

## MUNDO OBRERO

Venezuela desconecta señal de TV golpista 12

### IMMIGRANTS TELL GOV'T:

'New Haven will not back down' 4

### POLICE CONDEMNED

Victim's mother wins settlement 2

Malcolm Ferguson  
OCTOBER22-NY.ORG



### ABOLISH 'LAW OF PARTIES'

The case of Kenneth Foster Mumia Abu-Jamal on 'DEATH TEXAS' 3

### Latin America leads the way

► Cuba ► Venezuela  
► Colombia ► Mexico

Centerfold

### U.S. DOUBLE-CROSS?

Turkey attacks Kurds 9

### BUSH CAN'T HIDE

Massive protests at G-8 summit 9

## Subscribe to Workers World

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

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Workers World Newspaper  
55 W. 17 St., NY, NY 10011

212-627-2994 www.workers.org

## For 2008 Democratic National Convention

# Denver officials attack free speech rights

## Protesters still plan to mobilize

By Larry Hales  
Denver

The Denver City Council decided it would not hear argument for a proclamation that assures that protesters' First Amendment rights would be protected for the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver.

The move to block a vote on the proclamation was spearheaded by Charlie Brown, a city councilperson in Denver, who has made it his cause to verbally attack organizers with the Recreate 68 Alliance—the main group organizing for the thousands that will converge on Denver next year as an act of resistance to the Democratic Party's pro-war, anti-labor and anti-immigrant positions.

Brown, who even stated that members of the Recreate 68 Alliance are "cruising for a bruising," and that the Alliance is trying to instigate a showdown, has shown nothing but hostility.

In public comments allowed for two city council members, Kathleen MacKenzie, who sponsored the proclamation, and Brown, Brown told the packed City Council Chamber that the police are not like Burger King, that the protesters cannot "have it their way."

He also violence-baited the alliance and invoked the federal government's fear-inducing charge of the possibility of "terrorism" in 2008, and the reason the resolution should not be heard is that it would tie the hands of the local government and state and federal cops.

The proclamation itself is reminiscent of the resolution passed in New York City in 2004, though the cops ultimately revealed their nature in capitalist society and attacked activists during the Republican National Convention. It is also similar to the resolution passed in St. Paul this year.

The Alliance's proclamation is an affirmation of rights guaranteed in the First Amendment, and partly reads:

Section 1. That the Council calls upon Mayor John

Hickenlooper and other city officials to affirm and uphold the exercise of First Amendment rights in Denver upon the occasion of the 2008 Democratic National Convention. Section 2. That the Council calls upon City officials to take affirmative measures to uphold and protect the rights of speech, expression and association, at the 2008 Democratic National Convention, including the creation and implementation of systems and procedures to ensure that (a) there is reasonable and prompt action on permit applications for public demon-

*Continued on page 11*



City Councilperson Charles Barron and Viola Plummer from the December 12th Movement clasp hands in a show of unity in front of supporters at a New York City Hall press conference June 10 to denounce racist attacks. Along with Barron and Plummer, other speakers included former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney; Larry Holmes, from the International Action Center; radio host Bob Law and D12 Movement members, Amadi Ajamu and Roger Wareham. See page 10 editorial.

WW PHOTO: ARTURO J. PÉREZ-SAAD



## To condemn police violence

# Jury awards large settlement

By Stephen Millies  
Bronx, N.Y.

On June 6 a Bronx, N.Y., civil court jury awarded \$10.5 million to Juanita Young, whose son Malcolm Ferguson was killed at point-blank range by policeman Louis Rivera on March 1, 2000. Five African Americans and one Latin@ found the city of New York and its police department 100 percent responsible for Malcolm's death.

Malcolm Ferguson was killed five days after he was arrested at a protest against the acquittal of the four cops who fatally shot Amadou Diallo 19 times according to the autopsy. Like the African immigrant Diallo, Ferguson, an African American, was unarmed.

The same day Ferguson died he had an argument with Rivera about Diallo. A few hours later this undercover cop shot Malcolm Ferguson in the head three blocks from where Amadou Diallo was killed the year before.

Were these mere coincidences? Many people in the Bronx don't think so.

In his closing argument to the jury, Young's attorney Seth Harris truthfully described the police action that led to Malcolm Ferguson's execution as a "hunting expedition."

Rivera himself testified that he entered the apartment building at 1045 Boynton Ave. because he saw a "male Black" leave hurriedly with his hands in his pocket, glancing over his shoulder. That was enough reason for this plainclothes cop to barge into the building, accost Ferguson on the stairs and draw his weapon from its holster.

"You never heard Officer Rivera utter 'Please forgive me, I'm sorry,'" Harris told the jurors.

The money awarded by the jury, which includes \$7 million in punitive damages, won't bring Ferguson back. But even this little bit of justice is being appealed by the city government. New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has a personal fortune at least 500 times as large.

"I paid a heavy price over the last seven years," said Juanita Young at a June 7 news conference in front of the Bronx Supreme Court. "I didn't let that stop me. I have to get justice for my son."

Young, who is legally blind, described how she was illegally evicted from her Section 8 apartment in 2003. "The cop pushed me down the stairs three times," she said.

Young was arrested in her own home on trespassing charges. Her hand was injured. A policeman told her, "No rallies for you today."

Young was held for 35 hours and fingerprinted five times. "If you run, we shoot you in the head," is what a cop told her during one of the 15 times she was shunted between six precincts.

Juanita Young and her family were homeless for months. Judge Benítez found Young not guilty two years later.

Cops arrested Young's eldest son because he supposedly looked like a murder suspect, described as "a tall Black man in a black jacket." A daughter was arrested for robbery and then let go with no charges filed. Another son of hers was threatened with jail for throwing snowballs when there was no snow on the ground.



WW PHOTO: STEPHEN MILLIES  
Margarita Rosario and Juanita Young.

Well after Ferguson was killed, police came to Young's block showing neighbors Ferguson's picture and asking them if he still lived in the area.

This sadistic campaign failed to intimidate Juanita Young. She continued to work with other parents whose children were killed by police in the Oct. 22nd Coalition and Parents Against Police Brutality.

Two of these parents, Margarita and Anthony Rosario came to the hearing. Their son, Anthony Rosario, was shot in the back and arms 14 times while their nephew Hilton Vega was shot eight times. Both were lying face down on a floor when they were killed.

One of the two detectives who shot these young men on March 12, 1995, had earlier been a bodyguard for Rudolph Giuliani. When Margarita Rosario called Mayor Giuliani's radio show on WABC, he cut her off and said she was a bad mother. Why isn't Giuliani questioned about this while he's running for president?

### A 'loving son' who helped blind people

At the Ferguson trial a retired police sergeant and an assistant medical examiner initially refused to honor subpoenas to testify.

Young had to listen to Louis Rivera describe how he killed her son. According to the medical examiner's report, the muzzle of Rivera's gun was against Ferguson's head when it was fired.

The most compelling testimony was given by Young. She told the jury about her "loving son," who was a "happy-go-lucky kid" who liked basketball. Malcolm would often look after children in the neighborhood.

Like millions of youths, Malcolm spent time in jail on drug charges. He earned his GED during his eight months in jail, five years before he was killed. Ferguson helped his mother with paperwork and bills because of her limited vision. Along with Young's other children, Malcolm would cook and slice so his mother wouldn't cut herself.

Up to when he was 12 years old, Ferguson would accompany his mother to camp for the blind. He would help sightless people at the camp and in his Bronx neighborhood.

Malcolm liked to shop for the family because he could buy spaghetti. Malcolm loved spaghetti, said Young.

Officer Louis Rivera put his 9 millimeter semi-automatic gun on Malcolm Ferguson's shoulder, because as the cop testified in an earlier deposition, he was mad at Ferguson. At the trial Rivera admitted that Malcolm never reached for the cop's gun.

On the first day of the hearing Johnson tried to prevent Juanita Young from testifying at all about the "pain and suffering" she suffered. The "reason" given was that she was "only" Malcolm's mother, not his spouse or child!

The jury awarded Juanita Young \$3 million for the pain and suffering that she continues to endure.

Even the police department initially took away Rivera's gun and badge for 15 months. This homicide was listed on one of their forms as "not justified."

Yet the Bronx D.A.'s office refuses to re-open any criminal investigation of Malcolm Ferguson's death. No justice, no peace!

*The writer attended the trial proceedings.*

This week ...



### ★ In the U.S.

Denver officials attack free speech rights . . . . .	1
Jury awards large settlement . . . . .	2
Free Kenneth Foster . . . . .	3
Mumia Abu-Jamal on the Kenneth Foster case. . . . .	3
Victimized youth organize against police brutality . . . . .	3
New York immigrants discuss their rights . . . . .	3
New Haven immigrants . . . . .	4
Domestic workers' demand: 'Down with exploitation!' . . . . .	4
Conference held on housing crisis . . . . .	4
Boston LGBT communities come out against war, racism . . . . .	5
Detroit rally defends reproductive rights . . . . .	5
Fior Cruz . . . . .	10

### ★ Around the world

BAYAN-USA solidarity with Cuba, Cuban Five . . . . .	5
U.S. ignored Cuban advice on hurricanes--twice . . . . .	6
U.S. blockade obstructed Cuban AIDS treatment . . . . .	6
Support broadcast for Cuban Five . . . . .	6
Mass protests over education convulse Colombia . . . . .	7
Mexican workers shut down border . . . . .	7
Venezuelans rally to support Bolivarian Revolution . . . . .	7
Mass protests greet Bush across Europe . . . . .	9
Turkey's attack in Iraq . . . . .	9
Report exposes CIA secret prisons in Eastern Europe . . . . .	9
Al-Awda convention demands right to return . . . . .	11
Palestinians remember the Nakbah . . . . .	11
Documentary shows deadly impact of Agent Orange . . . . .	11
Hear Lebanese-American writer/activist . . . . .	11

### ★ Editorials

Defend Viola Plummer and self-determination . . . . .	10
JFK terror plotters . . . . .	10

### ★ Noticias En Español

Venezuela desconecta señal de TV golpista . . . . .	12
---	----

Workers World  
55 West 17 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
Phone: (212) 627-2994  
Fax: (212) 675-7869  
E-mail: editor@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org  
Vol. 49, No. 24 • June 21, 2007  
Closing date: June 13, 2007

Editor: Deirdre Griswold  
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk  
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson  
West Coast Editor: John Parker  
Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno  
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas  
Internet: Janet Mayes  
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2007 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

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

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription.

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

## JOIN US.

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latin@, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

**National Office**  
55 W. 17 St.,  
New York, NY 10011  
212-627-2994;  
Fax (212) 675-7869  
wwp@workers.org

**Atlanta**  
P.O. Box 424,  
Atlanta, GA 30301  
404-627-0185  
atlanta@workers.org

**Baltimore**  
426 E. 31 St.,  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
410-235-7040  
baltimore@workers.org

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

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

**Chicago**  
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138  
Chicago, IL 60606  
773-381-5839  
chicago@workers.org

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

**Denver**  
denver@workers.org

**Detroit**  
5920 Second Ave.,  
Detroit, MI 48202  
313-831-0750  
detroit@workers.org

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

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

**Milwaukee**  
milwaukee@workers.org

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

**Raleigh, N.C.**  
raleigh@workers.org

**Richmond, Va.**  
P.O. Box 14602,  
Richmond, VA 23221  
richmond@workers.org

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

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

**San Francisco**  
2940 16th St., #207  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415-738-4739  
sf@workers.org

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



## Free Kenneth Foster

# Abolish the 'Law of Parties'

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Kenneth Foster is fighting for his life. Texas is scheduled to execute him on Aug. 30. Even by Texas' own Law of Parties, Foster is innocent, but it is this backward, "hang 'em all" statute that sent Foster to death row 10 years ago.

Foster was sentenced to death in May 1997 for driving a car from which Mauriceo Brown got out and shot Michael LaHood Jr. Brown got out of the car, allegedly attempted to commit a robbery, though he claimed that no robbery was intended, and said that he wanted to talk to a woman who was with LaHood. Complications arose and Brown shot LaHood while Foster and two others stayed in the car nearly 80 feet away with the windows up and the radio on.

Brown admitted to the shooting, claiming self-defense. But he said that no one had any prior knowledge of the crimes he was about to commit.

Foster has become an outspoken critic of the death penalty, an activist inside Texas' death row, a prolific writer and poet, and an organizer. He is one of the founding members of the Death Row Inner Communalist Vanguard Engagement—DRIVE—Movement, an organization on death row that has organized several hunger strikes to protest the horrific conditions the men are subjected to.

DRIVE is a multinational organization of activists who see unity of those on death row as their strength. They use civil disobedience as a tool to call attention to death row conditions of isolation and brutality.

Activists in Texas are planning activities in support of Foster for this summer. Supporters, family and friends are holding weekly meetings in Austin. There will be a statewide demonstration in Austin on July 21.

For almost as long as Foster has been on death row, he has been educating his supporters, anti-death-penalty activists and the public on Texas' unjust Law of



PHOTOS: WWW.FREEKENNETH.COM  
Kenneth Foster's grandfather Lawrence Foster, Sr.; Kenneth with daughter, Nydesha, right.



Parties. He also contributes to the struggle through his writings.

From his web site Foster says: "I am here to tell you that capital punishment is a form of genocide. Some people may say, 'Whoa. That's a strong word to use.' But I use it with no hesitation. . . . What we see going on in America is systematic genocide. It is subtle in its form: booming prison systems made to seem like rehabilitation centers when they are like concentration camps; tobacco products made to seem cool to kids when it is only killing them; lack of health care provided while curable diseases are ravishing our communities; police murders which are given passes under the law; purposeful poverty; and the most blunt is capital punishment.

"They will try to justify my murder through their law of parties. Laws don't make justice. Once upon a time in Amerika, slavery was a law. There were lynch laws. There were Jim Crow laws. None of them were right and the Law of Parties statute is not being applied right. . . . We will not be silent. We will fight until the end. I have dedicated my life for 10 years now. I will not walk head down. In my own right I have left a legacy—for my family, for my child, for fellow strugglers. . . . My murder should act as a flame in the heart of fighters for justice—not a mourning device. Don't mourn, MOBILIZE!"

To get involved in the campaign to save Kenneth Foster, call Austin activists at 512-494-0667 or Houston activists at 713-503-2633. See [www.freekenneth.com](http://www.freekenneth.com), [www.drivemovement.org](http://www.drivemovement.org) or [www.kennethfoster.de](http://www.kennethfoster.de). □

## From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row

# DEATH TEXAS: The Kenneth Foster case

From a May 31, 2007 column, [www.prisonradio.org](http://www.prisonradio.org)

For a decade Kenneth Foster Jr. has languished on one of the worst death rows in the U.S. - Texas. He now faces an execution date of Aug. 30, despite the fact that even the trial judge, the district attorney and the jury that sentenced him to die admit he never killed anyone.

Whoa!

I know that it sounds funny (or fishy), but it's not. It's just a fluke of Texas law.

In Texas, that fluke is called the Law of Parties—a variant on conspiracy law, but like most things in Texas this law takes a bigger chunk out of the accused.

In essence, the Law of Parties criminalizes presence, not actions.

Under U.S. law, as announced by the Supreme Court in its 1982 *Edmunds vs. Florida* decision, a death sentence for someone who killed no one, nor intended to, nor assisted in such a killing is a violation of the Eighth and 14th Amendments to the Constitution.

But again—this is Texas.

This is the same state that ruled in the *Herrera* case that innocence is irrelevant; that poisoned the Black activist Shaka Sankofa (born Gary Graham); that twice violated court orders from the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Miller-El* cases; and that sent George W. (as in warmonger) Bush to the White House.

These items are noted, of course, to make clear the very real danger that Kenneth Foster Jr. faces. A young Black man - an innocent man - on death row - in Texas!

If you wish to read more about his amazing case on the web, write to:

Kenneth Foster Support Group  
P.O. Box 14268  
San Antonio, TX 78214

Kenneth (also known by his adopted name, Haramia KiNassor) is a talented writer, poet, and father of an adorable 10 year-old girl named Nydesha.

Help free her dad. □



Free Mumia Abu-Jamal NOW!

# Victimized youth organize against police brutality

By Kathy Durkin

It was a somber day in May. Thirty-two grieving young people were walking to the subway train in Bushwick, a Brooklyn neighborhood. They were on their way to a wake for a friend, Donnell McFarland, who had been tragically murdered at the age of 18.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, as the youth neared the Myrtle Avenue station, police swooped down on them, harassing, cursing, and terrorizing them. They were all searched; nothing illegal was found.

All of these Black and Latin@ women and men—some as young as 13 years old—were handcuffed, arrested and taken to the 83rd police precinct. The majority were charged with so-called unlawful assembly and disorderly conduct. Several were held overnight, some for 38 hours.

In his investigation of the horrendous May 21 police attack, journalist Bob Herbert interviewed several of the young people involved, who are all students at Bushwick Community High School, as well as other eyewitnesses including Kathleen Williams, a parent who was traveling with them. Everyone said that youth did absolutely nothing wrong. Williams was threatened with arrest herself when she objected to the arrests. (*New York Times*, 5/26/07)

The police even taunted them about their deceased friend. And later, to justify their outrageous actions, the cops pointed to the memorial T-shirts the youth were wearing with McFarland's picture on them, and tried to claim the gathering was "gang-related."

The young people called it what it was—a clear-cut case of racial profiling.

This is business as usual by New York City police. The callous mistreatment, racist humiliation, harassment and intimidation of youth from oppressed communities is a commonplace, citywide occurrence—on the streets, in the subways and even inside the schools.

There is a reign of terror against the Black and Latin@ youth of this city.

In fact, by their own admission, a New York Police Department report issued earlier this year stated that cops stopped-and-frisked 508,540 people in 2006, 85 percent of whom were Black or Latin@. The majority of these intimidating acts were leveled against young oppressed women and men.

Inside the schools, thousands of students every semester are verbally abused, intimidated, threatened, sexually harassed and physically assaulted by cops and security guards. Teachers and parents who come to their aid are also targeted.

A New York Civil Liberties Union report issued in March, "Criminalizing the Classroom: The Over-Policing of New York City Schools," details the aggressive practices of the New York Police Department's so-called School Safety Division, which subjects students to "invasive practices and other forms of abuse everyday by nearly 5,000 SSA's, many of whom are armed." ([www.nyclu.org](http://www.nyclu.org))

But the students are fighting back! On June 5, the Student Coalition against Racial Profiling met with City Council members and community organizers to organize opposition to these racist police

practices. Among those attending was City Councilperson Charles Barron, who expressed his solidarity with the young people there.

Dana Jordan, a Bushwick Community High School senior and a founder of SCARP, said, "We are coming together to let the community know what has been going on with the cops, the excessive stop-and-frisks, the profiling, to let them know that it is time for a change in our community. We started SCARP because we wanted the community to know that we are trying to fight this battle against police

profiling and that we need their support." (*New York Times*, 6/6/07)

Public officials, right up to Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, who have said nothing, must be held accountable. These racist attacks must be stopped!

The Bushwick 32 will be in court in mid-July. This is a time for progressive organizations and activists to come out in solidarity with them and to spur a larger struggle to stand with the oppressed youth of this city and demand an end to police abuse. □

## NEW YORK



# Immigrant rights conference

The May 1 Immigrant Rights Coalition hosted a one-day "Know Your Rights" conference in New York City on June 9 that attracted immigrants from Asia, Africa and Latin America as well as U.S. supporters. Participants learned practical and legal methods to resist "La Migra" Immigration Custom Enforcement terror and at the same time denounced ongoing ICE raids and deportations. The group also condemned the current Senate immigration bill, which still poses a danger for immigrant rights.

—Report and photo by Heather Cottin



## Immigrants on gov't raids:

# 'New Haven is not backing down'

Special to Workers World  
New Haven, Conn.

In New Haven, Conn., the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has encountered the problem faced by all instruments of repression and armies of occupation. By retaliating against the immigrant community for daring to organize and fight back, ICE has unleashed an even stronger tide of resistance from an even broader cross-section of the community.

On the evening of June 4, New Haven became the first local government in the U.S. to offer an identification card that undocumented immigrants can use to access city services, open bank accounts, obtain health care and use for other everyday functions that most people take for granted.

Some immigrant rights advocates said that while they believed that there were sufficient votes on the thirty-member New Haven Board of Aldermen to pass the City ID legislation, they were surprised at the final tally: 25 in favor and only one against.

The measure reflected the latest step by city officials to welcome immigrants. Mayor John DeStefano had previously instructed the New Haven Police Department not to question city residents about their immigration status.

Less than forty-eight hours later, the federal ICE struck back, carrying out ear-

ly morning raids and detaining at least 31 immigrants in several households in the predominantly Latin@ Fair Haven neighborhood. Because of a lack of cooperation from local law enforcement, ICE detentions had been a rarity in New Haven prior to the June 6 raids.

Word spread quickly in the New Haven community, with activists out on the streets almost immediately warning residents about the raids. By mid-morning, the Connecticut chapter of the National Lawyers Guild issued a widely-circulated statement declaring that "the timing of these raids compels the conclusion that the U.S. government is engaged in an effort to chill the immigrant rights movement and punish those who dare to speak out."

In response to the NLG statement, activists began calling elected officials demanding that they speak out against ICE efforts at intimidation. Kika Matos, a community services administrator for the City of New Haven who had spearheaded passage of the City ID measure, told a press conference later that day that the raids were clearly not a coincidence, as ICE officials claimed. "Why else would they be in New Haven at this time?" Matos asked rhetorically at a press conference on June 6. "I think this is a disgrace. I'm ashamed of the federal government." Mayor DeStefano issued a statement describing the ICE raids as "retaliatory" and promised to stand by the City ID measure and the immigrant community.

Lawyers from Yale University and the Connecticut chapter of the NLG have been scrambling since June 6 to identify, enter appearances for, and obtain bond for as many of the detainees as possible. Though detainees were scheduled to appear in court in Hartford, those that did not post bond were reportedly being transferred to an ICE detention facility located more than two hundred miles away in Portland, Maine.

Predictably, ICE denied that the raids were intended as retaliation and claimed that they were routine "final order of deportation" cases, where a judge had already ruled that an immigrant had to leave the country and the immigrant had not complied.

ICE was quickly and publicly caught in a lie, however, when it was revealed that only two of the thirty-one detainees had final orders, and that all of the other arrests were "collateral." This is ICE's code word for its racist round-ups. A collateral detention is what happens when ICE uses a final order as an excuse to enter a home and arrest a resident, and then detains all of the other people in that residence at the same time. In the case of the New Haven detentions, there were reports of city residents being pulled off of city buses by ICE agents.

If ICE thought that its collective punishment of New Haven's immigrant community would chill activism by the community or its supporters, they were much

mistaken. On the evening of June 7 more than 1,500 people gathered outside St. Rosa of Lima Church on only a few hours notice to denounce the ICE raids and to re-state their determination to see that the City ID law is implemented.

Kika Matos received loud applause when she told the June 7 rally, "I want to be very clear: New Haven is not backing down!" Many non-immigrant activists discussed obtaining City ID cards so that ICE cannot use possession of the cards as "evidence" that a person is undocumented.

New Haven resident and survivor of the Nazi Holocaust in Germany, Irma Wessel, evoked the spirit of solidarity, telling marchers, "We need to stick together as people. We are all human beings and our government needs to hear from us that we are human beings and we need to be considered as such."

Norma, a woman whose cousins and husband were recently detained, told supporters that "I feel this pain deep, deep, deep in my heart" because of the raids but went on to express her family's thanks for the outpouring of support from the community.

The spirit in New Haven—not only among immigrants but in the larger working class community as well—is angry but more determined than ever. In its arrogance, ICE believed that its June 6 raids would be throwing cold water on the fires of resistance. Instead, it has thrown gasoline. □

## Domestic workers demand:

# 'Down with exploitation!'

By Anne Pruden  
New York

A vivacious multi-national rally of several hundred people gathered June 9 at a New York University campus park to protest the racist oppression of domestic workers who led this action on a rare day off from housekeeping, childcare and elderly care jobs.

They work without benefit of a living wage, medical care, overtime or sick time and many suffer abuse from prejudiced bosses. Under the call "We Built This City," domestic workers formed "DWU"—Domestic Workers United—to fight for basic labor rights, as well as respect, recognition and reparations.

DWU members—mostly women from the Caribbean, South America,

Asia and Africa—loudly chanted their demands, adding a variety of displays of cultures. These members represented Unity Housecleaners, Kalayaan/Women Workers Project of CAAAV, Andolan Organizing South Asian Workers, Damaayan Migrant Workers Assoc. and Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees.

As they marched to City Hall, these demands attracted much attention from shoppers who heard cries of "Free domestic workers! Down with slavery! Down with exploitation! Down with racism! Down with sexism! Up with the workers! Up with immigrant rights!"

Many blocks later, from a sidewalk beside City Hall, several domestic workers testified about how difficult and dangerous their work can be. They demanded passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of

Rights (A628B, S5325).

As in their chants, speakers connected their plight to that of slaves. So the next step in this long working-class march was to the African Burial Ground. After an emotional request by DWU leaders for a moment of silence at this burial ground, a speaker from the Transit Workers Union, who also represented the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, followed.

Haitian musicians performed there soon after, and speakers in several languages addressed the marchers.

For the next and ending march to a park near the government's immigration offices, demonstrators connected to a long



June 9 protest.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

chain to show the likeness to slavery that domestic workers face daily. Finally, the chain was thrown to the ground by all and the DWU led an inspirational song about their struggle ending in victory.

The DWU action was sponsored by the New York Domestic Workers Justice Coalition, New York Jobs With Justice and Jews for Racial and Economic Justice. □

## HARLEM, N.Y.

# Conference held on housing crisis

Following are excerpts from a June 2 press release.

On June 1st and June 2nd at St. Ambrose Church, hundreds of tenants and activists from Harlem and throughout New York City convened two days of plenary sessions and workshops at the 1st annual Harlem Anti-Gentrification Conference sponsored by the Harlem Tenants Council and the Delano Village Tenants Association.

The conference entitled "Race, Class and Gentrification in Harlem" addressed a number of issues that included rising evictions, luxury developments adversely impacting Harlem's already inflated rental market and Columbia University's expansion. According to Nellie Hester Bailey,

Director of the Harlem Tenants Council, the conference critically examined public policies that facilitated an escalating housing crisis throughout New York City, and in particular Harlem.

Bailey said, "The affordable crisis has moved us beyond shallow rhetoric of how bad landlords are when in fact what we need is a pro-active independent tenant movement addressing eminent domain abuse for private profit, legal representation for indigent tenants, vigorous state/city investigation of landlord abuse and accountability of elected officials starting with mayor Bloomberg."

Valerie Orridge, President of the Delano Village Tenants Association, a seven build-

ing complex of 1,800 units in Harlem said, "Our new owners purchased the complex a year ago for \$175 million only to refinance several months ago for \$350 million! Some tenants upon lease renewal had increases upward to a thousand dollars! We are working people, where are we to go?"

On June 1st the conference kicked off with speakers, including renowned scholar on gentrification Professor Neil Smith, activist Daniel Goldstein of Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn and Dr. Mindy Fullilove, author of "Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It."

There were eight workshops on June 2 including Senior Citizen Protection,

Know Your Housing Rights, Building Alliances that featured tenant activists from across the city sharing experiences fighting gentrification, and authors Deborah and Rod Wallace presented their carefully researched book, "A Plague on Your Houses" that looked at the New York City's devastated policy of "planned shrinkage" that uprooted 2 million working poor people of color.

Robert Fitch, author of "The Assassination of New York" traced the City's ruling elite destruction of its manufacturing base replaced with finance, insurance and real estate as the growth engine of the city aimed at the depopulating of blue collar workers. □



## No pride in occupation!

# Boston LGBT communities come out against war & racism

By Gerry Scoppettuolo  
Stonewall Warriors,  
International Action Center, Boston

A major lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) anti-war coalition—AskTellAct ([www.asktella.org](http://www.asktella.org))—dominated this year's LGBT Pride march in Boston on June 9. It was the biggest anti-war contingent in Boston LGBT history—and the single biggest group in this year's march.

After weeks of struggle many different queer communities in Boston united and came out against war and racism on June 9 in a big way that suggests a major rebirth in 1970s style gay liberation political activism here.

The entire contingent was more than a block long with colorful pink banners and led by floats from Local 26 Hotel Workers Union and the Stonewall Warriors/International Action Center. Many groups were represented including the Rainbow Solidarity with the Cuban Five national campaign; QueerToday.com; Unite Here!, Hotel Workers; Who Are You Sleeping With Campaign; Stonewall Warriors/IAC; Boston Bio Lab Opposition; Boston May Day Coalition; Gay & Lesbian Labor

Activist Network, Pride at Work Boston; SEIU 509 Lavender Caucus and SEIU Lavender Caucus East Coast Region; City Life/Vida Urbana; Women's Fightback Network; Military Families Speak Out; and U.S. Labor Against the War.

The Stonewall Warriors Float was driven by USWA Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers Union Vice President Steve Gillis.

The AskTellAct Coalition came into being to oppose the official theme selected by this year's Boston Pride Committee—Proud to Serve Our Nation—complete with Rainbow military dog tags logo. The coalition's mostly young organizers led a broader campaign of community outrage against such a nationalistic pro-war theme in a time of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. The increasingly corporate-controlled Pride marches in Boston and elsewhere have alienated many who are disgusted with the drift towards mainstreaming LGBT politics funded by deep-pocket banks and pharmaceutical companies.

The anti-war protesters had also organized a counter-protest at the official Pride Committee rainbow flag raising at Boston City Hall on June 1, by simultane-



Boston Pride March, June 9.

WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

ously hoisting a "No Pride in Occupation" flag during the ceremony as an all-white delegation of five Boston City Councilors looked on.

Also, on the night after the Pride March, seven AskTellAct organizers crashed the big "military ball" at Club Avalon and unfurled two large banners on the dance floor which read: "650,000 Dead Iraqis, Not Sexy" and "3,500 Dead U.S. Soldiers, Still Not Sexy." They were thrown out by management but were well-received by the audience.

A controversy had also erupted at an

official June 5 Boston Pride event called Pride Idol when a performer on stage made many racist remarks insulting the Asian and African-American communities. A protest movement led by Massachusetts Asian and Pacific Islanders (MAP) and [queertoday.com](http://queertoday.com) forced the Pride Committee to issue a formal apology the night before the march.

The AskTellAct Coalition plans to meet again to take up the question of continuing its work. For more information, email [stonewallwarriors@iacboston.org](mailto:stonewallwarriors@iacboston.org) or call 617-522-6626. □

## BAYAN-USA solidarity with Cuba, Cuban 5

Following excerpts are from a statement made by Yancy Mark Gandionco from BAYAN-USA *Queers at the June 2 Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five meeting at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center in New York City.*

In a world now undergoing unprecedented political and economic crisis, Cuba has an economy that has not stagnated. When its neighboring countries in Latin America are plunged into poverty and hunger, the growth in Cuba, even measured in exact gross domestic product, is greater by a four to one ratio than the average growth in Latin America, according to the Economic Affairs Commission of the Cuban government.

Today, hundreds of thousands of peasants now own and till the land that was the property of the foreign companies and local elite.

But most important, the revolution gave the Cuban people the ownership of the Cuban nation. The foreign companies and the ruling elite no longer own these properties. Neither the international financial institutions, nor foreign capital, can dictate the vision and destiny of this tiny but great country.

From 344 doctors before [the Cuban revolution] to 10,300 today, from 46 health units to 4006 today, from 1,470 hospital beds to 12,000 today, 1,682 teachers to 7,479, no university to 12 now, from 40.3 percent illiteracy rate to 0.2 percent, lowest incidence of AIDS and free medical service for children.

This is a stark contrast to the Philippines, where social services such as health care and education for the Filipino people have practically been eliminated in favor of payment of onerous loans by the International

Monetary Fund and World Bank.

These numbers and conditions reveal the triumph of the Cuban revolution over the past situation when its people were exploited by foreign companies, big landlords and corrupt bureaucrats in government. And it is these conditions and numbers that the U.S. government fears, for they undermine the system that it is trying to promote and protect.

The imperialist U.S. is so threatened by these conditions that it is doing everything in its power to preserve itself. The imprisonment of Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero and Gerardo Hernández is an example of the desperate and absurd measures that the U.S. government has taken.

These five Cubans are convicted on charges of espionage conspiracy. Yet clearly no espionage evidence was ever introduced.

This is similar to the Philippines, where the government accused and charged genuine and progressive parliamentarians representing the basic sector—the peasants and the workers—with sedition and rebellion charges. They are Ka Satur Ocampo and Ka Crispin "Bel" Beltran. These charges served to instill fear in the people. Fortunately enough the Philippine government's plan backfired and created a unified and consistent campaign to free these leaders. And just a few days ago, all charges against them were dismissed and Ka "Bel" was finally released after a two-year detention.

"Preemptive strike" is what America has always wanted to do to Cuba since the failed Bay of Pigs invasion four decades ago. "Regime change" is what America has always wanted to do to the sovereign gov-

ernment. *Continued on page 8*



WW PHOTO: G.DUNKEL

Yancy Mark Gandionco



Michigan residents march in Detroit June 9 to defend women's rights.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

## Detroit rally defends reproductive rights

By Workers World Detroit bureau

A march and rally in defense of women's reproductive rights took place in Detroit's cultural center on June 9. The pro-choice demonstration was called by the Detroit Action Network For Reproductive Rights, the Detroit chapter of the National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood of Southeast Michigan, and the Wayne State University chapters of Students for Choice and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance.

Leaders of these organizations had met together on May 10 to plan this response to the Supreme Court's reactionary April ruling that upheld the federal abortion ban and signaled more restrictions on women's right to choice and reproductive freedom.

Protesters also expressed their opposi-

tion to another recent ruling by the high court that essentially legalized pay inequity for women workers and workers of color.

Most of the demonstrators were young women. For some it was their first protest. A carload of youths came all the way from Traverse City in northern Michigan; others came from Grand Rapids and the Lansing area.

Young women led a spirited march up Woodward Avenue. Many drivers honked their car horns in support. A short rally afterward heard from Chris Cardenas of WSU Students for Choice, Dessá Cosma of Planned Parenthood, clinic escort organizer Wendy Richardson and Kris Hamel from DANFORR.

Demonstrators vowed they would continue the struggle for reproductive rights for all women. □



# U.S. ignored Cuban advice on hurricanes—twice

By Teresa Gutierrez

A nonfiction book titled "Isaac's Storm," written by Erik Larson, vividly details a horrific hurricane that devastated Galveston, Texas, on Sept. 8, 1900. The hurricane killed over 8,000 people—one-sixth of the population, destroyed one-third of the city and sank most of the island under water.

At the time, Isaac's Storm was the greatest storm ever to hit the U.S. It forever changed the course of history for Galveston.

The book documents a series of errors and miscalculations which, had they not occurred, could have saved lives. One of those miscalculations was a patronizing and colonial view towards an island in the Caribbean that had, in fact, a great deal of knowledge about hurricanes.

That island was Cuba.

In his book, Larson describes how if Isaac Cline—the weather meteorologist in charge of the operations in Galveston at the time of the storm—had paid attention to warnings from Cuba about the impending storm, history would have taken a different course for Galveston and its people. It was not the only mistake, but it was an important one.

Larson writes, "Cuba's meteorologists had pioneered the art of hurricane predictions; its best weathermen were revered by the Cuban public." By 1870, the Belén Observatorio in Havana had dedicated itself to finding the meteorological signals that warned of the advance of a hurricane.

No different today

Fast forward to May 23-26, 2007, when a meeting between U.S. and Cuban hurricane experts took place in Monterrey,

Mexico, organized by the Center for International Policy.

This U.S.-Cuba Hurricane Summit was the first event of its kind, according to organizers. It was attended by Wayne Smith of the organizing Center; Dagoberto Rodríguez, head of the Cuban Interests Section in the U.S.; several journalists and hurricane experts from Louisiana State University hurricane center; and the emergency management directors of Mobile County in Alabama.

However, a U.S. meteorologist from Miami, Lixion Avilia, was prohibited from attending the conference. The U.S. State Department reportedly detained Avilia in Dallas en route to Monterrey, Mexico, and told him not to attend the U.S.-Cuba Summit.

The Cubans are not only experts in predicting hurricanes. They are vastly superior to the U.S. in protecting their population from these natural disasters. If the U.S. government was truly concerned about the millions of people in the path of ever-more-deadly hurricanes and storms, it not only would have sent more experts to attend this important conference. It would have allowed the conference to take place in the U.S.

Conference organizers were forced to have the event in Mexico so that Cubans could attend.

But the U.S. government is not concerned with the plight of its population. The whole world was reminded of this in August 2005 when Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast region. The human and material loss was enormous, but the real neglect and devastation was the fault of the government, not the hurricanes. Monies that should have been used to shore up the levees were diverted

to the war against Iraq.

This was yet another example of the insidious racist nature of this system and the contempt this government has for Black people and the poor.

Two attendees from Cuba at the Monterrey Summit were Dr. José Borges Rodríguez and Dr. Daniel Loriet Andreu representing the Henry Reeve Medical Brigade. This brigade was set to come to New Orleans after Katrina to offer assistance and bring 1,600 doctors and 36 tons of medical supplies. The U.S. government callously barred this aid.

The brigade instead departed for Pakistan and Indonesia, where major earthquakes had taken a terrible toll.

The June 3 Times Picayune from New Orleans writes about the Monterrey Summit: "Since Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana has awakened to the importance of developing evacuation plans that take pets into account. Cuba builds an extra measure into the island's emergency planning: Not only are pets sheltered in the face of an approaching storm, provision also is made for packing up and moving refrigerators, televisions and other hard-won possessions. That was one insight exchanged between Cubans and their counterparts in emergency management from Louisiana and other Gulf Coast locations at a hurricane conference last week in this Mexican city of 3.6 million nestled in mountains 180 miles away from Gulf waters."

Possessions, as well as their owners, were contemptuously disregarded by FEMA and the U.S. government in Louisiana in the aftermath of Katrina.

The Cuban government on the other hand—a socialist government that organizes to defend, not defeat the people—handles these things another way.

A well-known and respected Cuba solidarity activist from Houston, Tex., was in Cuba in 2004 and saw firsthand how the Cuban government prepares for hurricanes. Ernest McMillan wrote to movement activists in 2004: "Hurricane Ivan is scheduled to make a visit here late tomorrow night or by early Sunday. Jamaica is feeling it now. Looks like my plans for church on Sunday are out! Anyway, you can probably imagine the tension and preoccupation here right now. There is so much spirit of resolve though (that fear and the hype we are typically bombarded with by the U.S. media during similar conditions are non-existent.) The government is treating this as if a military invasion is taking place. Generals, soldiers and even Fidel sit besides meteorologists and public health professionals in an uninterrupted (commercial free) dialog about the many aspects of the approaching cyclone, the multi-sided impact it could have as well as the various precautions being taken. They are mobilizing an intelligent, well grounded citizenry to action. Students secure their classrooms and school buildings. Public works personnel, medical teams and soldiers position themselves in strategic stations throughout the city and countryside in advance of the storm, rather than after the fact as we are accustomed to here."

This is one reason why Cuban doctors were not allowed to come to New Orleans in 2005. The people of the region would have been awakened to another kind of society, a socialist society. That idea would have been embraced by a people who were reminded once again that this is a country built on slavery that aims to keep its workers and oppressed down.

A socialist way of handling hurricanes would have sounded damn good. □

# U.S. imperialist blockade obstructed Cuban AIDS treatment

By Leslie Feinberg

The Cuban approach to AIDS saved lives, Joseph Mutti concluded in June 1999. "Cuba now has one of the world's lowest rates of infection, with only one of every 1,500 persons testing HIV-positive (the U.S. rate is 1 of every 550). That statistic is especially remarkable given Cuba's sexually active youth and easygoing attitudes about sex." ("Love and Honesty: The Dawn of Gay Rights," Resource Center of the Americas.org)

MEDICC Review explained that, "By the end of 2001, Cuba will have approved its most ambitious offensive yet against HIV/

AIDS: setting up a National Task Force Against AIDS (GOPELS)," to be headed by the minister of public health and the secretary of the council of ministers.

"Their job will be to integrate prevention strategies among the various national players, including the Public Health and Education Ministries, the Federation of Cuban Women, and other government agencies and NGOs. They will be guided by the 'Strategic Plan for Controlling HIV/AIDS,' outlining national strategies against the virus for the next five years."



(Vol. II, No. 1, 2—2001)

The biggest problem in dealing with AIDS on the island continued to be access to medicine for free distribution to the population because of the U.S. blockade.

MEDICC Review noted in 2001 that, "Early treatment of AIDS consisted of AZT, interferons and other drugs commonly used in international protocols—but often more difficult for Cuba to purchase because many were patented by U.S. pharmaceutical companies and therefore not freely available to Cuban importers

under the restrictions imposed by the U.S. embargo.

"Earlier this year, Cuba began to manufacture its own anti-retrovirals and make them available to AIDS patients free of charge. Cuba has maintained a strong research component in the fight against AIDS, primarily through studies of the application of interferons to AIDS patients and the continued research to develop an HIV/AIDS vaccine."

In February 2003, it was reported that treatment of Cubans with AIDS had greatly improved over the preceding two years

Continued on page 8

# 'Happy birthday Gerardo!' Support broadcast for Cuban Five

By Leslie Feinberg

People across the U.S. and around the world found a way to send a birthday greeting of solidarity to Gerardo Hernández, one of the Cuban Five imprisoned in the U.S. for almost nine years for the "crime" of having infiltrated CIA commando groups in the U.S. in order to stop terror attacks on their island nation.

Tanya Torres, radio host of the KPFFK program "Cantos sin Fronteras" (Songs without Borders) out of Los Angeles, had planned to devote half of her two-hour time slot on June 2 to birthday messages for Hernández.

The response to her broadcast appeal overwhelmed the program's electronic mailbox.

Messages poured in from the U.S., Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Germany, and from Cuba. Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda penned a poem and message for Hernández.

Torres opened up the whole two hours of programming for the messages. But even after the messages were edited down, only 66 of the hundreds could be read in that time period. The host added that the phone calls did not stop during the entire program.

The most moving message was from Adriana Pérez—married to Gerardo Hernández—who has not been allowed by the U.S. government to see her spouse for nine long years. A live interview allowed her to voice her love to Hernández from their home in Havana.

The four other Cuban Five prisoners—Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—each dedicated special songs to their compañero that aired during the program.

After listening to the radio show in Victorville Penitentiary in Adelanto, Calif., Gerardo Hernández said, "This program just knocked me dead."



One of the other Victorville prisoners who also tuned in reportedly asked Hernández, "Did your eyes water when you heard the program? Because mine did."

The U.S. government has locked up the Cuban Five in dungeons. But people of consciousness and courage everywhere are working hard to make the keys to free them. For more information about how to help, visit freethefive.org or freethefiveny.org.

Feinberg is an initiator of Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five (www.freethefiveny.org).



## Despite gov't repression

# Mass protests over education convulse Colombia

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Mass actions begun May 23 culminated in the largest national mobilization in recent Colombian history on May 30. In Bogotá more than 220,000 people marched in the capital, effectively shutting down transportation for hours. Nationally, students occupied more than 300 colleges—130 in Bogotá alone—defending their right to free and affordable education, with hundreds of thousands demonstrating nationwide.

Since May Day, a day when workers demonstrate around the world, Colombia has been in a state of political convulsion. The suffering of the masses in that country is almost unimaginable. Yet despite massacres, displacement, selective assassinations, mass arrests and detentions, general repression and the always present threat of the paramilitaries, the unarmed social and labor movement keeps struggling against all odds, pushing a progressive agenda.

President Álvaro Uribe's new proposed National Plan of Development (NPD) and the Law Project of Transferences (LPT) have provoked the anger and outrage particularly of teachers, students and college and university workers, who have been in a state of permanent mobilization opposing the measures since May 23.

The NPD—which is basically the financial plan for the nation until 2010—states that the schools and universities must pay pensioners from their own budget, thus ending the government's subsidy. The LPT will reduce the amount of money that the national government allocates towards education and health care. The education system in Colombia is already precarious and these measures will further erode these vital services.

Analysts in Colombia say these measures will pave the way to the privatization of education and health care and consequently the ending of access to them for poor families who are the vast majority of the population.

Plan Colombia, the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the U.S. and the infiltration of the paramilitaries in the national and local governments had already aroused mass opposition. Now this new attack on education added a new layer of activism.

Prior actions and assemblies of teachers and students around the nation broke out on May 23 into a new social upheaval

in Colombia. The Workers Federation (CUT), the Alternative Democratic Pole—which is the opposition center-left party in the Colombian Congress—and the Colombian Federation of Educators (FECODE), among others, called for a national strike on May 23 against Uribe's policies, including the NPL and LPT.

That day teachers of primary and secondary schools initiated a strike that lasted until June 1. The May 23 actions also demanded a political, not a military solution to the internal armed conflict, the rejection of the privatization of the national oil industry (ECOPETROL), and for truth and justice in the scandalous case of the paramilitary ties with politicians.

In Bogotá alone 42,000 people marched on May 23. Students, teachers, workers, pensioners, the Indigenous and Afrocolombian communities, peasants, women and many other sectors of the working poor marched for more than six hours throughout the capital's streets.

In most of the country the schools were paralyzed, with marches and other actions in Medellín, Manizales, Pereira and Pasto and road blockades elsewhere. Telesur reported that day that in the very poor western region of Chocó in the border with Panama, "the Indigenous communities closed the Medellín-Quibdó route and demanded the presence of organisms of control like the public defender and the office of the attorney general so that their demands, especially their social demands, are met."

Teachers and students held assemblies and diverse actions nationally after May 23. The student movement coalesced and formed a united front in defense of public education, calling for the occupation of colleges and another day of national demonstrations for May 30.

The government's response so far has been to go forward with the NPL and LPT, to close the National University in Bogotá and to use the riot police (ESMAD) against the students in some cities. Around 100 ESMAD agents violently invaded Caldas University in the early morning hours of June 5 breaking doors, throwing tear gas and shooting "perdigones" (pellets) at the 200 students that were occupying the campus. Students responded by throwing stones back at the police, who detained 22 students. On June 11, the Student Federation of Caldas University circulated on the

Internet a statement requesting solidarity.

This repression has not dampened the struggling mood of the students nor the masses. Actions continue throughout Colombia and a call is on for the "occupation of Bogotá" on June 13.

### U.S., corporate media role

The capitalist media in the U.S. have finally begun to report about the Colombian "parapolitical" scandal—the paramilitary infiltration of the National Congress and presumed paramilitary links with Uribe. This signals that a sector of the ruling class both in Colombia and in the U.S. is trying to distance itself from the near-fascist Uribe regime. The U.S. Congress picked up this signal and is at least delaying its vote for the FTA with

Colombia, basing this delay on that country's notorious human rights abuses.

Still, not a single article has appeared in the U.S. corporate media about the great strikes and large demonstrations by students and workers described above. Apparently these media have decided that publicizing popular resistance to a capitalist U.S. ally, even to Uribe's government, is harmful to U.S. interests and that of the Colombian ruling class.

In contrast, the same media have given coverage ad-nauseam to the counterrevolutionary Venezuelan students' demonstrations against the constitutional and completely legal closure of the pro-coup station RCTV. These very much smaller protests do represent the interest of the ruling class in Venezuela and the U.S. □



School teachers and supporters rally June 6. Sign reads in Spanish, 'The D-1-68 Pre-school delegation manifest their total rejection to the new law of the social security institute for state workers, ISSSTE.'

## Mexican workers shut down border

By Zola Muhammad  
Tijuana, Mexico

On June 6, as many as 20,000 protesters from Tijuana and other parts of the Mexican state of Baja California Norte shut down the busiest border crossing in the world for nearly three hours at the San Ysidro entry into San Diego, Calif. Southbound lanes into Mexico were also closed for two hours.

The protest was mainly organized by Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación (National Union of Education Workers) or SNTE, a teachers' union in Mexico, along with other unions, workers and students.

They were protesting a new law passed in March by Mexico's new conservative president, Felipe Calderón. The law, Ley del ISSSTE, which stands for Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado, (Social Law of the Institute of Security and Services of the Workers of the State), privatizes the pensions of teachers and other public-sector workers.

The law also extends the age of retirement from 50 to 60. One protester said, "We have to tell the world that the Mexican working class suffers from these new laws."

Another protester, Luis García, said, "The new law affects not only teachers, but doctors, nurses, federal police and all workers." Others criticized the law as

"anti-constitutional."

The SNTE says that adding 10 years to the age of retirement will also adversely affect their pensions and health benefits. The SNTE has been organizing demonstrations against Ley del ISSSTE all across Mexico. As a result of the successful June 6 protest, commuters into Tijuana were stuck on the Interstate 5 freeway, while Tijuana police rerouted northbound travelers to the Otay border crossing 10 miles east.

Traffic there became extremely congested, causing the San Diego police, Border Patrol, California Highway Patrol and San Diego's Port Authority to swarm to the border to deal with all the cars and pedestrians. On average 30,000 pedestrians, 35,000 vehicles and 250 buses cross the U.S. border each day at the San Ysidro entry.

The Mexican working class is under constant attack as of late—with the attacks on immigrants in the U.S., the triple border fence, rigged Mexican elections, bigoted and racist diatribes from conservative right-wing U.S. talk-show hosts, and Immigration Customs Enforcement raids that are tearing apart immigrant families. This new law, which is a continuation of the attack on Mexican workers, attempts to undermine the unions and reverse the gains won through organized struggle. It is becoming increasingly important for the world's working class to stand in solidarity with them because the workers' struggles know no borders. □

## Venezuelans rally to support Bolivarian Revolution

By Jaimeson Champion

In what has been nearly two weeks of continuous demonstrations and rallies, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have taken to the streets of Caracas to voice their support for President Hugo Chávez and his decision not to renew the broadcast license of Radio Caracas Television (RCTV). The massive pro-Chávez demonstrations have far outnumbered the well-orchestrated protest marches of the reactionary student groups, whose opposition to the non-renewal of RCTV's license has received enormous coverage in the capitalist controlled media.

The pro-government demonstrators carried banners and placards heralding the creation of the new public television

station TVes. They expressed their excitement about what they called a "democratization" of the airwaves. By replacing the privately owned RCTV with the publicly controlled TVes, the Chávez-led government has helped to enfranchise the masses of Venezuela, who will now have an increased role in determining what television programming will be broadcast. TVes has established educational and training sites around the country where any Venezuelan who is interested can take free classes on topics ranging from film production to news broadcasting.

The past two weeks of confrontations in the streets of Caracas, between Chávez supporters and the reactionary student groups who support RCTV, are ostensi-

*Continued on page 8*



# U.S. imperialist blockade obstructed Cuban AIDS treatment

*Continued from page 6*

because Cuba's pharmaceutical industry was producing its own generic copies of anti-HIV medicines. Dr. Byron Barksdale, director of a U.S. medical group, said, "Cuba now produces enough anti-viral medicines for its own patients and it has offered to supply other nations in the Caribbean region." (Financial Times, Feb. 16, 2003)

The Financial Times—no friend to socialist construction—reported, "Cuba has much to teach the world about tackling AIDS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science heard on [Feb. 16]. A wide-ranging prevention and treatment program, backed by strong political action, has given the Caribbean country the lowest prevalence of AIDS disease and HIV infection in the western hemisphere—and one of the lowest rates in the world."

## Cuba addresses world impact

In its issue coinciding with International AIDS Day 2001, MEDICC Review noted, "Today, some 36 million people worldwide are infected with HIV, over 25 million of them in Africa, where most have no way to pay for the drugs that might extend their lives. They die with no treatment in sight." (Vol. II, No. 1, 2)

MEDICC Review reprinted the full text of a speech by Cuban Vice President Carlos Lage Dávila, delivered earlier that year at the United Nations General Assembly on AIDS. Lage Dávila had offered his socialist government's offer of Cuban solidarity for people with AIDS, "especially those in the developing countries most affected."

In his speech on June 25, 2001, Lage Dávila said, "No country is free of AIDS. Some—the privileged and rich—have managed to reduce the mortality rate with medicines sold at high, unreasonable prices. Others—unfortunate and poor—are experiencing a terrifying reduction in their population's life expectancy and a demographic decline that could lead them to extinction."

He stressed that, "In many African nations, the number of teachers who die from AIDS each year is greater than the number of new teachers graduating. The deaths in sub-Saharan Africa to date are equivalent to those that would have resulted from dropping on the region 70 bombs like the ones on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is a dramatic paradox that, in this new millennium, the same continent that witnessed the appearance of humankind's first ancestors six million years ago begins to witness the disappearance of humankind."

"Cuba also suffers from this disease; there have been 2,565 people living with HIV/AIDS in our country, 388 of whom currently have the full-blown disease, and 896 of whom have died over the last 14 years."

"Our program to fight AIDS," Lage Dávila explained, "guarantees comprehensive care for people with HIV and AIDS, free anti-retroviral treatment for all, specialized medical centers for those who require them and a constant struggle for patients to achieve the fullest social integration, with all their rights and without discrimination."



is then immediately given overwhelming news coverage in the corporate-controlled media outlets throughout the world. The editorial pages of the large capitalist newspapers trumpet the students' cause as a so-called "human rights" issue.

If this seems like déjà vu, it is because these exact same tactics have been used numerous times before by the imperialist powers in attempts to destabilize non-aligned or socialist countries. In fact, some of the same imperialist operatives that helped orchestrate the toppling of the Milosevic government in Yugoslavia are actively participating in the current destabilization attempts in Venezuela. There is nothing spontaneous about the student protests in Venezuela over the past two weeks. The protests have been intentionally fomented by the remnants of the Venezuelan ruling elite and their imperialist backers outside the country.

In a speech given on June 7, President Hugo Chávez referenced this imperialist tactic and asserted that it would fail miserably in Venezuela, saying "To George Bush and the ideologues of this soft coup with a slow fuse: Sirs, your plan for Venezuela, forget about it."

As the Venezuelan people continue to bravely struggle against the imperialist destabilization campaign, it is important for all workers around the world to actively support their Venezuelan sisters and brothers in the struggle for socialism. The imperialist powers are actively organizing against the people of Venezuela. It is imperative that workers around the world intensify their efforts in defense of the Bolivarian Revolution. □

"It also guarantees access to safe blood, certifying that 100 percent of blood donations are free of AIDS, hepatitis and other illnesses; voluntary testing of all pregnant women, resulting in zero mother-child transmission since 1997; and an education and prevention strategy aimed at vulnerable groups, young people and the entire population. We have the lowest AIDS rate in the Americas and one of the lowest in the world, with 0.3 percent of the population between 15 and 49 years affected."

"Even in the face of the [U.S.] blockade, which prevents our access to 50 percent of the world's new medicines because they are produced in the United States," Lage Dávila stressed, "we have controlled the epidemic, and what is more, achieved a life expectancy of 76 years and an infant mortality rate of less than seven. Cuba participates in this Assembly as a responsible member of the international community, showing solidarity and modesty and freely offering our experience and collaboration."

## Solidarity proposal

Lage Dávila stated, "The U.N. Secretary General has proposed—and is making a worthy and just effort to obtain—\$7 to \$10 billion for the fight against AIDS. The amount is not enough and money alone cannot solve the problem, but it is a necessary start. It is incomprehensible to think that this life-saving money cannot be found in a world that spends 40 times more on illegal drugs, 80 times more on military budgets and 100 times more on advertising."

"It is incomprehensible to think that this life-saving money cannot be found in a world where 20 percent of the population is responsible for 86 percent of private consumption, and where the personal fortunes of 22 people each exceed the amount the Secretary General is requesting, fortunes that in total represent 43 times his request."

Lage Dávila pointed to the U.S.: "The richest and most powerful nation in history—that claims it is a human rights champion, does not make its payments to the U.N. and is trying to reduce its contribution to the WHO [World Health Organization]—dedicates barely 0.2 percent of its gross domestic product to development. It is the only country that voted against the resolution giving every individual the right to have access to AIDS medicines, while at the same time, it has unleashed an insane arms race upon the world, with the sale of the most sophisticated instruments of war to allies and followers, and its global missile shield initiative."

"There is no need to elaborate further to understand that the international economic order is criminally unjust, that when the words 'democracy,' 'human rights,' 'individual liberty,' 'equal opportunities' and others come from the mouths of the powerful, they ring hollow and demagogic."

Lage Dávila delivered Cuba's urging that the special session of the U.N. General

Assembly proclaim that:

"AIDS drugs and other vital medicines required on a large scale should not be protected by patents. People cannot be allowed to make money off the lives of human beings."

"The foreign debt of the poorest countries should be cancelled immediately and unconditionally. They have already paid more than once."

"The next Group of Seven meeting, instead of adopting a new economic liberalization to impose on the world's poor and less fortunate, should agree to reduce their military budgets to raise at least U.S. \$10 billion requested by the U.N. And they should turn these funds over today, not sit by while 25 million more people die. This is merely a small part of their social debt to the Third World."

## Cuban government offer

Lage Dávila concluded with an offer from the Cuban government to the poorest countries and those with the highest prevalence of the illness:

- Four thousand doctors and health personnel to create the necessary infrastructure to supply the population with the prescription drugs and necessary follow-up and to train a large number of specialists in their own fields, including nurses and allied health technicians.
- Sufficient professors to establish 20 medical schools, many of whom could be chosen out of the 2,359 Cuban doctors who were then serving in 17 countries as part of Cuba's Integral Health Program. These schools could train 1,000 doctors annually in countries that need the most assistance.
- Doctors, teachers, psychologists and other specialists needed to assess and collaborate with campaigns to prevent AIDS and other illnesses.
- Diagnostic equipment and kits necessary for basic prevention programs.
- Anti-retroviral treatment for 30,000 patients.

Lage Dávila concluded, "All it would take is for the international community to provide the raw materials for the medicines, the equipment and material resources for these products and services. Cuba would not obtain any profits, and would pay salaries in its national currency, thus taking on the most expensive part for international health agencies, as well as the most difficult part, which is to ensure that the professionals are prepared and ready to begin their work."

The U.S.-led political and economic blockade of Cuba kept this offer of socialist solidarity from reaching those around the world who most needed it.

*Next: Arc of progress on same-sex love and gender variance visible in Cuban films.*

*To find out more about Cuba, read parts 86-100 of Lavender & Red at workers.org.*

*E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org*

# Venezuela

*Continued from page 7*

bly about the non-renewal of a broadcast license. But in another sense, they are also a microcosm of the larger transformations that are reshaping Venezuelan society, as the Bolivarian Revolution progresses along the path to 21st century socialism.

It is no coincidence that the pro-RCTV groups are comprised of students primarily from the wealthier neighborhoods of eastern Caracas, while the massive demonstrations in support of President Chávez have been attended by large sections of the working-class neighborhoods of western Caracas. The Bolivarian Revolution is giving working people access to sectors of the economy and society that have historically been the exclusive property of the elite. The reactionary student groups are protesting these developments because they represent major defeats for their class.

Over its 54-year history, RCTV was a mouthpiece for the ruling class. Its programming reflected the views, opinions and interests of the ruling class, known in Venezuela as the oligarchy. Whether it was a soap opera about the life of a rich socialite, or a news report praising the leaders of the 2002 coup, RCTV's programming was developed for the elite, by the elite.

The new TVes station is a medium controlled by the people, and its programming will reflect the interests of the popular masses of peasants, workers and urban poor and those who identify with them. The switch from RCTV to TVes represents another step forward for the Bolivarian Revolution, as it seeks to remake Venezuelan society according to socialist principles.

The developments in Venezuela over the past two weeks are eerily familiar. A small student group, in a country not aligned with the imperialist camp, issues overly dramatized proclamations about the need for "freedom of speech." This small group

# BAYAN-USA solidarity with Cuba, Cuban 5

*Continued from page 5*

ernment of Cuba led by Fidel Castro. Total economic subversion is what America has always been doing to the island-state of Cuba in a desperate attempt to cause the collapse of the Cuban economy.

Like in Iraq, America will not find in Cuba "weapons of mass destruction" to justify their illegal action. What they do find in Cuba is the most powerful weapon of all—the weapon of mass resistance!

Bayan-USA Queers urges the people

and leaders of Cuba to relentlessly continue with their chosen path of maintaining and enhancing a system that puts the interest of its workers, peasants and other sectors above the personal and ambitious interests of a private individual and the violent greed and aggression of U.S. imperialism. And we condemn the state-sponsored terrorist activities the U.S. government is supporting and promoting against Cuba and other nations. We demand that the Cuban Five be freed. □



# Mass protests greet Bush across Europe

By John Catalinotto

Wherever President George Bush went in Europe this June, whether he was meeting with G8 leaders, Pope Benedict, presidents or opposition leaders of NATO allies, or rightist officials in the former socialist countries, he provided an excellent reason for the people to come out in the streets, often in massive numbers.

The largest protests, and rightly so, were at the G8 summit in Heiligendamm June 2-7, near Rostock on the north coast of eastern Germany. Leaving Vladimir Putin's Russia aside for the moment—Russia is an undesired but necessary invitee—the G8 are really the G7—the seven countries with the strongest economies. They call themselves the seven most industrialized countries, but they are really the seven most powerful imperialist countries, with the U.S.—which spends nearly half the world's outlay on its military—by far the most powerful.

When the G7 meets, it is to decide the best methods for intensifying the pillage of the rest of the world, especially of what has been called the Third World or the South, and the exploitation of the world's workers, including those living within their own boundaries. Through the G7's decisions, millions die daily of disease and starvation throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America, and jobs and services are lost in the imperialist metropolises, and bombs have fallen on capitals of the Middle East and the Balkans. Thus instead

of considering this a meeting of world leaders, it provides a more accurate picture to think of it as a gathering of organized crime captains, each one with private interests, but joined in their common goal of robbing humanity, and Bush as the head of all these captains.

Some 80,000 people from all over Europe gathered near Rostock, some staying for days as with earlier anti-globalization demonstrations, to protest G8 and Bush's visit. The German state mobilized 16,000 cops of various forces to keep these protesters from disrupting the meeting of the criminals. Cops opened the attacks on the protesters with clubs and gas and injured and arrested hundreds.

While there is some debate in the European movement over the tactics of the more militant of the demonstrators, few from outside the continent could be concerned that unarmed demonstrators threw stones at cops who were protecting the most pernicious gathering of thieves and murderers on the globe.

The next largest protest was in Rome, where at least 40,000 people gathered on June 9 to protest Bush's visit. The protesters targeted Bush, but also the Italian government led by Romano Prodi. This



PHOTO: MARX21

Rostock, Germany, June 9.

“center-left” regime has pulled Italian troops from Iraq, but has sent others to Afghanistan and Lebanon in an attempt to remain welcome in the imperialist club. Despite Prodi's submission, Bush paid him the insult of holding an unprecedented private meeting with opposition leader Silvio Berlusconi, the rightist former premier and media magnate.

Bush also visited the right-wing government in the Czech Republic and the far-right regime in Poland to reinforce

their decision to accept the U.S. bases using missile shields. In both countries, which Bush calls “democracies,” the population hates having the missile shields, as these weapon systems threaten Russia and could become targets for counterattack.

Thus in Prague, at least 2,000 protested Bush's visit organized by the “No to Bases” organization, and another few hundred protested outside the U.S. Embassy, organized by the Communist Youth Movement (KSM), that the “democratic” Czech government has outlawed.

“We are here to protest against the building of a U.S. radar base in the Czech republic, against the policies of the American government on this issue, against the position of the Czech cabinet on the base,” one of the organizers, KSM chairman Milan Krajca, told Xinhua on June 7.

In Poland, where the far-right regime depends completely on U.S. support, hundreds gathered in Jurata, near Gdansk, where Bush was meeting with Lech Kaczynski to discuss how to set up the missile bases despite the adamant opposition of the Polish population.

Only in Albania, where a far-right regime even weaker and more beholden to U.S. imperialism than those in Poland and the Czech Republic rules, were there no public protests of Bush. □

## Turkey's attack in Iraq: another U.S. double-cross of Kurds?

By Bob Dobrow

Thousands of Turkish troops crossed the border into Iraq on the morning of June 6 to pursue Kurdish guerrilla fighters (Associated Press). U.S. and Turkish officials deny this report. What is undeniable is a massive Turkish military buildup on the Iraqi border and an escalation of Turkish government attacks against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has been fighting for self-determination for Kurds within Turkey.

The big question is: What is the role of the Pentagon?

Turkey, a member of NATO, is the third largest recipient of U.S. military aid. Only the Israeli and Egyptian regimes get more money. Washington has collaborated with Ankara against the Kurdish liberation struggle for decades. The U.S. funded 80 percent of Turkey's arms between 1984 and 1999, during the height of the civil war inside Turkey against the PKK. This brutal struggle left 37,000 dead, 3,000 villages destroyed, and some two million people displaced.

What may confuse some people is that today the Bush administration claims to champion the Kurdish people. The Kurdish region of Iraq is said to be supportive of the U.S. invasion and occupation. In the imperialist mythology of the war, the Saddam Hussein government's attacks against the Kurds justified, in part, U.S. intervention.

Never is it mentioned that when many of these attacks were taking place, in the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. government collaborated with the Hussein government and supplied some of the weaponry of the Iraqi regime. It was only later in the 1990s, when Washington decided to wage war against Iraq, that the Hussein government became Public Enemy Number One, and the Kurds became a temporary U.S. cause célèbre.

U.S. words and U.S. deeds with respect to the Kurdish people have dripped with cynicism and hypocrisy for decades, and serve as a prime example of imperialist tactics of “divide and conquer.”

“Covert action should not be confused with missionary work,” was how then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger explained the U.S. government's double cross of Kurdish leaders in 1975. Kissinger had secretly funneled millions of dollars of military aid to Kurdish parties inside Iraq, via the shah of Iran, to promote a Kurdish uprising.

After Iran and Iraq resolved their border dispute, the U.S. withdrew its aid, and the Iraqi government, without opposition from the U.S., was given a clear field to wipe out the Kurdish fighters. Iraq's military decimated Kurdish forces. Between 150,000 and 300,000 Kurds fled to Iran.

This was all revealed when the secret Pike report, issued by the Congressional Select Committee on Intelligence, was leaked to the press in 1976. The Pike

report concluded that if the U.S. and the shah hadn't encouraged the insurgency, the Kurds “may have reached an accommodation with the central government, thus gaining at least a measure of autonomy while avoiding further bloodshed. Instead, our clients [the Kurds] fought on, sustaining thousands of casualties and 200,000 refugees.”

The report added that for Washington, the Kurds were never more than a “card to play,” a “uniquely useful tool for weakening” Iraq.

Thirty years later, nothing has changed. Only the cynicism has gotten even more brazen.

Last August, the U.S. appointed a special envoy to the Middle East to specifically help Turkey counter the PKK. Retired Air Force General Joseph Ralston, former NATO supreme allied commander, has been working closely with Turkish generals and Iraqi puppets to try to eliminate PKK bases throughout Kurdistan.

Ralston likes to vilify the PKK as “terrorists” who don't represent the Kurdish people. But the former general sits on the board of directors of Lockheed Martin, the world's largest arms maker. Lockheed Martin has profited famously from the U.S. purchase of billions of dollars of F-16 fighter planes, which the Turkish military is now using to terrorize the Kurdish regions. The State Department itself even acknowledged that F-16s were involved in “human rights abuses” in Turkey in the 1990s. Two weeks before his Mideast appointment, Ralston was named vice chairman of The Cohen Group, a Washington lobbying group that represents Lockheed Martin.

All this suggests that behind the public statements of the Bush administration distancing itself from the Turkish incursion stands naked imperialist interests which are hostile to all the people of Iraq and the Middle East, no less the Kurdish people than any others. □

## Report exposes CIA secret prisons in Eastern Europe

By Caleb T. Maupin

A Swiss politician named Dick Marty has issued a Council of Europe expose showing, based on his interviews with U.S. and European intelligence sources, that there were several CIA secret prisons in Poland and Romania from 2003 until 2005. In these prisons, detainees, mainly from the Middle East, were shackled and forced to remain naked for months at a time without any charges being brought against them. The guards wore masks to hide their faces. “Interrogation techniques,” a euphemism for torture methods, were used.

The CIA called the report “exaggerated,” but never denied that such prisons existed

or countered any of the report's claims.

The report shows that there were 10 secret flights to Poland by U.S. military planes. Six of them were from Afghanistan.

It appears that some of those who saw their country bombed and invaded by the United States, and picked up a gun to resist, found themselves apprehended, put onto a plane, and shipped like a piece of cargo to prisons in Eastern Europe, where they faced torture and interrogation.

This report just adds to the growing body of knowledge about U.S. policy toward prisoners accused of being “terrorists” since Sept. 11, 2001. It is worldwide knowledge that the U.S. military brutally tortured people at Abu Ghraib, with the

torture approved high up the chain of command. An unknown number of people are currently held without charges by the U.S. government at Guantanamo Bay, where they are subjected to brutality and abuse.

This latest report from Marty just reinforces the fact that the capitalist class, in its naked pursuit of profit and control of the Middle East, will stop at no amount of brutality, torture, violation of human rights, and repression. The only law in the eyes of the Republican Party, which carries it out, and the Democratic Party, which silently approves it, is that oil profits from the Middle East must continue to feed the parasite class of Wall Street, with no limit. □





## Defend Viola Plummer & self-determination

If there is a progressive person out there who still believes the myth that New York City is a bastion of liberal politics, please rethink that. Consider two extremely reactionary editorials: one in the June 9 New York Post and the other in the June 12 New York Daily News. Both editorials viciously attacked Viola Plummer, a Black revolutionary leader of the Brooklyn-based December 12th Movement.

The recent spark that led to these editorials is D12's leading role—along with New York City Councilperson and former Black Panther Charles Barron—in trying to get an avenue in the Brooklyn community of Bedford-Stuyvesant renamed “Sonny Carson Avenue.” The late Sonny Carson was a well-known Black nationalist community activist who advocated self-determination. (Read [www.workers.org/2007/us/sonny-carson-0617/](http://www.workers.org/2007/us/sonny-carson-0617/))

When the majority of white City Council members, lead by the Council Speaker Christine Quinn, was instrumental in voting down the proposal on May 30 for the Carson street renaming, Plummer, Barron and other Black activists justifiably labeled this action as racist.

Excerpts from a June 9 media release by D12 in defense of Plummer read, “The Bedford Stuyvesant community’s proposal to rename Gates Avenue to Sonny Abubadika Carson Avenue sparked a heated confrontation in the chambers of City Hall, where the issue of community self-determination was subjected to Council Speaker Christine Quinn’s negative prerogative. Subsequently, veteran political activist and chief of staff for Councilman Charles Barron, Viola Plummer was overheard by reporters advocating the

‘assassination of the political career’ of Quinn minion Leroy Comrie, for abstaining from the Council vote along with six other Black and Latino Council members.

“The next day Comrie joked with Plummer about the incident. However several days later, a ‘suddenly irate’ Comrie spoke out calling for Plummer’s firing. Barron and Plummer view this as a calculated diversion from Quinn’s racist political assault on community self-determination and her role in dictating leadership to Blacks.”

“Diversion” is crucial in describing the real motives of these racist editorials. Not only do these editorials have the audacity to call for Quinn to remove Plummer from her position as Barron’s chief of staff, but they attack Plummer’s contributions to the struggle—including defending the right to sovereignty from Harlem to Zimbabwe. These editorials have a strong divide-and-conquer element.

Let’s be very clear. The Black community in New York, similar to other oppressed peoples, is being overwhelmed in disproportionate numbers by rampant police brutality, gentrification, unemployment, inadequate education, imprisonment and much more. Plummer and Barron are two important leaders of the legitimate aspirations of the Black community; the New York Post and New York Daily News editorial boards—bosses’ mouthpieces—certainly are not. Workers World Party stands in solidarity with these leaders and for the right of Brooklyn’s Black community to rename a street for Sonny Carson. To build anti-racist unity and class solidarity, others in the progressive movement of all nationalities are urged to do the same, in words and in deeds. □

## JFK terror plotters

A convicted drug dealer posing as a terrorist plotting with a small group of others to blow up John F. Kennedy International Airport gave this information to federal investigators in exchange for a lighter sentence, the Associated Press reported June 4.

The story should have ended there. A paid informer, one who faced life in prison, turned up a terrorist plot on JFK airport in New York City involving four retirees from the Caribbean—in exchange for little or no jail time.

That’s not a life-threatening terrorist conspiracy; that’s a get-out-of-jail free card that someone’s just played.

But like the U.S. government’s claims that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction—which everyone now knows was a total lie—the big business-controlled media is willing to report it as the real thing. That’s because it fits their agenda.

Never mind that the so-called plot to blow up fuel lines at the airport is not possible—CNN reported that Homeland Security said the attack as planned was “not technically feasible.” That didn’t stop the media.

There has been a long history of alleged terror plots being turned up by paid FBI informants. All of them fall apart under examination.

The Miami plot to bomb the Chicago Sears Tower in June 2006 is but one. The FBI said, and the media repeated as truth, that it was a plot by seven men with “sworn allegiances to al Qaeda.” Two months later the Washington Post reported that there were no hidden weapons, as the FBI had claimed, there was no conspiracy, and none of the seven had any connection to al Qaeda.

A month after the fictional plot in Miami, the FBI reported that a “NYC transit bomb plot was thwarted.” Days later, on July 7, CBS News said that “despite the FBI’s announcement that it disrupted a terror plot against New York City-area commuter trains,” CBS News had learned that the alleged plot was “mere bravado.”

The Ft. Dix attack plot reported on May 7 was another case of a paid FBI informant putting together a conspiracy and reporting the details to the FBI in exchange for his freedom from prison.

What do all these terror plots have in common, besides FBI press agents? They all seem to fit the political agenda of the administration in Washington.

A statement made by the defendants and their families in Trinidad and Tobago charged the FBI informant had approached them “with the specific intent to entrap them in activities they know nothing about, never agreed to and did not participate in.”

Huda Ibrahiim, daughter of Amir Kareem Ibrahiim, one of four men charged, read a statement on June 6 on behalf of the Trinidad and Tobago and the Guyanese Shi’ite Muslim community. She spoke at a news conference at a hotel in Port of Spain. (News24.com)

“We believe that the persons responsible for the arrest of our brothers are doing it for a purpose other than the protection of the people and interests of the USA,” she said.

“They have apparently done so in the interest of shoring up a lame duck presidency and increasing the lame chances of the Republican Party being returned to power in November 2008,” Huda concluded.

That pretty much sums it up. □

## Fior Cruz: A freedom fighter to the end

By Sue Davis  
New York

Several hundred members of New York’s progressive movement gathered to celebrate the life of Fior Cruz on June 3 at Riverside Church. Cruz lost her battle with breast cancer this past May 26. She was 52 years old.

Friends and family paid tribute to her with heart-felt words, a video chronicling her life, drumming, singing, libation, meditation, a banquet and a fashion show of Cruz’s Afrocentric couture.

Born in the Dominican Republic in 1954, Cruz was one of the founders of the Dominican Women’s Development Center over 16 years ago and served on its board of directors.

She contributed her political vision and organizational skills to the International Working Women’s Day Committee, which organized multinational events each year in New York City beginning in 1983 and continuing through the mid-1990s.

In 1991, for instance, the committee called a women’s march from Times Square to Union Square to protest the first U.S. war on Iraq. Cruz’s political and social activism encompassed many struggles, from fighting apartheid to showing solidarity with Cuba to fighting to free Mumia Abu-Jamal from Pennsylvania’s death row.

Suzanne Ross, co-chair of the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition of New York, wrote in a May 28 e-mail that Cruz “gave a wonderful statement to the press, quoted in the Amsterdam News,” at Pam Africa’s birthday party last fall. “Within the past year, she protested the Dominican Republic’s racist practices at the border with Haiti and [its policy of] brutally sending Haitian workers back to Haiti.”

When Cruz was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1993, she chose to fight it with alternative medicine because she did not trust the profit-based medical establishment. “Fior



saw cancer as internalized oppression of capitalism,” noted Puerto Rican activist, Esperanza Martell.

Thanks to non-Western practices like acupuncture, meditation and Reiki, Cruz lived cancer-free for many years.

In 2002 Cruz received the self-healing award from the Mutulu Shakur Defense Committee. In a speech given when she received the award, she said, “We have all been lied to, and those lies have made us and the planet sick. We are living with different kinds of diseases and we cannot escape seeing and feeling each others’ pains and suffering. Common sense demands of us to get involved and participate in the struggle to help bring peace, justice, equality and healing to our fellow sentient beings. ...we know without a doubt that victory is certain.”

After the cancer returned, one of Cruz’s fondest wishes was to see her 18-year-old son, Ola Cruz, graduate from high school. She was so proud that he will enter City College in the fall. Speakers described Cruz as a freedom fighter, a warrior, a pioneer, a revolutionary and a wise sister. As Ross noted, “We will miss Fior for her loving spirit, her stubbornness, her humor and her powerful presence.” Fior Cruz presente!

*The writer worked with Cruz in the International Working Women’s Day Committee.*

### WW is in the streets and on the web.

The National Spring Fund Drive for Workers World newspaper is underway. This is a twice-a-year fundraising campaign that covers the costs of publishing this newspaper, mailing it out, and maintaining our vital Web site.

Your contribution would make a real difference!

This paper offers class truth. It tells you what’s really happening to working and oppressed people around the world and in this country—and why.

It doesn’t just report news. It goes beyond the surface with a Marxist historical perspective that analyzes events in terms of broad social movements and class struggles. Unlike the big business media, it doesn’t pass on pronouncements from boardrooms and political demagogues—it gets to the economic roots of conflicts and elevates the people’s struggles that change history.

Because of hard work by our volunteer staff, the articles are also posted online every week at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org). We had 237,420 online readers in the month of May and 1.5 million “hits.”

This independent weekly’s publication is not paid for with corporate advertising or by wealthy backers. The costs are paid by our readers, subscribers and supporters.

You can help us keep the print newspaper going out to readers all over the country and make the web site available to the world by contributing.

Please fill out the coupon below and return it with your check to WW Publishers. Know that your dollars will help get the truth out and be an organizing tool in the fight against capitalist war, racism and poverty.

**Yes!** I want to contribute to the National Spring Fund Drive.

Here is my donation of  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$35 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ (other).

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: WW Publishers, 55 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St., 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011



# Al-Awda convention demands right to return

By John Parker  
Anaheim, Calif.

On May 25th the Fifth Annual International Al-Awda Convention took place in Anaheim, Calif., with hundreds of participants dedicated to the theme "Uniting for the Return." Al-Awda, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition, is the largest organization of activists and students dedicated to Palestinian human rights. It supports the right of all Palestinian refugees to their original homes and lands that they were expelled from by the bloody Israeli occupation beginning in 1948. More than 5.5 million Palestinians live in exile.

This convention occurred in spite of last minute maneuvers attempting to sabotage the event by the University of California Riverside, which demanded unprecedented financial arrangements

and invasive security measures. The venue had to be moved to the Embassy Suites Hotel for this reason.

Al-Awda co-founder Zahi Damuni said: "We have emerged from our coming together united, stronger and eager to carry out our work. The convention reaffirmed its commitment to Al-Awda's mission, goals and points of unity."

The conference began with testimony from survivors who detailed the horrific experience of the Israeli attack in 1948. From the host committee report: "Several described how they were shot, and others how they escaped attack and survived living as refugees in tents made of bed sheets under trees for more than a year. Others spoke of the horrors of the massacres they witnessed, and the attempts by Zionist terror squads to intimidate and frighten Palestinian civilians to flee their homeland."

A particularly moving presentation was given by Leila Al-Arian, who spoke of the ongoing struggle of her father, jailed Sami Al-Arian, a Palestinian professor and activist who has suffered non-stop harassment and persecution by the FBI and other U.S. government agencies for his principled stand on Palestinian rights.

Workshops included discussions on the deteriorating conditions of Palestinian refugees and the projects attempting to provide access, building student activism for Palestine at local campuses, the movement to build boycotts and divestment and sanctions against Israel.

A panel on coalition building was led by representatives from Al-Awda, ANSWER and the International Action Center. Panelists discussed building unity amongst anti-war and social justice forces and challenges and successes in integrat-

ing awareness of and leadership from the Palestinian activists into the anti-war and immigrant rights movement.

One of the keynote speakers at the conference was author and professor Dr. Naseer Aruri, who exposed Israel's role as mercenary at the behest of U.S. imperialism. In addition, Dr. Jamal Zahalka, an Arab Palestinian member of the Knesset, challenged the notion that Israel has a democratic government. Zahalka also cited the case of Dr. Azmi Bishara who is no longer allowed to represent the Palestinian voice in government and is being persecuted for his principled positions in support of Palestinian rights.

To support Al-Awda's ongoing work, go to [www.al-awda.org/donate.html](http://www.al-awda.org/donate.html) and follow the instructions. View pictures from the Palestinian Cultural Event at [www.al-awda.org/convention5/photos/photos.html](http://www.al-awda.org/convention5/photos/photos.html). □

## Palestinians remember the Nakbah

On June 8, in San Francisco, about 200 members of the Palestinian and Arab communities and their supporters honored the 59th year of continuous resistance to the occupation of Palestine at a public meeting.

Many audience members had family and friends who directly experienced the U.S.-backed establishment of Israel in 1948. The event organizers, Justice In Palestine Culture

### Hear Lebanese-American writer/activist

Pham Quoc Thai, below, a producer of "The Last Ghost of War," a powerful documentary on the impact of Agent Orange on Vietnam, its population and Vietnam veterans, and Joyce Chediak, a Lebanese American writer for Workers World, spoke at a June 8 Workers World meeting in New York. Thai urged everyone to attend to the film showing of his documentary on June 11. (See article on this



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

page.) To hear the podcast of Chediak's remarks on the current crisis for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, go to [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org). □

Project, stated that, "The Nakbah is the Arabic word for 'catastrophe.' It marks the creation of the 'State of Israel' in Palestine in 1948, where the Zionists expelled over 750,000 Palestinians, massacred thousands more, and destroyed hundreds of villages. Today, nearly 5 million Palestinians are struggling to return and many more are fighting for equality and justice. After nearly six decades of dispossession, we make sure that our struggle continues and the Nakbah will never be forgotten."

Their ongoing struggle was shown in a current video of yet another Palestinian olive orchard being hacked down by the Israeli military, toting chainsaws and guns. The video also documented the total clearing of the land with backhoes and bulldozers, and a small home belonging to a Palestinian family being boarded up. The family, shown gathered in outrage, was beaten and driven away at gunpoint.

An extensive new photo exhibit of both historical and recent photos was displayed on the walls in the meeting room, among signs and banners hung up by some of the cosponsoring groups. Speaking to the crowd, Eyad Kishawi, one of the event's organizers, expressed the general sentiment there, when he emphasized "asserting our right to return ... as Indigenous Arab Peoples."

—Report and photo by Joan Marquardt



Palestinian hero, Leila Khaled, right, in 1970 and today.

## Denver attacks free speech

Continued from page 1

strations, marches and rallies; (b) use of force, including the use of horses, pepper spray or other aggressive means to police public demonstrations, is restricted except to the minimal extent required by legitimate law-enforcement purposes; (c) demonstrations may occur in close proximity to and within sight and sound of the Convention delegates, consistent with reasonable security concerns; (d) restricted use of four-sided enclosures or barricades to confine the movement of people at public demonstrations except in limited circumstances based on legitimate and reasonable security concerns, and in such circumstances ensure that such enclosures have sufficient openings to allow people to exit, return and move freely around the demonstration site.

The proclamation is simple, not the original one written by members of Recreate 68, but a slightly modified one. Yet, even it is being rejected. This reaction by the Denver City Council represents a clear danger to activists building resistance to the Democratic National Convention.

Activists repeatedly have stated that the festival planned next year is to be peaceful and that the invocation of 1968 is merely because of the mood of that era. After all, it was a cop riot that ensued and this is the

reason the proclamation is needed.

The proclamation does not necessarily protect against a reaction, but it is evidence that activists are not putting the thousands of protesters at risk and not calling for any acts of violence and are trying to ensure unfettered access to the entire city, right up to the front entrance of the Pepsi Center, as is the right of all people that will protest in August of 2008.

That it was not passed and was vehemently opposed is perhaps a sign of the times, but at the very least it is a clear message.

The city of Denver, a liberal bastion—a city whose police conducted years of surveillance on activists, then tried to destroy the evidence, a city where the police have a long record of abuse and violation of civil rights—is not the postcard image nestled to the east of the Rocky Mountains, but a city like most in the U.S., cold and harsh and seemingly ready to defy the thousands who will clamor here to make a statement against the other major capitalist party, the Republican-lite Democratic Party.

Regardless of city, state and federal authorities' plans, Glen Spagnuolo from Recreate 68, states, "They have the Pepsi Center and we have the rest of the city. That's called freedom. You can't put me in a cage and tell me, 'You're free.' That's not democracy." □

## Documentary shows deadly impact of Agent Orange

The theater in New York's Greenwich Village was filled, both with an audience of 150 people and a searing indictment of the chemical catastrophe afflicting generations of Vietnamese because their country stood up to the United States and defeated it in 1975.

That indictment was the June 11 showing of "The Last Ghost of War" documentary. Shot in the United States, Vietnam and France, the film details the legacy of Agent Orange in Vietnam.

From 1962 to 1971, the United States sprayed millions of gallons of Agent Orange and other defoliants on the southern part of Vietnam as part of its effort to derail the struggle of the Vietnamese people.

Agent Orange was contaminated with dioxin, one of the most deadly industrial byproducts ever created. As actor and activist Vinie Burroughs put it in a talk before the movie showing, "This spraying let the big corporations and the fat cats grow fatter, while people died and suffered."

Trinh Bui, a Vietnamese woman active in supporting the Vietnamese people's lawsuit against the chemical companies that produced Agent Orange, and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center co-chaired the event.



Trinh Bui

After the film was shown, David Kline of Veterans for Peace, Constantin Kokkoris, an attorney for the lawsuit's appeal, and the film's producers Pham Quoc Thai and Janet Gardner led a panel discussion.

—Report and photo by G. Dunkel

### Mon • June 18

Gather at Foley Square 12:00 P.M.  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit  
500 Pearl St. • NYC

Fill the Courtroom & Attend the Oral Argument to continue the civil suit 1:00 P.M.  
Against 37 U.S. chemical companies that produced the toxic chemicals during the Vietnam War.

Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin

The Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin was established in 2004 to assist Victims of Agent Orange and to be their advocate in Vietnam and around the world. VAVA recently filed a lawsuit in US federal Court on behalf of Vietnamese Victims of Agent Orange against Dow, Monsanto and the other manufacturers of AO.

### Sat • June 16 6:30 P.M.

Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center 1199 SEIU  
310 West 43rd St, (8th & 9th Aves) • NYC

### All Out to Greet the Delegation of Agent Orange Survivors

Organized by Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility campaign



¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

## Contratiempo para la CIA Venezuela desconecta señal de TV golpista

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Los contrarrevolucionarios venezolanos, con el apoyo de los Estados Unidos y otros gobiernos imperialistas, han intentado utilizar la revocación de la licencia del canal Radio Caracas TV para desestabilizar el popular gobierno progresista del Presidente Hugo Chávez.

Es necesario mencionar algunos puntos para ayudar a explicar los eventos y las razones del porqué es importante defender al gobierno bolivariano del presidente Chávez.

Después de la contundente victoria en las elecciones de diciembre del 2006, Chávez reafirmó su promesa de consolidar la Revolución Bolivariana, nacionalizar las industrias que antes habían sido privatizadas, y más importante aún, reconstruir la sociedad sobre una base socialista. Anunció entonces que la licencia de RCTV no se renovaría luego que llegara su fecha de expiración el 27 de mayo del 2007.

Esta estación privada había utilizado el espacio electromagnético público por 54 años. Desde que Chávez llegó al poder en 1999, la RCTV ha sido un arma muy fuerte de la oposición contra la revolución Bolivariana, usando ataques racistas y vulgares contra Chávez a la vez que exigía su eliminación. Aún así, a pesar del papel jugado por RCTV en la promoción del abortado golpe militar en abril del 2002, esta no fue cerrada o silenciada.

El espectro radioeléctrico es limitado y por ley es un espacio público. El gobierno de Venezuela tiene el derecho constitucional de negar la renovación de la licencia de RCTV.

Según Andrés Izarra, el ex gerente de RCTV, quien renunció en el año 2002 en protesta por esta haber apoyado el intento de golpe, RCTV emitía por VHF, de alta frecuencia modular que permite una amplia difusión y por lo tanto mayor recepción nacionalmente. Las estaciones de difusión estatales tiene un alcance mucho más limitado comparadas a las estaciones privadas multimillonarias como RCTV, Venevisión y Globovisión.

Una estación de servicio público, TVes, reemplazará a RCTV. Esto instará la participación del pueblo y a productor@s independientes.

Izarra, quien ahora dirige Telesur, dijo en una entrevista con El Universal que "Lo fundamental es impulsar una revolución cultural, ese cambio necesita de la creación de consensos y de la construcción de una hegemonía comunicacional de lo público en Venezuela, a mi juicio como una herramienta fundamental para esos cambios hacia el socialismo que se está planteando en el país."

### Dirigido a desestabilizar la revolución

Desde el anuncio de Chávez en diciembre, RCTV y las fuerzas antichavistas han montado una campaña en contra del gobierno. Aunque han dominado las ondas de difusión por largo tiempo, hipócritamente han usado "la falta de lib-



ertad de expresión" como lema para tratar de desestabilizar la revolución.

Estas fuerzas ahora están montando protestas diarias, las cuales describen como "pacíficas," pero durante las cuales ellos no solamente gritan insultos, sino que lanzan piedras y botellas de vidrio a las fuerzas del gobierno. Durante una manifestación frente a CONATEL, la oficina estatal de comunicaciones, l@s contrarrevolucionari@s dispararon balas que hirieron a por lo menos un oficial de la policía.

La oposición ha movilizado a estudiantes de los colegios privados ricos para tener las manifestaciones diarias, las cuales son mostradas ante el mundo. Desde estas protestas "espontáneas", dan entrevistas con lágrimas a la prensa imperialista nacional e internacional pidiendo ayuda para dar fin al "silenciamiento de la oposición."

En una conferencia de prensa, el vicepresidente de la Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela, Desiree Santos Amaral, reveló una grabación de dos conversaciones telefónicas involucrando a Alfonso Marquina, líder del nuevo partido de oposición, Un Nuevo Tiempo, que demostró que las protestas no eran nada espontáneas. Estas conversaciones revelan la conexión y la coordinación entre l@s estudiantes y los líderes de la oposición. Implican al dueño de RCTV, Marcel Granier, con el derechista Comando Nacional de Resistencia y las manifestaciones estudiantiles.

Un comunicado público urgente desde Venezuela distribuido por el Internet el 30 de mayo declara: "En los últimos días se han hecho públicos documentos que reflejan el pago en dólares a periodistas de páginas digitales y de estas dos televisoras por parte del gobierno de Estados Unidos, a través de la National Endowment for Democracy (NED), vinculada al Departamento de Estados de Estados Unidos y la Central de Inteligencia Americana (CIA) a través de The Freedom House."

Individu@s y organizaciones progresistas en los EEUU se han unido a otr@s alrededor del mundo publicando una declaración apoyando a la Revolución Bolivariana frente a esta reciente confrontación. Una carta circulada por el Centro de Acción Internacional (IAC) y firmada por organizaciones y activistas polític@s y personajes reconocid@s está siendo enviada al Presidente George W. Bush, a su administración, a la vocera de la Cámara de Representantes Nancy Pelosi, a miembr@s del Congreso y a la prensa nacional. El texto integro declara:

"Nosotr@s l@s abajo firmantes repudiamos el papel ya sea abierto o encubierto, del gobierno de Estados Unidos y de los medios de comunicación en la campaña de desestabilización del legítimo gobierno de Venezuela y quisiéramos confirmar nuestro apoyo al presidente democráticamente elegido de Venezuela, el Honorable Hugo Chávez Frías y a la revolución de Bolivariana."

"Una campaña hostil contra el gobierno venezolano bajo el nombre de "libre expresión" ha sido abierta por las fuerzas opositoras en Venezuela y sus aliados en el exterior, particularmente en los Estados Unidos después del anuncio de que no sería renovada la licencia de difusión de la Televisora Radio Caracas (RCTV) una vez expirara el 27 de mayo de 2007."

"La decisión del gobierno venezolano es legal y legítima basada en su constitución que garantiza y regula el acceso y el uso del espectro radioeléctrico en beneficio del público en general. RCTV faltó a estas leyes y por lo tanto perdió su licencia. ¡No se ha silenciado, puesto que puede continuar difundiendo por cable, satélite e Internet!"

"RCTV ha obrado constantemente contra los intereses de la mayoría del pueblo venezolano. Su programación ha sido sexista, racista y peyorativa. Más crucial, participó activamente en el golpe del 2002 contra el presidente Chávez. Después de que millones de venezolan@s lo reinstalaran a su puesto, RCTV prohibió a sus reporteros que difundieran CUALQUIERA de esta información, por lo tanto negando a su audiencia información vital sobre su gobierno democráticamente elegido. Según un artículo en el Houston Chronicle, esa acción en los EEUU "no habría durado más que algunos minutos con la FCC". ¡RCTV no fue cerrado entonces y estuvo transmitiendo hasta el 27 de mayo!"

"Aunque la oposición y sus aliados aducen que la acción contra RCTV refleja una carencia de libertad de expresión (para ellos es criticar al presidente) para los medios privados, es importante anotar que el 80% de TV y radio en el país está en manos privadas y "no han sido silenciados".

"El senado EEUU unánimemente pasó una resolución la semana pasada que indicaba "preocupación profunda" por la

acción del gobierno venezolano y solicitaba medidas de la OEA que se reunía en Panamá. Esta fue seguida por una declaración de la portavoz de la Cámara de Representantes, Nancy Pelosi, indicando su "preocupación por su liderazgo (de Chávez)".

"El congreso de los EEUU de mayoría demócrata debido a la votación pacifista en las elecciones del 7 noviembre, y que ha votado recientemente para financiar una guerra criminal que ha causado la muerte de millares de vidas iraquíes y de los EEUU, haciendo caso omiso a las voces de sus elector@s, no tiene ningún derecho moral o legal de interferir en la política venezolana; aún menos acusar al presidente Chávez por suspender la licencia de RCTV. L@s congresistas de EEUU deben en su lugar, aprender del presidente Chávez cómo escuchar al pueblo."

"En febrero de 1997 la administración de la Universidad Temple terminó la transmisión de la estación Pacífica a través de la radio WRTI de la UT en Filadelfia, ciudad sede de la Constitución de EEUU. La suspendieron por la única razón de que era la única estación que difundía los comentarios políticos del periodista premiado y ex Pantera Negra, Mumia Abu-Jamal—quien permanece en corredor de la muerte en Pensilvania, víctima de un montaje. ¿Dónde estaba la indignación de los Medios y del Congreso? De hecho, en los Estados Unidos, las voces de la oposición a la guerra o a la política nacional o exterior, muy raramente se oyen en las emisoras o periódicos principales. ¡Su cobertura de la situación en Venezuela ha sido sobre todo unilateral, en el lado de la oposición!"

"Muchos países han apoyado la acción del gobierno de Venezuela. Entre ellos, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Cuba, varios países en Asia, Alfa Konaré, ex-presidente de la Unión Africana, la Unión Europea, y China, entre otros."

"Exhortamos a la administración del presidente Bush, al Congreso de los EEUU y a los Medios de los EEUU a que cesen y desistan de esta campaña de desestabilización contra Venezuela Bolivariana, su líder, el Presidente Hugo Chávez, y su pueblo; y que respeten el derecho a su soberanía."

Entre las primeras firmas se encuentra Ramsey Clark; l@s artistas Vinie Burrows y Peter Coyote; George McCollough, director de Princeton Community TV; Cynthia McKinney, ex miembro del Congreso estadounidense; la Pastora Carla Harris, anfitriona de radio en WURD 900AM; John Jonik, caricaturista; Teresa Gutiérrez, Coalición Primero de Mayo; Larry Holmes, Coalición Tropas Fuera Ahora; Sara Flounders, co-directora del Centro de Acción Internacional; David Sole, presidente Local 2334 UAW, Detroit, Michigan; Larry Hales, FIST (Luchemos contra el Imperialismo, Unámonos); John Catalinotto, redactor del periódico Workers World/Mundo Obrero; la Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres y la Red Nacional de Mujeres en Lucha. (NWFN). □