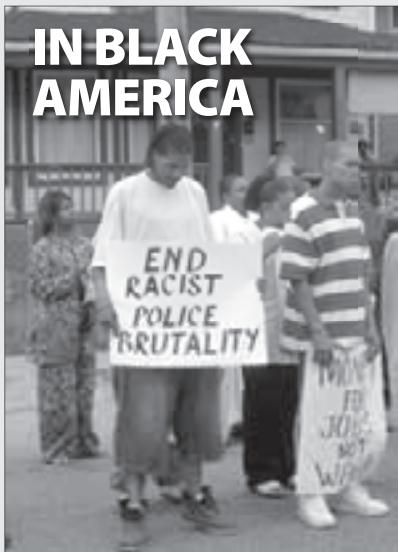


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# Time to mobilize anti-war forces Big firms get rich as Iraq war escalates

By Deirdre Griswold

The debate over the war in Iraq has finally made it onto the agenda of the Senate! But not at a time when funding for the war is up for a vote. A majority of Congress, including most Democrats, already voted to approve those hundreds of billions of dollars.

The current debate is over an amendment to the appropriations bill, put forward by Democratic Senators Carl Levin of Michigan and Jack Reed of Rhode Island, that would begin to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq within 180 days (six months) of enactment and complete a reduction of troop strength—but not a total withdrawal—by April 30, 2008.

This debate is finally happening after the electorate has in many, many ways expressed its utter disgust with the war, the

occupation and both political parties for letting the carnage drag on despite the immense pain and suffering it has meant for the Iraqi people and many in the U.S. Especially hit here is the working class, which pays for wars in blood and taxes while the rich generally do quite well as war spending oozes through the upper layers of the economy.

The senators also must know that calls are heard more and more frequently to impeach George W. Bush and Dick Cheney because these two lied to the world about Iraq's mythical weapons of mass destruction. Every online discussion having to do with the war or the White House—except those on bizarrely ultra-right Web sites—rings with colorful denunciations of these political figures.

However, there's an elephant in the room that still seems to

*Continued on page 5*



## ALABAMA Defending women's clinics against hate

Birmingham, Ala. From left: Mary Ouellette, president, Little Rock, Arkansas, NOW chapter; Michelle Colón, MidSouth NOW regional director; Nicole Casey, state president, Arkansas NOW. See story on page 3

WW PHOTO: MINNIE BRUCE PRATT





This week ...

# Injustice for the Jena 6

In September 2006, a group of African-American high school students in Jena, La., asked their school administrator for permission to sit beneath a “whites only” shade tree, as there was an unwritten rule that Blacks couldn’t sit there. Predictably, the school said they didn’t care where students sat. However, the day after some Black students sat under this tree, there were three nooses (in school colors) hanging from its branches. The boys who hung the nooses were suspended from school for a few days. They didn’t receive harsher punishment because the school administration considered this action a harmless prank. Some Black students held an impromptu protest, gathering under the tree. Soon after, the district attorney, along with several police officers, addressed students, telling them that he could end their life with the stroke of a pen.

There were a series of violent actions following these events. A Black student went to a white party, and was beaten. The instigator was put on probation. A white resident of Jena pulled a gun on three Black students, who were able to take it from him. They were charged with theft of the gun. Possibly in response to taunting, a white student was beaten at school. He was taken to the hospital, released, and seen socializing later that evening. Six black students were then expelled from school and charged with attempted second degree murder and conspiracy to commit the same. (Recall that when white

kids beat Black kids, they were put on probation.) Bail amounts ranged from \$70,000 to \$138,000.

To date, Mychal Bell has been tried, with his charges reduced to aggravated battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated battery. This charge requires a dangerous weapon to have been used, and the prosecutor claimed that Mychal’s tennis shoes were this dangerous weapon.

The trial was a mockery of justice. The jury pool was all white, and the resulting jury included two people friendly with the district attorney, a relative of one of the witnesses, and several others who were friends of prosecution witnesses. According to a Chicago Tribune article, Mychal’s public defender did not challenge the all-white jury pool, put on no evidence, and called no witnesses. The jury deliberated for less than three hours before finding Mychal Bell guilty on the maximum possible charges of aggravated second degree battery and conspiracy. He is scheduled to be sentenced on July 31 and faces up to 22 years in prison. Five other students await trial.

You can find out other ways to help by contacting the Jena 6 Defense Committee, PO Box 2798, Jena, LA 71342, jena6defense@gmail.com. You can find an online petition at: www.petitiononline.com/aZ51CqmR/.

—Amy Hasteley,  
Atlanta

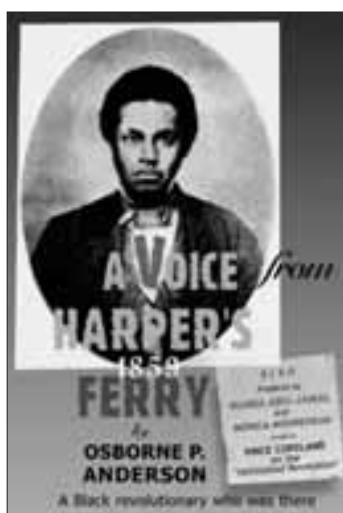
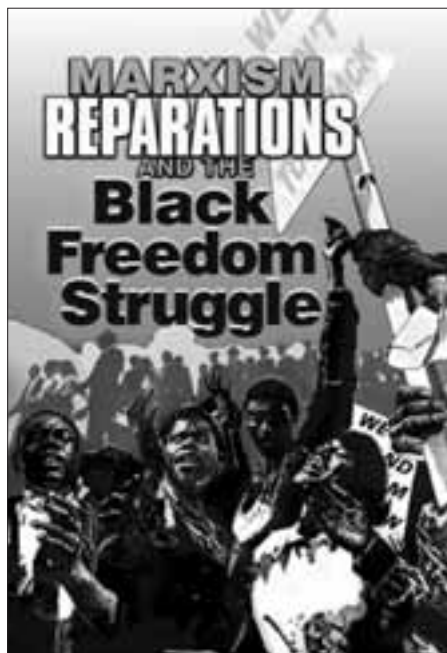
## LETTERS

## Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

A new book from World View Forum with writings by political activists including Larry Holmes, Monica Moorehead, Saladin Muhammad, LeiLani Dowell, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Pat Chin, Sam Marcy, John Parker, Larry Hales, Imani Henry & Minnie Bruce Pratt. The following sections present an outline of the contents:

- Black liberation & the working-class struggle
- The material basis for reparations in the U.S.
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## ALABAMA

# Defending women's clinics against hate

By Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Birmingham, Ala.

A small but dedicated group of activists are on the front line defending women's reproductive rights in Alabama. They have launched Alabama Reproductive Freedom Week in Birmingham to counter the attempts by right-wing Operation Save America (OSA) to close the two women's clinics in the city during July 14-22.

Local and Southern activists belonging to the National Organization for Women (NOW) are the primary organizers of the week, with assistance from Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas state NOW groups, as well as National NOW.

The Planned Parenthood Clinic and the New Woman All Women Clinic both provide an array of health services, including abortion, to women, especially low-income women. Women not only from Alabama, but also from neighboring states, depend on the clinics for a full range of reproductive services presented to them in a caring and non-judgmental way.

The activists defending these clinics know that when a complete range of women's health care is threatened, then women's lives are at stake. Anywhere in the world where safe, legal abortions cannot be obtained is a place where pregnant women die.

At that time using the name Operation Rescue, OSA targeted these and other clinics in the city in 1988. In 1998, the ultra-rightwing and anti-woman terrorist Eric Rudolph bombed the New Woman Clinic, killing its security guard and gravely wounding clinic nurse Emily Lyons. Rudolph, who has a history of anti-Semitic and white supremacist activity, also bombed Centennial Park during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, injuring 100 people, some of them permanently. He is now in prison, from where he continues to write diatribes against feminism and homosex-

uality as well as attacking abortion rights.

Lyons spoke at the opening rally of Alabama Reproductive Freedom Week on July 14. Referring to the OSA threat to bury abortion services in Alabama, Lyons said, "Rudolph tried to put me in a grave, but I am still here."

About 80 people gathered in torrential rain at Kelly Ingram Park to hear speakers that also included Patricia Todd, an Alabama state representative who is the first self-identified lesbian to be elected to the state legislature. The park commemorates the historic 1963 Children's March, a key event in the Black civil rights movement, and was also the location for recent May 1 immigrant rights rallies.

Some pro-choice supporters went directly from the rally to the New Woman Clinic for defense, as about 30 anti-abortion protestors had gathered there to chant and preach. Clinic supporters are an eclectic group including feminists, members of the lesbian/gay/bi/trans community, long-time civil rights activists, socialists, health care professionals and people from various religious communities of Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Protestants.

Slated for the week's activities are clinic defense, rallies, an abortion speak-out and a women's health fair. On Sunday, July 15, an interfaith panel of speakers from Catholic, Muslim and Protestant traditions explored ethical and religious issues in reproductive rights.

Sanovia Muhammed, speaking as a



From left: Mary Ouellette, president, Little Rock, Arkansas, NOW chapter; Michelle Colón, MidSouth NOW regional director; Nicole Casey, state president, Arkansas NOW.

WW PHOTO:  
MINNIE BRUCE PRATT

member of the American Muslim Mission of the Nation of Islam, said, "To me the Koran is a book of choice," and eloquently affirmed her belief that "a struggle against oppression—and that includes women's oppression—is a tenet of Muslim faith."

## 'Fighting for reproductive justice'

Of the need to place abortion in a larger context of economic and social justice, Michelle Colón, MidSouth NOW regional director, explained: "We are fighting for reproductive justice. For the right to abortion, yes, and also for the right for the children we choose to have food, shelter and childcare, everything they need."

Several women in the audience spoke out about having had abortions, both legal and illegal, and emphasized their decision as "positive" and "the best decision I ever made." All the panelists stressed the necessity of keeping abortion safe, legal and accessible for all women.

Clinic defense resumed at 7 a.m. on Monday morning, July 16, and continued until 6 p.m. There were about 20 pro-choice supporters on alert at all times. Anti-clinic forces were as many as 130 at

the height of harassment. The local police allowed OSA to occupy the sidewalk across from the New Women Clinic during the afternoon, even though Alabama Reproductive Freedom Summer had secured a permit for that area for every afternoon during the week.

At midday the OSA forces moved their signs and chants a few blocks away to Five Points South, hub of the clinic's neighborhood. In line with their tactic of disguising their anti-woman position by falsely claiming to be part of the civil rights movement, they proceeded to read an "Emancipation Proclamation" against women's right to choose abortion. On its Web site, the OAS quotes Martin Luther King Jr. and cynically and wrongfully substitutes its anti-woman, anti-choice language for the anti-racist language King uses. The OSA's presumptuous attempt to link abortion rights with slavery and genocide immediately backfired when the people in the area objected to what they were saying.

Birmingham is the heart of over a century of struggle by working class and nationally oppressed peoples. People who live there clearly know what a real freedom struggle is. And they saw right away that the OSA had nothing to do with struggling for freedom.

Local residents who had not heard earlier about the OSA demonstrations became outraged at these right-wing tactics. They immediately walked over to the New Woman Clinic to offer support.

Nicole Casey, the young activist who is the president of Arkansas NOW, summed up the reason why people are gathering for Alabama Reproductive Freedom Summer: "We came to support our sisters in activism, and to support our sisters who need these services and need defense against hatred."

*Minnie Bruce Pratt has been taking daily shifts of clinic defense at the New Woman Clinic in Birmingham.*

Aug. 29-Sept. 2

# Katrina-Rita tribunal to focus on U.S. crimes

By Dustin Langley  
New York

July 17 at the Center for Constitutional Rights in Manhattan community organizers from Louisiana, progressive attorneys and elected officials announced that the International Tribunal on Hurricanes Katrina and Rita will be held in New Orleans from Aug. 29 to Sept. 2, marking the second anniversary of the Katrina disaster. The tribunal will include hurricane survivors, expert witnesses, international delegations, a team of human rights and civil rights prosecutors, and a panel of U.S.-based and international judges.

Attorney Joan Gibbs of Medgar Evers Center for Law and Social Justice, who will also be part of the prosecution team, chaired the news conference. Speakers included Kwame Kalimara of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement; former Georgia Congress Member Cynthia McKinney; New York City Council Member Charles Barron; Kali Akuno of the Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund; and Viola François-Washington, an organizer with the Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund and Executive Director for the Welfare Rights Organization.

Kalimara opened by announcing that

President George W. Bush and Governors Kathleen Blanco and Haley Barbour (of Louisiana and Mississippi respectively) had all been officially advised that the Tribunal would be trying the U.S. government for crimes against humanity and genocide under the U.N. Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other relevant international agreements following the hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast almost two years ago.

McKinney cited as an example of the crimes committed the incident at the Gretna Bridge, when more than a hundred hungry and thirsty Katrina survivors—mostly African-American—tried to flee across to dry land right after New Orleans was flooded in 2005 and were prevented from crossing by racist Gretna police officers, who fired on the crowd and shouted racist epithets.

McKinney also cited the suspension of the Second Amendment right to bear arms by Michael Chertoff, secretary of Homeland Security. Survivors found that their own weapons were confiscated, while mercenaries from Blackwater and other corporations were sent in to patrol the streets. "Instead of sending food, they sent men with guns," McKinney said.

She pointed out that the blame for the



'Instead of sending food, they sent men with guns,' former Georgia Congress Member Cynthia McKinney said.

an opportunity to shed light on important institutional issues, including race, class and gender issues. He said, "We need to put enough pressure to put Katrina on the top of the agenda. Black people cannot let the government get away with what they did, because they left our people to die."

Viola François-Washington, a Katrina survivor on the Gretna Bridge during the infamous incident, reported on the complete lack of any assistance during and after the storm. "We saw helicopters flying all over the city, but no one was helping us," she said.

The racism that denied help to people during the disaster is still very much a reality. "We still have two cities," François-Washington said. "One is getting help and the other has not."

For more information on the tribunal, see [www.internationaltribunal.org](http://www.internationaltribunal.org). □

ongoing disaster falls on both major political parties. "Bush was criticized for not mentioning Katrina in his 2007 State of the Union address, but Pelosi also failed to mention it in the Democratic Party's first one hundred days in power."

Barron said that the tribunal would be



# Private equity backs VEBA; Dana contract saddles UAW with health care

By Martha Grevatt

The auto industry, including the parts sector, has decided to dump health care coverage on the unions. The July 6 agreement between the Dana Corporation, a major worldwide producer of axles and other vital parts, has begun the process, which presents a danger and a challenge to the organized labor movement.

Central to the proposed settlement, through which Dana hopes to emerge from Chapter 11 bankruptcy by year's end, is the establishment of a Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA), which will be controlled and administered by the union.

For decades autoworkers have engaged in collective bargaining over not only wages but a wide range of benefits from pensions and health care coverage to vacations, holidays and income security during layoffs. It is generally understood that benefits are a form of deferred wages—compensation different in form but not in essence.

Because health care is so important for workers and their families, the UAW has over the years made wage concessions—deferrals—to offset rising medical costs and maintain the level of coverage members are accustomed to. Most recently workers at Ford and GM agreed to forgo a dollar an hour in previously negotiated annual raises and cost-of-living-allowance (COLA) increases.

Since 1964, in all but two contracts, the union agreed to divert part of the COLA and apply it to health coverage. With all of the horse trading that has gone on in negotiations over the years, it's been with a mutual understanding that employers were responsible for insuring employees to shield them from prohibitive medical costs. At what cost? The concessions have led to the overall downsizing of the living standards of auto workers.

## What is a VEBA?

VEBA is a trust established to fund workers' and retirees' benefits. A trust

is a transfer of something of value to another party—in this case the UAW. VEBA will be responsible for the dispersing of funds for health care. The UAW will become the trustee of those funds giving the union control of the assets. The retirees and disabled will be the beneficiaries of those assets. They must be protected if the deal is consummated. Dana is contributing \$700 million in cash and \$80 million in stock in seed money to start up the VEBA.

While legal since 1928, VEBAs were relatively uncommon and became a topic of widespread discussion only with this year's settlement of the Goodyear strike. Goodyear agreed to make an initial contribution of \$1 billion to establish the fund, but the fund is to be run by the United Steel Workers and relieves the company of all future pension liabilities.

Dana is the first auto parts supplier to require its unions to take full responsibility for providing health care to retirees and disabled. Dana's plan in creating a VEBA is to dump the rising health costs onto the union, which they believe will save them millions when they come out of bankruptcy in September. Dana plans to close eight North American plants and sell several manufacturing units if the deal goes through.

Centerbridge, a Wall Street private-equity firm and one that lost the bidding war over Chrysler, is paying Dana \$500 million to acquire a 25-percent stake in ownership. The union must challenge this ownership of a private equity corporation. Herein lies the struggle over property rights and control.

The bosses are all too happy about the potential of VEBAs as long as the UAW bureaucracy blesses them. JP Morgan said that profits will rise if auto companies convert union retiree health care liability into a fund run by the UAW. (Detroit News, July 10). They believe that VEBA will force the UAW to impose health care cuts.

For the unions, the risks are tremendous, as the VEBA could become

underfunded, forcing a union that is the administrator of the trust to make benefit cuts.

If the union remains passive on this critical issue, the squeals of joy in Detroit boardrooms and on Wall Street will be deafening. If the trend becomes widespread, this could put the health care of a half-million UAW workers at the mercy of huge debt to cover the rising costs. The Big Three, bankers, private equity companies and the medical-industrial complex will be the big winners. Collective bargaining between the Big Three and the UAW begins next week when Ford and Chrysler meet with the union. GM follows a few days later. VEBA will be at the top of the agenda.

For the UAW to promote VEBAs is a form of class collaboration that is dangerous to the organized labor movement. However, the assets contained within the VEBA, combined with the value created by the decades of labor power of retirees and their deferred wages and benefits, can be translated into a form of property rights, an early stage of workers control. Through the VEBA the UAW should exercise its rights over Dana's property as collateral for rising health care costs and an underfunded benefit.

It is time for the labor movement in defense of the UAW in the coming negotiations to mobilize the vast numbers of rank-and-file workers and retirees to protect health care and jobs—a property right—by any means necessary. The health care crisis is permeating all sectors of the workers and the oppressed nationalities, including community groups, immigrant rights organizations and the anti-war movement. Health care is a universal right and demands a universal and united response.

*Milt Neidenberg also contributed to this article.*

*Martha Grevatt has been a Chrysler worker and UAW activist for twenty years.*

*Email: mgrevatt@workers.org*

## ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

### Calif. grocery workers threatened

Representatives of the 65,000 unionized grocery workers in Southern California are continuing to negotiate for decent pay raises and health care benefits, as they have since their contract expired on March 5. In June the UFCW workers voted to authorize a strike, though the union has repeatedly stated it wants to avoid one. But the bosses are already setting up the barricades.

Even though it's public knowledge that the CEOs of Albertsons, Ralphs and Vons received raises totaling \$27 million in 2006, the bosses aren't making serious pay offers that meet even minimal cost-of-living increases. The workers have not received a raise since 2002, and the supermarket chains want to cut back the wages of new hires. In true-blue ruling class style, the chains have threatened to lock out the workers. But Ralphs just escalated the situation by announcing a plan to hire replacement workers, that is, scabs. It also threatened to fire workers who strike or to cut their hours and to make them pay exorbitant fees for family health care during a work stoppage. (UFCW press release, July 9)

Barbara Maynard, representing UFCW Local 770 covering the greater Los Angeles area, told the Santa Clarita Signal that the grocery companies have "continued to put forward proposals that show a tremendous disrespect for the workers and the communities they serve." (July 11) The current notice extension requires a 72-hour cancellation rolling by either the UFCW or the supermarket chains. The struggle continues.

### Prison labor working Colorado fields

After the state of Colorado passed strict laws against hiring undocumented workers in 2006, immigrants boycotted the state. A shortage of farm workers led to crops rotting in the fields last fall. So in May the state Department of Corrections set up a farm-labor pilot program. Ten women inmates are now working on five farms covering 2,400 acres. The program is the first of its kind nationwide. (The Washington Times, July 11)

Rep. Dorothy Butcher, who opposed the legislation, has been contacted by the United Farm Workers and immigrant rights groups who were concerned that the program devalued skilled farm labor. Other groups have protested the possibility of chain gangs, where prisoners are forced to toil under backbreaking conditions for no pay. Even though farmers pay the DOC \$9.60 an hour per inmate and prisoners earn \$4 an hour—which is better than most \$1-per-hour prison jobs—the inmates are unskilled labor forced to work because of economic necessity. The real solution is to grant amnesty to trained immigrant workers and pay them a starting salary of at least \$9.60 an hour.

### Toys 'R' racism

A federal lawsuit filed July 12 accused the Toys "R" Us chain of singling out Black customers in a race-based pattern of stops, searches and wrongful detention. The suit was brought by people who say they were unlawfully or unreasonably detained or searched because of their race. They are seeking class-action status, \$400 million in damages and a court order to end discrimination.

### Asian-American laborers sue for wages

The Asian-American Legal Defense and Education Fund filed four lawsuits on June 12 on behalf of six Sikh and Bangladeshi laborers seeking payment of unpaid wages from five construction contractors. The suits accuse the companies of breach of contract and violations of minimum-wage laws. □



## workers.org on the march

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## Time to mobilize anti-war forces

# Big firms get rich as Iraq war escalates

Continued from page 1

clude most of the lawmakers and the media. It concerns what the war is really all about.

### Not just personalities

There are criticisms galore of Bush's IQ, his lack of tact, his cowboy style, his refusal to compromise or bend to bring others on board. Cheney is raked over the coals for his Machiavellian manipulations. Other administration figures from the klavern of neocons are excoriated for being too ideological.

But you seldom hear the issue that gets raised at every anti-war demonstration. What about the immense oil profits that Bush and Cheney promised their wealthy backers would flow into their coffers once Iraq had fallen? How much is being said about that in Congress, or on prime time?

The world understands very well what this war is about, but it's a non-subject in official Washington and Medialand.

For example, here's an item you probably didn't see on television:

On July 16, about 300 oil industry workers in the port city of Basra, Iraq, took their lives into their hands to protest a proposed new law—drafted by U.S. “specialists” and “advisers”—that these workers say would allow foreigners to “pillage the country's wealth.”

This important demonstration got no coverage in the U.S. media, but was reported by the French press agency AFP.

“To compensate for the military and political failure of the U.S. administration in Iraq, this administration is trying to control the country's wealth,” the organizers said in a statement distributed to reporters, as they carried black coffins labeled “freedom.”

“If this is endorsed by the parliament it would abolish sovereignty and hand over the wealth of this generation and the generations to come as a gift to the occupier,” the statement said. “This law, in fact destroys the achievements of the Iraqi masses and especially the Law number 80 of 1961 and the nationalization of 1973”—legislation that sharply limited foreign involvement in the oil sector, enacted after Iraq broke free of colonial domination.

The very same social forces that had hoped to profit immensely off this war own the politicians and the media. Their failure to talk about this is not because of some narrow conspiracy hatched by a few individuals—it is the way everything functions in a society where money capital reigns supreme.

The immense popularity of the film “Sicko” shows that millions now realize that health care is a mess because of the profit motive. Is there any reason to think that warfare is somehow more altruistic?

In fact, this war and the many other imperialist interventions known euphemistically as “national defense” represent an immense feeding trough for the well-connected.

### Web of industry, gov't & military

This was illustrated most graphically in a story that did break into the media in a very limited way recently. It is the story of a corporation that most people never heard of but that is awarded more lucrative government contracts for “defense” and “national security” than any other.

The company is Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC). Right, you say, never heard of it. But you've heard of Boeing, right? General Electric? Halliburton? Lockheed Martin? Well, SAIC gets more government contracts than any of them. Last year it sucked up over \$8 billion in public money. And it has more than 44,000 employees.

SAIC provides “experts,” especially in high-tech fields. It was SAIC employees who tried to create economic chaos and bring down the government of Venezuela in 2003 by sabotaging the terminals where the oil was loaded onto tankers for export. The media here called it a “strike” by oil workers, but in fact the real workers—not the high-paid managers on SAIC's payroll—were the ones who figured out how to manually put the oil facilities back online after their bosses had shut down the computers that controlled everything.

In the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, one of the most vociferous and ubiquitous figures arguing on television for “regime change” to get rid of “Saddam's weapons of mass destruction” was David A. Kay, identified as an expert on counterterrorism. Kay was an executive of SAIC.

Two investigative journalists—Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele—dug out information about SAIC and wrote it up for the March 2007 issue of *Vanity Fair*. Recently, the PBS program *Exposé* ran a half-hour special on the company.

In the *Vanity Fair* article, entitled “Washington's \$8 Billion Shadow,” Barlett and Steele wrote that “SAIC executives have been involved at every stage of the life cycle of the war in Iraq. SAIC personnel were instrumental in pressing the case that weapons of mass destruction existed in Iraq in the first place, and that war was the only way to get rid of them. Then, as war became inevitable, SAIC secured contracts for a broad range of operations in soon-to-be-occupied Iraq. When no weapons of mass destruction were found, SAIC personnel staffed the commission that was set up to investigate how American intelligence could have been so disastrously wrong.”

This article explains that much of the running of the U.S. imperialist government's “dirty tricks” and its military adventures abroad has been privatized. Operations that used to be handled by the CIA or the Pentagon are now farmed out to companies like SAIC, which pull in billions of dollars every year devising and carrying out plans to control the economies of oppressed countries and, if necessary, use military force against them so U.S. big business can exploit their resources and labor.

They are not subject to congressional oversight and can operate pretty much as they please. In Iraq, SAIC got the U.S. contract to build a “democratic media” after the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime. Its Iraqi Media Network became such an obvious mouthpiece for the Pentagon, says the *Vanity Fair* article, that soon Iraqis “openly snickered at the programming.”

These companies have close relations with the oil monopolies, the big banks, defense contractors and all the government agencies in the business of warfare and “counterterrorism.” In fact, SAIC set up its Center for Counterterrorism Technology and Analysis several years before 9/11, describing it to potential investors as a growth industry.

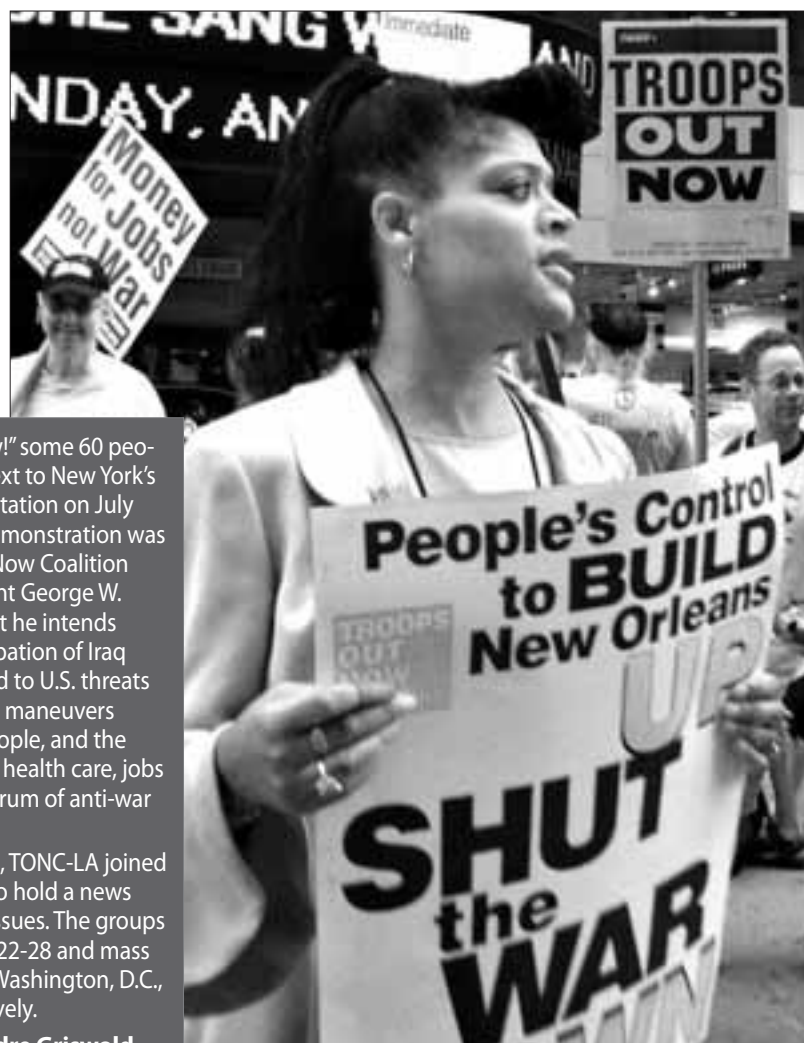
SAIC is much bigger than just the neocons in the Bush administration. Its bipartisan board of directors has included former CIA directors like John M. Deutsch, appointed by Bill Clinton, and Robert M. Gates, appointed by the current Bush's father. In the present Bush administration, Gates is now secretary of defense,

## Protests greet Bush's 'interim report'

Chanting “Troops out now!” some 60 people filled a traffic island next to New York's Times Square Recruiting Station on July 16. The quick-response demonstration was called by the Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC) to protest President George W. Bush's announcement that he intends to keep the war and occupation of Iraq going. Chants also referred to U.S. threats against Iran, Washington's maneuvers against the Palestinian people, and the growing crises at home in health care, jobs and racism. A broad spectrum of anti-war groups was represented.

Meanwhile in Los Angeles, TONC-LA joined with many other groups to hold a news conference on the same issues. The groups plan encampments Sept. 22-28 and mass mobilizations Sept. 29 in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, respectively.

—Report & photo Deirdre Griswold



having replaced Donald Rumsfeld.

Other members of the SAIC board have included Melvin Laird, Richard Nixon's secretary of defense, and Rear Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, director of the National Security Agency under President Jimmy Carter and a deputy director of the CIA under Ronald Reagan. Inman was also on the board of the Rockefeller-founded Council on Foreign Relations. The Rockefellers, let it never be forgotten, originally got their money from Standard Oil and then spread out into banking.

It is this unholy trinity of big business, the government and the military/intelligence establishment that continues to drive the war in Iraq—or Iran or Afghanistan or Palestine or wherever it suits their interests.

### SAIC not affected by elections

One former SAIC manager said in a recent blog posting: “My observation is that the impact of national elections on the business climate for SAIC has been minimal. The emphasis on where federal spending occurs usually shifts, but total federal spending never decreases. SAIC has always continued to grow despite changes in the political leadership in Washington.”

Marine Gen. Peter Pace said on July 16 that the Joint Chiefs of Staff is weighing a range of possible new directions in Iraq,

including an even bigger troop buildup, if Bush deems it necessary.

The U.S. Air Force has been building up its equipment inside Iraq, including the monster B1-B bomber. It has sharply stepped up bombing and has laid a foundation for a sustained air campaign, according to a July 15 AP dispatch. Already, there is an increase in “collateral damage” among Iraqi civilians.

Half the warships in the U.S. Navy are now in the waters around Iran and Iraq. When one of those ships, the USS Nimitz, made a five-day port call to Chennai in southern India in early July, it was met by massive protests.

Keeping their eyes on these hard facts and not being diverted by false hopes about change in Washington, some anti-war groups are now planning militant actions for the fall.

In both D.C. and Los Angeles, the week of Sept. 22-29 will see encampments, called by the Troops Out Now Coalition (troopsoutnow.org) and endorsed by hundreds more, that will take the anti-war struggle back to the streets and link it to the growing war at home of racism, poverty and repression. On Saturday, Sept. 29, massive mobilizations are planned in both cities.

The time could not be more critical. The power to stop the carnage lies with the people, not the politicians.

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## As U.S. warships threaten Iran

# Senate resolution ratchets up pressure

By G. Dunkel

From hostile propaganda, to military threats and pressure, to actual small-scale attacks inside Iran, the Bush administration refuses to rule out any options in its confrontation with that oil-rich country.

The Senate on July 11 unanimously passed a resolution, introduced by the war hawk Sen. Joseph Lieberman, calling on Iran to end all forms of “support that it or its agents are providing, and have provided, to Iraqi militias and insurgents, who ... are responsible for the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces.”

U.S. Brig. Gen. Kevin Bergner, speaking at a press conference in Baghdad in early July,

tried to bolster the charges in Lieberman's resolution. He claimed that Lebanese Hezbollah instructors trained Iraqis in three camps near Teheran, and that the Qods Force, a special forces section of the Iranian military, funded these “special groups” with up to \$3 million per month.

The U.S. propaganda campaign against Iran also raises what it calls human rights abuses, Iran's nuclear program and Iran's “meddling” in the internal affairs of Iraq.

It's hard for Washington to make these charges stick in the international arena, since they come from a government whose violations of human rights in Iraq and the U.S. itself are well known, a government

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## LUCASVILLE 5

# Prosecutor cross-examined at hearing

By Sharon Danann  
Dayton, Ohio

On July 9 and 10, supporters filled a courtroom of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio in Dayton for an evidentiary hearing for Keith LaMar (chosen name Bomani Hondo Shakur). LaMar hopes to get a new trial based on the violations presented in the hearing.

This was the first time that there has been the opportunity to cross-examine the prosecutors of one of the Lucasville Five in order to demonstrate prosecutorial misconduct in the original trials.

The Lucasville Five are five men on

death row as the result of charges brought after the prison rebellion in Lucasville, Ohio, in 1993. LaMar did not take part in that rebellion, but he refused to either confess to crimes he didn't commit or cooperate with the state, and he also encouraged other prisoners to do the same. For that he is now on death row.

In this hearing, the focus was on evidence that the prosecutors failed to provide to LaMar's defense attorneys. At the time of the original trial, the prosecutors provided summaries of the interviews to the judge, who read them aloud at a hearing. However, all names had been omitted, rendering them virtually useless. The

following day the defense was provided with an overall list of the names of prisoners who had been interviewed by the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

This forced the defense to re-interview the prisoners, for which the defense did not have adequate financial resources and time. Not providing exculpatory evidence to the defense, meaning evidence that could have proved LaMar's innocence, is a violation of the legal precedent known as *Brady v. Maryland*, a U.S. Supreme Court decision from 1963.

In an unusual move, Judge Michael Merz interrupted the proceedings to thank the observers for taking the time to come

to the hearing. It is hoped that this signals a positive inclination toward granting LaMar a new trial.

To write to Keith LaMar, include his prisoner number, #R317-117, Ohio State Penitentiary, 878 Coitsville-Hubbard Road., Youngstown, OH 44505-4635 and include a pre-embossed stamped envelope so that he can answer your letter.

To obtain a copy of Keith LaMar's book, "Condemned," about his torture at the hands of the prison system and the triumph of his spirit, send a check or money order for \$10 to Cleveland Lucasville Five Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5963, Cleveland, OH 44101. □

## Community groups assail police raids

By Sharon Danann  
Cleveland

This spring the Cleveland police department conducted sweeps in targeted communities, arresting over 150 Black youth in the St. Clair/Superior neighborhood and over 90 in the Central neighborhood. Many of the young men could face long sentences without parole under RICO sentencing guidelines for alleged gang activities. In many cases the "gangs" amount to no more than neighborhood friendship groups.

In addition, there have been 96 deaths of Cleveland youths aged 25 and under to date. Alarmed about violence and the widespread incarceration of young people, Black on Black Crime Inc., a community organization, reached out to other groups to make a protest and a positive statement with an event called "One Voice, One Vision."

The organizers set up an encampment on Cleveland's Superior Avenue between East 87th and East 89th and occupied it around the clock for a week, from July 9-15. Flags of red, black and green—the colors of Black nationalism—proclaimed liberated territory.

During the days, groupings from the encampment walked the streets of the neighborhood listening to the concerns of the residents. At night there were programs at the base camp with workshops, affirming hip-hop performances,

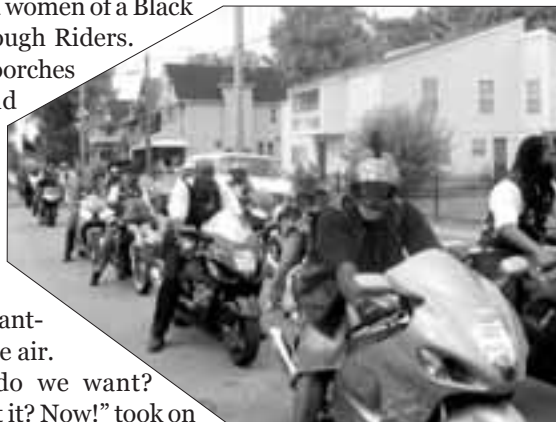
speeches, prayers, poetry and free food. In between the air vibrated with the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and the music of James Brown, "Say it loud, I'm Black and Proud." There was talk of the police, the prison system, the criminal justice system, the politicians, the lure of gang life and the need for jobs.

Participating organizations included Hip Hop Workshop, New Alliance of Black Nationalists, Future of Cleveland Under Scrutiny (FOCUS), the Cleveland Lucasville Five Defense Committee, Black Contractors Association, the Nation of Islam, and Survivors/Victims of Tragedy, Inc.

The event culminated in a march through the neighborhoods with security provided by the men and women of a Black motorcycle club, the Rough Riders.

Families were on their porches to watch the march and members of the core group from the encampment went up to shake their hands. Neighbors of all ages joined the march as participants kept up the vigorous chanting with many fists in the air.

The chant, "What do we want? Peace! When do we want it? Now!" took on a whole new meaning. This was a march for peace in the community which was taking matters into its own hands to stop the violence rooted in police occupation. □



Marchers protest police harassment of community.

WW PHOTOS: SHARON DANANN



## Racism ramped up in Berrien County, Mich.

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Pan-African News  
Benton Harbor, Mich.

This could be the strangest story to emerge from the Berrien County, Mich., courthouse in a long time. It's getting almost impossible to believe that Michigan's governor or the Department of Justice doesn't intervene.

Addie Kyle, a 40-year Benton Harbor resident was sitting at a table outside the courthouse, taking a break as court observer in late June. A juror, also on break, walked by and had a friendly conversation with Kyle. She commented to him that the courthouse is racist and Black people need to stick together more.

The next day two police officers showed up at her door wanting to know what she had said to the juror, so she told the truth. They immediately issued a warrant for her arrest.

Kyle hired an attorney, who went to the courthouse asking Judge LaSata to recuse

himself from the case since the attorney may have to call him as a witness. The judge said, "If you say another word I will send you to jail." A back-and-forth ensued with the attorney asking repeatedly if he was being threatened and the judge yelling, "Shut up!"

Kyle's hearing was on the morning of July 2.

A few hours before her hearing, at 4 a.m., someone burned a cross in her front yard. In court, the juror she spoke to the previous week defended her by saying she did not talk about the trial she was observing, he was in no way intimidated by her, and she was not "jury tampering."

The judge and prosecutor became angry (because the juror didn't lie), and Judge LaSata pronounced Kyle guilty of jury tampering. He sentenced her to 60 days in jail, one year's probation, and she may not enter the courthouse ever again. She will be tried in October and could be sentenced for up to 10 years on a felony charge.

It seems that those who run the courthouse have figured out recently that "jury tampering" may just be an easy way to jail more Benton Harbor residents. About two weeks ago a woman was laughing in the courthouse parking lot when the bailiff called her into the building and escorted her into a courtroom, where she was charged with jury tampering. For laughing in the parking lot. After she hired an out-of-county attorney, the charge was dropped.

Part of the success of the Berrien County thugs is that they have operated in isolation for years.

Is this the worst courthouse in the U.S.? It sure seems like a distinct possibility.

As for cross burning—

The Supreme Court ruled in April 2003 to uphold a state law banning cross burning carried out with the intent to intimidate. Cross burning is an instrument of terror and not a form of expression protected by the First Amendment.

Cross burning in the U.S. is inextricably

intertwined with the history of the KKK which, following its formation in 1866, imposed a reign of terror throughout the South, whipping, threatening and murdering Black people.

### Death threat

Wilson Chandler's household was a good place to enjoy yourself this June 28. Shortly before 10 p.m., Chandler was selected in the first round of the NBA draft by the New York Knicks. A 2005 graduate of Benton Harbor High School, Chandler went to New York for the draft. That year he was selected as Mr. Basketball in Michigan. Chandler is the first player from Benton Harbor to be selected in the first round of the NBA.

What was Berrien County's response? Several people called him with death threats, i.e., "Mr. N---, you will never sign that million dollar contract."

When will the people of Berrien County admit to the worst racism since earlier last century in the South? □



# Prison conditions worsen for Al-Amin

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

Among the hundreds if not thousands of political activists who have been railroaded into prisons across the U.S. after being harassed, spied on and threatened by government and police agencies for their opposition to racism and the oppression of their people is Imam Jamil Al-Amin (formerly known as H. Rap Brown), convicted on murder charges in 2002 in Atlanta.

Brown became the leader of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1967 following his often dangerous work of organizing voting rights and other civil rights campaigns in rural parts of the South. His experiences, growing up in Louisiana during Jim Crow segregation and facing Ku Klux Klan violence while registering Black people to vote, brought him to a revolutionary perspective. He quickly was identified by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI as a threat to the system and accumulated more than 44,000 pages of surveillance notes in his government file.

Brown survived assassination attempts, constant police harassment and arrest, and prison time.

While in Attica Prison in New York, he converted to Islam and changed his name to Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin.

In the late 1970s, he moved to Atlanta's West End, opened a store that serviced a poor neighborhood and became an imam at the Community Mosque.

Under his leadership, residents of the area organized against drug trafficking and prostitution and developed sports, educational and arts programs for youth. He became well-known nationally in



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Muslim associations for his religious scholarship and teaching.

Nevertheless, Al-Amin remained in the sights of police agencies, including the FBI.

On March 16, 2000, two Fulton County deputies came at 10 p.m. at night to serve a warrant on Al-Amin on charges that he thought had been dismissed. Out on the street, a shoot-out took place. One deputy died and the other was wounded. The injured deputy reported that the shooter was 5'6" with grey eyes and that he was also wounded.

Nevertheless, the search was on for Al-Amin, who stands a slender 6'5" tall and has brown eyes. When Al-Amin was arrested four days later, he had no signs of having been shot.

This inconsistency was repeated during the trial. Yet despite 911 (emergency police) calls from people that reported a bleeding man running away from the scene on the night of the killing, Al-Amin was convicted on 13 charges including the murder of the deputy. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Since his arrival at Reidsville Prison in 2002, Al-Amin has been held in adminis-



trative segregation. He spends at least 23 hours alone in his cell daily, let out only for a shower and exercise. He has been denied the practice of his religion. His dietary requirements are not met. His legal mail is tampered with. He suffers harsh treatment from the guards.

Just recently, Al-Amin was transferred to an even more restricted area of the prison after filing a complaint against a guard for misconduct. This section houses mentally ill inmates whose conditions are even more intolerable.

The International Committee to Support Iman Jamil Al-Amin requests that those who want to express concern for Al-Amin's safety, send letters to the Board of Corrections, 2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Atlanta, GA 30334.

On July 20, there will be a rally held adjacent to the Community Mosque at 3:30 p.m. to continue to raise support for political prisoner Imam Jamil Al-Amin.

For more information, go to [www.icsija.tk](http://www.icsija.tk) or e-mail [communitymosque@yahoo.com](mailto:communitymosque@yahoo.com)

*The writer, who is scheduled to speak at the July 20 rally, is the Atlanta coordinator of the International Action Center, which has been a consistent supporter of efforts to defend Jamil Al-Amin.*



PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO  
From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row

## The beating of Black lawyers'

From a July 5 column

No matter who we are or where we live, folks in Black America have grown up with the lesson of the importance of education as a tool of social mobility.

That's why lawyers are generally so highly regarded in many Black communities, as people who have undergone years of legal education.

But that respect doesn't go far beyond the community.

Cops in Brooklyn, N.Y., recently showed what they thought of lawyers by beating them up!

Well-known human rights attorney Michael Tarif Warren, and his wife Evelyn (also a lawyer), were driving down Brooklyn's Vanderbilt Avenue when they spotted a Black youth being chased by cops across a McDonald's parking lot. [The youth was later identified as Latino—WW]

The youngster was tackled to the ground and handcuffed, when the Warrens saw a Sgt. Talvy begin kicking him in the head, the ribs, and stomping on his neck.

The two attorneys stopped their car, walked within 10 feet of the beating, identified themselves as lawyers, and told the cops to stop beating the youth and simply take him to the nearest precinct.

The sergeant's response was to shout, "I don't give a f--k who you are. Get the f--k back in your car!"

The Warrens returned to the car, where Michael began to write down notes of what he saw and the license plate numbers of the cop cars present.

Before he could finish his notes, Sgt. Talvy walked up to the car and began to repeatedly punch him through the window, shouting "Get out of the car!"

Warren was then dragged out of his car, his clothes ripped in the process.

His wife, obviously upset at these events, demanded to know why he was attacked and was promptly punched in the face by this same cop!

Both Warrens were arrested and driven to the 77th Precinct and charged with obstruction, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

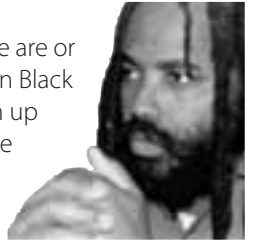
Within hours hundreds of Brooklynites converged on the precinct, demanding the release of the Warrens. People came from all walks of life, for Tarif has a long history, almost 30 years, of representing people who have been victims of police or prosecutorial misconduct in the city.

Groups like the December 12th Movement, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the International Action Center and many others quickly mobilized support for the Warrens.

In an interview in the New York Daily Challenge, Evelyn Warren spoke for many people when she said, "We are professionals. If they do this to us in broad daylight on a crowded street, what do they do in the dark when no one is around? That's what I'm concerned about."

She and others called not only for the removal of Talvy, but of Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly as well.

When Black lawyers are beaten in the streets, what about average folks? What about you? □



# Thousands demand justice for Genarlow Wilson

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Douglasville, Ga.

The quiet of this historic, Southern town with its tree-shaded houses and old-fashioned downtown was disrupted July 14 as thousands of people, mostly African-American residents of Douglas County, marched, wearing tee-shirts, carrying signs and chanting, "Free Genarlow Wilson."

The protest ended at the steps of the County Courthouse Building where for more than two hours the crowd listened to local and state elected officials, religious and civil rights leaders, radio personalities and others decry the unfairness of Wilson's trial and sentencing.

Juanessa Bennett, his mother, in thanking those present, said that her family has become "part of a much bigger movement" to make the justice system equal for all.

Wilson's case has drawn international attention. At age 17, the star student and athlete was arrested, stood trial and was convicted of "aggravated child molestation" for having consensual oral sex with a 15-year-old classmate at a New Year's Eve party.

Under Georgia law at the time, Wilson was sentenced to a mandatory 10-year prison term plus one year on probation as a felony sex offender.

Furthermore, he would be required to register as a convicted sex offender and

be restricted in where he could live and work.

The law has since been revised with the maximum penalty for under-age teen-age sex being a misdemeanor conviction with 12 months. Wilson has been in prison close to three years already.

A particular target of the crowd's anger was Douglas County District Attorney David McDade, who has been unrelenting in his prosecution of this case, going so far as to release numerous copies of the videotape that captured the sexual acts of Wilson and the young girl. He is also accused of threatening the mother of the girl if she did not agree to his pursuing of the felony charges against Wilson.

The crowd roared its approval when speakers called for McDade to be charged under federal child pornography statutes and be disbarred for his conduct in this case.

On June 13, Georgia Superior Court Judge Thomas Wilson (no relation) ruled Generlow Wilson's case to be a "miscarriage of justice" and ordered his sentence reduced and his release.

State Attorney General Thurbert Baker immediately appealed his decision and Generlow Wilson stayed in prison.



A photo of Generlow Wilson at age 17 provided by his family. Wilson is now 21.

On July 20, the State Supreme Court will hear arguments about the legality of Judge Wilson's ruling.

As quoted in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, protester Sheila Polk summed up the sentiments of the crowd that spilled all across the lawn and parking lot of the County Courthouse. "This is not just for Genarlow. ... This is for everybody." □



## COLOMBIA

# Parapolitical scandal is Uribe's quagmire

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez is nose-deep in a parapolitical scandal. Like Merlin, the wizard at King Arthur's court, he is trying to come up with the magical spell that will turn around his cruel reality show. His delusion is shared by U.S. President George W. Bush, who, along with Bush's close associates, consistently defends Uribe.

But reality only pulls Uribe deeper and deeper into the horrible quagmire caused by the tight relationship of his closest political associates with the criminal paramilitaries who have inflicted so much suffering on Colombia's people. So far, more than a dozen politicians, including senators and other government officials, all from parties or groups allied with Uribe, are in prison because of these links. And that's not all.

According not only to human rights advocates but also to other paramilitaries, the investigations and subsequent arrests are mounting and getting closer and closer to Uribe himself. And the testimonies of "reinserted" or "demobilized" paramilitaries have only begun to reveal the intricate network of crimes, assassinations and utter corruption that involve the Colombian military, police, government officials, the president and several U.S. corporations.

## A compromising video

Dan Kovalik, a United Steel Workers union attorney, represents the relatives of three murdered employees of the U.S. mining company Drummond. This corporation is currently on trial in federal court in Alabama for its hiring of paramilitaries to use against its workforce in Colombia.

During his investigative work for the USW suit against Drummond, Kovalik found a video recorded on Oct. 31, 2001, in Colombia's northern department of Antioquia. In it, presidential candidate Uribe is seen shaking hands with a well-known paramilitary chief in that area, Frenio Sánchez Carreño, also called commander Esteban. Uribe's spokesperson

denied the relationship, saying that Uribe "was not aware that the person had connection with or was a paramilitary."

Kovalik countered in a June 15, Miami-based *Nuevo Herald* article that, "It is reasonable to think that Uribe should have known that he was meeting with members of the AUC [United Self Defense Forces of Colombia or paramilitaries], including commander Esteban, given his [Esteban's] notoriety."

An article in the Colombian *Semana.com* supports Kovalik's assertion in the *Nuevo Herald* article, saying, "The newspaper also affirms that during that time, the name of commander Esteban was well-known among the labor leaders in Barrancabermeja. Twelve days before the meeting, Esteban signed a message from the AUC targeting the union leaders of the region, something that prompted a 24-hour strike by the workers of ECOPEPETROL. This news had national repercussion."

## Uribe's associates under investigation

Though Uribe denies association with paramilitaries, there is a report from the Secret Department linking current Army Commander General Mario Montoya with the paramilitaries of Medellín. In July, the Supreme Court initiated an investigation of three more Congresspeople for the same reason. Among them were Uribe's first cousin, Senator Mario Uribe. Uribe's vice-president, Francisco Santos, is also under suspicion of association with paramilitaries, particularly with Carlos Castaño.

Jorge Noguera, the former director of the Administrative Department of Security/Intelligence (DAS), was rearrested on July 6. Noguera is an Uribe appointee who was imprisoned last February and accused of allowing the "infiltration of paramilitaries" in the DAS. He was also accused of giving to paramilitaries a list with names of labor leaders, many of whom were assassinated afterwards.

Noguera had been in jail one month when a judge ruled in March that his detention was illegal due to the techni-

cality that the prosecutor in his case was only a "deputy" instead of the general prosecutor. After this ridiculous decision, the prosecutor issued a new order stating that there is evidence linking Noguera to paramilitaries.

These "parapoliticians" as they are called in Colombia, are now in the justice system. Their testimonies could offer more information about the paramilitary association of others, including Uribe. For that reason, and to "protect" his parapolitician friends, Uribe will have to devise a way to help them out of this swamp.

As May ended, Uribe proposed a law that would help politicians who associate with "paras" but have committed no "atrocious" crimes and who confess the "truth." Neither their opponents nor the parapoliticians, who objected to the part that stopped them from holding public office, accepted this law.

## Uribe's unilateral releases: setup, cover up, or both?

At the end of May, Uribe unilaterally released more than 100 prisoners, whom he identified as members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Uribe's main enemy with whom he has refused to negotiate. The FARC denied the 100 were members.

Uribe also released Rodrigo Granda, FARC's international relations person, to act as "peace negotiator." Granda stated that he took orders only from the FARC secretariat. If prisoner-exchange peace negotiations are to succeed, they have to be planned by both sides. But Uribe was making a theatrical gesture, not really opening talks. Granda eventually went to Cuba, which had offered asylum.

Days later, on June 18, the Colombian government launched a military operation to "rescue" politicians whom the FARC had detained. Eleven deputies from Cali died in the crossfire. Uribe accused the FARC of killing them.

## Humanitarian exchange

With U.S. approval, Uribe had consistently called for a military retaking of

the hostages. This attitude completely ignores the demand of the majority of the Colombian people, including most of the hostages' relatives, who want to see a negotiated humanitarian exchange. Completely misjudging the situation, Uribe called for demonstrations on July 5 to "condemn terrorism," which to him means condemning the FARC. But thousands of people turned out with slogans of "humanitarian exchange now," and many blamed the government for the death of the 11, calling Uribe's administration irresponsible.

In a shameless show of cruelty against victims' relatives, local government officials in Cali criticized Carolina Charry, daughter of one of the victims, when she thanked those present at a demonstration for their solidarity and "for mobilizing to reject the government policies that are stained with my dear father's blood ... as an indolent president refused to listen to their plea to declare [the zones] Pradera and Florida a Zone for Humanitarian Exchange."

## The real terrorism

The real terrorists, known to millions of Colombians, are the criminal paramilitaries in alliance with the government forces and U.S. imperialism. Through Plan Colombia, U.S. military and corporations plot to steal the natural wealth and resources of the Colombian people.

Let us not forget the victims of paramilitaries' crimes: close to 5,000 members of the Patriotic Union killed; 4 million people displaced; the hundreds of assassinations already confessed to by just one paramilitary; the hundreds of bodies being unearthed from common graves; the more than 3,000 kidnapped; the 10,000 bodies expected to be found in several common graves according to the general prosecutor.

"Dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres"—this Spanish adage corresponds to: "You are known by the company you keep." Uribe's close company with criminal paramilitaries has become his big problem. □

# Philippine revolutionary victory in EU court

By Caleb T. Maupin

Jose Maria Sison, a lifelong revolutionary and currently chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), who is now exiled in the Netherlands, won a victory in a European court July 11 that will allow him access to his funds, which had been frozen since December 2001.

In a statement issued on July 13, Sison wrote: "The judgment of the European Court of First Instance (ECFI) annulling the decision of the Council of the European Union (EU) to put me in the 'terrorist' blacklist is a victory for the cause of justice. It is not merely my personal victory. It is a victory for all the people, my panel of lawyers, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines as intervener and the International Committee-Defend."

Sison, an intellectual also known for his literary works, discovered Marxism-Leninism and socialism as tools that could lead to the liberation of his people. While living under a U.S.-backed dictatorship, he helped to establish a new Communist

Party in the Philippines.

In 2001 the U.S. State Department declared that Sison, the CPP and the New Peoples Army (NPA) were all terroristic and that the Philippines was "the second front of the war on terror." On Dec. 27,



The Philippines gov't, which targeted Sison, has 'disappeared' progressive organizers. Above is mother of Sherlyn Cadapan, a missing student activist.

WW PHOTOS: TERESA GUTIERREZ

2001, a European court deprived Sison of his funds and virtually confined him to the Netherlands.

Sison now lives half a world away from his home country, the nation which he has devoted his life to liberating. Labeled a "terrorist," he continues to battle the U.S. and various European governments as well as the regime of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the Philippines, which seeks his elimination.

Sison has suffered horrifically at the hands of imperialism and its local puppets. At one point he was captured by U.S.-backed forces directed by Philippines

President Ferdinand Marcos, a dictator overthrown in 1986. Sison had spent eight years chained to a bed in a small solitary confinement cell during the Marcos regime.

While Sison is a revolutionary and the organizations he is associated with aim to liberate the Philippines by revolutionary means, he argues that he is no terrorist and has facts to prove it. In the same statement mentioned above, he writes:

"In the Philippines, I have been repeatedly cleared of criminal charges. At the fall of the Marcos fascist regime in 1986,

*Continued on page 10*



# Who gets blame for deaths in Darfur?

By John Parker

A close look at the crisis in Sudan shows that the imperialist powers and especially the U.S. have active responsibility for the social turmoil and passive responsibility for an ecological disaster that is tantamount to genocide.

Yet on May 29, President George W. Bush, in trying to promote U.N. sanctions against Sudan, accused the Khartoum government of the “bombing, rape and murder of innocent civilians” and said, “The world has a responsibility to put an end to it.”

This charge against Sudan comes from the commander-in-chief of an armed force that is carrying out genocide, rape, murder and bombing in numbers far outweighing what even the U.S. State Department alleges were committed by the Sudanese government. Currently millions of civilians have been either tortured or murdered directly by the U.S. military in Iraq, Afghanistan and U.S. occupied Guantanamo.

In contrast to this direct U.S. role are the charges against Khartoum: that a proxy grouping working at the behest of the Sudanese government is engaged in the violence.

Bush went further in regards to the violence on the part of the Sudan government: “My administration has called these actions by their rightful name: genocide.”

The prime motivation for U.S. intervention into Sudan has everything to do with that country’s rich resources and oil reserves rivaling those of Saudi Arabia.

Bush, speaking on behalf of the U.S. ruling class, with its oil, financial and military interests in Africa and Western Asia, was ready to give any excuse that would allow the U.S. access to the old and newly discovered oil wealth in the region. He would like as much as possible to put an international cover on U.S. designs for the region. Charges of genocide help force the UN to do as it finally did in Iraq and in the Balkans: help facilitate U.S. occupation there.

This is not the first time the Bush administration has tried to promote the charge of genocide against Sudan.

When former Secretary of State Colin Powell was used to level the “genocide” charge, a U.N. commission in 2005 investigating alleged atrocities said the Sudan government was not guilty of genocide. Many in the international community agreed with this U.N. commission.

What the U.N. did recently say last month about the crisis in Sudan, however, helps point the finger of genocide right back at the U.S. and other imperialist countries.

This June the U.N. published an 18-month study by the U.N. Environmental Program that blamed environmental factors as the root causes of the violence in Sudan. It warned that inaction will spread violence well beyond Sudan’s borders.

The U.N. report found that the desert in northern Sudan has advanced southwards by 60 miles over the past 40 years and that rainfall in the area has dropped by 16-30 percent.

“It [the U.N. report] illustrates and demonstrates what is increasingly becoming a global concern,” said Achim Steiner, UNEP’s executive director. “It doesn’t take a genius to work out that as the desert moves southwards, there is a physical limit to what systems can sustain, and so you get one group displacing another.” (British Guardian)

The U.N. study also found that there could be a drop of up to 70 percent in crop yields, devastating areas from Senegal to Sudan.

Before rebel groupings attacked gov-

ernment forces in 2003, sparking the current civil war in Sudan, the rains had diminished and the desert was growing by over a mile per year.

Why didn’t the government of Sudan do more to avert this environmental crisis? One thing is for sure—British, French and U.S. interference in the affairs of Sudan had an extremely draining effect on its resources and ability to develop economically, let alone defend itself from natural disaster. Sanctions, such as those Bush is promoting, have been one of the means used to drain Sudan.

## Sudan’s colonial legacy

Sudan’s problems can be traced to its colonial past. After 1916, when Britain militarily gained full control over the Sudan as its colony, British rule depended on creating conflict and dividing the Muslim north from the Christian or animist south. It left isolated and un nourished what were then thought to be unprofitable regions like Darfur.

In another words, the British Empire did not allow the creation of an infrastructure facilitating government assistance to the region. Like Darfur today, these regions contained people who were all Muslim and possibly harder to divide.

Despite current claims to the contrary by U.S.-based propagandists, who want to promote the idea that this is a war between “white Arabs and Black Christians,” all the people in the Darfur region were and are people who look alike in terms of their dark skin and features. They are all Muslim.

The poverty and inequities facing Darfur have roots in the British Empire, as do the civil wars between the South and North of Sudan, whose combatants have migrated also to the Darfur region.

The more recent history of intervention by imperialist forces, especially the U.S., into Sudan should make everyone see through Bush’s hypocritical talk.

## As U.S. warships threaten Iran

# Senate resolution ratchets up pressure

Continued from page 5

that has the largest stockpile of nuclear weapons in the world and is actively pursuing new generations of tactical nuclear weapons, and a government that not only “meddles in the internal affairs of Iraq” but has half-destroyed that country while occupying it with hundreds of thousands of troops.

Iran has been firm in maintaining its right to a peaceful nuclear program, aimed at research and power generation. While the U.S. has been successful in pushing through a couple of U.N. resolutions that impose limited sanctions on Iran, its major European imperialist allies have been reluctant to push further. Discussions among the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany are continuing.

Two aircraft carriers, the USS John C. Stennis and USS Nimitz, are currently in the Gulf, conducting war “games” against Iran. The nuclear-powered carrier USS Enterprise left Norfolk for the Gulf in early July and is scheduled to replace them for a few months before another carrier is sent.

However, according to an AP news report, if the Pentagon wants to ratchet up the pressure on Iran it can hold either the Stennis or the Nimitz in the Gulf or send their replacement early.

The U.S. naval buildup in the area is prodigious. Half of all the U.S. Navy’s



The current situation with this spread of war from the South of Sudan to the Darfur region was exacerbated greatly by U.S. military and financial support of the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in southern Sudan. The SPLA was the nucleus for the Sudanese Liberation Army now fighting in Darfur. Fueled by U.S. dollars, that war in the South helped drain Sudan’s economy and discouraged the development of its oil resources.

The U.S. call for sanctions during a natural crisis has precedent. The senior Bush administration called for sanctions in March 1990, at exactly the same time a drought crisis occurred. Later, former President Bill Clinton pushed additional sanctions and went further by bombing Sudan in August 1998 and destroying its primary pharmaceutical plant.

The current sanctions by Bush Jr. hit 31 Sudanese companies, mainly companies that build and maintain Sudan’s vital infrastructure, including agriculture and transportation and the development of its oil resources, which could help provide money to avert the effects of the drought.

The U.S.-led U.N. sanctions against Iraq starting in 1990 are estimated to have killed 1.5 million people, including a half-million children. What effect sanctions will have on one of the poorest countries in the world is yet to be seen.

In the 1990s, while U.S. aid fueled the civil war in the South of Sudan, many Christian and other religious charities also sent their dollars to support rebel forces against the Sudanese government.

Likewise, today, the Bush-endorsed Save Darfur Coalition, a grouping led by Christian and Zionist organizations with some Hollywood and even African-American members, supports U.S. military intervention in Darfur. In spite of the overwhelming evidence that U.S.

sanctions seriously damage developing countries, these groups encourage sanctions against Sudan.

Is there a better solution for Sudan? The U.N. commissioned another report by the U.N. Millennium Project, which calculated that extreme poverty could be ended in the entire continent of Africa with \$189 billion. The supplemental appropriations passed by the U.S. Congress in May for the Iraq and Afghanistan occupations would cover most of that cost.

When the last G8 summit ended in Germany, the leaders of the imperialist NATO powers—including Britain and the U.S.—all agreed that climate problems on the African continent affecting Sudan existed and would continue to devastate more of the continent. Yet they came up with no solutions.

Given that the U.S. and other imperialist countries continue to fuel the fire of natural disaster in Sudan while sitting on the very means to solve the situation, one could consider this a passive act of genocide against African people. □

277 warships are stationed close to Iran, alongside most of Teheran’s estimated 140 naval surface ships and six submarines. (Los Angeles Times, July 11) More than 60 aircraft are aboard the Stennis, along with dozens more on the Nimitz. U.S. carriers have the facilities to deploy nuclear weapons.

As part of the psychological warfare that goes along with the presence of so many death-dealing machines able to wreak havoc on Iran, the U.S. makes sure to politely notify the Iranians about its maneuvers.

Capt. Bradley Johanson, commanding officer of the Stennis, makes it all sound like a tea party. He says the Iranians respond professionally and courteously, saying “Thank you very much for the information.” (LA Times, July 11)

The AP reported July 12 that Iran shelled the Iraqi border region of Hajji Umran after an incursion of Kurdish irregulars over the Iraq border into Iran. It said shells also fell as far as 18 miles from the border in the Peshdar region northwest of Sulaimaniyah. Back in May, Iran conducted artillery attacks in the same general region.

The exact role the U.S. is playing in the Kurdish attacks is kept secret, but it appears to be doing more than just furthering its political alliance with Iraqi Kurdistan.

Moreover, it has its ally Turkey to con-

sider. The Turkish government has protested the continuing attacks from the Autonomous Kurdish areas in northern Iraq; Turkish Ambassador Nabi Sensoy says he does not believe the U.S. is supplying weapons directly to fighters of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), but that Pentagon weaponry is funneled to the PKK by Kurdish members of the Iraqi government. (Chicago Tribune, July 12) This “government,” of course, owes its existence to Washington.

The PKK, operating through a group that calls itself Kurdistan Free Life Party (known as PJAK), has also reportedly been involved in the attacks in Iran. According to Reese Erlich, a freelance journalist working with the magazine Mother Jones, the U.S. is trying to support the PJAK’s attacks in Iran while opposing any it carries out inside Turkey.

The seesawing U.S. approaches to Iran—U.N. sanctions but not very severe ones, a Senate resolution that does not explicitly authorize force, supporting armed attacks inside Iran but on a small scale—point to a debate inside not just the Bush administration but the broader political establishment of the U.S. ruling class over how to increase their domination of the region without falling deeper into a quagmire. Meanwhile, the debacle in Iraq hangs over George W. Bush’s head, yet he continues to “stay the course” of occupation and war. □





## Suddenly, it's al-Qaeda everywhere

U.S. operations in Iraq, it seems, are no longer against “insurgents.” No, the “insurgent,” a vague term not nearly as appropriate as “resistance fighter” or “partisan” in the case of occupied Iraq, has mostly disappeared from the scene these days.

Currently all U.S. strikes are against “al-Qaeda.” Scratch a U.S. general and he will say, “We have eliminated 37 al-Qaeda operatives in Ramadi today.” Or, “the Air Force has bombed three buildings in Anwar Province housing suspected al-Qaeda terrorists.”

Bush, too, and all administration spokespeople name only al-Qaeda as the U.S. enemy. And the media—they like to call themselves the “free press”—all repeat after them: “al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda in Iraq, al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia.”

This ploy became so obvious that the official New York Times newspaper critic on July 9 wrote an entire column on it, criticizing the Times itself for going along unquestioningly with the new terminology.

Why the change in propaganda? Consider this: Bush's popularity ratings are below 30 percent. That's in the United States, where he won the elections—or stole them, according to many—in 2000 and 2004. Outside the U.S., according to Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez's talk in Argentina last spring, Bush's popularity index is “negative.” Chávez's comment was loudly

applauded by 40,000 Argentines.

How then to find some enemy even less popular than Bush for the propaganda war? Impossible outside the U.S., perhaps, but inside the U.S., whatever al-Qaeda really is, it has been blamed for the strike on the World Trade Center that killed nearly 3,000 people here. Thus, it may be hated even more than Bush, although Bush is responsible for the deaths of 3,600 U.S. troops and hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.

So the public relations experts of the Bush gang decided that from now on all fighting would be described as against al-Qaeda, and that's what all the media must also write and say. Then, they thought, people would support Bush.

No matter that in Iraq there is so much hatred of the U.S. occupation that even puppet troops rebel and wage firefights against the Pentagon's forces. No matter that al-Qaeda—whatever it is—didn't exist in Iraq before the U.S. invasion. No matter that dozens of Iraqi groups, from tribal to religious to nationalist to socialist organizations, all carry out armed resistance against the occupiers. Al-Qaeda gets the blame for everything.

It would seem like a stupid ploy, but the Bush gang is using it to prepare for new escalations and new wars, so the al-Qaeda lie campaign must be resisted, just like all the other lies from Bush and his gang. □

## George Galloway, again

It must be hard to be a reactionary British parliamentarian these days. Or even a pro-imperialist Labor MP. In the old days—before World War II—when they arrogantly insulted colonial peoples, from the Indians to the Irish, they had the satisfaction of doing it for the Empire. Now they do it as mere junior partners to the U.S., happy with the interest their banks amass in the wake of the Pentagon's pillage of the world. It must have been embarrassing for them to see the articulate British Premier Tony Blair be the spokesperson on a world scale for the indefensible aggressive policies of George W. Bush.

Thus they grow bitter. And the latest target of this bitterness is George Galloway. Again. Galloway, the MP representing the anti-war Respect Party, who is often described as “maverick,” is the most eloquent spokesperson for the anti-war movement among those in Parliament who have campaigned against Bush and Blair's war—against the war that U.S. and British imperialism have imposed upon the Iraqis, the Middle East, indeed, upon the world.

Galloway, who had been a leader in the struggle against the murderous sanctions that killed 1.5 million Iraqis, including a half-million Iraqi children under 5 years of age, has continued to fight against the next round of U.S. and British war crimes in Iraq.

Anyone who has consulted with, worked with or shared a platform with Galloway has always been happy to have him on their side. Those who debate him are most often defeated. He has been an able spokesperson for the anti-war movement, not only in Britain but on the world scale.

His rival MPs, accusing him of being pals with Saddam Hussein and of getting funds from the Iraqis for a children's charity—that helped Iraqi children—have suspended Galloway for 18 days. Galloway, who has been vindicated on similar charges in the past, has again ably defended himself. “I am not a punchbag,” he said. “If you aim low blows at me I will fight back. That's what I've done and that's what I've been suspended for.” He added, “I deserve a medal, not a ban, for Iraq.”

We couldn't say it better. □

## Philippine revolutionary victory

Continued from page 8

I was cleared of the charges of rebellion and subversion. In 1992 the charge of subversion that had been trumped up in 1988 was nullified. In 1994 the charge of multiple murder arising from the Plaza Miranda bombing was dismissed by the Manila prosecutors as something based on speculation. In 1998 the Philippine secretary of justice issued a certification that

there were no pending criminal charges against me.

“In 2003, the Arroyo regime started to fabricate charges of rebellion and common crimes against me. But in a recent decision early this month, the Philippine Supreme Court has rendered null and void the identical false allegations of rebellion against more than 50 accused, including the Batasan Six, some NDFP legal consultants and myself.” □

## 1990s: Cuba education reached every home

By Leslie Feinberg

The revolutionary Cuban government, since the 1990s, has waged a struggle against deep-rooted old prejudice about same-sex love in virtually every cultural venue.

In 1998 a national television program opened a mass discussion about lesbians and gays to immense audience interest. The topic was discussed in communities for weeks afterwards. (Leonardo Hechavarría and Marcel Hatch)

Librarian Larry R. Oberg wrote on his observations of homosexuality and culture in Cuba. “Between March 2000 and April 2002, I spent more than four months in Cuba on four separate occasions, working as a librarian on a range of research projects with my Cuban colleagues. Most of that time was spent in Havana, but also in numerous other cities, including Matanzas, Trinidad and Santiago de Cuba. As a gay man, I was motivated to find out as much as I could about the status of Cuba's gay and lesbian population.”

Oberg referred to the cross-dressing, cross-gender performances in the neighborhood of La Güinera, on the outskirts of the capital. “Many of these drag shows are sponsored by the local CDRs (Committees for the Defense of the Revolution),” Oberg reported, “and play to large and wildly enthusiastic audiences. (If you're wondering, the performers were great!)”

Oberg stressed, “One of the most striking things about Cuba is the vitality of its cultural and intellectual life throughout the island, particularly in Havana. Gay themes are prevalent in the theatre, in lectures, and in concerts.”

“In December, 2000, I attended a play entitled ‘Muerte en el Bosque’ (A Death in the Woods), produced by the Teatro Sótano in Havana's Vedado neighborhood. Based upon the acclaimed novel ‘Máscaras’ (Masks), by Leonardo Padura Fuentes, the play follows a police investigation into the murder of a Havana drag queen, a plot device that allows for an examination of Cuban attitudes and prejudices towards gays at every level of society.” (www.cubanlibrariesolidaritygroup.org.uk)

Oberg concluded, “A striking contradiction in Cuban society today is the contrast between the rich cultural and intellectual life that is widely available and easily affordable, and salaries that make the purchase of a pair of shoes an event for which one must plan.”

He noted that Cubans could buy theater tickets for the equivalent of about a nickel, first-run movies for about a dime, theatrical plays for less than 50 cents, and musical extravaganzas and ballet festival performances for half a buck.

The U.S. blockade of Cuba, aimed at strangling the economy, makes it harder to buy a pair of shoes, let alone build socialism, which requires material abundance and often imported materials.

Wall Street hopes that economic deprivation will turn up the pressure cooker on internal relations, making it easier to wear down and overturn the revolution that took the Cuban economy, labor, land and resources off its list of neocolonial “assets.”

But the revolutionary government has continued to move forward on every

front possible to generate consciousness, including about same-sex love.

“While in Cuba, I spoke with scores of gays, mostly men, and encountered none who said that their government was persecuting them,” Oberg stated. He reiterated that no one with whom he spoke “reported active or systematic repression by the state.” (“The Status of Gays in Cuba: Myth and Reality,” March 20, 2006)

### Art and consciousness

AIDS prevention is only possible with widespread safer-sex information and a thoroughgoing struggle against sexual prejudices that allow the disease to spread in the silence of shame, guilt and fear. Revolutionary Cuban leadership brought the battle against AIDS and sexual prejudices—including bigoted attitudes about bisexuality—to the small screen of popular television, as well as the big screens of culture.

Last year the 115-chapter television series “La Cara Oculta de la Luna” (The Hidden Face of the Moon), had virtually all of Cuba buzzing with debate.

“La Cara” deals with AIDS, youth sexuality, bisexuality and other social issues. The series began with the story of a 14-year-old girl who contracted AIDS during her first sexual experience.

As of November 2005, 5,422 Cubans were HIV-positive or had full-blown AIDS.

“La Cara,” wrote author Freddy Domínguez Díaz, was “a series on human behavior, on people's attitude of life, on everyone's responsibility for themselves and everybody else.” (Interview, Juventud Rebelde, Oct. 9, 2006; walterlippmann.com)

The series borrows from the popular style of television novellas—soap operas.

Marlon Brito López, a screenwriter and director, critiqued the television novella “as a member of the audience and media expert.” He wrote, “The main goals were well defined: a warning of the dangers of this pandemic disease, present also in our territory, which can infect people in any group, race or creed; and a reflection on the elimination of prejudice linked to HIV-AIDS and sex in our society, particularly within the family.”

Brito López stated, “I believe art is so ambiguous and abstract it has a latent effect on our consciousness, mainly when it reflects with honesty and talent the society one lives in. This is precisely what ‘The Hidden Face of the Moon’ is achieving.”

He continued, “AIDS statistics in the world increased alarmingly and in our country; despite the excellent professional project and public health plan to prevent infectious diseases, media campaigns on the HIV-AIDS subject had shown little efficacy. It is here where we artists must step in. Concerts and songs by Buena Fe [Cuban musical group], or documentaries by my colleague Belkys Vega and others, were not enough to reach our homes at prime time with an artistically effective language, with affection and respect.”

### Bringing education to every home

“La Cara” series director Rafael “Cheito” González explained, “When we deal with present-day stories, we try to be as close to reality as possible. Everywhere in the

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## about same-sex love

world there are soaps for entertainment. We try to discuss the social problems we have and therefore we deal with topics such as these. I believe it is valid to face them with all seriousness. In this soap there are some parallel stories aimed only at entertaining the audience, but we cannot overlook the problems we have, and these must be tackled with courage.

“What better way to do it than through a TV soap watched by the whole country? Information on HIV is offered in TV spots, there is also a specific TV program on AIDS, but these are not seen by everybody. The soap, on the other hand, is watched in every home.” (La Jiribilla #260, April 28, 2006)

Cheito noted, “We did a lot of research to pull out all the stops, as popular speech has it, in approaching AIDS as a topic, that is, seriously and with all due respect, since we can’t beat about the bush if we want to send an effective message.” (Interview, Juventud Rebelde, Oct. 9, 2006; walterlippmann.com)

Magda González, a television director who now directs the Dramatizations Division for Cuban TV, also stressed, “When we decided to take on this theme in this slot, we were convinced that it would provoke all sorts of reactions. They’re not themes that we usually deal with in a dramatized form, even though over the past three years they have been dealt with in a direct and open way by other programs like ‘Let’s Talk about Health’ [a weekly program focusing on health matters] and ‘It’s Worthwhile’ [a weekly program in which a leading psychologist discusses letter writers’ problems].”

But as the AIDS epidemic continued, “and because we consider we have a socially responsible role to play to put television in the front line of the Battle of Ideas, we decided that the dramatic format was an ideal way to disseminate messages using the emotions and the viewer’s identification with the human dramas. When writing the script and producing the tele-serial we called upon experts from the Center for Sexual Education and the National HIV-AIDS Prevention Center as advisers and we believe it mirrors realistically aspects of our society.

“The second theme incorporates a new element in teledramas,” she continued, “the treatment of sexual relations between men either as homosexuals or bisexuals. Public reaction is divided. Some are indignant that the theme is shown on screen, others applaud the initiative, and still others say that these themes have to be aired but not in this way.

“That the first exists is only natural in people whose sexual attitudes were formed by a Hispanic culture, heavily influenced by the Catholic Church, where sex is a sin and homosexuality a crime. Hopefully the telenovela will help them understand that to respect, recognize and tolerate different lifestyles doesn’t turn them into accomplices of what they believe to be evil, but that it makes them followers of the concept given to us by our Comandante when he says that ‘The Revolution is about equality and full liberty, it’s about being treated by everybody else as human beings.’” (La Jiribilla #260, April 29-May 5, 2006)

### This is revolutionary process

No one, of any sexuality, was of one mind in Cuba about “La Cara.” However, those who brought the series to television screens did not shy away from the debate. On the contrary, widespread public debate with leadership was the whole point, and

it has been eminently successful.

The Cuban health care system Web site “Infomed” garnered viewpoints about the television novella. So did Cuba’s National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX). E-zine La Jiribilla devoted an entire issue to the topic.

Journalist Ricardo Ronquillo concluded, “It would be worrying if we thought of ourselves as a wholly agreeing society with neither competing arguments nor opposing positions in face of its most intimate conflicts; or even worse, that silence prevailed.”

La Jornada correspondent Gerardo Arreola wrote, “This discussion has become the most relevant signs of public impact on the matter since the motion picture ‘Fresa y Chocolate’ (‘Strawberry and Chocolate’) shook sectors of Cuban society in 1993 with its statement against intolerance through the story of a homosexual character.” (May 8, 2006, walterlippmann.com)

The Miami Herald, an unlikely source for any supportive news about Cuba, reported in November 2006, “Now, as the show draws to an end, Cuban gays and lesbians say the show is symbolic of the communist island’s government and people becoming more accepting towards them.” (Advocate.com, Nov. 8, 2006)

It is this process of popular education with leadership, in which consciousness is raised through mass participation, discussion and debate, that is the revolution and the “unfettered thought” it liberates—not overnight, but with ongoing labor, without which nothing is produced.

CENESEX continues to be at the forefront of that important work, including backing the television novella that sparked such controversy.

*Next: Mariela Espín Castro talks about work still to be done in Cuba.*

*To find out more about Cuba, read parts 86-105 of Lavender & Red at workers.org.*

## Showing solidarity with Cuba



Detroit TV2 interviewed Teresa Gutierrez on July 4 alongside a school bus donated to the 18th Pastors for Peace Friendshipment Caravan to Cuba. As part of the metro-Detroit kickoff of one of 14 Friendshipment routes throughout the U.S. and Canada, Gutierrez spoke in Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich, and Windsor, Ont., Canada. After going to Cuba to challenge the U.S. trade and travel ban, Pastors for Peace will return and cross the Mexico/U.S. border on July 28.

Also on July 28 another contingent of mostly young activists from the

Venceremos Brigade, African Awareness Association, U.S./Cuba labor Exchange and FIST (Fight Imperialism Stand Together) will return to the U.S., openly declaring their defiant civil disobedience of the cruel and unjust travel ban and marching from Fort Erie, Ont., Canada, over the Peace Bridge into Buffalo, N.Y. Supporters will gather in Buffalo both to celebrate the successful challenges and to organize any defense actions that may be needed at either border crossing.

—Report and photo  
Cheryl LaBash

# Rainbow Solidarity

## In Defense of CUBA

This soon-to-be published work, a compilation of 25 articles from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper, shows the tremendous progress the Cuban Revolution has made in uprooting colonial and imperialist-era anti-gay prejudice.

The book shows the Cuban Revolution’s trajectory of progress in hard facts. It’s a must-read to understand the revolutionary process required to uproot prejudice.

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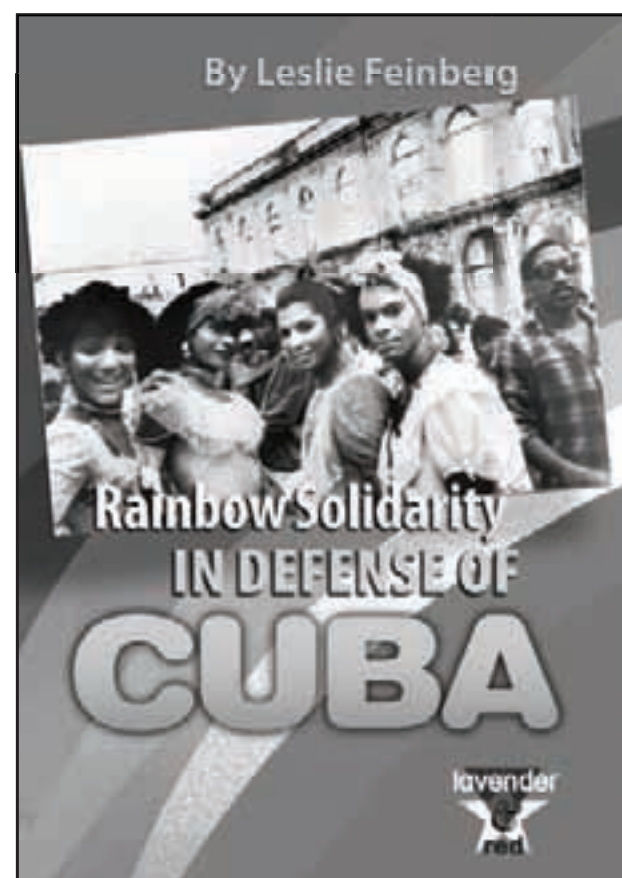
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## Corte Suprema de Justicia (2da parte) avanza agenda derechista

Por Deirdre Griswold

Una semana antes la corte había dado un golpe a los inversionistas que quieren demandar a compañías y ejecutivos por sospecha de fraude, haciendo más difícil el litigio de acción de clase. Después del debacle de Enron, el cual le quitó a mucha gente todos sus ahorros, los inversionistas se pusieron muy nerviosos y empezaron a buscar maneras de responsabilizar a los ejecutivos mejor pagados.

Esa decisión fue la segunda en solamente una semana “que era una derrota para l@s accionistas y una victoria para las compañías demandadas. El 18 de junio los jueces decidieron que l@s garantes de bonos en la Bolsa de Wall Street están generalmente inmunes a los litigios anti-monopolistas.” (New York Times, 22 de junio) Los jueces nombrados a perpetuidad decidieron a favor de 10 de los principales bancos de inversión acusados de conspirar para arreglar los términos y los precios de las primeras ofertas públicas de acciones.

En muchos casos los accionistas involucrados son fondos de pensión que han sido establecidos en años recientes porque el Seguro Social no es suficiente para mantenerse y l@s trabajador@s han ido perdiendo los planes de pensión que estaban financiados parcial o completamente por los empresarios.

Estas decisiones en contra de l@s accionistas por lo tanto afectan a much@s trabajador@s y también a personas de la clase media mientras que protegen a los más ricos de los ricos.

Otras decisiones de la corte en meses recientes representan un retraso de los beneficios ganados por mujeres y por

los millones, abrumadoramente de la clase trabajadora y predominantemente gente de color, que están atrapad@s en el enorme sistema de prisiones de este país.

La corte aprobó el Acta de Prohibir los Abortos de los llamados Nacimientos Parciales, la cual limita la libertad de la mujer de escoger terminar o no su embarazo.

También hizo más difícil para l@s prisioner@s el apelar sus condenas — justo en una época donde la evidencia del DNA ha mostrado cuántas personas están conducidas a la cárcel por una “evidencia” dudosa.

Una decisión dijo que un/a prisioner@ no podría solicitar tarde su apelación aún si la corte le había dado a su abogad@ una fecha equivocada.

Otra decisión restringió la jurisdicción de las cortes federales a que decidan sobre peticiones de habeas corpus de l@s encarcelad@s en prisiones del estado.

Y otra decisión le facilitó a l@s fiscales en casos de pena capital el eliminar a jurad@s potenciales que tuvieran dudas sobre el uso de la pena de muerte.

L@s trabajador@s a quienes les timan en su sueldo también sintieron la mano pesada de esta corte que está a favor de los intereses de las grandes corporaciones. La corte decidió que l@s emplead@s tienen sólo 180 días para someter un reclamo en caso de discriminación — aún si no estaban conscientes de que recibieron menos paga hasta pasado el tiempo para reclamar. A much@s trabajador@s les dan instrucciones al principio de su empleo de que no discutan su paga con otr@s emplead@, y sólo se dan cuenta de las desigualdades del pago después que haya pasado un tiempo.

### No es sólo Republicanos contra Demócratas

En la mayoría de estas decisiones la corte se dividió 5-4. Hay cuatro miembros de la corte considerados conservadores ideológicos absolutos: Roberts, el Juez Principal; Antonin Scalia; Clarence Thomas y Samuel Alito. Pero Anthony M. Kennedy considerado un “moderado” se unió a ellos en todas las decisiones.

Los cinco jueces que forman esa mayoría fueron nombrados por presidentes republicanos.

Pero no podían haber sido aprobados sin el apoyo de demócratas en el Senado.

No hubo ni un voto de disensión cuando Scalia fue confirmado en 1986, ni cuando Kennedy fue confirmado en 1988. En 1991, Thomas fue confirmado en una votación de 52-48 cuando 11 demócratas, la mayoría de ellos “Dixicratas” del sur, se unieron a la mayoría republicana para respaldar el primer conservador afro-americano en la corte. Todos los republicanos y la mitad de los demócratas votaron por Roberts en 2006. La votación por Alito, más tarde el año pasado, fue otra vez muy estrecha: 52-48, donde cuatro demócratas dieron los votos esenciales decisivos.

Sin embargo, el carácter derechista de esta mayoría en la corte no puede ser atribuido sólo a diferencias entre los partidos Republicano y Demócrata, los cuales son brazos políticos de las grandes corporaciones estadounidenses, financiados por la clase dominante capitalista y obligados a ella a pesar de los votos que obtengan en las elecciones.

La corte liberal encabezada por Earl Warren, el Juez Principal, que decidió en contra de la segregación en el caso Brown v. Board of Education y otros, también estaba

llena de jueces nombrados por republicanos. El mismo Warren, cuando era gobernador republicano de California en los años 40, había aprobado el establecimiento de los notorios campamentos de detención para japones@s-american@s durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Más tarde, fue otra vez una corte mayormente republicana la que en 1973 aprobó Roe v. Wade, la importante decisión sobre el derecho de las mujeres al aborto.

¿Qué hizo a esas cortes mayormente republicanas distintas a la que existe actualmente?

Esas cortes hicieron sus decisiones basadas en el miedo que tenía la clase dominante de los movimientos militantes de masas en el período anterior. Por décadas, a partir de los años 50, millones de personas se echaron a las calles para participar en manifestaciones que eran más que simbólicas.

El movimiento por los derechos civiles, en el cual gente afro-americana y algun@s aliad@s blanc@s se enfrentaron a perros de la policía, mangueras de incendio, el Ku Klux Klan, y la policía racista para desmontar el sistema de discriminación racial legalizado, inspiró a toda una generación con su valor de luchar por la justicia.

En la misma época, por todo el mundo, pueblos que habían sido oprimidos y explotados por las ricas potencias capitalistas coloniales — incluyendo a los Estados Unidos además de Europa del Oeste y Japón — estaban en lucha, dedicando sus vidas en guerras revolucionarias para ganar su libertad.

Esa nueva militancia se esparció en los años 60 a los Estados Unidos cuando jóvenes lucharon contra el servicio militar obligatorio, soldados se rebelaron contra sus comandantes, y veteranos vueltos de Vietnam decidieron que preferían luchar contra el sistema aquí que ver a jóvenes hacerse carne de cañón para los generales.

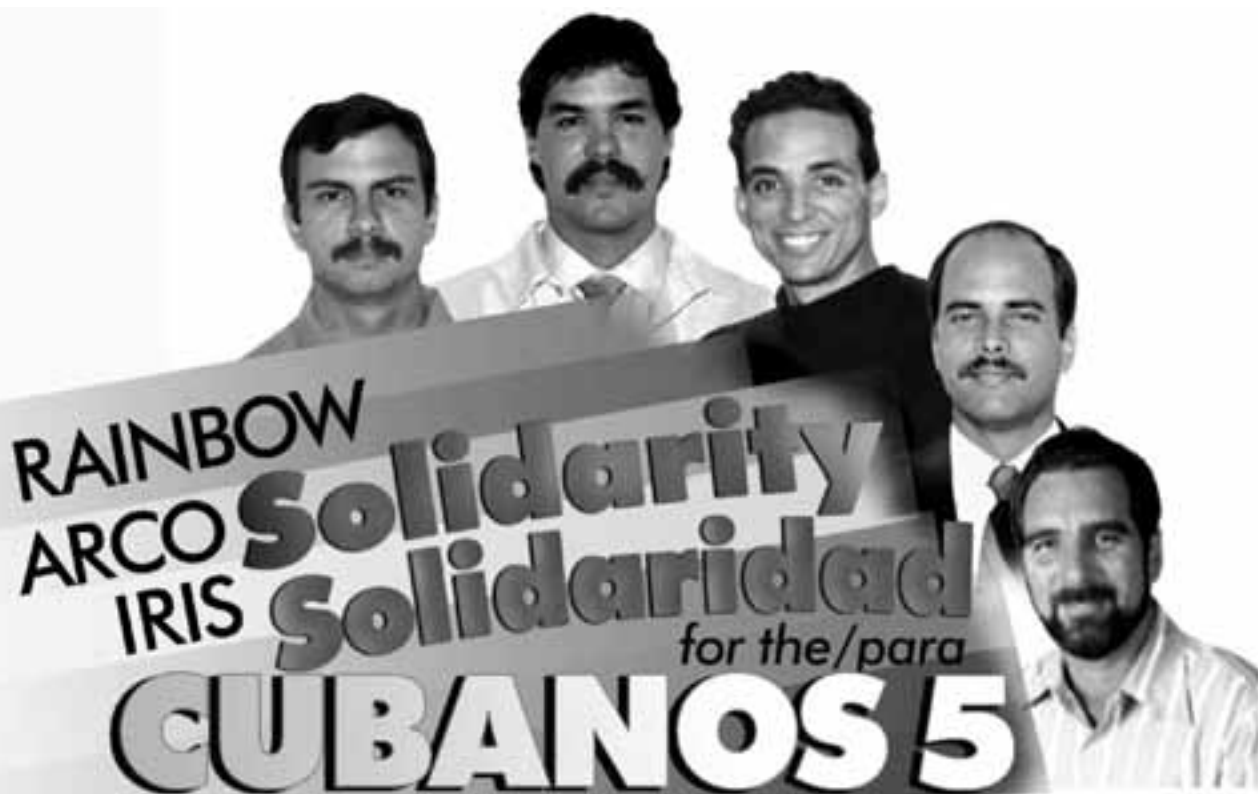
Pronto el movimiento de mujeres estuvo sacudiendo al antiguo patriarcado. Y con la Rebelión de Stonewall en 1969, gente homosexual y transgénero salieron del closet para confrontar la intolerancia y la brutalidad policíaca, combatiendo por días en las calles de Greenwich Village en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Todas estas luchas consternaron a la clase dominante, la cual acumula tanta riqueza de la sociedad durante temporadas “tranquilas” cuando la explotación continua está inalterada.

Tenían que hacer concesiones. Y sus representantes cuidadosamente escogidos en la corte lo sabían. Entonces ellos se “mordieron la lengua” e hicieron decisiones que hubieran sido inconcebibles en temporadas más calmadas.

Hoy en día, una corte derechista parece tener el poder de una fuerza devastadora para aplastar los derechos de las masas. Son nombrados a perpetuidad y no tienen por qué temer un cambio menor de representantes electos. Pero deje que sientan la respiración caliente de la resistencia popular y militante y todo eso podría cambiar.

*Nota: La primera parte de este artículo se publicó la semana pasada.*



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