

MUNDO OBRERO

COLOMBIA

Asesinatos y terror

12

WOMEN SPEAK OUT

'Equality for all, now'

3

'FREE THE CUBAN FIVE'

Struggle gears up

8-9



FIGHTING RACISM AT HOME

Then & now
Centerfold

Save Kenneth Foster!
Shown here with daughter Nydesha.

UTAH MINE DISASTER

Bosses put profits before lives

4

EYEWITNESS LATIN AMERICA



• Police killing roils Puerto Rico

10

• Big Oil linked to murders in Colombia

11

Subscribe to Workers World

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

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

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

212-627-2994 www.workers.org

Deportation of Arellano galvanizes movement

Immigrants, supporters call for national protest

By LeiLani Dowell
New York

Activists and supporters of the immigrant rights movement have stepped up their tactics and organizing in the face of the U.S. government's increased repression against immigrants—including deaths at detention centers and the arrest and deportation of Elvira Arellano.

On Aug. 15 some 10 immigrant rights activists, including four women from Hermandad Mexicana, were arrested after blocking traffic outside the Metropolitan Detention Center in Los Angeles to demand full legalization of currently undocumented immigrants and an end to the raids and deportations terrorizing immigrant workers. Dozens of supporters participated in the demonstration. Their court date is Sept. 7.

Also on Aug. 15 at the Los Angeles Federal Building demonstrators exposed the inhuman treatment of immigrant detainees resulting in recent unnecessary deaths. Victoria Arellano, a transgender woman, was denied medical treatment resulting in her death on July 20.

Four days later, immigrant worker, mother and activist Elvira Arellano (no relation to Victoria) was arrested in Los Angeles and deported to Mexico. Arellano, who had been in sanctuary with her son, Saulito, in a Chicago church for the past year, left the church recently to participate in a speaking tour on immigrant rights.



Elvira Arellano with civil rights leader Jacqueline Jackson.

Since the beginning of her sanctuary, Arellano's struggle—to remain in the United States to work and take care of her son—had galvanized the movement for immigrant rights, and this newest provocation against her has only increased the dedication of the movement.

Despite pouring rain, the May 1st Coalition held a
Continued on page 3



WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH, LEFT AND ANNE PRUDEN ABOVE

John Parker, International Action Center-L.A. coordinator, arrested at immigration rally in Los Angeles, left. Brenda Stokely of the NY Solidarity Coalition for Katrina/Rita Survivors, above, leads chant at immigration rally in New York.

LOS ANGELES

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sept 22-24 1st Tent City: Westwood Fed. Bldg.

Sept 25 March to downtown Fed. Bldg.

Sept 25-29 2nd Tent City

Gather at Noon
Broadway & Olympic

LA TONC at the Int'l Action Center
5274 W Pico Blvd, Rm. 203, L.A. 90019
323.936.7266

MARCH & RALLY SEPT. 29

People's encampment
in front of the Capitol
Sept 22-29

NYC: 212.633.6646

Solidarity Center 55 W. 17 St., NY, NY 10011

Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC) www.troopsoutnow.org

STOP the WAR at home & abroad

Join by Aug. 31 to vote

WBAI radio election represents political battle

By John Catalinotto
New York

The Local Station Board of WBAI, Pacifica's flagship radio station, is holding an election this October that could alter the current progressive policies of the only major broadcast medium here that regularly presents anti-imperialist and anti-racist programming. To vote in this Local Board election, listeners must become active members by Aug. 31.

Lisa Davis, who is a current Local Board member from the Justice and Unity Campaign running for re-election this October and an African-American reparations activist, told Workers World that it is "vitaly important that there be strong people on the boards—not just armchair activists, but people engaged in political struggles—to make sure that the interests of the African-American, the Indigenous and other oppressed nationalities and communities are fully represented.

"A struggle for control of the local stations affects not just WBAI locally, but profoundly affects the entire Pacifica network—which has a national board for the listener-supported stations across the country. The fights within the WBAI Local Board are not just infighting or a clash of egos. The fighting represents groups with completely opposing political views. Justice and Unity wants to continue WBAI's record of reporting on and discussing the struggles of the oppressed communities. The others, who have at times called themselves List Prog or ACE, are completely opposed to our political perspectives," she stressed.

"While they say they believe in our struggles, they oppose us on every front and have little if any connection to the community. If they have their way, WBAI could end up sounding like NPR lite.

"Remember also that WBAI and Pacifica have an enormous archive on African-American history and the history of the struggle of other oppressed peoples. You can't talk about civil rights and liberation without talking about African Americans, about Indigenous nations. No other media has covered these struggles like WBAI and Pacifica. And the community must make sure that we have people on these boards who are sensitive to these struggles, and that live and breathe them, to ensure that the historical treasures contained in these archives are respected and protected. We can't afford to let WBAI/Pacifica, this tremendous asset, fall into the wrong hands," Davis concluded.

How to join by Aug. 31

In order to join WBAI, listeners must either contribute at least \$25 or do three hours of volunteer work by Aug. 31, or apply for a hardship waiver. Since this election can determine the direction of the station, the Justice and Unity Campaign—currently holding a narrow majority on WBAI's Local Board—has urged everyone to make

sure they are eligible to vote in this election (see justice-unity.org). There are no residency restrictions.

WBAI broadcasts both political discussion and cultural programming representing a broad spectrum of oppressed communities in and around New York City, especially the most oppressed. Based in downtown Manhattan, the station's broadcast range of 50 miles puts 20 million people in reach of its programs.

Over the past seven years the struggle over program content and station organization has given birth to two opponent coalitions. The more consistently progressive one is the Justice and Unity Campaign, which is made up of and represents New York's diverse population, reflecting the concerns and fight-backs of African-American, Latin@, Asian/Pacific Islander, Arab, Indigenous and immigrant communities.

Among Justice and Unity's elected representatives are Ray Laforest, a labor and Haitian community organizer; International Action Center co-coordinator Sara Flounders; and Black Liberation theologian Father Lawrence Lucas.

The other coalition, which in 2006 ran under the name of the Alliance for Community Elections (ACE), focuses on its members' business, administrative and fund-raising experience. One of the Alliance leaders, multimillionaire Steve Brown, recently issued a letter asking WBAI supporters to send their contributions for the station to him personally. This would in effect sabotage WBAI's funding.

Since WBAI is in the center of the FM dial in the center of the biggest U.S. metropolitan area, it is worth hundreds of millions of dollars. So WBAI is a target not only of government and right-wingers, but also of those wanting to enrich themselves. In 2000 a business-oriented group seized control of the station for about a year and nearly ran it into the ground in an apparent attempt to privatize the station.

Michael Tarif Warren supports Justice and Unity

WBAI and Justice and Unity has gained the support of political activists like African-American attorney Michael Tarif Warren, who recently wrote a support letter urging people to become members of WBAI by Aug. 31:

"When my wife Evelyn and I were brutalized recently by the NYPD, WBAI played a key role in mobilizing the community. ... With a \$25 donation, you can help the station survive and become a member eligible to vote in this fall's local board election.

"The Justice and Unity Campaign has fought to preserve the ability of WBAI to serve communities ignored by the mainstream media. This year's election is critical to maintaining the station's strong anti-racist programming. In sum, WBAI needs both your financial and political support. Call 212-209-2845 or donate via credit card at www.wbai.org," Warren wrote. □



★ In the U.S.

- Deportation of Arellano galvanizes movement 1
- WBAI radio election represents political battle 2
- Full equality for all women now! 3
- Mineworkers likely left for dead by management 4
- SF Bay Area says 'No' to anti-immigrant hate speech . . . 4
- On the picket line 4
- Activists demand moratorium on foreclosures, layoffs . . 5
- NYC water is at risk 5
- Garvey Day promotes socialism in Africa and beyond . . . 6
- Inner City Voices: 'I Just Wanna Testify' 6
- Support builds to save Kenneth Foster's life 7
- Le Monde supports U.S. death-row prisoner 7
- Justice demands freeing the Cuban Five 9

★ Around the world

- Lavender and red, part 110 8
- Book review: Moving story on plight of Palestinians . . . 10
- Police execution in Puerto Rico 10
- Oil companies behind violence in Colombia 11

★ Editorials

- The Pentagon's problem 10

★ Noticias En Español

- Colombia 12

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 49, No. 34 • Aug. 30, 2007
Closing date: Aug. 22, 2007

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

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

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

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at www.workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

Subscribe to Workers World Newspaper

4 weeks trial subscription \$2 NAME _____ PHONE _____
 One year \$25
Workers World Newspaper ADDRESS _____ EMAIL _____
 55 W. 17 St. 5 Fl., NY, NY 10011
 212-627-2994 www.workers.org CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

JOIN US.

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

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

National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org
Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org
Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-235-7040
baltimore@workers.org
Boston
284 Armory St.,
Boston, MA 02130
617-983-3835
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org
workersworld.net/boston

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-566-1115
buffalo@workers.org
Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org
Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org
Denver
denver@workers.org
Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202
313-831-0750
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 595
Houston, TX 77001-0595
713-861-5965
houston@workers.org
Los Angeles
5274 West Pico Blvd.,
Suite 203
Los Angeles, CA 90019
323-936-1416
la@workers.org
Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org
Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, PA 19139
610-453-0490
phila@workers.org
Raleigh, N.C.
raleigh@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221
richmond@workers.org
Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org
San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92104
619-692-0355
San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org
Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org



Full equality for all women now!

By Sue Davis

"The women's struggle needs a revival of militancy and action, with low income and oppressed women taking the lead," Kris Hamel, a founding member of Detroit Action Network for Reproductive Rights, told Workers World. To back up those words with action, DANFORR has called for an Aug. 24 picket line and rally at 5:30 p.m. at Grand Circus Park, a major intersection in downtown Detroit.

"All women's rights are under attack," continued Hamel, "whether it's abortion rights, the right to raise children if that's our choice—with everything they need for a decent life—or the right to equal pay with men. Every working-class struggle impacts women the most, and

that's why we need to have our presence everywhere.

"We won't sit back and let inequality and oppression still be OK in the 21st century. We won't let the enemies of reproductive justice and women's equality think they have free rein to push us back. We are not going back!"

DANFORR's action is part of the national mobilization for Aug. 24-27 called by the National Women's Fightback Network to demand economic, social and reproductive justice and full equality for all women. The occasion is "Women's Equality Day," Aug. 26, a supposed national holiday commemorating the date the 19th amendment passed, giving women the right to vote.

"Because recent Supreme Court decisions banned an abortion procedure

and gave the bosses a green light to discriminate against women in pay, we felt women needed to take to the streets to demand real equality," explained Hamel.

A speakout is planned in New York City on Aug. 27 to "stop the attacks on women at home and abroad." Kathy Durkin, an organizer there, proposed the day be renamed "Women's Fightback Day" to more accurately reflect the need to end the deeply entrenched racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic discrimination and economic exploitation of women. Among the diverse issues to be raised at the speakout are the repression against and deportation of immigrant workers such as Elvira Arellano, which will be addressed by Teresa Gutierrez of the May 1 Coalition, and police brutality by attorney Evelyn Warren, who was recent-

ly attacked by racist cops in Brooklyn.

Since the NWFN call was sent out at the end of July, nearly 50 endorsements have come in from all around the country as well as England and Australia. Actions are being planned by NWFN groups in Buffalo, N.Y., Chicago and Boston in addition to Detroit and New York.

A Women's Fightback Network contingent from Boston will join with anti-war, environmental and labor groups on Aug. 25 in Kennebunkport, Maine, the Bush family's vacation home, to demand an end to the war and occupation.

"The response to our call has given the struggle for women's rights a boost," noted Hamel. "Now people recognize that a new kind of women's rights movement is being advocated and organized." □

Deportation of Arellano galvanizes movement Immigrants, supporters call for national protest

Continued from page 1

major press conference and picket at the Federal Plaza in New York on Aug. 21 in support of Elvira Arellano and revolutionary Chilean activist Victor Toro, who also faces deportation.

A press release for the conference read in part: "Elvira's deportation is an example of the unjust, cruel and brutal immigration policy of this country.

"In recent days, the Bush administration and the Department of Homeland Security have announced plans on immigration policy that aim to drive immigrants further and further underground. Their aim is not to deport the 14 million undocumented in this country but to force this reserve army of labor into a more manageable and super-exploitable pool of workers.

"This attack drives down wages on all workers, U.S. and foreign born. The raids are meant to tell all workers in this country that they had better not fight back or organize for health care, job security and so on.

"Elvira's decision to come out of sanctuary in a church in Chicago and go on a national speaking tour to speak against these policies is but one of many examples that immigrants and their activists will not be intimidated."

Present at the news conference were Nieves Ayres, Victor Toro Defense Committee; Walter Sinche, Pachamama Organization; Teresa Gutierrez, May 1st Coalition; Larry Holmes, Troops Out Now Coalition; Brenda Stokely, Katrina Survivors Coalition; Sharon Black, Women's Fightback Network; Alba Mota, May 1st Coalition; Marina Diaz, Guatemalan Immigrant Rights Group; Mike Gimbel, AFSCME Local 375 of District Council 37; Rita Dentino of Casa Freehold; Comrade Shahid of Pakistan/U.S.A. Freedom Forum; and representatives of the Hip Hop Movement Rebel Diaz.

The press conference showed diverse support for Elvira and solidarity between immigrants and U.S. workers. Everyone at the conference called for mass actions Sept. 12.

Gutierrez said, "Sept. 12 will be a day of national action in defense of immigrants. There will be hunger strikes, demonstrations in New York City, Washington, D.C., and around the country. In addition, the May 1st coalition will accompany Victor Toro on Sept. 12 to Buffalo, where a hearing on his case will be heard. September 12 will resonate to the White House and to the callous border walls in Arizona and Texas. All out for Sept. 12!"

Of Arellano's deportation and the recent developments in the immigrant rights struggle, Javier Rodriguez of the May 1 National Movement and the March

25 Coalition in Los Angeles said, "Elvira's case is uniting the movement, people from different backgrounds and points of view are coming together in one united strug-

gle. This is a tremendous development."

Cheryl LaBash contributed to this report.

E-mail: ldowell@workers.org



Immigration rights rally in New York City.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

End the wars! Use the money to provide—

- Jobs at a living wage with pay equity, equal access, no discrimination
- Free, universal, sensitive, accessible health care for all
- Free education—from day care through adult training to life-long learning
- Affordable housing & safe homes for everyone
- Reproductive justice for all women—ob-gyn services, paid maternity leave & job protection, safe contraception, no forced sterilization, full access to abortion, positive sex education, all the social & economic resources needed to raise healthy children
- Centers for shelter & self-defense against sexual & domestic violence, for independent living for disabled people and seniors, for recovery from addiction, with an end to racist, sexist incarcerations
- Full rights & services for all undocumented workers & an end to ICE raids
- Rebuilding the infrastructure of New Orleans & Gulf Coast to bring Hurricane Katrina & Rita survivors home
- Cancellation of all student loan debt with support services for young people
- A national campaign against racism, sexism & anti-LGBT bigotry

The Women's Fightback Network is a grassroots alliance of poor and working women of all nationalities, immigrants, disabled activists, students, elders and youth, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender women—all standing together to protest budget cuts, racism, sexism, homophobia and war. (WFN affiliated to WIDF)



STOP the WAR Against WOMEN AT HOME & ABROAD

Unite against sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia!

Unite against economic exploitation! Unite to win everything we need!

Issued by the National Women's Fightback Network

New York: 55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011

For info. call: 212-633-6646. E-mail: NYWomenFightback@action-mail.org

Boston: 284 Amory S., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

For info. call: 617-522-6626. E-mail: wfn@iacboston.org

MONDAY
AUG • 27
SPEAK OUT
RALLY 5-7 PM
UNION SQUARE
NYC



Mineworkers likely left for dead by management

By David Hoskins

Officials of Murray Energy Corp., co-owner of the Crandall Canyon mine where six Utah miners have been trapped since Aug. 6, all but called for an end to efforts to rescue the miners. Vice-president Rob Moore stated on Aug. 19, "It's likely these miners may not be found. ... I can't say with certainty we will be able to continue the underground efforts." Moore's comments follow the deaths of three rescue workers from a cave-in while tunneling underground. Six other rescue workers were injured in the incident.

The trapped miners' families justifiably lashed out at the federal government and company officials. During a news conference Sonny Olsen, spokesperson for the families, read a prepared statement as 70 family members stood behind him. The statement read in part, "We feel that they've given up and that they are just waiting for the six miners to expire."

Company officials have so far denied the family members' demand that rescuers immediately begin drilling a 30-inch hole so that a rescue capsule could be lowered to save the miners. "We are here at the mercies of the officials in charge and their so-called experts. Precious time is being squandered here and we do not have time to spare," said Olsen.

If the miners are left for dead, it will be the result of company greed to extract the last bit of coal possible to bring to market. Bob Murray, chief of Murray Energy Corp., admitted that the mine had utilized a technique known as retreat mining for decades. Retreat mining forces miners to yank out a mine's pillars, grabbing the last bits of available coal. The six miners may

not have been able to retreat in time to save their lives.

The Crandall Canyon Mine owners' failure to continue rescue operations doesn't just ignore the rightful wishes of the families to have peace of mind and see their loved ones given a proper and humane burial. The mine owners are also ignoring the history of rescue operations in an attempt to spare the cost of additional efforts.

Hominy Falls, W.Va., saw a tragedy in 1968 similar to the one currently playing out in Utah. Six miners stayed trapped in a cold and flooded mine only three feet high for ten days. Former mine superintendent Frank Davis admits there was no doubt in his mind at the time that the miners had already died. The miners, however, managed to gather a few sandwiches and a canteen of water together and survived for ten days until rescue workers finally reached them. Jennings Lilly, one of the six miners trapped in the 1968 incident, has said, "Given what happened to us, I wouldn't give up on them."

Another mining tragedy occurred in Princeton, Ind., on Aug. 10 when three men riding in an open-top mining bucket plunged 500 feet and were killed instantly at the Gibson County coal mine. The U.S. Mine Safety Health Administration had cited the company for 353 violations last year—127 of which were deemed serious. This year the mine had so far received another 292 citations. Eighty-four of this year's citations were deemed serious.

Coalmine fatalities more than doubled in 2006 due to a severe accident at a mine in Sago, W.Va., and several other tragedies that year involving multiple fatalities. Coalmining is one of the ten most dangerous industries in the U.S. and coal

miners across the state of Utah may be at particular risk of disregard for their lives due to owner and management racism against the large numbers of miners who are immigrants or of immigrant descent. Three of the six miners trapped in the Crandall Canyon Mine are from Mexico.

United Mine Workers of America activists warned that tragedies like the one in Utah and the 2006 Sago mine disaster will keep happening unless mining conditions are made safer. The UMWA pointed out that many safety precautions could easily be enacted that could save lives.

UMWA President Cecil Roberts pointed out, "From almost the beginning of the tragedy that continues to unfold at the Crandall Canyon mine, Murray Energy CEO Robert Murray has blamed everyone but himself and his company for the situation at that mine. ... The safety record of the operation and mining plans at the Crandall Canyon mine and other Murray operations speak for themselves. We do not need to raise that record publicly. Many independent mine safety experts and others—including some in the media—are quite capable of doing that for themselves and are doing so independently of the UMWA."

Murray had previously attacked the UMWA for expressing its condolences to the family members and for calling for a thorough and timely investigation into the causes of collapse. Crandall Canyon Mines are nonunion and the company recently issued statements in effect stating that officials saw no reason not to continue risking the lives of more mineworkers, for the sake of coal company profits, by continuing retreat mining in the areas surrounding the six entombed miners. □

On the picket line

By Sue Davis

First UAW strike vote

When General Motors workers in Lansing, Mich., convened on Aug. 16, a whopping 97 percent of Local 652 members voted to strike.

That's the first UAW local to authorize a strike if negotiations fail when the current contract with GM, Ford and Chrysler expires on Sept. 14. The UAW has requested that locals hold strike authorization votes by the end of August.

On Aug. 16 Reuters quoted UAW President Ron Gettelfinger as saying he's not entering talks "in a concessionary mode," so a strike is possible. Stay tuned.

Support Smithfield workers Aug. 29

Workers at Smithfield Foods in Tar Heel, N.C., have been fighting for over a decade for union representation. They see it as the only way to end the company's racism, violence, intimidation, poverty wages and brutal, crippling working conditions.

On Aug. 29, hundreds of Smithfield supporters will demonstrate at the company's annual shareholders' meeting in Williamsburg, Va. They will present a petition demanding justice and union recognition for the multinational work force. To sign it, go to www.uncw.org or www.jwj.org.

A recent example of Smithfield's anti-worker tactics was the Aug. 6 firing of union supporter Jose Ozorio Figueroa. Ozorio was one of the main organizers of last November's spontaneous walkout protesting the company's harassment of Latin@ workers over immigration issues. Though Ozorio was only four minutes late for his shift—company policy allows two such infractions—he was summarily fired. And he was told he could not collect vacation pay he had earned.

For that injustice alone, Smithfield deserves to know that progressive people

Continued on the next page

SF Bay Area says

'No' to anti-immigrant hate speech

By Joan Marquardt

More than 300 mostly Latin@ workers and students rallied in front of Clear Channel Communications-owned radio station KNEW on Aug. 15, protesting the vitriolic hate directed at the immigrant community by local commentator Michael Savage.

On July 5, denigrating the students, immigrants and children of immigrants that are locally fasting for immigrant rights, Michael Savage said on the air, "Let them fast until they starve to death."

The outcry was immediate. The enraged community, individuals and organizations coming together as the Hispanic Anti-Defamation League demanded that the xenophobic messages delivered during Savage's daily three-hour radio show—clearly intended to dehumanize immigrants—cease at once.

People traveled from all around—Sacramento, Stockton, Napa, Pinole, Richmond, Pittsburgh, Hayward, Berkeley and San Jose—to participate. Chanting, "Free speech, NOT hate speech!" the demonstration was viewed by the radio station management, as well as Savage himself, from windows directly above the street. Protesters held signs reading, "Hate speech is NOT protected under the first amendment," "Hate speech on radio is a threat to national security" and "Desear la muerte a alguien no es libertad de expresion" (Wishing for someone's death is not free speech). One large sign



WW PHOTO:
JOAN
MARQUARDT

was attached to the rear of a car, announcing, "The U.S. citizens of the Bay Area condemn the racist, hateful and defamatory language used by Michael Savage against the Hispanic immigrant community!" Passersby in cars, trucks and buses honked their horns and waved in support. In addition to brief speeches and the chants, the spirited crowd sang "De

Colores," changing some lyrics to fit the occasion, and Mariachi musicians played.

Speaking about the demonstration the next day, organizer Aurora Grajeda said: "We were outraged, yet we were festive. ... At the end, so many of us seemed reluctant to leave, we dragged our feet from the place where we created memories and wrote history. Yes, this is another chapter

of countless immigrant chronicles, where there are battles, bravery, sacrifice, wins, losses, life and death. We came determined to fight for our lives, for our future and that of future generations, fully knowing that we are facing powerful forces that will fight us every step of the way. ... There was not only committed determination, but eagerness to do what needs to be done." □

MICHIGAN

Activists demand moratorium on foreclosures, layoffs

By Jerry Goldberg

The Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice has begun a grassroots campaign demanding that Gov. Jennifer Granholm use her emergency powers under Michigan law to declare a State of Economic Emergency and impose a moratorium to stop foreclosures, utility shut-offs, evictions, school shutdowns, plant closings and layoffs.

MECAWI activists distributed a broadsheet on this campaign at the African World Festival in downtown Detroit and are beginning to circulate it statewide as well. The broadsheet states in part:

"Michigan is among the leaders in the nation in foreclosures. Forty-seven thou-

sand households have had their water shut off in Detroit, and tens of thousands of homes statewide are without heat and/or electricity. Child poverty in Michigan has risen statewide to nearly 20 percent, and almost 50 percent in Detroit. Schools, hospitals, factories are shutting down in unprecedented numbers."

The broadsheet notes the legal basis for turning this situation around: "Three separate Michigan statutes—MCL 10.31 et.seq., 10.85 et.seq. and 30.401 et.seq.—mandate that the governor declare a State of Emergency during periods of crisis, natural or 'man-made,' and provide special powers to meet the crisis. We demand that Gov. Granholm utilize these emergency powers to impose an Emergency Moratorium."

The MECAWI broadsheet points out: "During the 1930s the state legislature utilized its emergency powers to pass the Mortgage Moratorium Act, Act No. 98, Pub. Acts 1933. The Act extended the redemption period during which homeowners could not have their property taken from them after foreclosure, from six months to five years.

"In *Russell v. Battle Creek Lumber Co.*, 265 Mich. 649, 649-650 (Mich. 1934), the Mortgage Moratorium Act was upheld as constitutional by the Michigan Supreme Court, based on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Home Building & Loan Association v. Blaisdell*, 290 U.S. 398 (54 Sup. Ct. 231, 88 A.L.R. 1481), which upheld a similar moratorium passed in Minnesota."

In the *Blaisdell* decision, the Supreme Court cited and approved the holding of Minnesota's Supreme Court, which said that "the economic emergency which threatened 'the loss of homes and lands which furnish those in possession the necessary shelter and means of subsistence' was a 'potent cause' for the enactment of the statute." The Supreme Court explicitly held that the states' right to take emergency measures to protect the health and welfare of the people can supersede private contracts.

It's time for a national moratorium on foreclosures

On April 4 a coalition of national civil-rights groups—including the Leadership Council on Civil Rights, NAACP, National Fair Housing Alliance, National Council of La Raza, and the Center for Responsible Lending—issued a call for a six-month national moratorium on sub-prime mortgage foreclosures.

The mortgage foreclosure crisis is deepening because banks and other financial institutions are tightening credit. The crisis is extending from the sub-prime sector, which hits people of color the hardest due to the racist policies of the banks and lending institutions, to the general working-class population.

This has already happened in Michigan, where the bulk of foreclosures are of so-called prime mortgages, which workers who have been laid off, cut back, or forced into early retirement can no longer pay. Michigan has one of the highest rates of housing foreclosure in the country. One out of every 29 households in Wayne County faces foreclosure. This is second in the country only to Stockton, Calif., where one out of 27 homes is in foreclosure. (Detroit News, Aug. 15)

According to a recent article in the

Detroit News, Wayne County's foreclosure rate is up 99 percent from one year ago. The suburbs are also being hard hit: Oakland County's foreclosure rate is up 120 percent from last year, and Macomb County's rate is up 74 percent. Other areas being pummeled with high foreclosures include Las Vegas, Denver, Miami, Cleveland and Memphis. (Aug. 15)

The credit crisis is sharpening the already deep crisis for auto workers as they head into contract negotiations, contributing to a decline in auto sales and leading to higher interest rates for the heavily indebted auto companies—for which they will try to make up by intensifying their drive for wage and benefit cuts.

Every state constitution and/or legislature invests emergency powers in its officials to declare a state of economic disaster. In the 1930s approximately 25 states declared economic emergencies and imposed moratoriums on foreclosures. It is time to begin a campaign for a national moratorium on all foreclosures to meet the deepening capitalist crisis.

Billions for war should be used for human needs

The MECAWI broadsheet notes how an emergency moratorium would give people a chance to survive during the economic catastrophe facing the working class in Michigan while they strategize on how to fight to rebuild the state and guarantee the right to jobs, housing, health care and quality education for all. It points out that "more tax breaks for big business—the same corporations that have created this catastrophe with plant closings and layoffs—is not the answer."

In response to Granholm and all the other politicians in Michigan who cry that there's simply no money to fund human needs, the broadsheet points out: "This is the richest country in the world. There is plenty of money to fund human needs. The problem is that rather than spending money to help the working class survive the economic disaster we are facing,

the money is being wasted on an illegal, immoral, doomed war in Iraq.

"According to the National Priorities Project, the war on Iraq has cost the people of the United States more than \$450 billion. And the people of Michigan, confronted with the worst economic crisis since the depression, have been taxed to the tune of \$12 billion to fund the Iraq disaster.

"The next time Gov. Granholm, Sens. Levin or Stabenow, or your local mayor or councilperson tells you they have to cut back on health care or schools or jobs programs, here are some figures to throw back at them: The \$12 billion robbed from the people of Michigan to fund the illegal war in Iraq could be used instead to build 107,988 new housing units; place 1,588,520 children in Head Start; fund 581,410 four-year full-time college scholarships; pay the health-care costs of 7,181,636 children for one year; and pay the salaries of 207,845 public school teachers.

"That's just the money stolen from us to pay for the Iraq war. It doesn't include the billions spent on the occupation of Afghanistan. In addition, the Pentagon gets \$500 billion a year for bombs and weapons of mass destruction above and beyond the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. And how about the hundreds of billions in corporate welfare doled out every day?"

MECAWI hopes to help galvanize a struggle in response to the deepening economic crisis facing workers in Michigan. It is organizing people from around the state to attend the National March on Washington Sept. 29, to "demand an end to the war on Iraq, bring the troops home now, restore the \$450 billion stolen from the people of the U.S. for the war and use those funds for human needs at home, not for wars abroad."

To get involved in the MECAWI campaign for a Moratorium on foreclosures, etc., call (313) 319-0870, email moratorium@sbcglobal.net, and visit www.mecawi.org. □

ON THE PICKET LINE

Continued from page 4

all over this country support the workers. Please sign the petition.

Janitors rally in Boston

About 500 women, men and children marched through Boston's Financial District on Aug. 11 demanding higher wages, more hours and better health benefits for janitors.

"They pay us too little, and the hours are not enough," Rosalia Minas told the Aug. 12 Boston Globe. The immigrant from Guatemala has worked for 17 years as a part-time janitor. The pay is so low she has to work a second job to support her two children. No wonder she told the Globe she'd be willing to strike if negotiations fail.

The contract for approximately 10,000 janitors represented by Service Employees Local 615 will expire Aug. 31. The local represents janitors in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island.

Contract for Oakland, Calif., garbage workers

Victory finally arrived for nearly 500 garbage workers in Teamsters Local 70 who were locked out for 25 days in July by Waste Management of Alameda County. The lockout affected 200,000 residents in the greater Oakland, Calif., area and generated more than 3,000 complaints.

The workers voted July 28 to ratify a five-year contract that included strong wage and pension increases and protection from future increases in health-care costs. (Teamster news release, July 30)

In addition to support from other Teamster locals and the Alameda Labor Council, Local 6 of the Longshore Workers and Local 1546 of the Machinists refused to cross Local 70's picket lines.

Meanwhile, Waste Management faces a class-action lawsuit brought by enraged clients demanding a rebate for failure to provide service. (www.insidebayarea.com, July 27) Whatcha bet that kind of community protest makes Waste Management—and other private providers of community services—think twice before refusing to negotiate with unionized workers in the future? □

NYC water is at risk

By G. Dunkel

While there is a financial crisis raging right now in the United States and throughout the developed world that possibly might devastate its economy, the crumbling of its infrastructure could possibly be just as devastating.

New York City has two water tunnels—No. 1 and No. 2—built respectively in 1915 and 1933 and operated continuously ever since. Water tunnel No. 3 was started in 1970, is scheduled to be completed in 2020 and will let the other tunnels be shut for repairs.

Water tunnel No. 2 has been leaking since at least 1988 and is currently estimated to lose 35 million gallons of water a day. A 7,000-foot stretch is badly cracked and the city's Department of Environmental Protection, the organization in charge of the city's water supply, hasn't yet made repairs because it can't shut the tunnel down without disrupting the city's water supply.

The state controller issued an audit Aug. 15 saying that the city hasn't even drawn up contingency plans in case the tunnel collapses.

In response, Emily Lloyd, head of the city's environmental agency, said the tunnel is stable, the city has budgeted \$239 million to start its repairs, and the DEP was upgrading its emergency plans.

Lloyd is working in a city where an eruption in a steam line shut down a chunk of midtown Manhattan, a power outage last year shut down a large portion of Queens, and outages this year shut down a sprinkling of neighborhoods in Manhattan. New York City is where the Brooklyn Bridge, a vital transportation connection, has the same Dept. of Transportation rating as the bridge that failed in Minneapolis. (Newsday, Aug. 3)

It would be very hard for Lloyd to admit that there was a serious risk to NYC's water supply. □

MILWAUKEE

Garvey Day promotes socialism in Africa and beyond

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee, Wis.



Marcus Garvey

A wide range of progressive community organizations and individuals participated in the 19th annual Garvey Day in Milwaukee, sponsored by Africans on the Move, on Aug. 18. This year's theme: "A United, Socialist Africa: The only solution for Africans at home and abroad."

"It was a very inspiring and inspirational event and a much needed event because of the crisis that African people are in globally, so this year's theme, a 'united socialist Africa' was very well meaning," Loretta Williams of Africans on the Move told Workers World.

Garvey Day celebrates the historical legacy and contributions of Marcus, Amy Jacques and Amy Ashwood Garvey and their family, founders of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the "Back to Africa" movement.

Milwaukee has a long history of connec-

tions to Garveyism. Malcolm X's mother, who once resided in Milwaukee with her children, was a member of the UNIA.

Events included members of the African diaspora from Milwaukee and nationwide participating in a diverse array of cultural activities, speakers talking on various progressive and revolutionary topics, children's activities, and a parade.

The night before, a pre-Garvey Day social included a screening of "Bloqueo," a film about Cuba's socialist process, and a special tribute to Mr. Clayborn Benson, curator of the Wisconsin Black Historical Museum where the Garvey Day events were held. Mr. Benson founded the museum 20 years ago to showcase the contributions of people of African descent in Milwaukee and Wisconsin. The museum, similar to Milwaukee's Black Holocaust Museum founded by the late Dr. James Cameron, has become nationally and

internationally known due to the tireless and courageous efforts of these two people and many others from the Black Nation in Milwaukee.

Three organizations that work with Black youth—Campaign Against Violence, Running Rebels and Urban Underground—were also honored with community awards.

Joya Mosely, an African-American woman from Milwaukee studying in Cuba as part of that nation's program to help 1,000 mostly oppressed people from the United States achieve their M.D.s, spoke after the Cuban film. She gave a moving presentation about her positive experiences on the socialist island and her struggle to achieve her dream of becoming a doctor and giving back to her community. She's returning to the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana in September for her third year of studies.

A major focus of the Garvey Day celebration is political education. Topics throughout the two days this year included Cuba's socialist process, the Cuban

Five, anti-war discussions, the contributions of African socialists including Kwame Nkrumah and Walter Rodney, the immigrant rights struggle, supporting Alderman Michael McGee Jr. and Frank Jude Jr., police brutality, sexism, LGBT oppression, national oppression, Pan-Africanism and much more.

Asked about the significance of the 2007 Garvey theme, Loretta Williams and her twin sister Lolita, also a member of Africans on the Move, said that although it must be understood that oppressed people, particularly those of African descent, must have the right to self-determination and that every nation is unique, socialism is the only solution to capitalism/imperialism internationally.

Said Lolita Williams: "Socialism is a human extension and it provides for the basic needs. In a socialist society your basic needs are provided for. You might not have a Lexus or a Benz but you will sleep, eat, have education and with that you'll be able to improve the quality of life for everyone." □

Inner City Voices: 'I Just Wanna Testify'

On July 23, 1967, a confrontation between Detroit vice squad officers and a section of the Black community exploded into a major rebellion, the biggest in U.S. history up to that time. President Lyndon B. Johnson sent in National Guard and U.S. Army paratroopers to repress the population. The result was 43 dead, 467 injured and more than 7,200 arrests. More than 2,000 buildings burned down. The following is Part 4 of excerpts based on a July 21 talk given by Abayomi Azikiwe, editor of the Pan-African News Wire, to a Workers World forum in Detroit.

When the rebellion erupted in Detroit on July 23, 1967, it was part and parcel of a consistent pattern that had been evolving over the several summers since 1963. The mass demonstrations of the spring and summer of 1963 in Birmingham, Ala., and other areas of the South and North heightened the sense of community and shared commitment for advancing the status of African-Americans.

In Birmingham that spring—1963—a violent response from the African community erupted during the period when police used repressive tactics aimed at halting the demonstrations to desegregate public accommodations and businesses in that Southern city. In 1964 rebellions erupted in New York City, Rochester, N.Y., and other cities on the East Coast. Of course the Watts rebellion of August 1965 raised the stakes to even higher levels with the dispatching of National Guard units into Los Angeles to put down the upheaval.

In June of 1966 the "Black Power" slogan, which arose out of the cotton fields of the Delta Mississippi region during the "March Against Fear," became the rallying cry of the masses of youth and working people in the South, the West Coast and the North. That year even more urban rebellions erupted across the United States with outbreaks in the Hough Section of Cleveland in May and on the west side of Chicago in July.

The rebellions in Chicago were closely intertwined with the citywide Freedom Movement that sought to desegregate neighborhoods and to improve housing conditions in African-American communities. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

moved to a housing project in Chicago and declared that the Northern cities would now be a key focus of the next phase of the civil rights struggle in the aftermath of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the so-called "white backlash" unfolded.

When [Chicago] Mayor Richard Daley Sr. dismissed the moderate demands of the Chicago Freedom Movement, the masses erupted and rebelled for four days on the west side of the city. The city administration blamed King and the civil rights movement for raising the expectation of the African masses to unrealistic heights and consequently frustration would set in after immediate progress would not be forthcoming.

There is a certain logic to this allegation based upon the rapid development of historical and social processes during the middle and late years of the 1960s. In a matter of a few years the African masses went from seeing no potential relief from institutionalized racism, segregation and national oppression to the mass movement of hundreds of thousands of people in support of full equality and political power. This was coupled with the overall international situation. As Malcolm X as well as others observed, the African nations were making rapid advances in their national liberation struggles and served as a source of inspiration to Africans in the United States.

According to the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder, during 1967 more than 160 urban rebellions took place throughout the United States. Prior to the rebellion in Detroit, violence erupted in Newark, N.J., on July 12. New Jersey had been a center of urban rebellion since the summer of 1964. A widespread rebellion beginning on July 12 prompted the dispatching of the National Guard once again in an American city.

Other cities throughout the state also went up in flames with mass loot-

ing and sniping. In the aftermath of the Newark rebellion, a National Black Power Conference was held which drew people from throughout the United States. Broad sections of the African-American movement gathered and grappled with the question of what strategies would take the struggle forward amid mass rebellion and increasing repression on the part of the Johnson administration, which was caught in a military quagmire in Vietnam facing growing casualties and tactical defeats on the ground.

Sherman Adams wrote in the Oct. 20, 1967, issue of the "Inner-City Voice" that the National Black Power Conference in Newark was a watershed in the ideological developments of the time period. Adams says in his article, which was published in the aftermath of the rebellion:

"The conference was clearly not just a small, secret meeting of burning eyed radicals, but a gathering of over 1,000 registered delegates from 38 states, representing a broad cross-section of Black America. There were old women from Rochester on welfare, Mississippi cotton pickers, municipal judges, Black Muslims, Black Catholics, broken down ex-boxers, Black Republicans, and a police captain from Harlem.

"Every major black organization in the U.S. was represented: H. Rap Brown of SNCC, Floyd McKissick of CORE, Watts' nationalist leader Ron Karenga, Dr. Martin Luther King's top troubleshooter Rev. Jesse Jackson and representatives from the Urban League were all official delegates. The delegates emphasized the role of Black Americans in the international struggle for human rights, a theme which earlier was developed by the late Malcolm X.

"A black manifesto was issued condemning the aggressive U.S. policy in Vietnam, Cuba and other foreign countries. Part of the manifesto read:

"Black people in America allowed

themselves to become the tool of policies of white supremacy. It is evident that it is in our own interest to develop and propagate a philosophy of blackness as a social psychological, political, cultural and economic directive. ...

"Blacks in America, Asia, Africa, and Latin America stand at the crossroads to either expanding revolution, or ruthless extermination."

"At about 4:30 p.m. on the first day of the Conference Ralph Featherstone, program director of SNCC, whispered in my ear, 'We are going for the revolution.' Within 10 minutes a nervous anxiety had spread through the crowd. Ralph stood up and asked to be heard; Dr. Wright granted him the floor. The young SNCC field worker said: 'In order that our Black brothers in Newark have not died in vain, I have a resolution I want to read:

"Whereas freedom and all of the rights conferred upon men has been the unshakable foundation of all societies ever since civilization were known and whereas man in his uncompromising struggle to be free has fought and died for centuries in rebellions, riots, insurrections, uprisings, revolts, crusades, revolutions and wars;

"Whereas the tree of freedom has been succored by the blood of such warriors as the Americans who died in the Revolutionary War, the French who stormed the Bastille, and the Asians and African battles against colonialism through insurrection;

"Whereas the nation of Black people which lives in the United States is determined it too will join the endless legion of Freedom Fighters by the fighting and dying for their freedom.

"Be it resolved that this National Conference on Black Power on July 20, 1967 hereby goes on record as strongly endorsing the black revolution. Further, that it proclaim its approval of the rebellions in cities from Watts to Newark as necessary to achieve nationhood."

"Mr. Featherstone, in addition, stated that Black people should pledge their loyalty and resources to their brothers in Black ghettos who carry the fury of the Black revolution on their shoulders. The resolution was adopted on the spot amidst shouting and cheering. It seemed

Continued on the next page

PART 4
The global struggle's link to Detroit's 1967 rebellion

As clock ticks towards execution

Support builds to save Kenneth Foster's life

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

Kenneth Foster's Aug. 30 execution is only days away, yet he, his family and supporters are not willing to give up the fight to save his life.

Foster did not kill anyone. The state of Texas is the first to admit this. But because when he was 19 years old, on Aug. 14, 1996, someone he was with murdered a young man, Foster was convicted and sentenced to death under Texas law.

However, under the law, Foster should not have been convicted because he did not fit the criteria of planning or conspiring or even anticipating a murder.

The last month has been a whirlwind of rallies, marches, forums, hip-hop concerts, and radio and TV interviews. Public meetings have been held in Houston, San Antonio and Austin, and also in Harlem, N.Y.

Foster's case has been covered in news media across the country and around the world. Even in Texas, several of the major daily newspapers, in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth and Galveston, have editorialized against his execution. From Australian radio to Spanish television, the world is learning about yet another case of an innocent person set for execution in Texas.

Texas state legislators have received more than 2,500 email letters asking them to look into Foster's case and to contact the governor and Board of Pardons and Paroles to stop his execution. Web sites and blogs are spreading the word.

This week a YouTube campaign to stop the execution began. People are recording a statement and uploading it to YouTube saying why Texas Gov. Rick Perry and the Board of Pardons should stop Foster's execution. Then they are sending a message to the governor and board that includes a link to their videos.

Inner City Voices

Continued from page 6

as though everyone at the conference, regardless of his political stripe, was concerned about the Black rebellion and the reaction of the white power structure." (ICV, October 20, 1967, p. 4).

These efforts to transform the urban rebellions into revolutionary insurrection were paramount in the minds of the most advanced elements in the Black Power movement in the United States. The Johnson administration and others within the Congress and the intelligence community sought to stifle these efforts through the intensification of the Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) that specifically targeted the most active organizations and leaders with both the civil rights and Black Power tendencies in the African-American political spectrum.

One question that arose in government circles was whether the rebellions were planned or derived from a national conspiracy. In June of 1967 several members of the Revolutionary Action Movement were arrested and charged with a conspiracy to assassinate civil rights leaders such as Roy Wilkins of the NAACP and Whitney Young of the National Urban League. RAM leaders issued a statement dismissing such allegations and stating that the arrests were part of a government plot to contain and isolate the militant wing of the movement from the African-American community as a whole.

Next, Part 5: July 23, 1967 and its aftermath: 'You set the scene'



Nydesha Foster and Mario Africa.



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Also this week, civil disobedience was planned for an Austin rally at the governor's mansion. And death penalty abolitionists in New York City planned to take signs against the execution of Kenneth Foster to the big glass windows at the ABC studio broadcast of "Good Morning America." A public forum featuring Foster's family is being held in Houston on Aug. 25.

Only four states across the country have laws that enable prosecutors to hold those who were merely present at the scene of a crime legally responsible. Texas is the only state that applies this statute in capital cases, making it the only place in the United States where a person can be factually innocent of murder and still face the death penalty.

Foster's attorney, Keith Hampton, filed a last appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court in mid-August, calling it a "shot-in-the-dark brief." It is based on the court's 1982 ruling in *Enmund vs. Florida* that forbade capital punishment for a getaway driver sitting in the car during a botched robbery-turned-murder. The court decided the case under the premise that the driver "did not kill or intend to kill, and thus his culpability is different from that of the robbers who killed."

In a separate case five years later, the justices ruled the death penalty can be imposed on an accomplice if he or she was a "major participant" in a murder and acted with "reckless indifference" to human life.

"There are constitutional limitations on what you can do to somebody who isn't the triggerman," said Steven Shatz, director of the University of San Francisco's Keta Taylor Colby Death Penalty Project. "Merely participating in a robbery is not sufficient, is not in itself a reckless disregard."

In Foster's case, not only was he not a participant in the robbery or murder, he did not have any knowledge that his friend was going to do it and he had no way of anticipating it.

Foster was driving his grandfather's car with three friends on that night in 1996. Two of the young men had committed two robberies that evening. As they were driving one man home, Foster's companion Maurecio Brown got out of the car to talk with a young woman while Foster and the other two sat in the car about 80 feet away with the windows rolled up and the radio playing. They reportedly heard a "pop" and realized that a shot had been fired.

Foster and Brown were tried together even though Brown admitted to the shooting as an act of self-defense. Both had inadequate court-appointed attorneys. Brown was executed in July 2006.

Two weeks ago, journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzales interviewed Foster's family on the radio and television show "Democracy Now." During the program, Foster's 11-year-old daughter, Nydesha, talked with wisdom and strength about her father.

"He encourages me," she said. "That's what keeps me strong. ... I would probably not be able to do anything, because I'd be so sad and stressed out. ... And even though he is a father behind glass, he does a lot of stuff for me. You know, he still is a father. And people need to recognize that. "When somebody is a big part of your heart, like my father is—I mean, my father is more than half of my heart. I mean, I love him so much. And if the state of Texas kills him just for driving a car, it's like you're killing my heart. It's like you're killing half of me. It's like if you execute him, you might as well execute me. ... But I think that I manage to keep myself together, because, you know, me and my father, we write back and forth. And, you know, we're constantly talking to each other. ... We're not going to let Texas separate us, because we love each other so much. I mean, I don't think there is a relationship this big, as me and my father's."

Foster's web page, www.freekenneth.com, has many of his writings. He ends one passage with these words: "I'm here to expose the death penalty for what it is ... and I will continue to scream that CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS GENOCIDE! AND I MEAN THAT!"

Call Texas Gov. Rick Perry at 512-463-1782 to demand that the execution of Kenneth Foster be stopped. Call the Texas Board of Pardons to ask for clemency for Foster at 512-463-1679. □

Le Monde supports U.S. death-row prisoner

By G. Dunkel

Le Monde, a major capitalist French newspaper, ran a prominent page 3, full-page story Aug. 4 on the case of Texas death row activist Kenneth Foster. The article analyzed Foster's conviction for "having seen a crime but not having done anything to stop it" and warmly portrayed the courage and fortitude he has demonstrated in facing the death penalty.

Le Monde also covered the broader use of the death penalty in the United States and that Texas carried out 139 executions while now-President George W. Bush was governor of the state. This focus on Bush might have been inspired by a desire to tarnish French President

Nicolas Sarkozy's vacation in New England and his lunch with Bush around the date of the article.

Other major French papers, including "Marianne," picked up the story after the Le Monde coverage.

No country in the European Union has the death penalty. Public opinion in France is dead set against it and it is a nonissue in French elections. Just a few far right, racist and xenophobic politicians openly support executions.

After two centuries of debate that began during the French Revolution in the late 18th century, the French parliament abolished the death penalty in 1981. This year a constitutional prohibition was established, even under a right-wing gov-

ernment, against ever sentencing anyone to death.

In the U.S., however, the Bush administration has gotten new power over states' use of the death penalty from the revised Patriot Act.

Once the Justice Department finishes writing the regulations, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales will have the authority to decide if federal litigation of prisoners' appeals—which are the main source of delays in death penalty cases—will be put on a fast track. This "fast track," according to lawyers, will substantially increase the difficulty of reversing an unjust verdict.

Gonzales was the Texas State Attorney General during Bush's term as governor and supervised all 139 capital cases. □

'Cuba: Estamos contigo!'

Rainbow Solidarity for Cuban Five circles the globe

By Leslie Feinberg

A multinational, multilingual group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) activists in the United States—the belly of the beast—issued a call in Spanish and English for Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five in mid-January 2007.

The five political prisoners—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—are collectively serving four life sentences and 75 years in far-flung U.S. penitentiaries. The “crime” they were convicted of is having infiltrated CIA-backed fascist commando groups in order to halt terror attacks against Cuba from U.S. soil.

The Rainbow Solidarity call demands a new trial and freedom for these political prisoners, defense of Cuban sovereignty and self-determination, and a halt to the illegal U.S. acts of war against Cuba—including the economic blockade and CIA-trained, funded and armed attacks by mercenary “contra” armies operating from this country.

This initiative was consciously issued by LGBT and other activists battling oppression based on sexuality, gender expression and sex—one of the targeted progressive movements at whom the imperialist campaign to vilify Cuba had been aimed.

This was not the first act of solidarity with Cuba by left-wing LGBT activists in the United States—not by a long shot. But the response to the Rainbow Solidarity initiative—swift and dramatic—signals a new day for LGBT support worldwide for Cuba.

Within hours and days after the call went out over the Internet, hundreds of individuals and organizations signed on to the call, posted on the www.freethefiveny.org web site (look for the rainbow).

Most exciting was how many of the signers immediately began forwarding the call to their lists.

Volunteers from around the world translated the introduction and call for Rainbow Solidarity to free the Cuban Five into simplified and traditional Chinese, Tagalog, Farsi, Turkish, Greek, Croatian, Portuguese, Italian, Danish, Japanese, French and German. More translations in the works or planned include Swahili, Urdu, Indonesian, Arabic, Korean, Bengali and a streaming video in ASL (American Sign Language).

International endorsements flooded in from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, occupied Palestine, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Wales and other countries, and from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Individuals and groups from every state in the continental United States signed on as well—from southern Florida to the Pacific Northwest, Southern California to Maine.

All told, they form an extraordinary and broad arc of a united front. A frequently updated list of signers is posted at www.freethefiveny.org.

Many names on the growing list will be recognizable as well-known LGBT activists and others battling oppression based



on sexuality, gender and sex, including women's liberationists.

This roster also reveals that many of these activists are also some of the hardest-working organizers in movements here and around the world against imperialist war, neo-liberalism, neo-colonialism, national oppression, racism, police brutality, prisons and the death penalty, sweatshops and capitalist globalization.

These are also leading activists in the struggle for immigrant rights; women's liberation, including reproductive rights; jobs; labor union, tenant and community organizing; education; health care and affordable housing; freedom for all U.S. political prisoners and for prisoner rights; liberation of oppressed nations; support for Cuba, and the revolutionary movement to overturn capitalism and build an economy based on planning to meet peoples' needs.

Expansive political spectrum

Early signers include Teresa Gutierrez, a longtime leader in the struggle to free the Cuban Five; former political prisoner and leading prison abolitionist Angela Y. Davis; Leslie Cagan, national coordinator of United for Peace and Justice; LeiLani Dowell, national coordinator of FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together); Stephen Funk, the U.S. Marine who was the first imprisoned Iraq War conscientious objector; Bev Tang, organizer for Anakbayan, the youth group of Bayan; Gerry Scoppettuolo, co-founder of GALLAN (Pride At Work, Boston); Lani Ka'ahumanu, BiNET USA; anti-imperialist activist Joo-hyun Kang; Atlanta community activist Pat Hussain; Camille Hopkins, director of NYTRO (New York Transgender Rights Organization) of Western New York; transgender activist Moonhawk River Stone; and Jesse Lokahi Heiwa, Queer People Of Color Action.

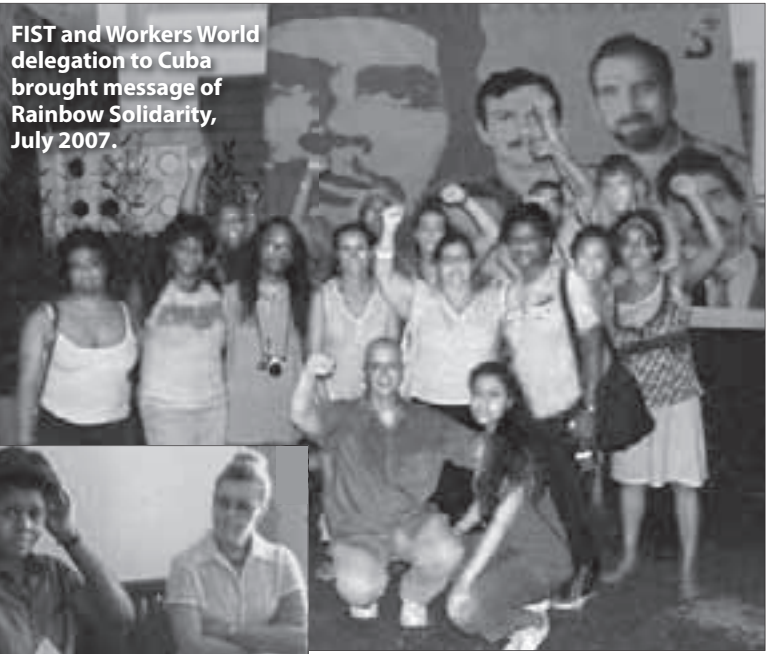
RaudaMorcos, general coordinator of Aswat-Palestinian Gay Women, signed on. The Puerto Rican Alliance of Los Angeles and its coordinator Lawrence Reyes have endorsed.

Activists Barbara Smith and Margo Okazawa-Rey signed on. The two were among the founders of the Combahee River Collective, a group of Black feminists of all sexualities who issued a historic 1977 statement against the “interlocking” system of “racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression.”

Former political prisoners Laura Whitehorn and Linda Evans added their names.

Louisville, Ky., filmmaker and activist Sonja de Vries, director of the documentary “Gay Cuba,” and Walter Lippmann, editor-in-chief of CubaNews, signed on. Other activists and organizations working in defense of Cuba added their weight to the call, including Cuba Education

FIST and Workers World delegation to Cuba brought message of Rainbow Solidarity, July 2007.



WW PHOTOS: DANTE STROBINO & MONICA MOOREHEAD

Freedom Party, Anaheim, Calif; and the LGBT Caucus of Workers World Party.

Among the signers are individuals and organizations whose activist work includes the struggle against women's oppression: Brenda Stokely, a leader of the Million Worker March Movement and NYCLAW; transnational feminist theorist Chandra Talpade Mohanty; Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center; Women's Fightback Network, Boston, Mass.; Melinda Clark, local co-founder of Code Pink in Willits, Calif.; Welfare Warriors, Milwaukee, Wis.; League of Women Voters in Montenegro; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) chapters in Washington, D.C.; Rome, Italy; and the Canadian Section in British Columbia.

Many labor activists have added their names and/or the endorsement of their unions, including Pride at Work/GALLAN Boston, Mass., AFL-CIO; Bus Riders Union/Labor Community Strategy Center, Los Angeles, Calif., and Guyanese-American Workers United, New York, N.Y. From Canada, Canadian Union Of Postal Workers, Calgary, Alberta; Canadian Union of Public Employees, Toronto, Ont.; and Hospital Employees' Union, Burnaby, B.C.

There's no end in sight to this rainbow.

Grassroots diplomacy

The Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five initiative is also giving voice to individuals who, living in capitalist democracies, have little political input except to be asked to pull a lever for a big-business candidate.

The Rainbow Solidarity call has become a poll that reveals a new grassroots sentiment as signers eloquently register their outrage at the continued imprisonment of the five Cubans and at Washington's economic and political blockade of Cuba and other illegal and covert acts of war.

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

David from New York state stresses how biased the trial venue was for the Five: “Five Cubans who were trying to stop the ultra-right terrorist groups in Miami from carrying out violent actions against the people of Cuba. Miami is the one city in the U.S. where the Five certainly could not receive a fair trial.”

Paul says: “As a gay man in South Florida who calls for freedom for our brothers, the Five, I am delighted to see this initiative. THEY MUST BE FREE!”

Tighe supports the five as “those most important defenders of everyone's right to live without fear of terrorism. The patri-



lavender
&
red #110

otic Cuban Five [are] illegally held political prisoners in a country with the most of its own people behind bars." Barry, who grew up in Miami, adds the need to organize to close down the U.S. prison at Guantanamo and free all those held there.

"T." from California, comments: "These five men, fighting against terrorism, have been imprisoned by the U.S. government—'MY' government! Jailing heroes and supporting terror, while pretending to do the opposite, is sadly all the public can count on from 'our' hypocritical, double-speaking, global corporate-run excuse for a 'by and for the people' government."

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

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

Richard, from Madera, Calif., says succinctly, "It's way past time to change our policy toward Cuba and the Cuban people."

Jerry, from Athletes United for Peace, U.S.-El Salvador Sister Cities, Nicaragua Solidarity Committee, writes: "These people were trying to prevent an act of terrorism. The country that claims to lead the 'War On Terror' is imprisoning them."

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

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

Ray from Farmington, Conn., suggests, "Put Cheney and Bush in jail instead of the Cuban Five."

Yancy, from the LGBTQI Desk of Bayan USA, affirms: "Mabuhang panaghiusang international!!! Long live international solidarity!!!"

Solidarity is not charity

Eric from Milwaukee reminds, "Ah, the things we gain from solidarity."

By defending Cuba against imperialist warfare, LGBT activists and organizations in the U.S. and other imperialist countries are breaking with their own ruling classes and extending their own unilateral declaration of peace to a socialist country.

By rejecting anti-communism, the movement against sexual, gender and sex oppression is combating capitalist ideology—a giant step towards liberation.

Cuba has much to teach those who yearn for the right to live and love without fear or censure about what it takes to begin the process of literally eradicating white supremacy, patriarchy and prejudice against same-sex love and gender/sex diversity; what it takes to create a new woman, a new man, a new human being, and new forms of communist comradeship.

The Cuban people fought back against enslavement for half a millennium. For the last half century they have resisted the most powerful slave-master in history, just 90 miles from their shores.

The famous labor union song poses the question sharply: Which side are you on?

Rainbow Solidarity answers: "Cuba, we are with you. Cuba, estamos contigo."

This is the last segment of the Cuba mini-series within the ongoing Lavender & Red Workers World newspaper series, which can be read in its entirety online at: www.workers.org.

Next: An anti-imperialist perspective on ending oppression based on sexuality, gender and sex.

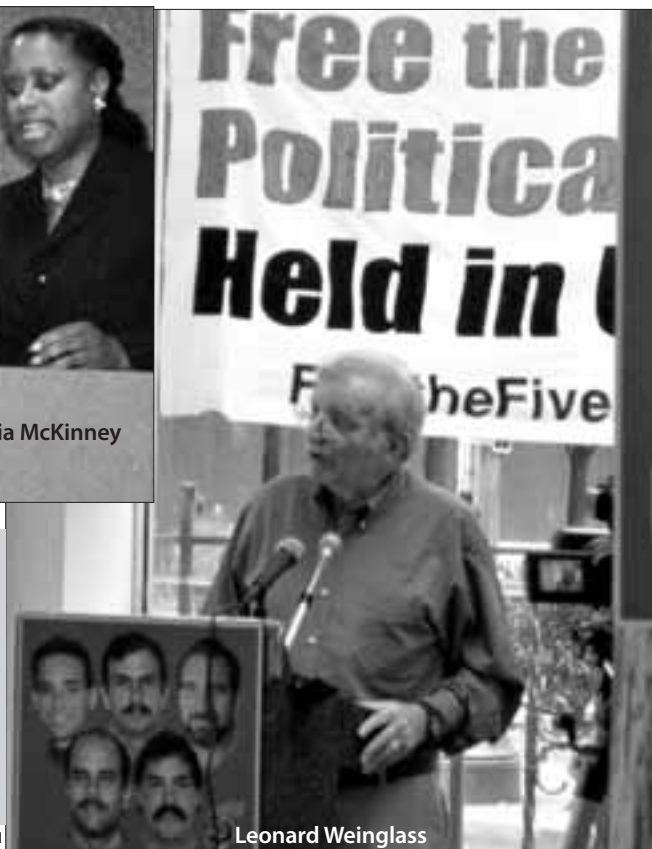
E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org



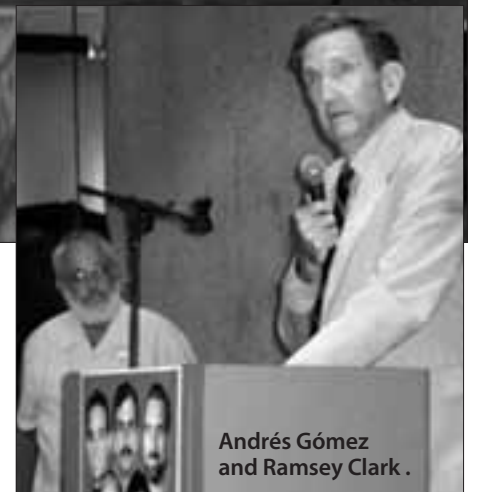
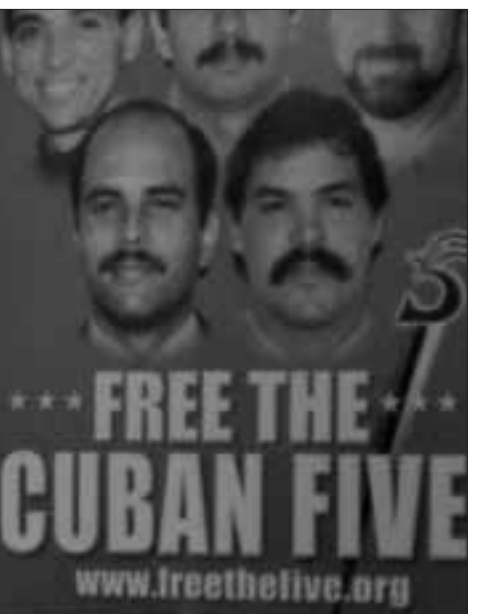
Cynthia McKinney

**Sept. 12- Oct. 6:
International
days to free
the Five**

WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH



Leonard Weinglass

Andrés Gómez
and Ramsey Clark

Justice demands freeing the Cuban Five

By Cheryl LaBash
Atlanta

The latest step in the international fight to free the Cuban Five unfolded in Atlanta on Aug. 20, where defense attorneys argued for a new trial before a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court. For a full two hours before the hearing, supporters—including both national and international notables and jurists—lined up along the sidewalk in the summer heat waiting for the courthouse doors to open, and then filled every seat.

On Sept. 12, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, René González and Ramón Labañino begin their tenth year of imprisonment in five separate U.S. prisons—in California, Texas, Florida, Wisconsin and Colorado. Their only "crime" was to monitor private paramilitary organizations based in Florida that planned and carried out violent attacks against Cuba when the U.S. government did nothing to stop them.

At a reception the evening before the court hearing, attorney Leonard Weinglass summarized the facts to be presented to the court that require either a new, fair trial or outright dismissal of the most serious convictions.

First, Gerardo Hernández was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder—a charge the U.S. prosecutors themselves admitted to the court the government could not prove.

"This is the first time in anyone's memory that an individual person is being held accountable for what an Air Force of a sovereign state does in protecting its own airspace," Weinglass said about the shooting down of "Brothers to the Rescue" planes that had repeatedly overflowed Cuban airspace.

Second, three of the Five—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero and Ramón Labañino—were sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiracy to commit espionage. During the original trial two U.S. generals and an admiral testified that no "secret" classified U.S. government information was among the 20,000 pages of evidence taken from the Five by the U.S. government. These maximum sentences handed out by the Miami court, which violate sentencing guidelines, were equal to those imposed in cases where actual U.S. government secret documents have been given to other governments.

In court, defense attorney Richard

Klugh pointed out the Five "were never directed to obtain espionage-level information," and "are serving a life sentence for what could've been published in the Miami Herald."

The third major point in the appeal argument was the prosecutorial misconduct riddling the entire six-month long trial. One example given by Weinglass occurred during the closing arguments. Prosecutors charged, not once but three times, that the Five aimed to "destroy the United States." This statement was totally untrue and certainly unproven, but was used to enflame the Miami jury and unjustly convict the Cuban Five.

U.S. government attorney Caroline Heck Miller exposed a small sample of how venomous the prosecution of the Cuban Five could get when, arguing before the appeals court on Aug. 20, she again falsely claimed the Five were "well-trained spies" intending to steal U.S. military intelligence. She accused the 11th Circuit Court of reading only the defense arguments.

At a press conference after the appeal hearing, Heidi Boghosian of the National Lawyers Guild pointed out that it was exposed last year that reporters in Miami had been paid by the U.S. government to print untrue articles about the Five and Cuba at the time their trial was going on.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, now an international human rights attorney, pointed out that in addition to Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch—who orchestrated murderous acts against Cubans including the mid-air bombing of a Cuban passenger airliner—the U.S. government has also welcomed Emmanuel Constant, responsible for thousands of deaths and torture in Haiti, as well as agents of the Shah of Iran, who harassed Iranian students in the U.S. until he was deposed. Clark said to see justice in the case of the Cuban Five, the U.S. should dismiss all charges, admit error, pay them for injuries inflicted on them and their families and provide them unlimited visas for reentry to the U.S.

Cynthia McKinney, former congressional representative from Georgia, said the U.S. had "become what Dr. King feared—the greatest purveyor of violence on the planet." Referring to the fact that three of the Cuban Five fought alongside the Angolans against South African apartheid, McKinney said she hoped "the Cuban Five can prevail in the U.S. as their fight for justice and a new South Africa

prevailed in Africa."

Observers included Dagoberto Rodríguez, chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C.; Roberto González, Cuban attorney and brother of René González; Ramsey Clark; Cynthia McKinney; Judge Juan Guzmán from Chile, who directed the prosecution of Augusto Pinochet; Dr. Norman Paech MdB, expert in international law, Germany; Heidi Boghosian; Father Geoffrey Bottoms, coordinator, British Campaign to Free the Miami Five; Vanessa Ramos, president, American Association of Jurists USA; José Pertierra, attorney for Venezuela in the extradition case of Posada Carriles; Andrés Gómez, Antonio Maceo Brigade and representative of a coalition of six Cuban organizations from Miami; Alicia Jrapko, International Committee to Free the Five-U.S.; Sobukwe Shakura, co-chair, National Network on Cuba; and many more.

Recent media coverage is finally penetrating the curtain of silence that has surrounded the Cuban Five, including articles in the New York Times, Reuters and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, as well as interviews with the BBC. This important case exposes the U.S. government role not only in attacks on Cuba and its decades-long economic blockade of that socialist island, but the torture, death, destruction and misery inflicted by the U.S. imperialist government in Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean.

The articles are the result of determined organizing by the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five in the United States, the member organizations of the National Network on Cuba, the International Committee to Free the Five-U.S. and many other individuals and organizations. A call for International Days to Free the Cuban Five, during the period starting with the anniversary of their arrest on Sept. 12 through the anniversary of the mid-air bombing of Cubana flight 455 on Oct. 6, will build on the momentum gathered in Atlanta.

Gloria La Riva, coordinator of the National Committee to Free the Five, said: "A major turning point has been reached in the interest of the press and people of the world for the Five. The Five are a stellar example of the defense of Cuba's defense of its sovereignty and everything it has done for its people and for the world." Complete transcripts are available at freefive.org. □

The Pentagon's problem

The failed and failing occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are bringing the U.S. military's basic problem to a boiling point. Such a boiling over can affect the Pentagon's role for decades, despite its overwhelming advantage in strategic warfare and air power.

Warfare still requires humans. This is the root of the Pentagon's problem.

The resistance movements in Iraq and Afghanistan continue to attract people who are willing to fight and ready to die to liberate their countries from the U.S. occupation. Most of the U.S. soldiers and marines, on the other hand, only grudgingly and wearily follow their orders to fight a war they see more and more for the crime it is, a crime against the Iraqi and Afghan people, and a crime against themselves.

A sign of the growing despair among U.S. forces is that troop suicides reached a high point for the last 26 years in 2006, and that the rate was growing for those troops now stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The combination of longer tours in Iraq—now at 15 months—and the knowledge that the war had lost the support of the U.S. population drove the U.S. troops not just to despair but to unprecedented expressions of dissent. An opinion piece in the Sunday New York Times written by seven enlisted soldiers in the 82nd Airborne Division offered its own analysis of the war that differed entirely with the chain of command, up to the president, and called on the U.S. to get out of Iraq.

Those committed to ending the occupations of those countries can only applaud the recent decision of the Iraq Veterans

Against the War to actively support war resisters. The IVAW's choice of a 2003 anti-war hero—resister Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia—as chair of the IVAW board underlines that step toward promoting active-duty resistance.

Add to this the Pentagon's difficulty in attracting new cannon fodder. The African-American community's near 100-percent rejection of the war has driven the enlistment of new Black recruits to a low point. In Puerto Rico, a popular movement has been preventing U.S. military recruiters from luring high-school students.

As a result, the U.S. areas providing most new "volunteers" are poor rural towns and small cities, where even recruitment bonuses of \$20,000 and a \$3.2 billion recruitment campaign were barely keeping the numbers on target.

Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute—Bush's "war czar"—raised one solution for the recruiting problem in a recent radio interview. Lute spoke of reinstating military conscription of U.S. youth: the draft. Even the Bush administration, which has arrogantly stonewalled the growing mass opposition to the war in Iraq, fears a draft and has denied it will happen—up to now. It fears a draft might turn 40 million U.S. youth from passive avoiders of imperialist war to impassioned political activists against it.

The troops have moved from compliance to demoralization to despair to dissent. They are moving toward military resistance. Those troops who resist deserve the unstinting support of the anti-war movement. The Pentagon's problem is an opportunity for humanity. □

Moving story on plight of Palestinians

"Scar of David" by Susan Abulhawa, 2006, Journey Publications, 326 pages, hardcover available from Leftbooks.com

By Judy Greenspan

How do you clear the debris of misconception and prejudice from people's minds about one of the most misunderstood struggles in history? More importantly, how do you propel people toward a real understanding of the Palestinian people's right to their homeland?

Writer Susan Abulhawa accomplishes these tasks—and more—with her first novel, "The Scar of David."

The "Scar of David" stands out as more than an impassioned history of the Palestinian people's struggle for their homeland. It is an intricate tapestry, a living quilt of five generations of Palestinian families, their lives and deaths, their pain and suffering and most importantly their love for their homeland—Palestine.

More than any book I have ever read, "The Scar of David" leaves the reader with a new depth of understanding about Palestine and its people's will to live.

This book, one of the finest pieces of realistic fiction that this writer has ever read, moves beyond the conventional biographies and histories about Palestine and Israel. "The Scar of David" brings to life every breath of the Palestinian people and every

major attack upon their existence beginning with the period before the establishment of the state of Israel when Jews and Arabs lived side by side in Palestine.

An amazing story unfolds, despite growing hostile actions by the Zionists against the Arab population, about a friendship between Ari, a Jewish boy whose family escaped the German holocaust, and Hasan, son of a Palestinian farmer and one of the main characters in the book.

The story is told by Hasan's daughter, Amal. The reader experiences firsthand the "catastrophe" of Nabka, the heinous forced removal of the Palestinian people from their homes and the establishment of the state of Israel and brings us to the most recent Israeli siege of the city of Jenin.

The reader is submerged in the most critical struggles of the Palestinians from the early massacre at Deir Yassin to the brutal Israeli attack on the Sabra and Shatila refugee camp in southern Lebanon.

Abulhawa skillfully and hauntingly humanizes every aspect of this resistance from the Intifada to the phenomena of the suicide bombings. The story includes the kidnapping of Amal's infant brother, Ismael, by an Israeli soldier who raises him as a Jew.

"The Scar of David" is a must read for everyone wishing to learn the truth about the Palestinian struggle. As a teacher, I would highly recommend its inclusion in middle school, high school and college classes. As a North American Jew, I believe this book should be read by Jewish people everywhere who wish to tackle decades of misconceptions and, like David's son, Jacob, understand and embrace the Palestinians' right to their homeland. □

**WORKERS WORLD
Book Review**

Video shows police shooting Miguel Cáceres Cruz



Evelyn (wife), Michelle & Jenny (daughters), Miguel (father) stand before casket of Miguel Cáceres Cruz after police shooting.

PUERTO RICO

Community, public demand justice after police

By Tom Soto
San Juan, Puerto Rico

A mother and father are destroyed due to the horrible death of their son. A 10 year old cries uncontrollably on his mother's lap. A wife mourns the loss of her husband, and two daughters will never see their father again. A brother is engulfed with pain and anger. An oppressed community demands justice.

At 6 p.m. on Aug. 11, 43-year-old Miguel Cáceres Cruz of the southeastern city of Humacao, in Puerto Rico, had parked his scooter along with several other motorcyclists in front of the establishment El Playerito in the barrio of Punta Santiago.

Cáceres and his friends were going to provide a motorcycle escort to a 15 year old who was celebrating her birthday. This kind of event is commonplace in Puerto Rico.

Soon thereafter police from the "elite" Division of Tactical Operations (DOT) were on the scene, supposedly complaining about vehicular traffic. Moments later Cáceres was in a pool of blood, shot four times, once directly in the back of the head.

In Puerto Rico, more often than not, an incident such as this would be immediately covered up, "whitewashed" as the saying goes. Police would act to protect one another, plant a weapon within

reach of the victim and claim self-defense. But in this case, a bystander videotaped the atrocity and delivered the footage to Univision's channel 11.

The next day and during the entire week TV stations and Puerto Rico's newspapers El Nuevo Día, Primera Hora and El Vocero showed pictures of the slaying, while their Internet editions aired the video.

The video can be seen on the Internet at www.breitbart.tv/?p=4344 and is available at other Internet sites. It shows Cáceres being grabbed and thrown to the ground. He is attacked by the cops and kicked by police officer Javier Pagán, while community residents plead with the three police agents to stop. Bystanders are heard shouting: "Stop!" "What are you doing, abusers?" "Don't do that!"

To the shock of anyone who views the video, Pagán discharges his gun, at first shooting himself in the leg. Then, while Cáceres is on the ground and unarmed, the cop shoots him several times.

Finally, while Miguel Cáceres' body is lying motionless and bleeding, face down on the ground, Pagán stands over Miguel's body and shoots him again, execution style in the back of the head.

Police attempt coverup

Before the video was exhibited in the media, chief of police for the Humacao region Edwin Rivera Merced defended

the actions of the police as "self-defense." In fact, in the initial police report regarding the police killing, Pagán was not even identified as the shooter.

But as the video began to be seen by the public, radio talk shows began analyzing the footage and callers took to the airways expressing their disgust, a mood of outrage developed throughout this entire island nation, which has been a colony of the U.S. since 1898.

The public mood generated by the video was so strong that the president of Puerto Rico's Supreme Court, Federico Hernández Denton, telephoned Evelyn Ramírez, the widow of Cáceres.

This gesture from the titular head of the judicial system is unheard of. It was obvious that the atrocity has put the judicial system and police on the extreme defensive. Even Superintendent of Police Pedro Toledo, upon being confronted by reporters, was forced to admit that "the video shows Miguel Cáceres being executed."

Family & community mourn loss

Miguel Cáceres Maldonado, father of the victim, told the press: "This is the worst abuse I have seen in my life. No one should be shot while lying on the ground, especially when they are lying face down."

Mayra Vásquez, who was present at the scene said: "Everyone was yelling: 'Don't

do it!' 'Don't do it!' ... but the policeman continued beating him. ... He killed him without compassion."

Evelyn Ramírez, wife of Miguel Cáceres, said: "This incident has wiped out our dreams. ... We had many. ... We were a loving, beautiful and united family. ... One sees these incidents in the news, involving other people, but one never imagines it can happen to me. ... The community is saturated with police brutality. ... I want for justice to be done." This year Ramírez would have celebrated 23 years of marriage with Cáceres.

On Aug. 15, hundreds of demonstrators expressed their anger in front of the General Headquarters of the Police Department in San Juan. Family members of youth slain by the police were present.

Maribel Rivera, whose nephew Nelson Santiago was slain by police, told reporters: "We are here to condemn police brutality. ... It is difficult to expose if you don't have a video. Pito (Nelson Sanitago) was shot eight times by police."

"My home town (Loiza), where Black people live, has been marked by police abuse since the days when, in order to evict Adolfin Villanueva from her home, they killed her," said Lidia Ester Rivera Sánchez.

Participating in the demonstration were residents from the public housing projects of Villa Cañona and Manuel A. Pérez.

Oxy, BP and Repsol

Oil companies behind violence in Colombia

By Deirdre Griswold
Bogotá, Colombia

Part two

In April a year ago, the Permanent Peoples Tribunal began a series of investigations into the role of transnational corporations behind human rights violations in Colombia.

Its first three hearings, which took place in different Colombian cities, focused on (1) how foreign-owned agribusinesses have affected the farmers and the Indigenous peoples; (2) the role of the mining companies, and (3) the impact of transnational-controlled development on biodiversity and the environment.

On Aug. 3 and 4 of this year, the tribunal met again, this time in Bogotá, the capital, and heard testimony about the reign of terror in those areas of Colombia where huge oil companies have made big investments and are sucking out even bigger profits from the “black gold” that lies beneath the soil.

As described in our first article, dozens of people took the great risk of describing in detail to a large audience at the Teachers' Union auditorium how their loved ones and comrades had been dragged out in the night and executed for no crime other than having served as leaders and activists of civil organizations—unions, farmers' groups, rural cooperatives and Indigenous associations.

A stinging indictment

When it was all over, the judges and co-judges issued a stinging indictment of the Colombian government and military, the oil companies whose interests they serve, and the U.S. government for allowing these crimes to continue with impunity.

The Permanent Peoples Tribunal is based in Rome and has been in existence since 1979. The judges presiding at this session were law professor Dalmo de Abreu Dallari of Brazil, a member of the International Commission of Jurists;



Graciela Castro speaks about the murder of her brother, Hugo Horacio Hurtado Castro, 17, who had been in the woods near the oil facility Caño Limón playing with his younger brothers when he was shot by soldiers who gave no warning.



Liliana Roa testified that paramilitaries killed her husband, Rito Antonio Díaz Duarte. Their town had put a toll on heavy vehicles carrying petroleum-drilling equipment that ruined the highway. The Army had demanded they lift the toll.

Nini Johanna Cardozo, top right. Her father, Tiberio Cardozo Dueñas, a civic leader in Cravo Norte, was one of a group tortured and killed by Army soldiers.



Rubiel Vargas, below. His brother, Oswaldo Vargas, was assassinated by paramilitaries after his civic organization demanded that British Petroleum pave the roads and stop polluting the environment.



Marcelo Ferreira, professor of human rights at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Antonio Pigrau Solé, professor of international public law at the University of Tarragona in Catalonia in the Spanish state.

They were assisted by five co-judges: Natividad Almárcegui, a teacher with the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) of Spain; Domingo Ankwash, president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Amazonian Ecuador (CONFENAE); Deirdre Griswold, a member of the first Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal in 1967, who represented the International Action Center of the United States; Ralf Häussler-Ebert, a Lutheran theologian from Germany; and Ivonne Yáñez, an Ecuadorian ecologist and South American coordinator of Oilwatch.

This set of hearings focused on the role of U.S. giant Occidental Petroleum, British Petroleum and Repsol, a Spanish company. After hearing from dozens of eyewitnesses to state-sponsored crimes and from human rights experts, and having received in written form an enormous

body of research on the conduct of these companies, the tribunal members at the end of the final session issued a detailed but preliminary judgment. The final judgment based on all four sittings of the tribunal will be made available at the end of this year.

The judges agreed that the three companies are following similar policies in Colombia, which amount to “the looting of the natural resources and systematic violence against the population. This has involved the destruction of their social fabric, the carrying out of assassinations and persecutions against their leaders as well as violations of the human rights of the majority and the destruction of indigenous groups.”

The document summed up the testimonies that had been presented:

“According to the accusations, the abuses by these companies, which are intended to exert control over the population and avoid any resistance to their activities, have used a combination of various strategies, among them pressures on the state to carry out policies benefiting them, such as the minimizing of state regulation, flexibility in their contracts, the privatization of energy companies, the granting of fiscal advantages, and the delivery of more petroleum and gas reserves to them; moreover, there is the militarization of social life, deepened by the application of Plan Colombia and by the direct support given by the oil companies to the armed forces, legal and illegal, and the promotion of corruption.”

Plan Colombia is the agreement between Washington and Bogotá that has poured billions of dollars into the Colombian armed forces, all in the name of the supposed “war on drugs.” Vast areas of the countryside have been “fumigated”—aerially sprayed with toxic chemicals—a method that does not distinguish between coca plants and a farm family's cornfield.

The tribunal saw a moving film documentary about the effects of these “fumigations,” which leave the people covered with welts and lesions in communities where there are few medical facilities to treat them or deal with possible long-term health effects.

Since the killings and fumigations began, many impoverished Colombian farm families, made refugees by the policies of their own government, have fled to neighboring Venezuela. Much of their land is now being converted to cash crops.

The tribunal found that the Colombian government had “criminalized” social protest through arbitrary arrests and mass detentions under the charge of “rebellion.” It also has failed to prosecute those authorities responsible for heinous crimes such as kidnapping, torture and murder.

One of those testifying, Gustavo Petro, is an opposition senator in the Colombian

Congress. He described the people behind the killings as “those who dress as senators in the morning, trade in cocaine in the afternoon and give orders to the paramilitaries in the evening.”

The tribunal concluded that the paramilitaries “have been able to count on the unrestricted support of the economic and political powers.”

Special role of U.S. government

In determining responsibility for the gross violations of human rights in Colombia, the tribunal found that, in addition to the Colombian state and the oil companies, the U.S. government also has played a very special role, “defending its presumed right to intervene in any country in order to preserve its security interests, including access to the sources of petroleum, and having contributed decisively through concrete plans, human resources, training and financing to the extreme militarization that surrounds the exploitation of oil in Colombia, as it has also done in other parts of the planet, with harmful consequences for the civilian population.”

There seemed to be virtually no coverage of the tribunal in the Colombian media, although European and Asian reporters were there (and this reporter from the U.S.). However, that doesn't mean the Colombian government wasn't paying attention to this event.

At one point, just as the son and daughter of oil workers' leader Marco Chacón from Barranquilla were testifying about how their father had been assassinated, plainclothes police pushed their way into the crowded hall and stood on the stage facing the audience, cradling AK-47s. After the organizers protested, they finally left, claiming they had come “because the senator will be speaking”—something the senator had not requested.

Now that the tribunal and the many brave witnesses who came forward have done their work, it is up to the progressive movements, especially workers who are increasingly exploited by transnationals, wherever they may be, to bring international solidarity to bear against these monstrous corporations and their servants within the state.

Unofficial translation from the Spanish-language tribunal document by Griswold, who served as a co-judge at the tribunal.

E-mail: dgriswold@workers.org

execution of worker

Also present at the demonstration were the Socialist Front, Electrical Workers Union, Hostos National Movement, the Federation of Teachers, Friends of the Sea, University Workers Union, Caribbean Project for Peace and Justice, Puerto Rican Independence Party, Independent Union of Legal Aid Attorneys and others.

Family demands: no state police at funeral

On Aug. 16 Cáceres was buried. The family demanded that no state police be present in the activities throughout the day. Their demands were met.

Thousands of working people, touched by the tragedy of the killing, participated. An honor guard representing various motorcycle clubs stood by Cáceres' coffin, while the lobby and outside of the Toñito Flores Funeral Home in Humacao were jam packed.

People in the adjoining community near the funeral home waited on corners and on rooftops to pay their last respects. The almost mile-long caravan that left the funeral home literally took over the highway on the way to Punta Santiago, where the municipal cemetery is located.

Once there, Armando Cáceres, the brother of Miguel Cáceres, led a march of hundreds of residents followed by a caravan of motorbikes, cars and the hearse carrying Miguel's body. The march lasted

for almost three hours as it went through Punta Santiago demanding justice.

Crowds formed in front of establishments to see the hearse and to pay tribute. Some men and women, handkerchiefs in hand, wept while many more joined the march to the municipal cemetery, where hundreds more residents awaited the arrival of the march.

As Cáceres' casket was taken from the hearse and carried into the cemetery, the crowds filling the streets and cemetery broke out into thunderous applause in his honor.

A banner reading “Police Assassins, We Want Justice, Enough!” was held high, as Cáceres' casket was lowered into the grave in the presence of his parents Lidia and Miguel, wife Evelyn, his two daughters Michelle and Jenny, his brother Armando and other family. In the final moments the crowd chanted, “Justicia para Tony” (Justice for Tony). Tony was Miguel's nickname in the community.

Due to the extraordinary public pressure, by week's end Pagán had been expelled from the police force and charged with first degree murder, but he was immediately released on reduced bail. Allegedly he is confined to his home by electronic bracelet. Police agent Zulma Díaz de León was also charged with first-degree murder. The third agent, Carlos Sustache, has not been charged with wrongdoing. □

M★NDO OBRERO

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

Asesinatos y terror Tribunal en Colombia examina el papel de las compañías petroleras

Por Deirdre Griswold
Bogotá, Colombia

Lo más extraordinario sobre la situación política en Colombia no es solo el alto nivel de violencia auspiciada por el gobierno en contra de las organizaciones populares y sus líderes, sino el alto nivel de valor y resistencia que brota del pueblo que rehúsa ser abatido o intimidado, aún por los asesinos enmascarados que llegan por la noche.

Ese valor y esa resistencia estuvieron expuestos aquí por dos días, el 3 y 4 de agosto, cuando una sesión especial del Tribunal Permanente de los Pueblos escuchó testimonios sobre el papel jugado por las compañías petroleras europeas y estadounidenses en las campañas de terror en contra de l@s activistas sociales en Colombia.

Unas 800 personas de Bogotá, la capital, y de muchas áreas rurales se congregaron en un auditorio provisto por el sindicato de maestros, donde se escucharon dolorosos testimonios de parientes y amig@s de activistas jóvenes y viejos que fueron asesinados por hablar sobre las condiciones en sus comunidades.

Algun@s de l@s testigos trataron de contener su llanto mientras relataban cómo los hombres armados entraban en la noche en busca de sus esposos, hijos y hermanos, cuyos cuerpos sin vida serían encontrados luego, muy a menudo mostrando horribles señas de tortura.

Una y otra vez l@s testigos describieron cómo el ejército colombiano y la policía local daban libre albedrío a los "paras", algunos de los cuales trabajan como guardias de seguridad para las grandes compañías petroleras-la Occidental, la British Petroleum y la Repsol. Y señalaron directamente al gobierno del Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez, quien actualmente está tratando de desviar la ira popular reorganizando el comando militar, muchos de cuyos miembros han estado directamente implicados en los crímenes junto a paramilitares y narcotraficantes.

Tres autobuses llenos de habitantes de Arauca acudieron al tribunal. Arauca es una región al nordeste, muy rica en petróleo, fronteriza a Venezuela, donde la violencia ha sido particularmente feroz.

La cara de Alirio Martínez, un campesino de Arauca quien fuera asesinado hace tres años, sonreía al público desde

una gigante pancarta colocada sobre el estrado. Detrás de él otros campesinos se veían llevando carteles con las consignas, "Arauca Vive," y "Seguimos construyendo caminos de libertad."

En un momento en el programa, un grupo de niñas y niños de Arauca, que estuvieron esperando pacientemente durante todo el día, tuvieron la oportunidad de bailar con precisión y gracia exuberante frente a la pancarta.

La energía de est@s jóvenes mostró que la campaña de terror contra la población local ha fracasado en quebrantar su espíritu. Aún aquell@s testigos que lloraron cuando dieron sus relatos, terminaban gritado consignas de lucha y optimismo.

El asesinato de Alirio Martínez

La ejecución de Alirio Martínez por soldados del gobierno en la mañana del 5 de agosto del 2004, fue solo uno más de los horribles crímenes traídos ante el tribunal, pero ilustra la base real del conflicto sangriento en Colombia, el cual lleva ya varias décadas.

Según la evidencia presentada al tribunal, Martínez, presidente de la Asociación de Usuarios Campesinos de Arauca,

ADUC, había pasado la noche en casa de un amigo en la vereda de Caño Seco, en el pueblo de Saravena, luego de una reunión con líderes de grupos civiles, que evaluaban la situación regional con respecto a los derechos humanos y sociales.

También estuvieron presentes en la reunión el presidente de la Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores de Hospitales y Clínicas (ANTHOC), Jorge Prieto Chapucero; Leonel Goyeneche Goyeneche y María Raquel Castro, ambos miembros de la Asociación de Maestros de Arauca y la Central Unida de Trabajadores (CUT); y Samuel Morales Flórez, presidente de la CUT en Arauca.

Alrededor de las cinco de la mañana, tropas pertenecientes al grupo Revéis Pizarro, asignados a la Brigada 18 del Ejército Nacional, entraron a la casa donde la reunión tuvo lugar, rodeándola por completo.

Cerca de media hora después, varios soldados fueron a la casa de Jorge Prieto, donde Alirio Martínez dormía. Los soldados lo obligaron a él y a Goyeneche a arrodillarse a un lado de la casa, y les dispararon a muerte. Luego arrastraron sus cuerpos lejos de la casa, colocaron cerca unas armas pequeñas y dispararon algunos tiros para dar la impresión de que había ocurrido una pelea.

Luego llevaron los cuerpos por las calles para que todos los vieran, los pusieron en un helicóptero y los llevaron a los cuarteles del batallón. También arrestaron a Samuel Morales, Raquel Castro y María Constanza Jaimes, llevándoles también en el helicóptero.

Esta atrocidad se conoce como la Masacre de Caño Seco.

El gobierno la dio a conocer como una operación exitosa en contra de los insurgentes armados del Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) y las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, (FARC).

Samuel Morales, Raquel Castro y otr@s líderes cívicos en la región fueron sentenciados a seis años de prisión por el crimen de "rebelión," el cual también fue la excusa dada para la masacre.

Raquel Castro logró una libertad temprana y fue directamente al tribunal, donde ofreció testimonio de haber oído los disparos que mataron a sus amigos, y a los soldados preguntar exigiendo "¿dónde están las armas?"

"No había ninguna" dijo Castro. Agregando que cuando el helicóptero aterrizó en el cuartel, ella vio a soldados estadounidenses-"gringos"-con los colombianos.

"Todo esto está hecho para suprimir la lucha por los derechos humanos de las organizaciones cívicas, campesinas, obreras" agregó esta valiente maestra.

En una pared al lado del auditorio, una bandera leía, "La Verdad y la Justicia honrarán la memoria de nuestras víctimas".

Griswold sirvió como co-jueza en el tribunal.

E-mail: dgriswold@workers.org

MARCHA EN WASHINGTON

Campamento del Pueblo frente al
Capitolio 22-29 de septiembre



Alto Ya a la Guerra

Doméstica y en el Exterior

www.TroopsOutNow.org
NYC: 212.633.6646
LA: 323.936.7266