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WW PHOTO: JERRY GOLDBERG

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WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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**Top general calls
Iraq a 'quagmire'**

Rising U.S., British casualties revive memories of Vietnam

By Fred Goldstein

The U.S. capitalist media has breathed not a word about recent criticism leveled by a prestigious Pentagon general against the Bush administration for the growing crisis in Iraq. It took the London Observer to publicize the critique of the occupation by retired Gen. William Nash.

Nash is a veteran of the Vietnam War, of the Gulf War of 1991, was commander of U.S. forces in Bosnia and is presently United Nations Civil Affairs Administrator in Kosovo. He told the June 22 Observer that "the window of opportunity which occurred with the fall of Saddam was not seized in terms of establishing stability.

"It is an endeavor which was not understood by the administration to begin with," said Nash. The U.S. "has failed to understand the mindset and attitudes of the Iraqi people and the depth of hostility towards the U.S. in much of the country."

Thus, "we are now seeing the reemergence of a reasonably organized military opposition—small scale, but it could escalate."

He continued: "You can't tell who is behind the latest rocket-propelled grenade. It could be a father whose daughter has been killed; it could be a political leader trying to gain a following or it could be a rump Saddam. Either way, they are starting to converge."

Relating his Vietnam experience to the situation in Iraq, Nash said: "There are far more things that were different about Vietnam than there are similarities. Except perhaps the word 'quagmire.' Maybe that's the only thing that is the same."

In his commentary, this general shows wisdom derived from experience. And his detachment is aided by looking at Iraq from the distance of Kosovo. At the same time he shows the inherent incapacity of the imperialist military to comprehend the fundamental and abiding antagonism between the oppressor and the oppressed which will ultimately bring down imperialism, despite all its technological prowess and military might.

His wisdom is that Nash can recognize a quagmire early on when he sees one. He took the bull by the horns and used the dreaded "q" word. That is probably why interviews with him are out of bounds in the U.S. capitalist media for the moment—although, if the military situation continues along present lines, he may come into vogue.

But where Nash exhibits the fundamentally flawed thinking of the ruling class and its imperialist military is in his assertion that the Bush administration missed its "window of opportunity" after the fall of Saddam. There never was a window of opportunity for the Pentagon to both invade Iraq and bring about stability. Colonial invasion and the destruction of national independence of a formerly oppressed people can never bring about "stability," because stability to the imperialists means subjugation. And subjugation brings about mass resistance.

There never was a "window of opportunity" to bring "stability" to Vietnam after the U.S. ruling class took the decision to try to conquer and enslave the country by military force. And the same holds for Iraq.

This is the type of delusion that Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Perle and the entire right-wing cabal in Washington promoted as they struggled to win over the population and the ruling class to back the invasion of Iraq. It is the classic ruling class syndrome of discounting the role of the masses.

Given the proud, anti-colonial history of the Iraqi people—an armed people with hundreds of thousands in the active military—it was an extreme case of imperialist wishful thinking to project that the invading forces would be welcomed as liberators after a "surgical" removal of the regime.

IN THE SPIRIT OF STONEWALL

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WW PHOTO: J. LA RIVA



PHOTO: P/N

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At a June 24 Pentagon briefing, the word "quagmire" was never uttered. Yet, the questions that permeated the media briefing session gave a sense of the deepening crisis and the fact that the Pentagon is caught in contradictions and losing control.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was pelted with questions about an attack on a convoy near the Syrian border a week earlier. The convoy and the village of Qaim near the Syrian border were attacked by AC-130 gunships, helicopters and a Predator drone. The region was sealed off by tanks and armored vehicles.

A woman and her one-year-old child were killed in the village and an undisclosed number of people in the convoy were killed and wounded.

The attack force crossed into Syrian territory, wounded three Syrian border guards, took five of them prisoner and refused to release them. The raid was carried out by special operations Task Force 20, an elite Pentagon unit. It was supposed to be targeting former Iraqi leadership. The raid was

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Why Benton Harbor exploded

By Jerry Goldberg
Benton Harbor, Mich.

Benton Harbor, Mich., was rocked by rebellion in mid-June, after police killed a Black man. The rebellion brought into national focus the police brutality, racism and economic devastation that characterize this southwest Michigan town of 12,000 whose population is 95 percent African American—and many other similar communities across the country.

The Rev. Edward Pinkney spends every day monitoring racist treatment of Benton Harbor youths by the Berrien County courts. Pinkney led several community protest meetings against police brutality in Benton Harbor in the past few months.

He described the June 16 police killing that sparked the rebellion as follows. Terrance Shurn was riding his motorcycle in Benton Harbor when a police car began bumping the back of his vehicle. Shurn sped off to escape the police harassment. Another police car cut him off, shunting his motorcycle into a building.

The officer who forced the motorcycle into the building was a white cop, Mark Lundin. Lundin belongs to the Benton Harbor Township police force that encompasses some of the white suburbs surrounding this African American city.

As Shurn lay dead, Lundin and the other officer present reportedly gave each other high fives.

There are more than 40 witnesses to this event.

The alleged “crime” that led to Shurn’s death was running a stop sign.

Many in Benton Harbor believe the police are now hard at work covering up evidence—repairing fenders, etc.

After Shurn’s death, some 200 people attended a regularly scheduled Benton Township Trustees meeting to register their complaints about police brutality. Many said they simply can’t take it anymore. They said they hope accounts about conditions here go out far and wide, because the experiences of the African American community have not been fairly or accurately reported.

Yvonne Diggs, Shurn’s cousin, described how he was loved in the community. Columbus Franklin, who grew up with Shurn, said that his friend, like many young adults, was ready to leave Benton Harbor because there are no jobs here. Seventy-five percent of the population is unemployed. Shurn was planning to move to Florida on July 1 to go to school there.

Many, many Benton Harbors seething

Shurn’s death, which occurred on a Benton Harbor corner where many young people hang out, sparked a June 16-17 rebellion by hundreds of youths. They lit fires, smashed police cars and fought off the police for two nights running.

The comments of many Benton Harbor residents made clear that this rebellion was not just over the police killing of Shurn. It was over the pattern of police abuse and economic devastation to which the African American community has been subjected for years.

The Rev. Pinkney described how 11-year-old Trenton Patterson was struck and killed while he stood on the sidewalk in downtown Benton Harbor in September 2000, in another police pursuit case that turned deadly.

Yvette Taylor, a lifelong resident of Benton Harbor, said she has seen years and years of police brutality and “it’s all because of racism.”

She told how Benton Harbor police killed Arthur Porter on April 12. His mother had called the police due to a family fight. The police came, put him in a choke hold and killed him.

She told how her cousin, Antoine Osby, was recently at an after-hours club when the Benton Township police arrived and ordered everyone to go outside. When Osby went outside, cops beat him viciously.

On July 19, Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm came to Benton Harbor to “investigate.”

Come out to Philadelphia

JULY 4

To say
**NO to racism
police brutality
& attacks on immigrants**

To demand money for
JOBS, healthcare

& schools

**NOT the
Pentagon's
WAR
Machine**

On July 4th, the National Constitution Center, a \$19 million museum dedicated to the “civil liberties and freedom” provided by the U.S. Constitution will open in Philadelphia, PA. But in reality “We, The People” are losing our civil rights on a daily basis, experiencing more terror at the hands of police and INS in the wake of devastating unemployment and cutbacks.

Philadelphia is a city that has become famous for racist police brutality, the 1985 governmental bombing of an African American neighborhood and where African American journalist and political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed and sentenced to death for a police murder he did not commit. To add insult to injury, the center was built right on top of a burial ground for enslaved African people who were once “owned” by George Washington. The Black communities of Philadelphia have led a major protest campaign to demand the Constitution Center pay tribute and acknowledge this important part of history.

As many communities mourn and continue to fight for justice against the brutal police murders of Black people here in New York, Benton Harbor, MI, and Shreveport, LA, hundreds of people plan to be in Philadelphia on July 4th to protest.

**NO
to the occupation of IRAQ
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WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Fri., June 27

Protest Bush coming to L.A. Occupation is not liberation! No war for empire! 6 p.m. At Santa Monica Blvd. & Ave. of the Stars, march to rally at Century Plaza Hotel. For info (213) 487-2368 or www.answerla.org or www.internationalanswer.org

NEW YORK

Every Friday

Workers World Party weekly meetings at 7 p.m. Phone (212) 627-2994 for topics and location.

SAN FRANCISCO

Fri., June 27

Protest Bush at his Bay Area fundraiser. 11 a.m. At S.F. Airport Marriott. For info (415) 821-6545 or www.actionsf.org or www.internationalanswer.org

Every Sunday

Workers World Party weekly meetings. These educational meetings cover current events as well as struggles of peoples from all over the world. 5 p.m. At 2489 Mission St, room 28. For info (415) 826-4828.

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Victory, but struggle's not over

Supreme Court issues mixed verdict on affirmative action

By Julie Fry

The Supreme Court issued landmark rulings in two cases on June 23 that challenged the use of affirmative action programs at public universities and colleges around the country.

In a victory for students of color, the court affirmed the right of universities to take a student's race into account when making admissions decisions.

At the same time, the court severely restricted the ability of universities to assert this right, by striking down the University of Michigan's undergraduate "point system" admissions program.

For over a decade now, right-wing think tanks and reactionary foundations like the infamous Center for Individual Rights (CIR) have been pouring millions of dollars into campaigns to defeat affirmative action. They have gotten referendums passed in California and Washington banning affirmative action in public universities and have used litigation to eliminate it in universities across the South.

In addition, they have launched a major media campaign in an attempt to create a racist, hostile climate in this country that would facilitate the destruction of these important programs.

This racist campaign culminated in two lawsuits filed by the CIR: one against the University of Michigan law school and another against the undergraduate school. CIR knew that these cases were likely to reach the Supreme Court. These ideologues were counting on the court to strike down affirmative action programs, emboldened by the reactionary climate of the Bush administration.

The Supreme Court, led by some of the most despicable, racist judges in the country, has been attempting to dismantle the tremendous gains of the civil rights movement for decades. From immigrants' rights to public education, this court has made it clear that it serves the ruling class, not the people.

But the Supreme Court also is aware of the tremendous rage and backlash it would spawn throughout the country by discarding one of the major gains of the civil rights movement. Students of color, who organized countless demonstrations to defeat this attack, made it clear that they would not go back to the days when universities were only for the children of the white and rich.

In this period of worldwide resistance to imperialism and to the reactionary U.S. government in all its forms, when the Pentagon is relying on lack of jobs to drive more people of color into the military, the Supreme Court was not willing to incite what would surely be a massive struggle to keep this most basic right.

Immediate effect

The law school ruling allowing race-conscious admissions programs will have an immediate effect on access to education for students of color, especially in the South. In the Fifth Circuit of the federal courts, which includes Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, affirmative action has been banned since 1996, after CIR filed a successful lawsuit against the University of Texas. A similar lawsuit was won in the Eleventh Circuit, which includes Alabama, Georgia and Florida. After these lawsuits, enrollment rates for students of color in flagship schools across the South had plummeted.

The Supreme Court decision overturns both those cases.

This ruling also has the potential to reinvigorate campaigns to overturn racist referendums, such as Proposition 209 in California, which banned the use of affirmative action throughout the state university system. Students and faculty at University of California schools have been fighting Proposition 209 ever since it was implemented. Now students can renew their campaign to overturn the proposition knowing their goal will not be preempted by a countrywide ban on affirmative action.

CIR and its supporters sought a complete elimination of all affirmative action programs for people of color. Its supporters spent millions to create a climate hostile to affirmative action. CIR, and others like it, have been waiting for years to get to the Supreme Court, where they were sure that right-wing justices like William Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia would help them wipe out affirmative action.

The fact that CIR lost, despite its bottomless pool of resources and powerful supporters, is a testament to the tremendous power of the movement, led by students of color across the country.

University of Michigan students recognized the threat posed by these lawsuits as soon as they were filed. They organized and made a historic, legal intervention in the cases themselves. Students of color in both Michigan lawsuits were able to put into the legal record evidence of the racism and discrimination they face every day—

through systemic inequality in public education—and the overt racism they experience on campus and in classrooms.

Students also organized countless demonstrations, including a historic protest on April 1 of this year, the day of oral arguments in the affirmative action cases. They came to Washington, D.C., from all over the country to demand their right to higher education, including access to the most elite schools. In what is a tremendous example of the strength of the people's movement, these youth of color can now claim victory over the powerful CIR and, even more significantly, the Bush administration which supported the lawsuit.

The fight isn't over

Much is still at stake, however, after the June 23 ruling. The court struck down as unconstitutional the University of Michigan's undergraduate affirmative action program. The program relied on a pre-determined point system awarded to applicants for different qualifications. An applicant with the minimum number of points was offered admission. One of these point factors was race.

The Court said that this system was unconstitutional, but at the same time upheld the University of Michigan law school's "critical mass" system—a system that is incredibly vague, and purposely so. The law school says it is looking for a "critical mass" of students of color—something above a token number but not any amount that it is willing to define. The school authorities say they don't have any objec-

tive way of measuring an applicant's credentials; they just look at the "total package" and take race into account—in some undefined way—when making an admission decision.

While touted as some sort of feel-good, "holistic" or "individualized" approach to affirmative action, the law school's model could prove to be extremely detrimental to students of color. By its own terms, this model provides no standard for measuring whether or not students of color are getting equal access to these elite schools.

Instead, students are left to the mercy of the bureaucrats who make up college admissions boards. Students of color, who have fought for their right to a decent education against racist school administrators for decades, know full well that most of these college administrators don't care about their interests.

This second ruling gives license to these universities, and in fact demands that these colleges discard any pretense of an objective standard measuring the progress in admissions of people of color.

While activists should be proud of the important victory they have won, they should also stay vigilant and be on guard against universities that will undoubtedly use the undergraduate decision as an excuse to replace affirmative action programs with totally meaningless "subjective" systems that decrease the enrollment of students of color in colleges and universities.

Fry is a former University of Michigan student.

Why Benton Harbor exploded

Continued from page 2

Granholm, a recently elected Democrat, never once came to Benton Harbor during her election campaign.

At a town hall meeting, speaker after speaker testified that the root of the rebellion was the economic devastation that characterizes this city—coupled with the racist criminal injustice system that swallows up the youth.

Emma Hall of the African American Arts and Culture Council testified that the rebellion reflected the pain of unemployment, no health care and, for many, no utilities. She said, "Because the leaders did not take action, the people took action themselves."

Belinda Brown told of praying for a State of Emergency for Benton Harbor to address the poverty. She offered the following examples: a woman who is living in a house that has been condemned for over four years but still has to pay \$400 a month rent; a man who has not been able to find a job for seven years, despite a high school diploma and college; a woman whose water has been turned off in her home because she cannot pay the \$200 water bill.

The only things being built, Brown stressed, are a new courthouse and jail "to fill up with our youth."

While Granholm promised to set up a "task force" to look into what can be done for Benton Harbor, the fact is that Michigan, like states across the country, is cutting funding for social programs and education.

On June 19, Benton Harbor youths held



WW PHOTO: JERRY GOLDBERG

Benton Harbor with an armored vehicle.

their own town meeting. Many brought hand-made signs protesting racism and police brutality and demanding jobs. They wore T-shirts in remembrance of Terrance Shurn.

Many of the youths had participated in the rebellion. They said they were proud to have stood up and forced the authorities and the country to take note of the devastation to which they have been subjected to for years.

At this meeting, Kevin Hunter, a local leader in the reparations movement, eloquently explained how Benton Harbor's problems stem from the mindset of St. Joe. He was referring to St Joseph—the affluent, virtually all-white city across the bridge from Benton Harbor.

The situation is reminiscent, Hunter

said, of apartheid South Africa, with Black workers laboring for their white bosses for starvation wages and then being sent home to Bantustans at night.

While things have quieted for the moment, the struggle in Benton Harbor is far from over. Despite the talk of reconciliation by Granholm, Jesse Jackson and others, the Benton Harbor police chief announced that the cops are reviewing tapes of the rebellion and will be preparing wholesale prosecutions.

This holds the potential of reigniting the struggle. The Rev. Pinkney announced plans for more mass demonstrations and community rallies in upcoming days.

There are many Benton Harbors across the United States—ready to explode in the period to come. □

In spirit of civil rights bus boycotts

Baltimore battle to halt fare hike

By Sharon Black
Baltimore

Community, union and church groups have launched a mass campaign to stop a bus fare increase and cuts in service here in Baltimore. Bus fare is set to increase from \$1.35 to \$1.60 on June 30. The cost of monthly bus passes would also increase. And several bus lines will be eliminated.

The All Peoples Congress and the Transit Riders League have called for a June 27 protest. Union activists from AFSCME Council 92 and AFGE Local 1923 have joined the effort, along with Councilperson Dr. Kwame O. Abayomi, Jesus Saves church, Unity for Action and others.

The group has called for a bus boycott on July 1.

Organizers have pointed out that this is also the 50th anniversary of the Baton Rouge, La., bus boycott. In 1953, the Baton Rouge City Council voted to raise city bus fares. This was a painful and humiliating blow: 80 percent of the city's bus riders were Black and although they paid full fare they were forced to sit in the back or stand. Ten seats in front were reserved for whites only.

For Black workers tired and worn out from long hours of backbreaking work, empty "white only" seats were an infuriating and painful reminder of the disgrace of Jim Crow laws.

On June 19, 1953, the United Defense League was formed, and the group announced a boycott of the bus system. The boycott lasted five days before concessions were won on June 24.

While the Baton Rouge bus boycott was short, it was the model that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other leaders in the civil rights movement studied.

The All Peoples Congress has dedicated its actions in the coming weeks to those who fought these important battles.

Union and community score a win

Maryland Secretary of Transportation Robert Flanagan, who is known for his arrogance and refusal to talk with community representatives, has finally agreed to meet with representatives of AFGE Local 1923 and #86 bus riders to discuss and negotiate issues about bus transportation for disabled riders.

This announcement came after a week of protests.

On June 18, the president and vice president of AFGE Local 1923 walked the picket line in front of the Maryland Transit Authority's downtown offices. They joined 50 other union members, bus riders from the #86, which is slated for cuts, and the All Peoples Congress to demand a meeting with Flanagan.

For workers at the Social Security Office who ride this bus, terminating the route would add four extra hours to their commute. This bus is also one of the few that is accessible for disabled riders.

The group had planned to ride the #86 bus on June 20—and then occupy the bus, refusing to get off. Reporters had readied to cover the action. Members of AFGE and the All Peoples Congress were prepared to go to jail. The group had gathered at the bus stop amidst heavy rain and intimidating security.

Flanagan then agreed to meet, averting the action.

The growing coalition has called on the community to keep up the pressure. For more information on how to help with providing alternative transportation during the July 1 bus boycott call (410) 218-4835. □



WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Patti Smith: standing up against war and racism.

BERKELEY

Anti-war concert rocks

More than 3,000 anti-war activists and fans of singer Patti Smith came out to Martin Luther King Jr. Park on June 15 for a concert to benefit the International ANSWER coalition.

Smith, considered one of the earliest performers of progressive punk rock, had played at the large anti-war demonstrations organized by ANSWER in Washington, D.C., over the past year.

Smith initiated the idea of the June 15 free concert as a way to show appreciation to anti-war activists in the Bay Area.

Anti-war talks were woven in between musical sets by singer-songwriter Noe Venable and popular Latino salsa band Los Mocosos. These messages urged the crowd to stay active against the policy of permanent war emanating out of Washington.

Ben Becker, an ANSWER youth organizer, talked about his experience at the large protests at the recent G-8 summit in Switzerland. Gloria La Riva, from the International Action Center, encouraged people to mobilize against President George W. Bush's visit to California on June 27.

Other speakers included former Berkeley Mayor Gus Newport and Nancy Macias of Code Pink. Chairing the event were ANSWER organizers LeiLani Dowell and Barbara Lubin—who is also with the Middle East Children's Alliance. The event was carried live to thousands of listeners on Pacifica Free Speech Radio, KPFA.

One of the last songs Smith played was her hit, "People have the power."

— Bill Hackwell



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

New York City on June 23

CUNY tuition hike hurts working students

Special to Workers World
New York

Compared to private colleges in New York City where tuition runs over \$30,000 a year, a \$300-a-year increase for students in the City University of New York's six community colleges may not sound like much. It will bring their tuition to \$2,800 a year. An \$800-a-year increase for senior colleges will raise their tuition to \$4,000 a year.

However, since 60 percent of CUNY students come from families that make less than \$30,000 a year, every dollar counts.

Many are single parents with two jobs. Most were born outside the United States.

Thousands of them are going to drop out when their aid is cut off, when they can't raise the tuition or pay the extra fare to get to classes.

Bill Crain, a teacher at City College, told a City Council hearing: "You talk about fiscal realities and shortfalls. But even during the Great Depression, CUNY remained tuition-free. It somehow mustered the will to remain true to its mission when CUNY was predominantly white. Muster the will today."

At the meeting where the Board of Trustees voted 13 to one for the increase, 175 students and faculty chanted, "Shame, shame, shame" as board members voted to deprive thousands of students of a higher education. □

NEW YORK CITY

Landlords deliver blow to tenants

By G. Dunkel
New York

A mildly worded section of a recent bill passed in New York City, reestablishing something called "vacancy decontrol," was a major setback for workers here. It will also have a significant impact on rents throughout the country.

"Vacancy decontrol" will now be in force for the next eight years.

New York City is a real estate market like no other in the United States. Two-thirds of families in the city rent rather than own their homes. A majority of the rental units here are covered by rent stabilization. These rental units are a significant fraction of the total in the United States and a major portion of all the rent-regulated units in the country.

Rent stabilization is a government program to keep rents on 1 million apartments in New York City below market value. It is bitterly opposed by landlords because it limits their profits. But tenants, mostly workers and their families, know that this program lets them live in the city.

Vacancy decontrol was introduced four years ago in a last-minute compromise

between landlords who wanted to abolish rent stabilization and throw those who couldn't pay the spike in rents onto the streets, and politicians who saw such tactics as perhaps inflaming class struggle. It allowed landlords with vacant apartments whose stabilized rents had risen to more than \$2,000 a month to rent them at market rates.

Landlords have various options for raising rents to over \$2,000 a month, in addition to applying rent increases. Over the past four years, more than 100,000 apartments have become deregulated. Michael McKee, associate director of Tenants & Neighbors, said the renewal of the law means that between 300,000 and 400,000 regulated apartments will be lost before the laws are up for renewal again in 2011.

"There will be hardly anything left in eight years," McKee said.

Judi Cheng, a tenant militant, spoke at an earlier meeting of the Rent Guidelines Board—the official group that sets the allowable increases for rent-stabilized apartments. Cheng had a solution for the high rents and resulting homelessness in this city: "Evict the landlords." □

'Celebrate the Children of Resistance'

Program honors Rosenbergs and today's fighters for justice

By Deirdre Griswold
New York

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were honored here on the 50th anniversary of their executions in a spirit that affirmed the struggle for social justice to which they had dedicated their lives. In a moving program entitled "Celebrate the Children of Resistance," dramatic readings, song and dance linked their lives and struggles to those of political prisoners today like Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier.

The Rosenbergs were executed on June 19, 1953, when the Cold War was at its very height. Washington was about to sign an armistice in Korea after the deaths of millions of Korean people, nearly a million Chinese volunteers and more than 50,000 U.S. soldiers. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who had wanted to take the Korean War to recently liberated China, had been fired by Harry S. Truman. There was a furor among U.S. imperialist strategists over who had "lost" China.

Unable to crush the socialist revolutions in Asia or turn back the rising movements of oppressed peoples around the globe for self-determination, the U.S. ruling class turned on the progressive movement at home with a vengeance.

The Rosenbergs were accused by the government of conspiring to pass crude information about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union. It was a time when many members of the Communist Party and other progressives were being hounded out of their jobs and portrayed as spies by

Sen. Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee.

The "Communist menace" became the excuse for the sharpest period of reaction and repression in the United States since the Palmer Raids of 1919-20, when thousands of immigrant workers, mostly from Europe and sympathetic to the 1917 Russian Revolution, had been rounded up and detained without trial for long periods, and hundreds deported.

The New York City anniversary event was very mindful that today the Bush administration is instigating a similar climate of repression and war over its aggression in the Middle East. Yet City Center in midtown Manhattan, which holds more than 2,700 people, appeared full to capacity as many older people from the political generation affected by McCarthyism were joined by younger activists.

Tovah Feldshuh and Peter Yarrow started off the program reading prison letters from the Rosenbergs to their two sons, Robert and Michael, both of whom participated in the evening's program. Those letters of resistance and strong feeling, written up to the day of the execution, urged the children to never give up hope and remember that their parents were innocent.

Robert Meeropol and his wife, Elli, who emceed the program, are today heads of the Rosenberg Fund for Children, which produced the event. Michael Meeropol also participated in the program. After the deaths of their parents, the two Rosenberg

sons had been adopted by Abel and Anne Meeropol. Abel Meeropol's powerful anti-lynching song, "Strange Fruit," was sung at the program by Janiece Thompson.

Muzi Ibn Jamal, son of imprisoned Black journalist and revolutionary Mumia Abu-Jamal, was one of several recipients of assistance from the Rosenberg Fund for Children who spoke about its importance to their lives. His father is the first political prisoner since the Rosenbergs to face execution.

A message from Abu-Jamal to the event was read by Harry Belafonte.

Suheir Hummad, author of "Born Palestinian, Born Black," joined others in reading stories of those helped by the fund—both children of political prisoners and young people persecuted for their activism.

Martín Espada, who collaborated on developing the program with the Meeropols, read some of his forceful poetry, including "Imagine the Angels of Bread," which begins: "This is the year that squatters evict landlords ... that shawled refugees deport judges ..."

The politics of this program flowed effortlessly from its artistry. Bill T. Jones conveyed the beauty of life and resistance in his dance. The songs of Ronnie Gilbert of Weavers fame and Holly Near struck many familiar chords with the audience.

Most of all, it was statements by Robby and Michael Meeropol about the need to continue to fight repression and war today that repeatedly brought the audience to its feet. □

Mumia Abu-Jamal
to Rosenberg event

Solidarity from death row



Political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, on death row in Pennsylvania, sent a message to the event commemorating the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg on June 19. Following are excerpts from his remarks.

I greet you all who have gathered here, 50 years after the state legally lynched Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. It is a testament to their great spirit that you are here; and their memory is hallowed by the high work that the Rosenberg Fund is doing, helping children of many politically imprisoned activists.

To prepare for this event, I read the infamous "Death House Letters," wrenching and haunting accounts of two loving young parents who find themselves on the brink of hell, subject to the "tender mercies" of ambitious public officials. One is struck, not just by the horrendous conditions under which they were held, nor the nakedly political frame-up that sent them to Sing Sing, but the deep, abiding hope they had in the American judicial system ... in the Appeals Courts, and the Supreme Court. One is struck by how they learned, the hard way, that the System is not to be trusted, and that the "Law," although promised to all, was not for them.

Ethel's letters read like the aching heart of any mother who longs for her children. Julius' letters are more overtly political, and they are a barometer of the repression of the 1950s, a time not unlike our present, for now, we have embarked on a "war on terrorism;" then, it was the "war on communism." As Julius writes on Oct. 9, 1952, "... (T)he political climate in this country is one of fear, with a rising hysteria against all those who don't conform." To read those words, and to think of today, is to be reminded of history's cycle. We are reminded of how politicians ruthlessly exploit fear to achieve their political ends; how the media plays into these campaigns of lies, to further isolate people, and to peddle the gruel of fear. Think of the lies which justify the recent war; and once again, the cycle of history ...

Fifty years ago ... and the Rosenbergs could not touch nor hug their boys; they were separated from each other by a screen ... Confined to a cell for but 15 minutes a day, in Sing Sing. 50 years ago ... right?

And yet we live in a nation where over 2 million men, women and juveniles are engaged. There are still non-contact visits for thousands of people awaiting legal lynching by the state.

When you see my son, understand that I have been forbidden from touching him since he was four years old. I have not been able to stroke my wife's face for over 20 years. 50 years ago ... right?

The Rosenbergs were progressive folks who dared to dream of a world where fascism and racism were no more; and where the state did not use its judicial apparatus for state terrorism. They did not succeed, but that does not mean their noble dream was wrong; it only means that there's work to be done.

Let our work further their dreams—into reality.

Ona Move, thank you,
Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Protests confront Bush, Cheney

By Monica Moorehead
New York

The chants "Occupation is not liberation" and "Bring the troops home now" resounded at emergency protests held in three cities on June 23 against fund-raising efforts by the super-rich to reelect the war-mongering Bush administration in 2004.

George W. Bush is expected to raise a quarter of a billion dollars for his presidential campaign from his millionaire and billionaire buddies. This astounding amount of money would surpass the combined budgets of the Democratic Party candidates.

In Manhattan on June 23, just a few blocks from the Sheraton Hotel where Bush was appearing at a \$2,000-a-plate fund raiser, hundreds of protesters converged in two demonstrations, chanting and explaining why they were there to thousands of rush-hour passersby leaving work.

One demonstration was called by ANSWER, and focused on the imperialist nature of the war and racist occupation of Iraq. An array of other international and domestic issues was raised by a multinational group of speakers, including Palestine, Korea, Cuba, Venezuela and the devastating decline in living standards for U.S. workers, oppressed peoples and the poor.

Like other cities in crisis, New York is in the throes of a tremendous budget crisis as the billionaire mayor, Michael Bloomberg, presides over the closing down of fire stations, deregulating rent controls, raising subway fares and



Larry Holmes, an ANSWER leader, speaks at the June 23 anti-Bush rally in New York City.

increasing tuition for CUNY schools.

Another protest was called by Planned Parenthood and United for Peace and Justice. Speakers there criticized Bush's anti-woman and anti-reproductive rights policies.

ANSWER had proposed a united protest against Bush's visit. As it was, the two groups occupied blocks right next to each other.

Early that morning, Richmond ANSWER had held a morning protest against Vice President Dick Cheney when he traveled to Virginia for another fundraiser.

And in the early afternoon in Hopkinton, Mass., a suburb of Boston, the Metro-

west Partners for a Just and Peaceful World coalition held a protest against Cheney, who flew in for a private fundraiser. Cheney is a well-known war profiteer. He sat on the board of directors of the Halliburton Corp. before he became Bush's running mate. Halliburton is reaping profits in Iraq from Pentagon contracts while it reportedly still pays \$1 million annually to Cheney. Boston ANSWER organized an anti-war delegation to support this demonstration.

ANSWER and other anti-war groups will be holding protests against Bush fundraisers on June 27 in San Francisco and Los Angeles. □

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Author of 'The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression'

The antidote to racism and anti-LGBT oppression

Bob McCubbin, author of the seminal work, "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression," published in 1976 by World View, was invited to speak at a June 7 forum of People of Color in Crisis, a community-based service organization for gay men of color in Brooklyn, N.Y. His booklet, the first Marxist analysis of the origins of sexual oppression, was groundbreaking for the lesbian and gay as well as the Marxist movements. The following are excerpts from his talk.

In 1963, before I had become an activist, I avidly followed the nationwide struggle against racial segregation and for civil rights for Black Americans. I already disliked both the Democratic and the Republican parties. I still, however, held out hope that there might be someone in the Democratic Party who was sincerely committed to the goal of racial justice.

In August of that year, I had the good fortune to attend the historic civil rights gathering in Washington, D.C., where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of his great dream. I was tremendously inspired, both by the size of the demonstration and by Dr. King's words. But I noted with anger that John F. Kennedy did not deign to attend or even acknowledge the importance of that pivotal event in the city where he resided. My alienation from the U.S.

Establishment—from what I have since come to understand is the U.S. ruling class—was, from that time on, complete and final. I have never since looked to them for solutions for any of the increasingly grave social illnesses that plague this country.

I joined Workers World Party in 1967. Workers World had an explanation for Kennedy's absence I didn't hear anywhere else: The interests of the rich are fundamentally opposed to the interests of the working class and oppressed peoples. And so I began to understand that racism isn't just some defect in the socialization process. It is a conscious strategy promoted in a thousand different ways by the powerful to protect their privileged status in capitalist society.

At the time I joined Workers World, the Black Panthers were, on the domestic front, scaring the ruling class half to death. And they were at the same time inspiring millions of Black people and others all over this country to believe that real change in the deplorable conditions of their lives was possible. The Vietnamese people were proving that "The Man's" technology—the overwhelming military superiority of the Pentagon—was no match for a united people fighting for their freedom and independence.

I became a full-time organizer for the Party's youth group at that time, Youth Against War & Fascism, and I began

studying the Marxist classics.

Try, if you can, to put aside for a minute the many negative references to Marxism you've probably heard. Let me offer two complementary definitions of Marxism.

First, Marxism is the science of human society and human social development.

Second, in a complementary way, Marxism is a guide to revolutionary action against social injustice.

Karl Marx spent his life fighting for social justice. He spent his life in poverty and he spent it talking to workers about their historic role as the gravediggers of capitalism and the birthmothers of socialism. He used his genius to expose the dynamics of the economic system that now dominates the globe. It is a system based on greed and theft. He showed that working people produce all the wealth of the world. And he showed how the capitalists expropriate most of this wealth for themselves.

He showed how change arises on the basis of struggle, social change on the basis of the class struggle. His predictions are firmly rooted in scientific investigation and analysis. The power of his ideas is confirmed by the fact that the most widely read book in human history is not the Bible, but rather the Communist Manifesto.

There is much more than this to be said about Marxism. It is a large and impressive body of information, analysis and theory. But I'm going to have to leave it to your own curiosity and initiative to explore.

One book that particularly caught my eye was Frederick Engels' "Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State." In this work, Engels demonstrated how the world historic oppression of women developed. He based his arguments on what anthropological information was available at the time. Another hundred-plus years of anthropological research since the publication of this book have only strengthened his findings.

In brief, Engels showed that women have not always been oppressed. In communal societies—that is to say, in the human groupings based on cooperation and sharing that existed for hundreds of thousands of years before society began to divide into economic classes of rich and

poor—women were highly respected, held leadership positions, and introduced many technological innovations, such as the domestication of small animals and the cultivation of plants. And of course their role in the production of new human life positioned them at the very center of human society.

Engels showed how, as human control over nature increased, so did surplus resources and the issue of ownership of them resulted in the division of society into classes and the overthrow of matrilineal societies. With the introduction of private ownership of material resources, women themselves came to be viewed as property. Their loss of equal rights and consequent inferior social status is thus directly attributable to the introduction of private property and is another important reason for us to fight for socialism, for an economic system based on human needs and sharing rather than competition and private profit.

I was, of course, against the oppression of women and very happy to have scientific proof that their oppression by men was not some immutable aspect of our species or some unchangeable part of men's genetic makeup. But there was another, secret reason for my excitement.

If women's oppression could be explained scientifically on the basis of Marxist historical analysis, wasn't it possible that so too could the oppression of lesbians and gay men?

'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression'

I was still in the closet, but news of the Stonewall Rebellion, the historic uprising of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Greenwich Village in 1969, forced me to face the fact that I was avoiding an issue of paramount importance to my life, that is, my sexuality. Inspired by the new Gay Liberation Movement, I did find the courage to come out, six months after the Stonewall Rebellion. Then I quickly plunged into a search for material that would provide a historical explanation of our oppression. The booklet, "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression," was the result, six years later.

But it's important to explain that this



WWW PHOTO: J. LA RIVA

Pride in struggle

By John Beacham
West Hollywood, Calif.

Thousands of cheering people lined the streets here June 22 for yet another extremely successful Christopher Street West Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Pride Parade.

A float in remembrance of Morris Kight, the principal founder of the annual LGBT Pride event in Los Angeles, was a big hit. Kight died earlier this year. In 1970, Kight, a member of the Gay Liberation Front, organized the first Christopher Street West event on the first anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. The slogan of that first march was "Gay Power."

Volunteers from the anti-racist and anti-war group the International ANSWER coalition marched with a float adorned with rainbow flags and the slogans "Stonewall means fight back," "No war for empire," "Derechos para los inmigrantes" [Rights for immigrants] and "Remember Matthew Shepard and Gwen

Araujo," both lynching victims.

The Palestinian flags that hung from the float were greeted with raucous approval. A "Free the Cuban Five" banner also received applause.

From the float, ANSWER volunteers from all walks of life waved brightly colored placards that read "LGBT equality now!" and "Marriage rights for all."

Joe Delaplaine, an organizer with International ANSWER, was greeted with ovation after ovation as he announced the protest against President George W. Bush planned for June 27 here.

Preston Wood, an organizer of the contingent, underscored the importance of supporting the struggle for democratic rights for all: "Racism, sexism and bigotry against lesbian, gay, bi, and transgender people is designed to weaken our resistance to cuts in domestic spending and imperialist wars abroad. We will continue to support the just demands of the LGBT community for equal rights and an end to all anti-gay and anti-trans laws." □



CLEVELAND

No pride in racism, war, occupation

"No pride in war, racism and occupation" was the message Cleveland anti-war activists brought to this year's Pride celebration. Their banner—Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans for Peace, which had already been carried in many local and national anti-war protests—was extremely well received. The majority of on-lookers joined in the chant, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, that son of a Bush has got to go."

This year LGBT activists were celebrating the flying of the rainbow flag for the first time from the city halls of Cleveland and nearby Lakewood. Among the Grand Marshals were members of Heights Families for Equality, who on June 23 filed petitions to make Cleveland Heights the first city to institute a domestic partner registry through ballot initiative.

— Photo and story by Martha Grevatt

work was not, by any means, a solitary effort. My allies and collaborators in the struggle to develop an objective analysis of the basis of our oppression were really all my comrades. When, in 1971, I called a meeting for comrades interested in working on this issue, more than 50 responded immediately. The effort to develop a Marxist analysis of the issue as well as to reach out a hand of solidarity to the gay liberation movement of that time became a party-wide task.

Today there are bookstores full of books addressing every aspect of LGBT experiences. Back then there was very little. I gathered what I could find, followed leads offered by others, and after four and a half years of collecting material, sat down to write.

If we were to rewrite the book today, we could include much more evidence to support our point of view. For example, there is much more information available now on the way humans lived in the long period of communal society preceding the development of class society. If women during this period were highly respected and held positions of leadership—and the evidence is overwhelming that they did—LGBT people were similarly respected and honored for their special contributions.

It must be admitted that our evidence is indirect, even if persuasive. The invention of writing and the habit of keeping records came only with the introduction of private property and the development of class society. Much of what we've learned about how our pre-class ancestors lived is from the reports of anthropologists, explorers and missionaries who spent time in areas of the world where communal and semi-communal societies survived as the world came to be dominated by class-based societies. And much of this evidence is tainted by the prejudices of the observers.

Nevertheless, it is very clear from the large body of subsequent information now available that gender-variant people and homosexually oriented people existed in all communal societies and were most often specially valued and esteemed members and also leaders of these communities.

A remarkable study by an openly gay white anthropologist is Walter Williams' book-length report on these Two-Spirit Native people titled, "The Spirit and the Flesh" (Beacon Press, 1986). His book is a

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WW interview with Argentine LGBT leader

'Together we will defeat imperialism'

By Rebeca Toledo

"I am a transvestite, a woman, a socialist, indigenous, fat, brown, poor, a worker. I am all these things and more. And I fight to build a world where I am accepted for everything that I am," Lohana Berkins tells Workers World.

Ms. Berkins had come to the United States from her native Argentina to receive the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission's 2003 Felipa Award. She also spoke to many other lesbian, gay, bi, trans and progressive groups while in New York.

About the LGBT struggle in Argentina, Berkins says: "There have been many closeted leftists in the LGBT movement and many closeted LGBTs in the left movement. But this is starting to change."

Two years ago, Berkins was the first LGBT candidate to run on the United Left slate for Congress. She ran as an open transvesti. Terms used for the LGBT movement around the world, as in the United States, are fluid—as is the movement itself. In Argentina, the word transvesti, or transvestite, would come closest to the term transgender in the U.S.

"Before I ran," she explains, "people said that LGBTs on the slate would lose votes, but we got more votes than the last time. This showed that we not only can get votes, but that we can get people to come out and vote in greater numbers. This year there are 10 LGBT candidates nationally and many more regionally."

In Argentina's LGBT Pride March last November, Berkins and others organized a group to march under the banner: "No to imperialism, no to war, no to ALCA (the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas)."

"We didn't know what to expect," she recounts. "At first we were a handful, and some of the compañeros were getting worried and wanted to disband. I insisted we continue, even if we were small."

"We were at the back of the march and

as we took the street, we were joined by so many people that we filled up the whole block. We kept gaining people as we went along. We became the most popular contingent."

Their contingent also consisted of "piqueteros," the unemployed workers who have been leading the struggle against International Monetary Fund-imposed austerity measures.

Lohana Berkins offers an eyewitness account of the December 2001 uprising in Argentina that led to the fall of three presidents in succession.

"When the president declared a state of emergency on Dec. 19, that was the last straw. I went out into the street of my building and saw two other women on the corner beating their pots and pans."

"In a matter of minutes we were 200 strong. People appeared on their balconies to join the 'caserola.' All corners filled with women, children, men, people of all ages."

"We decided spontaneously to go to the Plaza de Mayo. When we got there, people were already there. And we stayed until 6 a.m. trying to take the Plaza from the cops who kept attacking us with tear gas."

Lohana Berkins tells the story as only one who lived it could—her eyes bright with the thrill of a living, breathing struggle.

"In the afternoon," she continues, "we returned better organized and took the Plaza. By 6 p.m., the president had resigned and the people had won a sweet victory."

Asked about the significance of these events, she replies: "It does not lie in the response of the ruling class of Argentina, because it has done little to alleviate the suffering of the people. The importance lies in the collective memory of the people that felt their power that December. And the absolute distrust and discredit that all government institutions have earned from them."



"That will live on and will lead to new uprisings."

The crisis in Argentina is profound. Berkins tells WW that out of a population of 40 million, 22 million live below the poverty level. And of those, 7 million have no means at all.

Salaries have been cut by two-thirds, while the cost of living has remained the same. Everything is now imported, in a country that has enough resources to be self-sufficient.

The IMF has opened an office in Argentina, something that is rare, according to Berkins. The new president, Néstor Carlos Kirchner, plans to let the IMF impose more belt-tightening for the people.

Lohana Berkins works for a city council member. She says, "We have street workers, transvestites and others coming in and out of our office all day seeking our services."

She also investigates human-rights violations in the country.

Of the U.S. role in Argentina, she points out that Washington has its eye on the water supply in southern Argentina. She says this is one of the largest reserves left in the world. "The U.S. would like to get its hands on our water supply so that it can continue to carry out its wars of aggression and secure a water reserve."

The United States demonstrated in Iraq how it could use such a supply to privatize water for profit. It is not that far-fetched considering that this is exactly what is being attempted in Bolivia.

About the U.S. war in Iraq, Berkins says: "That was not a war of equals—that was an invasion. U.S. imperialism is through using diplomacy. It will continue to show its true face and will use force and invasion against all peoples of the world."

"In Argentina, we protested at the U.S. embassy during the U.S. invasion," she concludes. "We were part of the worldwide movement. We must stop imperialism with more internationalism and more solidarity. Together, we will defeat it." □

Lavender & red: Towards liberation

Call for anti-capitalist struggle draws standing ovations

By Bob McCubbin

More than 700 people came out to hear transgender lesbian activist and Workers World Managing Editor Leslie Feinberg during a mid-June California speaking tour. She drew enthusiastic audiences in San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego. Her well-received remarks—which touched on many issues but centered on the struggle against war, racism and capitalism—elicited repeated strong applause and standing ovations.

Her first appearances on June 13 were as a featured speaker at the National Queer Arts Festival at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center in San Francisco. A repeat performance was scheduled that night after the first event sold out. Both capacity audiences responded with thunderous standing ovations to the call for a militant, liberation current of the LGBT movement to fight racism and imperialist war.

A third meeting, held the following day, was organized by the San Francisco branch of Workers World Party and was held at the historic Women's Building in San Francisco's Mission District. When

the newly renovated building opened in 2000, its rooms were dedicated to 30 women leaders and freedom fighters, past and present; one was established in Feinberg's name. (www.womensbuilding.org/public/building/naming3.html)

At the June 14 meeting, Feinberg retraced the history of more than a century of support by the left-wing of the socialist movement for an end to sexual and gender repression—including consistent support by Workers World Party.

She examined problems faced by the countries that have struggled to build a planned, socialist economy while faced with imperialist sabotage. And she defended the socialist countries as achievements of the working class, similar to labor unions.

"Our class enemies use any imperfection in a workers' state to try to discredit socialism. We examine the problems they've faced in order to make socialism stronger."

"We say to those at the citadel of capital: It's your toxic waste dump of ideology that workers in socialist countries are

forced to mop up. And while they try to carry out this task, you encircle and strangle, infiltrate and invade like slave-owners trying to destroy maroon communities of those who broke their shackles."

"But we will not let you obscure the tremendous achievements of these young societies. The poorest of these states have done what you, the richest capitalist countries, won't do and can't do because of your drive for profits. They have provided free education, free health care, jobs, inexpensive housing and transportation for all."

She called on all gathered to defend Cuba and North Korea, whose only "crime" is trying to construct socialist economies, and to stand up for all those struggling to defend their right to self-determination and sovereignty, including Iraq, the Palestinians, Iran, Colombia, the Philippines and Venezuela.

During the hour-long question and answer period following her talk, members of the audience showed they were giving serious thought to how a revolution could be achieved in this country.

A video clip from the event is on the

internet. It includes part of the important introduction by LeiLani Dowell, who chaired the meeting, about why WWP is a strong supporter of the LGBT movement. The video clip can be found at: sf.indymedia.org/news/2003/06/1621546.php.

A meeting on June 15 organized by the Los Angeles International Action Center was held at the ONE Institute & Archives, which serve as a valuable repository for the largest research library on LGBT historical, literary and cultural materials in the world today.

Stuart Timmons, the institute's executive director, introduced Feinberg to the capacity audience. Timmons, the biographer of Harry Hay, evoked the struggles of that gay pioneer who was also a communist, reminding those gathered that it was radicals who struggled for many of the gains that the working class enjoys today, like unions and Social Security. Timmons said that Feinberg, like Hay, has played a germinal role in both the LGBT and the communist movements.

In her talk, Feinberg focused on the question of whether overturning capitalism is really necessary. Since LGBT people

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EU caves in to Washington's anti-Cuba pressure

By Gloria La Riva

More than 1 million Cuban people marched on the Spanish and Italian embassies in Havana on June 12, protesting their imposition of sanctions against the island through the European Union.

The mass demonstration divided in two to culminate in joint rallies at both embassies, led by Cuban President Fidel Castro and First Vice President Raul Castro.

Only days before, on June 5, the 15-member European Union (EU) had adopted new economic and political measures against Cuba. The EU's move is supposedly meant to protest the conviction of 75 Cubans in early April as foreign agents of the U.S. working to destabilize the socialist country.

Many observers see the EU's move as a surrender to U.S. domination in one more geopolitical sphere: first Iraq, now Cuba. The June 5 EU declaration continues a growing anti-Cuba trend begun in imperialist Europe in the mid-1990s.

What about Guantanamo?

Cuba denounced the EU for hypocrisy in not uttering a word against the Pentagon's brutal detention of Muslims, Arabs and Afghans on Guantanamo naval base, which the U.S. occupies over Cuba's objections. The more than 600 prisoners at Guantanamo are being held without charges and are deprived of all rights.

Despite massive demonstrations by the peoples of Europe and the world, the European Union uttered not a word of condemnation of the U.S. bombing of Iraq or of the current occupation of the country and exploitation of its wealth.

With the March 1996 passage of the Helms-Burton law, the U.S. government tried to expand its now 44-year-old blockade by demanding that other countries

break economic ties with Cuba or be penalized.

It has applied intense pressure on Cuba's European and Latin American trading partners. Two governments in particular—Spain and Italy—have been servile to U.S. imperialism in recent years, against not only Cuba but Yugoslavia and Iraq. However, huge sections of Spanish and Italian public opinion disagree. The largest demonstrations against the Iraq war were held in these two countries. On Feb. 15, 2003, more than 4 million people took to the streets in Spain—10 percent of the entire population.

Although Spain is one of Cuba's biggest trading partners, Prime Minister José María Aznar has led a virulent anti-Cuba sanctions campaign within the EU.

He now proposes that the "Common Position on Cuba," adopted by the EU on Nov. 13, 1996, be tightened against Cuba in the continuing EU talks. The Common Position is incorporated as Point Four in the current June 5 EU statement.

Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has reprinted a Spanish newspaper article from 1996 that commented on the significance of that change:

"In Brussels tomorrow," wrote *El País*, "the Spanish government will propose to its partners in the European Union that they implement a strategy of economic harassment of Fidel Castro's regime."

The measures planned by Aznar, it said, "envisage a complete break in Spanish Cuba policy." Aznar, a conservative, had become prime minister in March of that year.

Italy's government, headed by the scandal-ridden administration of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, has taken unilateral steps to cut off the equivalent in euros of \$46 million earmarked for economic trade and development.

These include eliminating \$20 million to improve irrigation in Granma and Havana provinces. Cuba has been suffering a severe drought for several years that shows no signs of relief, according to meteorologists.

Millions more would have gone to support senior centers.

Another threat to Cuba by the European Union is its pledge—embodied in the June 5 statement—to invite Cuban counter-revolutionaries into the EU's respective embassies in Havana, thus supporting the overthrow of the government under the guise of "promoting democracy in Cuba."

Diplomatic officials at the Spanish Cultural Center—"Casa de España"—in Old Havana have already been doing this. Cuba hosts a program of cultural cooperation with certain countries, allowing the guest country a place to display and share its national culture. But Spain has defied the purpose of the cultural exchange and frequently used the center to invite Cuban right-wingers to its gatherings to organize against the socialist government.

On June 14, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the Casa de España would revert to Cuban supervision: "In a just tribute to one of the greatest Spanish poets and dramatists, brutally sent to the firing squad by fascism in 1936, the institution is to become the Federico García Lorca Cultural Center. From now on, under Cuban administration, the center will be totally dedicated to promoting the finest values of Spanish culture in our country."

A large billboard of the famed Picasso anti-fascist mural, "Guernica," in memory of the victims of fascism in the Spanish Civil War, was recently raised in front of the Spanish Embassy in defiance of Aznar's alliance with Bush.

Meanwhile, on May 20, the U.S. step-

ped up television and radio interference with Cuba's airwaves. It also allowed José Basulto, the notorious Miami-based anti-Cuban terrorist, to fly a plane with rudimentary television broadcast equipment to a point where it interfered with Cuba's television stations.

On June 12, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell made an outrageous and unsubstantiated claim: that Cuba has actively promoted trafficking of children in prostitution for the promotion of tourism. It was clearly designed for mass media consumption, like the phony charts alleging Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction that he had presented to the UN to justify the U.S. invasion and war.

In this annual State Department report on human trafficking, Powell put Cuba in "Tier 3," the most serious level.

The human trafficking report is one more political weapon wielded against independent and sovereign countries that the U.S. ruling class deems a threat to its aim of domination.

If Washington were really worried about trafficking, it would abolish the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, the single greatest enticement to human smuggling from Cuba to the U.S.

This reporter has made many visits to Cuba. Any visitor can see that children are regarded as the greatest treasure of the revolution. Not only do children no longer have to shine shoes or clean windshields or beg in the streets, they have a future assured to them by the socialist gains of Cuban society.

The barrage of lies and false charges leveled against Cuba are meant to confuse and disorient the people of the world, especially in the United States. More than ever, a working-class analysis and clarity are needed to strengthen the people's movements in defense of Cuba. □

Even on a remote Greek peninsula

Capitalist leaders can't escape mass protest

By John Catalinotto

Leaders of the capitalist world are having problems finding a meeting place that isn't beset by angry demonstrators. Their latest try was the European Union summit in Greece June 20-22. Even at the far southeastern end of the European continent, 100,000 people came out to protest.

The summit had first been set for Greece's second-largest city, Salonika. Fearing popular protest, the Greek government decided to move it 50 miles east to the seaside resort of Porto Carras. This town, like the mountain town of Evian in France where the G-8 countries recently met, was more easily sealed off, this time with 16,000 Greek troops.

Called together by Action Salonika 2003, some 10,000 demonstrators in 172 buses arrived at the town of Marmara on the Halkidiki peninsula, the closest town to the summit site. Police barricaded the road to the summit site at the far end of Marmara with concrete blocks and a police bus on a small bridge.

Greek government workers also held a general strike on June 20, the day the summit began. Then, on June 21, tens of thousands of people in three separate marches joined to hold a rally of 100,000 people in the central square of Salonika. Though they had come from all over Europe, the

large majority of those present were Greek.

The June 23 Berlin daily *Junge Welt* reports that the marchers' central slogan was "Stop NATO, the EU and the USA." They targeted Washington's wars of aggression and the EU's support for these wars through NATO.

As tens of thousands of demonstrators filed past the heavily guarded U.S. Consulate in Salonika, they demanded an end to these aggressive policies. They also demanded that the rich countries give debt relief to developing nations and impose controls on transnational corporations.

The two major marches were organized by the Social Forum and by Action Salonika 2003, a broad movement grouping together unionists, students, farmers and others, including the Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

The EU was discussing a draft constitution in preparation for its expansion from 15 to 25 countries in 2004. The 10 new countries include Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Malta and Cyprus. All except Poland have relatively small populations and eight were formerly part of the socialist camp led by the USSR.

These countries are economically and politically subservient to the major EU countries and some—the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, for example, which

are NATO members—have already assigned part of their military to Pentagon-led adventures.

Greek workers anti-war

Though Greece is a long trip for many north Europeans, it has been a hotbed of anti-war and anti-imperialist activity, especially since NATO's war on Yugoslavia. Then it was the only NATO country where a militant, mass anti-war movement developed. In Salonika itself, Greek anti-war forces were able to hold actions that delayed military deliveries to NATO forces poised to invade Yugoslavia.

This movement expanded during the buildup to the war on Iraq. It involved trade unions, high-school and elementary school students and had the support of the vast majority of the population.

In an interview in the Belgian weekly newspaper *Solidaire* on June 17, George Havatzas, spokesperson for Action Salonika 2003, described the political reasons behind the protests.

He said the goal of the EU summit was to "impose new anti-democratic measures and confirm or even reinforce some reactionary decisions taken previously. The West European leaders want to block social rights, launch new attacks against social security and the income of farmers, diminish national sovereignty and rein-

force the role of the EU at the core of its member nations."

"The EU is an imperialist structure," Havatzas continued. "Deep contradictions divide the EU and the United States. But the great powers have a common objective: to serve the interests of the transnational capitalist monopolies, to exploit the workers at both the national and international level while forcing them to submit. NATO is nothing other than a military alliance of the imperialist powers, which enters into action when they deem it necessary."

"The people of the world can only free themselves by struggling against these imperialist powers and against their military alliances. That's why Action Salonika 2003 has participated very actively in demonstrations against the war in Iraq."

Is the EU 'pacifist'?

Regarding the idea that some of the European governments were "pacifist" because they opposed the U.S.'s war on Iraq, Havatzas said the following: "No European government was fundamentally opposed to the war in Iraq. There were contradictions among the imperialists and these disagreements continued regarding how to split the spoils."

"This led to what seemed to be resistance to military intervention within the

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Top general calls Iraq a 'quagmire'

Continued from page 1

carried out on June 18, but the Pentagon only revealed it on June 23. The area is still sealed off.

When asked if Iraqi leaders had been hit in the raid, Rumsfeld said no. When asked who was hit, he would not answer. Asked whether the rules of engagement allowed hot pursuit across the Syrian border, Rumsfeld again would not answer. Asked why the Syrian border guards were not returned to Syria, he said they were wounded, as if the Syrians were incapable of rendering medical treatment. Asked why it took so long to tell the world, Rumsfeld replied that it happened "far away from Baghdad" and that people were "busy."

After about 10 minutes of evading the issue concerning the provocative violation of Syrian sovereignty, Rumsfeld muttered, "General Myers is ready for a question."

Whereupon a reporter asked Gen. Richard Myers, chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "You said that U.S. troops are having considerable success inside Iraq, yet in the past 24 hours there were 25 separate attacks on U.S. forces, six Brits were killed in two separate attacks down near Basra, and there was a rocket attack on the civilian mayor's office at Fallujah. That doesn't sound like success to me." (cnn.com, transcripts, June 24)

Myers muttered something about being "careful of the snapshots you take" and that the "security situation is a little uneven in the country." What was unusual is that the customarily combative Rumsfeld let Myers swing in the breeze and never offered a word of rebuttal or defense.

And with good reason. For the first time since May 1, when Bush declared the war essentially over, the resistance carried out a major operation in the Shiite south. Six British soldiers were killed and eight wounded in two separate incidents near the city of al Amarah, north of Basra. It was the largest number of casualties in any day since May 1. The six were killed in the police station in the town of al Kabar, while on a mission to train Iraqi police.

Nearby, a "large number" of Iraqi forces (AP, June 24) opened fire on a British patrol with rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and rifles. One soldier was wounded. When a rescue helicopter and tanks came to the rescue, seven soldiers on the helicopter were wounded.

In addition to this major operation in the south, U.S. forces came under attack in the cities of Ramadi, Daura, Tikrit, Baiji, Fallujah, Baghdad, Hit, Khan Azad and other places. In Fallujah, the office of the U.S.-installed mayor was attacked.

The attacks are being carried out in the very areas that have been the subject of U.S. raids. "For a week, thousands of troops have raided Baghdad, Tikrit, Fallujah, Ramadi, Thuluyia and other towns in central Iraq," wrote the June 22 Washington Post. And with each new raid, hatred of the U.S. grows and the social and political tensions in the country mount.

Paul Bremer, U.S. administrator, is rapidly turning the occupation into a harsh dictatorship. Having dissolved Iraq's military, he has declared that the U.S. wants to form a new military of 40,000—one-tenth of the previously existing armed force.

"A senior American official, Walter Slocombe," wrote the June 23 New York Times, "said the three-division force of light infantry would operate without an air force and would guard the country's borders and key installations."

If anything clearly shows the U.S. plan to hold Iraq in subjection it is this thinly

disguised attempt to create a puppet police force and deprive Iraq of any substantial armed forces. The Pentagon has plans to keep forces in the region, including access to four military bases. This would be the real power in Iraq. A country without a military to defend itself, particularly against imperialist aggression, is not a sovereign nation.

The U.S. would never try to rebuild a genuine military force in Iraq for the simple reason that Washington fears that an independent Iraqi military would rapidly move to expel the occupation forces. Keeping Iraq in colonial bondage means destroying its military.

That is why one of Bremer's first acts was to disband the Iraqi military. The soldiers were cut off without an income. They demonstrated at the Republican Palace, the occupation headquarters, demanding their pay. Two officers were shot dead by U.S. troops.

Bremer's arrogantly defiant comment at the time was, "They were thrown out of work by something called the freedom of Iraq." But in the week since, under pressure from the U.S. military and Iraqi collaborators who were fearful of driving all 300,000 former soldiers into the arms of the resistance, Bremer has had to eat his words. Washington is now going to pay a stipend for an indefinite period to the former soldiers.

Bremer has also issued repressive decrees. "Almost unnoticed outside Iraq," wrote the London Guardian of June 16, he "has issued a proclamation outlawing any 'gatherings, pronouncements, or publications' that call for the return of the Baath Party or for opposition to the U.S. occupation."

Bremer cancelled a scheduled election for mayor in the Shiite city of Najaf. The election had been organized with the permission and encouragement of the local U.S. military commander. "We should have had this election," said a U.S. military officer in Najaf who asked not to be identified, according to the New York Times of June 22. "What are we telling them?"

This is the "democracy" that the U.S. is bringing to Iraq.

All this repression, raids and the brutalization of the Iraqi population is taking a heavy toll on the morale of the U.S. troops, who are being dragged into this reactionary quagmire. Many newspapers carried a syndicated photo of a soldier consoling another soldier after he had seen three Iraqi children injured by munitions. The story behind that photo has come out in a June 24 AP dispatch.

"On a scorching afternoon, while on duty at an Army airfield, Sgt. David J. Borell was approached by an Iraqi who pleaded for help for his three children, burned when they set fire to a bag containing explosive powder left over from the war.

"Borell immediately called for assistance. But the two Army doctors who arrived about an hour later refused to help the children because their injuries were not life-threatening and had not been inflicted by U.S. troops."

Said Borell: "I have never seen in almost 14 years of Army experience anything so callous." When AP contacted the 3rd Corps Support Command, it received an e-mail back from the public affairs officer stating "our goal is for the Iraqis to use their own existing infrastructure and become self-sufficient, not dependent on U.S. forces for medical care."

Such insensitive, colonial brutality by the U.S. high command is making enemies of the Iraqis and pushing the soldiers into a situation where they become either bru-

tal or totally demoralized. The raids, the mistreatment of the people and the growing casualty rate among the soldiers is steadily leading to a deterioration of morale.

"What are we getting into here?" asked a sergeant of the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division stationed north of Baghdad, according to the Washington Post of June 20. "The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed. Is it worth it? Saddam isn't in power any more. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?"

Lavender & red: Towards liberation

Continued from page 7

have made strides in this country, couldn't capitalism just be "tinkered" with?

She pointed out that the first mass historic movement for gay, trans and lesbian liberation—the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement—and its precious archive were destroyed by the rise of fascism in 1935. Capitalism in times of crisis can wipe out the gains of decades, she emphasized. "A movement that relies solely on incremental reforms or the next election is doomed to the experience of Sisyphus, who, in Greek mythology, was forced to roll a heavy boulder up the hill, only to watch it come thundering down again."

Feinberg's San Diego appearance the next day drew a standing-room-only audience—mostly young and mostly from the local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities—to the Santa Fe Room in Balboa Park. The San Diego International Action Center organized this event with a lot of help from the local HEAL organization.

Feinberg focused on the need for coalition building among the LGBT communities and beyond. She emphasized how tactically important it is that "T" has been added to "LGB." It was gender-variant lesbians and gay men who helped birth the movements against sexual and gender oppression, she noted. And while the populations of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people don't face a common oppression, they are up against a common enemy. "The lesson of Stonewall is that those who do not face the same degree of exploitation or oppression can make history when they fight back together," she pointed out.

She related episodes from her experiences as a young labor unionist, later as an anti-war and anti-racist activist, and still later as a community organizer during the 1990s ultra-rightist mobilizations in Buffalo, her hometown. The common lesson of all these experiences, she noted, was the power of solidarity.

You always knew, she pointed out, when contract negotiation time was coming in the sweatshops and mills of Buffalo, where she worked in the 1960s. The foremen and supervisors would always seek out ways to divide the workers, using racism, sexism, gender-baiting the butch women and feminine men, anti-Semitism and red-baiting. The only answer to their divide-and-conquer tactics was to show even greater unity. The watchword she learned in practice was: An injury to one is an injury to all.

Further developing the idea of solidarity, Feinberg outlined struggles of the 1990s in Buffalo, when the right wing held two national campaigns to try to shut down women's health clinics and abortion services. LGBT volunteers played an important role in the Buffalo United for Choice (BUC) coalition that twice successfully beat back the fascist fundamentalists. And

This situation cries out for a world-wide protest to end the occupation and bring the troops home. This is the only real way to show solidarity with the heroic Iraqi resistance fighters and with the U.S. workers in uniform who are being forced by the Pentagon and the White House to become shock troops in a criminal war against the people of Iraq.

What the soldiers need is jobs and a decent life at home, not an imperialist war abroad. And what the Iraqis need is to get the U.S. military off their backs so they can determine their own destiny. □

when the right-wingers in a last gasp of rage targeted Buffalo's LGBT social clubs, heterosexual women and men from the BUC coalition helped Rainbow Peacekeepers, organized by the LGBT communities, to successfully defend these bars.

Feinberg reminded her audience that the left wing of the early gay movement won many allies with the enthusiastic presence of the Gay Liberation Front at anti-Vietnam War rallies, demonstrations in defense of the Black Panthers and the other struggles of those days.

She noted that Huey P. Newton, the internationally known leader of the Panthers, publicly acknowledged and offered a hand of solidarity to the LGBT movement. His revolutionary statement made in the summer of 1970 is still an outstanding example of political insight and courage.

Death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal's call for unity against anti-gay violence was from the same heroic mold, she said.

The Bush administration's attacks on civil rights and his program of "endless war" and occupation won't be stopped by an "anyone but Bush" campaign that diverts the energies of an independent movement into electing a Democrat, she said. She recounted how Democrat John F. Kennedy, viewed as a "liberal hope" by some, widened and deepened the war against Vietnam, while reactionary Republican Richard Nixon had to formally end the war. "It was the courageous struggle of the Vietnamese people and the massive protests by people of all nationalities and ages that made the difference," she said.

She urged those in attendance to stand up to red-baiting attacks that serve to divide the movement and divert it from focusing on the heart of the matter: The world productive apparatus has been built and run by hundreds of millions of workers and oppressed people worldwide, but is owned and controlled by a handful of billionaires.

"We don't want to break up these monopolies," she concluded, "We want to wrest private ownership out of the hands of this tiny capitalist class and apply consciousness and planning to produce to meet human needs and desires. It will take a mighty battle to bring this better world into birth.

"And lesbian and gay, trans and bi people are leaving our imprint in this historic struggle which is already shaping the demands and tasks of socialism."

Feinberg's audiences ratified her conclusions with applause, cheers and standing ovations.

Are the political winds picking up and shifting direction? Has Pentagon bellicosity and Justice Department racism aroused a sleeping giant? Feinberg's audiences gave every indication of being hungry for even more anti-capitalist analysis. And Feinberg urged them to get involved in the struggle. □



Money for AIDS, not for war!

The Centers for Disease Control has announced a shift in policy that could have drastic, far-reaching consequences for public health. The CDC says it will no longer directly fund community-based organizations that address HIV prevention for those who are currently not infected but are at highest risk.

Instead, direct funding will only be provided to programs that target people already HIV-infected.

The CDC also announced that it would not require full pre-test counseling in medical settings, as it has in the past.

The rebuttal to this shocking move was swift. "Many of us active in seeking to prevent the spread of HIV believe that HIV-prevention programs must be made available to both groups—those who are HIV-negative and HIV-positive. Further we believe that complete pre-test HIV test counseling is a vital point for prevention interventions and informed consent," stated a June 24 media release issued by the Latino Commission on AIDS. The statement was also signed by leaders of the American Indian Community House, the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS and the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS.

"Many of us feel," continued the release, "that the pressure on local funds is already enormous and that local governments will not be able to pick up the slack and definitely not expand efforts, especially with the CDC recommending a different approach."

The four AIDS advocacy groups are appealing to concerned people to send letters of opposition to the new policies and the potential impact they will have on African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Latinos and Native peoples. These letters should be addressed to Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson. A sample letter can be downloaded from www.latinoaids.org/misc/underattack.asp.

The Bush administration and both aisles of Congress have made it clear where their funding priorities lie: war, war and war.

An even louder demand of "Money for AIDS, not for war!" must be raised—now more than ever. □



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Big win

Canada says 'I do' to same-sex marriage

By Preston Wood

In an upset to right-wing forces in the United States—not to mention Democrats and Republicans alike—the Canadian government has gone off on its own and announced that Canada will soon change its law to allow same-sex marriage.

Canada, which also defied U.S. pressure to join the Pentagon war on Iraq, will grant full marriage rights based on a June 10 Ontario Court of Appeal ruling. That decision declared that the definition of marriage as a union of a man and a woman is invalid and should include any two adults who wish to unite in marriage.

Under pressure from the growing lesbian, gay, bi and trans movement in Canada—and from polls that show the majority of Canadians favor full marriage rights to same-sex couples—Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced June 17 that the new law would be submitted to the Canadian Supreme Court for review and then put to a vote in Parliament, where the Liberal Party has a large majority.

This victory north of the U.S. border will no doubt spur on the LGBT struggle on both sides of the border. And it will fuel the movement in the United States for equal protection under the law for LGBT people.

Because U.S. law recognizes the legitimacy of Canadian marriages, U.S. courts will soon be forced to grapple with recognizing the union of same-sex couples from this country who get married in Canada.

Right-wing talk shows and conservative columnists across the United States are using this progressive development as yet another excuse to spew vitriolic hatred against millions of LGBT workers and their families, who, like all other workers, produce the wealth of society.

This enormous wealth is of course controlled by the big capitalists. Tools like racism and bias are used to divide and weaken the overall struggles of the workers and oppressed for economic and social justice.

The guarantee of equal protection under law has been trampled by successive governments throughout U.S. history. Equal access to jobs and housing is routinely denied to African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Arabs, Native people and others. Immigrants are rounded up and deported without legal recourse.

LGBT people face discrimination on the job, in the military, housing, etc. In addition, 15 states in the United States still have medieval "sodomy" laws on the books, criminalizing private sexual acts between consenting adults. These laws are used to target LGBT people. Hate crimes against LGBT people have risen significantly under the fire-and-brimstone rhetoric of Bush and his right-wing zealots.

A battle against discrimination, bigotry

Why is the right to marry so important? Beyond the wedding ceremony itself, what is marriage under capitalism?

It is about love and commitment, of course, but it also comprises the rights to spousal medical benefits, tax breaks, adoption of children, social recognition of a partnership, to rent an apartment or buy a house together, civil rights. These are things that affect all workers, and that have often been denied to LGBT people in class society.

To understand better why the issue of same-sex marriage rights is an important question for Marxists to analyze, take a look at the landmark 19th-century work "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," by the great Marxist theoretician Frederick Engels.

In his book, Engels shows how inequality, the rule of one class over another and the repressive apparatus of the modern state all developed along with the means of production. From pre-class communism to modern capitalism, the means of production have been in constant change, just as everything in nature is always changing.

These changes in how things are produced have determined forms of social organization. This applied both to what social systems developed—e.g. slavery, feudalism, capitalism—and also affected the way people live and love.

Engels demonstrates how, for most of human history, the family as it is known today did not exist.

Before class society developed, people had to live and work in the face of harsh conditions of scarcity. People lived in loose groupings where women were not oppressed or dependent on men. With the growth of technology and skill, though, came the accumulation of surplus and wealth and the development of patriarchal domination.

Eventually, the control of wealth became paramount, and with the development of social classes came the oppression, brutalization, and super-exploitation of women.

Gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and trans people were also super-repressed by the growing ruthless power of church and state. Falling outside the patriarchal family system of procreation and inheritance, queer lovers and trans people challenged and threatened the new order.

When the great Stonewall rebellion occurred in New York City in June 1969, it shocked the world. LGBT people, oppressed under capitalism, fought back as a group and thus changed history. In the words of Harry Hay, a founder of the early gay rights movement, the "me" of isolation became the "we" of united militant action.

Since Stonewall, ongoing struggles for equal rights and against bigotry have helped pave the way for greater unity and solidarity among all the workers and oppressed peoples. The struggle for full marriage rights for all that lies ahead can help strengthen that unity and mount a serious challenge to the capitalist agenda of divide and conquer. □

Capitalists can't escape protests

Continued from page 8

so-called Paris-Berlin axis. But this did not at all stop the governments of these countries from allowing the use of facilities for those troops leaving to make war on Iraq."

The European army now under discussion, said Havatzas, "is a weapon in the hands of the imperialists and the European transnationals. It was conceived in order to crush resistance in the heart of the European Union and to intervene anywhere in the world to force the peoples to submit."

Statements from EU countries at the summit and during the weeks before backed Havatzas' analysis. While the EU leaders called on the United Nations to play a leading role in Iraq, they pledged to contribute to Iraq's "reconstruction," something asked by the U.S. and Britain.

The EU summit also repeated "serious concern" about Iran's nuclear program. The U.S. accuses Iraq of preparing to make nuclear weapons and has threatened Iran.

EU countries, with Italy and Spain taking the lead,

have also taken steps to punish socialist Cuba for that besieged country's actions against U.S. agents in its midst, and have criticized the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In addition, France and Germany have sent troops into Africa under UN cover.

Italian President Romano Prodi announced at the summit that the EU would not finish its expansion until the Balkan countries were included, referring to the countries of the former Yugoslavia, with the exception of the already accepted Slovenia. No dates were set, however, and the EU leaders advised these countries to clear up their instability and organized crime.

The same European countries, under Germany's leadership, encouraged the breakup of the former Yugoslavia by supporting the secession of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991 and Bosnia soon after. This helped give impetus to a decade of civil wars. Finally the U.S./NATO bombing and intervention destroyed Yugoslavia, leaving a handful of unstable and corrupt mini-states in its place.

The EU countries jumped right in behind U.S. imperialism to wage that reactionary war against Yugoslavia, just as they are now looking for a way into Iraq. □

Moorehead at Harlem forum on Zimbabwe

'U.S. trying to re-enslave Africa'

Monica Moorehead of the International Action Center participated in a public forum June 22 entitled "Zimbabwe and Mugabe: Governance, the Land Question and Its Impact Worldwide" in Harlem, New York. Other panelists included Viola Plummer, December 12th Movement; Elombe Brath, Patrice Lumumba Coalition; Ibrahim Rainey, Fellowship for Reconciliation; and Nellie Hester Bailey, a Harlem tenants' organizer. Bailey chaired the event, which was organized by the Uptown Brecht Forum. Junior Mambazo, a South African a cappella singing group, performed. Excerpts from Moorehead's talk follow.

Zimbabwe is an issue that should be of great interest not only to the Black movement but for every progressive movement for social change, regardless of nationality, class, sex, gender or age. What lurks behind the economic and political attacks on Zimbabwe, along with the brutal war and occupation of Iraq, the daily Zionist atrocities against righteous Palestinian resistance, the deepening threats against Iran, Cuba and North Korea, and the decline of living standards at home is U.S. imperialism.

It is U.S. imperialism, in the guise of the Bush regime, that threatens the entire planet with endless war for empire in order to re-carve up the world for profits on behalf of U.S. big oil conglomerates and other greedy corporate interests.

This is the economic and geopolitical context in which the Zimbabwe situation must be viewed and understood if there is to be any clarity in perspective and tactics. Slowly but surely the U.S. is positioning itself to overtake its European imperialist rivals to become the number one military slave master of Africa. The imperialist banks have already enslaved Africa's economy, which has led to the deepening plunder of Africa's abundant mineral wealth along with unimaginable underdevelopment and imperialist-backed tragic civil wars.

Zimbabwe was brutally colonized by European imperialism in the late 1800s and won nominal independence in 1980 due to a guerrilla struggle. I say nominal because, to this day, 95 percent of Zimbabwe's economy is still in the hands of British corporate interests and white commercial farmers. How can a country be deemed free and independent when its economy is still dominated by its former oppressors?

This exposes the lie that President Robert Mugabe is single-handedly sabotaging the economy. If any forces are doing the sabotaging, they are the U.S., Britain and other European powers who have imposed criminal economic sanctions and other isolationist maneuvers. They are even pressuring Zimbabwe's neighbors. Just a few days ago, the Washington Post wrote a vile editorial calling for the overthrow of Robert Mugabe and insisting that President Thabo Mbeki turn off the 15 percent of the electricity that South Africa provides to Zimbabwe.

This editorial threatens the people of Zimbabwe that if they don't get rid of their president, a president they democratically elected, they will suffer the consequences of further economic destabilization that could ignite a civil war. And the Washington Post is getting its orders from a president who has violated every law on the book, including stealing the presidency by disenfranchising African Americans.

So if Bush is willing to conspire to tram-

ple on the rights of oppressed people in the U.S., who in their right mind could ever think he would hesitate to trample on the rights of people of color elsewhere? This is the same Bush who legally lynched over 150 prisoners, mostly Black, Latino and poor, as the governor of Texas; who denied the largest percentage of poor children in Texas access to the right to health care; who is providing the largest tax breaks to the super-rich ever and whose administration has done nothing to oppose the loss of over 2 million jobs during his first term in office; who submitted a legal brief to the Supreme Court opposing the University of Michigan's affirmative action program. He will express outrage when dispossessed Black farmers organize to take back their land stolen by colonialism, but is dead silent when these same Black farmers are being paid starvation wages by rich white farmers.

The bottom line is that Bush could care less about the indigenous people of Zimbabwe or the 600 million people who inhabit the African continent. The pitiful amount of U.S. funds to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic that threatens millions of lives and future generations in Africa is proof positive of his "I could care less about you" attitude.

Bush and Blair's beef with Mugabe has nothing to do with his policies but everything to do with making an example of Zimbabwe to prove to what lengths they will go to undermine the right to sovereignty and the right to self-determination. Bush and Blair are sending a clear message to the people of Zimbabwe and the people of Africa: if you dare to struggle to free your land and your economy, which would lay the basis for being totally independent from colonialism and imperialism, then we will do everything possible to re-enslave you and your country.

So no matter what you may think of Robert Mugabe, there is no denying that he has taken a defiant stance against imperialist arrogance. This is a man who has fought for most of his adult life against colonialism; a man who was a leader of a national liberation movement. This cannot be dismissed and it has not been forgotten by imperialism. In fact, it is a big reason why they still despise him.

We cannot allow ourselves as revolutionaries and as activists to trip and fall into the imperialist camp. To consciously or unconsciously side with the imperialists weakens and divides our movement and helps to reinforce the racist view that only colonialism can save Africa from so-called despotic leaders.

U.S. imperialism is hypocritical when it denounces "repressive measures" taken by the Mugabe government. Look at the repression we face right here if we organize anti-war or anti-police brutality demonstrations. When aren't there thousands of NYPD cops in full riot gear trying to intimidate and even arrest us when we exercise our right to freedom of assembly and free speech? Look at how revolutionaries like Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier are locked away because they dared to speak out against this terrible, racist, oppressive system.

We have to continue to expose the real aims and objectives of U.S. imperialism in Zimbabwe, in Africa and throughout the world. The fact that the U.S. is orchestrating to overthrow legitimate governments, not because they promote so-called terrorism but because they are defending their right to sovereignty, exposes the unprecedented criminality of imperial-

ism.

The U.S. may possess the most powerful military arsenal in the world, but their military prowess cannot overcome overwhelming worldwide public opinion against war and occupation. This has been evident for the past several months as tens of millions of people took to the streets to oppose a war on Iraq. The U.S. may have won the military battle in Iraq but they will never win over the hearts and the minds of the Iraqi people as the popular resistance grows stronger day by day and U.S. troop morale plummets.

Hands off Zimbabwe! Pay reparations now to the African people for colonial crimes against humanity! U.S. imperialism out of Africa! □



Monica Moorehead

PHOTO: PVN

Racism & anti-LGBT oppression

Continue from page 7

lengthy and detailed report of what he discovered by living with various indigenous peoples in widely scattered areas of the Americas. His research focused especially on Native groupings in the midwestern, western and southwestern U.S. and in Yucatan, Mexico.

The same year, Paula Gunn Allen, a Laguna Pueblo/Sioux Indian, published "The Sacred Hoop" (Beacon Press), which explored the honored role of lesbians in Native societies.

Gay American Indians published an anthology titled "Living the Spirit" (St. Martin's Press, 1988) that documented alternative sex/gender roles in 133 Native nations on the North American continent.

These and other truly remarkable findings with regard to the social roles of sexually and gender variant people bolster the generalizations we made in the Roots booklet. And they are in harmony with historian/author and WWP member Leslie Feinberg's conclusions regarding the roots of the oppression of transgender, transsexual and intersexual people.

We Marxists think that it will only be when we rid human society of all the social, political, and economic inequalities and restraints, all the prejudices and repression, that is to say, when we are freed from the oppressive dictatorship of the capitalist class, that human sexual and gender expression will once again be free.

The final issue I was asked to address is the role, if any, that white LGBT people can play as allies in the struggle for Black gay liberation.

As a socialist, I am keenly aware that the struggle for socialism will only be won with the intervention of a united working class—and one that is conscious of and in solidarity with all the struggles for justice, including, of course, the struggle for Black gay liberation.

In the opinion of my organization—Workers World Party—fighting racism, in the interests of building unity among the working class and its most oppressed sectors, is the most important task facing all of us who fight for social justice. And it is, first and foremost, a task that is the responsibility of white progressives and revolutionaries.

The slogan on every issue of our newspaper is: Workers and oppressed people of the world unite!

But that can only happen if the less exploited and less oppressed take up the struggles of the more exploited and more oppressed with commitment and deter-

mination. And that means that men must embrace the struggle for full equality for women. Straight people must defend equality for LGBT people. Whites must join people of color in their struggle for equal rights and an end to the scourge of racism. And the white LGBT community must stand in solidarity with the Black, Latino, Asian, Native and Arab LGBT communities.

Now, I understand that these sentiments might, at first glance, seem very idealistic, even more like a utopian dream than a strategy for political struggle and victory. But they have their origin in the very concrete and difficult struggles of the international working class over the past several hundred years. When people are in the heat of struggle, they are in a position to learn difficult lessons and solve difficult problems quickly and well.

First and foremost, of course, they want to win. When a political struggle erupts, the daily interests and routines of our lives are more or less put on hold. Our attention and intelligence are focused intensely on the task at hand. When we discover weaknesses in our ranks, we are highly motivated to correct them. And all too often the weaknesses we discover involve divisions based on gender, sexual orientation and race.

Leaders who are worth their salt must always be fighting all these manifestations of injustice. But it is in the midst of struggle that the greatest inroads can be made in removing these divisions among the exploited and oppressed. It is in the heat of battle that the less exploited and the less oppressed are willing to listen, are prepared to change, are most able to put themselves in the shoes of their more exploited, more oppressed sisters and brothers, to understand what it means to face the daily racism, sexism and super exploitation of capitalist society, and to cast off their own backwardness in anger and disgust and do whatever is necessary to overcome the divisions that threaten the victory of all.

The LGBT communities need to start making more noise. We need to start challenging the rule of the bigots. We need to revive the spirit of Stonewall. Let's start raising the issues that fester in our communities, that hold us back, that make our lives less full than they should be.

We in Workers World Party pledge our support. Our white comrades will explain to other white workers, patiently but firmly: While people of color remain oppressed, your own liberation is impossible. □

Entrevista con Lohana Berkins

Por Rebeca Toledo

“Yo soy una transvesti, una mujer, socialista, indígena, gorda, de color, pobre, obrera. Soy todas estas cosas y mucho más. Y lucho para forjar un mundo donde seré aceptada por todo lo que soy,” declaró Lohana Berkins a Mundo Obrero.



FOTOS: PNN

La señorita Berkins llegó a los Estados Unidos de su nativa Argentina para recibir el Premio Filipa de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos para los Gays y Lesbianas del 2003. Ella también habló a muchos grupos progresistas de Lesbianas, Gays, Transvesti y Bisexuales (LGBT) mientras se encontraba en Nueva York.

Sobre la lucha de los LGTB en Argentina, ella dijo, “Han habido muchos izquierdistas escondidos en el movimiento LGBT y muchos LGBT en el movimiento izquierdista. Pero esto está comenzando a cambiar.” Hace dos años, la señorita Berkins fue la primera candidata LGBT para el congreso bajo la boleta de la Izquierda Unida. Durante toda su campaña ella se dio a conocer como transvesti.

“Antes de comenzar mi campaña la gente decía que los LGBT perderían votos, pero ganamos más que la última vez. Esto demuestra que nosotros no solo obtenemos votos, sino que también podemos hacer que la gente salga a votar en cifras altas. En este año hay 10 candidatos del movimiento LGBT nacionalmente y muchos más regionalmente,” dijo Berkins.

En la marcha de orgullo de los LGBT en noviembre del año pasado, Berkins y otros organizaron un grupo para marchar con la manta que decía, “No al imperialismo, no a la guerra, no al ALCA.”

“No sabíamos que iba a pasar,” ella nos cuenta. “Al comienzo solo éramos un puñado y algunos de los compañeros estaban preocupados y querían deshacer al grupo. Yo insistí que continuaríamos aún si éramos pocos.”

“Estábamos al final de la marcha y al comenzar nuestra marcha por las

calles, se nos unieron muchas personas hasta que llenamos la cuadra entera. Otras más se nos unieron durante la marcha. Nos hicimos el contingente más popular.”

Su contingente también consistía de “piqueteros”, los trabajadores desempleados que han estado luchando contra las medidas de austeridad impuestas por el FMI.

Lohana Berkins ofreció testimonios de personas que participaron en el alza popular de diciembre del 2001 en Argentina y que provocó la caída en sucesión de tres presidentes. “Cuando el presidente declaró el estado de emergencia el 19 de diciembre, eso fue lo que nos colmó la paciencia. Yo salí a la calle frente a mi edificio y ví a otras dos mujeres en la esquina tocando ollas y cacerolas, en cosa de minutos nos hicimos una fuerza de doscientas personas. La gente apareció en sus balcones a unirse a las ‘cacerolas’. Todas las esquinas estaban llenas de mujeres, niños, hombres y gente de todas las edades.

“Espontáneamente decidimos irnos a la Plaza de Mayo. Cuando llegamos, ya había gente allá y nos quedamos hasta las 6 de la mañana tratando de quitarle el control de la Plaza de manos de los policías que siguieron atacándonos con gases lacrimógenos”.

Lohana Berkins recuenta la historia solo como puede una persona que lo experimentó –sus ojos brillaban con la emoción de una lucha viva e infundida de espíritu. “Por la tarde”, ella sigue, “volvimos mejor organizados y tomamos el control de la Plaza. Ya por las 6 de la tarde, el presidente había dimitido y el pueblo había ganado una dulce victoria”.

Al preguntarle sobre el significado de estos hechos, Berkins responde, “Lo importante no es la respuesta de la clase dominante de la Argentina, porque esta ha hecho poco para aliviar el sufrimiento del pueblo. La importancia está en la memoria colectiva del pueblo que sintió su poder en ese diciembre. Y que a la vez se dio cuenta de la desconfianza y el descrédito que todas las instituciones gubernamentales han tenido en los ojos del pueblo. Esto se va a mantener en vivo y va a resultar en nuevos levantamientos”.



Yo soy una transvesti, una mujer, socialista, indígena, gorda, de color, pobre, obrera. Soy todas estas cosas y mucho más. Y lucho para forjar un mundo donde seré aceptada por todo lo que soy.



La Ciudad de Méjico a once de Junio

La crisis en Argentina es profunda. Berkins dijo a Mundo Obrero que de una población de 40 millones, 22 millones viven bajo el nivel de la pobreza y de ellos, 7 millones no tienen ningún recurso económico. Los salarios han sido recortados en dos terceras partes mientras que el costo de vida ha seguido igual. Ahora, todo es importado, en un país que tiene todos los recursos para ser autosuficiente.

El FMI ha abierto un despacho en la Argentina, algo muy inusitado, según Berkins. El nuevo presidente, Néstor Carlos Kirchner está planeando permitir al FMI imponer más medidas de austeridad al pueblo.

Actualmente, Lohana Berkins es empleada por un miembro del concejo municipal. Ella dice, “Tenemos prostitutas, prostitutos y transvestis viniendo por nuestro despacho todo el día buscando nuestros servicios”. Ella también investiga violaciones de los derechos humanos en el país.

Una de las cosas que ella destaca sobre el papel jugado por los EE.UU. en la Argentina es que está velando el suministro de agua en el sur de la Argentina.

Ella dice que esta es una de las reservas más grande que queda en el mundo. “A los EE.UU. le gustaría apoderarse de nuestro suministro de agua para poder seguir llevando a cabo sus guerras de agresión contando con una reserva de agua segura.” Los EE.UU. demostró en Irak cómo pudo utilizar tal reserva para privatizar el suministro con fines de lucro. No es difícil creer esto en el caso de la Argentina considerando que es precisamente esto lo que están tratando de hacer en Bolivia.

Sobre la guerra en Irak, Lohana Berkins declara, “Eso no fue una guerra entre iguales—eso fue una invasión. Los EE.UU. acabó con la diplomacia. Va a seguir revelando sus verdaderas intenciones utilizando la fuerza para invadir a todos los pueblos del mundo.”

“En la Argentina, protestamos frente a la embajada de los EE.UU. durante la invasión”, y concluye, “conformamos parte del movimiento mundial. Tenemos que frenar al imperialismo con el internacionalismo y con más solidaridad. Juntos lo derrotaremos”. □



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