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More than a power failure

**Capitalist greed  
short-circuits grid**

By Deirdre Griswold  
New York

It flows instantaneously from city to city, state to state, region to region, and across national borders. Where there is demand, it rushes in. Where it cannot turn a profit, it ebbs away. Sometimes the flow reverses at a critical moment, and crisis results.

The complex grid along which it travels enriches many corporate entities, but a few giants dominate the entire process.

No, we're not talking about electricity. We're talking about capital.

In order to understand why on Aug. 14 the electricity grid in a large part of the United States failed once again, it is necessary to know what is happening to the vast pool of social wealth created by the collective labor of millions of workers in the richest country in the world. This enormous wealth has been used to create a military machine more modern and powerful than that of any other bloc of nations in the world. It has created a class of billionaires with more assets than many entire countries.

So why is it that, in the 21st century, the distribution of electricity in the United States has just gone through a monumental breakdown?

As the Enron scandal and the energy debacle in California showed, vast fortunes have been made by capitalists, legally and illegally, from the selling of electricity as a commodity. Between 1999 and 2000, total utility revenues increased by 32 percent and earnings per share went up 11 percent. Despite the stagnation in the rest of the economy, the average return on investment in utilities is now the highest it has been in 10 years. The yield on utility dividends is three times greater than the Standard & Poor's 500 average.

At the same time, these companies have not found it worth their while to invest in upgrading the grid—the huge complex of

power lines that carry electrons from generators to consumers. Investment in electrical transmission is now half what it was 10 years ago.

So even though excess capacity exists in the area of generating electricity—enough to meet peak-load demands—bottlenecks can and do crop up in the area of transmission. The computers that direct electricity along power lines from sellers to buyers are programmed to produce hefty profits—often at the expense of efficiency and energy conservation. Electricity is being sent longer and longer distances, losing potency along the way.

**Regulation started in 1930s**

For more than a century, of course, the reliable availability of electric power has been absolutely indispensable to the growth of U.S. capitalism. This became painfully clear to the ruling class during the Great Depression, when the business failure of many power companies contributed to the implosion of the economy.

As much as capitalists, then and now, love to attack big government, the astute political representatives of big business in the Roosevelt administration were trying to rescue their own class from chaos when they enacted a package of regulations that would insure access to electric power across the U.S. at relatively low rates while guaranteeing private power companies a profit. Many of these companies were locally owned.

But the tremendous growth in demand for electricity of recent decades has whetted the appetites of big capital and made them dissatisfied with those regulations. Their lobbyists have pushed through partial deregulation in some areas.

Enver Masud, who managed the U.S. National Power Grid Study (1980) and National Electric Reliability Study (1981) for the U.S. Department of Energy, wrote in the Aug. 18 Christian

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Anti-imperialist youth march in Hiroshima

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New York, N.Y. 10011
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Editor: Deirdre Griswold;
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk;
Managing Editors: Greg Butterfield, John Catalinotto, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson;
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Contributing Editors: Joyce Chediak, Pat Chin, Naomi Cohen, Shelley Ettinger, Teresa Gutierrez;
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National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, N.Y. 10011
(212) 627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, Ga. 30301
(404) 235-5704

Baltimore 426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, Md. 21218
(410) 235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston 31 Germania St.,
Boston, Mass. 02130
(Enter at 284 Amory St.)
(617) 983-3835;
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
P.O. Box 1204
Buffalo NY 14213
(716) 857-2112
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago P.O. Box 06178,
Wacker Drive Station,
Chicago, Ill. 60606
(773) 381-5839;
Fax (773) 761-9330;
chicago@workers.org

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

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, Mich. 48202
(313) 831-0750;
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 130322,
Houston, Texas
77219 (713) 861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
269 S. Western Ave.,
Room 110,
Los Angeles, Calif. 90004
(213) 500-0529
la@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, Pa. 19139
(610) 352-3625;
phila@workers.org

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

Rochester, N.Y.
2117 Buffalo Rd., PMB.
303, Rochester, N.Y. 14624
(716) 436-6458;

San Diego, Calif.
3930 Oregon St., Suite 230
San Diego, Calif. 92104
(619) 692-4496

San Francisco
2489 Mission St.
Rm. 28,
San Francisco,
Calif. 94110
(415) 826-4828;
fax (415) 821-5782;
sf@workers.org

Seattle
1218 E. Cherry #201,
Seattle, Wash. 98122
(206) 325-0085;
seattle@workers.org

State College, Pa.
100 Grandview Rd.,
State College,
Pa. 16801
(814) 237-8695

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
(202) 347-9300
dc@workers.org

## San Diego to Bush:

# You're not welcome here!

By Bob McCubbin  
San Diego, Calif.

Inside the sprawling San Diego Convention Center, the local banking and corporate establishment assembled to greet the king.

A few blocks away, just beyond the glitter of the Gaslamp District, many hundreds of homeless people were settling in for the evening in the shadows of crumbling old warehouses.

Immediately across from the Convention Center, at least 1,000 San Diegans had gathered along Harbor Drive with signs, banners and loud voices to express their disapproval of the occupier of Iraq.

The protest, organized by the San Diego ANSWER coalition and the local Peace and Justice Coalition, stretched along Harbor Drive from First to Fifth Avenues. Huge ANSWER banners proclaimed: "Occupation is not liberation," "Bring the troops home now" and "George Bush is a war criminal."

The visually striking protest was fully visible to Bush and his entourage as the presidential motorcade sped along the highway and swung into the Convention

Center's underground parking facility. Earlier, activists had dropped a huge pink banner from the window of a facing hotel that read: "Bush you lied! You're fired!"

Following Bush's departure, ANSWER activists and other youths led a march of hundreds through the streets of the Gaslamp District. Radical writer and reporter Joe Williams III wrote in his eyewitness account, "As the marchers began their trek through the Gaslamp District, they passed a restaurant named Pat and Oscar's. As the protesters walked by, the restaurant workers came outside and started cheering the crowd. ...

"We marched a few blocks more, and I noticed a small group of demonstrators surrounding a woman sitting on the ground. An onlooker explained to me that the woman's foot had been stepped on by a horse. The cop just rode off without a word. In the middle of what looked like a police state, not one officer inquired about what had happened. ...

"As the demonstrators dispersed, a marcher approached me about how we could get the word out to the masses of people. I turned to him and said, 'We just did.'" □

## Bush can't even lunch quietly in Orange County

By John Beacham  
Irvine, Calif.

President George W. Bush cannot go anywhere these days without being harassed by large and militant demonstrations.

On Aug. 15 at 12 noon, Bush stopped in the usually very friendly Orange County to raise money for his campaign at a \$2,000-a-plate luncheon at the Hyatt hotel. Hundreds of activists braved temperatures in the high 90s to condemn the occupation of Iraq, massive unemployment and cuts in badly needed social services.

The protest was put on by the International ANSWER coalition-Orange County. The county has been home to an incredible surge of activism in recent months as the deepening economic and political crisis is starting to hit all areas of the country.

One union member who is also a Republican, Janet Jones, denounced President Bush for "lying and leading the people into a war for oil and plunder."

Asked to comment about the impor-



WW PHOTO: JOHN BEACHAM

tance of the protest against Bush in this bastion of corporate headquarters and reactionaries, Chuck Anderson, an organizer for ANSWER-Orange County, said, "It's very important to let President Bush know that he is unwelcome here. We live and work in this deep Republican cesspool of racism and employer abuse. We are workers, immigrants and students and we will not accept Bush's warmongering and the pillaging of Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine." □



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

As the \$2,000-a-plate pro-Bush crowd departed the Convention Center in their BMWs and Mercedes, they faced a gauntlet of angry youth protesting Bush's foreign and domestic policies.

## LOS ANGELES

# Bangladeshis protest killer cops

Special to Workers World  
Los Angeles

Angry protesters, mostly from the Bangladeshi immigrant community here, gathered in front of the Los Angeles Police Department's main headquarters on Aug. 15 to demand justice for Yusef Mullah. Mullah, a 32-year-old Bangladeshi man, was shot and killed by officers from the LAPD on July 27.

Chanting and carrying signs saying "Justice for Yusef" and "Stop police brutality," the protesters called for an independent investigation into the shooting. They also demanded that the cops responsible for killing Mullah be removed from active duty and held responsible for his death.

Mullah—who had a history of mental disability—and his family had been desperately seeking medical attention for his condition. Due to massive budget cuts for psychiatric services in California, he had been unable to get treatment.

On July 27 at 6:30 p.m., after receiving a call from neighbors, LAPD Division police arrived at Mullah's apartment. According to witnesses, Mullah was shot by the police five minutes after they arrived at the scene. He crawled into his



Yusef Mullah

PHOTO: SOUTH ASIAN NETWORK

apartment and locked the door.

Family members arrived soon after. They explained to the officers that Mullah had a history of mental disability and asked them to facilitate getting him emergency medical care.

Rather than calling for medical care, the police waited three hours for the SWAT team to arrive. The SWAT team fired tear gas into the apartment. When they broke down the door, Mullah was found dead on the floor. He had bled to death as a result of the gunshot wound.

Speakers at the rally demanded justice for Mullah and that the cops be held responsible for their use of unwarranted deadly force. Speakers included Hamid Kahn, a leader of the South Asian Network, who organized the demonstration; Mizan Rahaman, brother of the victim; Greg Simons of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights L.A.; and Preston Wood of the Los Angeles chapter of the International ANSWER coalition—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism. □

## A haven for lesbian, gay, bi, trans students

# Harvey Milk School under siege

By Imani Henry  
New York

On July 28, a New York City program for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth announced plans to become the first high school for LGBT students in the country in September. Founded in 1984, the Harvey Milk School recently hired its first principal and was awarded \$3.2 million to expand its classrooms and increase its 50 students to 170.

The school is named after the first openly gay member of the San Francisco

board of supervisors. Harvey Milk was assassinated by a right-wing bigot in 1978.

After the July 28 announcement, right-wing forces came out of the woodwork to falsely charge the MHS with segregation, rejection of heterosexual students and diversion of funds from other schools.

In a July 28 New York Post interview, New York State Conservative Party Chairperson Mike Long blasted the school for "social engineering." Long, a supporter of President George W. Bush's faith-based initiative campaign, called for "tolerance" from the LGBT commu-

nity for "heterosexual rights."

This is an argument used historically by the ultra-right to undermine the fight for civil rights for oppressed peoples. Suggesting there is real equality under capitalism negates the history of systematic special oppression that people of color, women and LGBT communities face.

The truth is that there are no laws that give LGBT people any "special rights" in the United States. What has been won is the inclusion of sexuality and gender expression in some anti-discrimination legislation. This in and of itself is the

acknowledgment that capitalism breeds a violently bigoted climate.

But even where protective laws have been won, like all anti-discrimination legislation, it is arbitrarily enforced by the courts and the cops. This further forces oppressed peoples to continue their fight for equality.

Still to be won are civil basic rights that people who are not lesbian, gay, bi or trans already enjoy. The right to marriage, medical and life insurance for spouses, and the right to adopt children are examples of

Continued on page 4



## CLEVELAND

# No power, no water

By Martha Grevatt  
Cleveland

Not only were workers in this metropolitan area without electricity for half a day because of the collapse of the power system on Aug. 14, but the city's electrically powered water pumps shut down. In addition, the beaches were closed after untreated sewage was found in Lake Erie.

It was not until four days later that residents were told their water was safe to drink.

Now it appears quite plausible that Akron-based FirstEnergy, the fourth-largest investor-owned power company in the nation and supplier to nearly all of Northern Ohio, may have triggered what became a cascading crisis. Residents and the mayor of Eastlake, where FirstEnergy operates an aging coal-fired power plant, report an explosion and an unusual amount of fly ash deposits at least two hours before the widespread power failure. One resident compared it to "a snow-storm in August."

FirstEnergy denies that an explosion

occurred but admits that the alarm screen for monitoring problems was not working. An industry group attributed the initial outage to the failure of five Ohio transmission lines, four of which are wholly or partially owned by FirstEnergy, and also criticized the company for not notifying neighboring energy suppliers in a timely fashion. The transmission lines began failing at least an hour before those in other parts of the United States and Canada.

FirstEnergy is notorious here for the slipshod maintenance that led its Davis-

Besse nuclear plant to develop a football-sized hole. If not discovered, it could have led to a catastrophe far worse than the recent emergency.

Any worker over 40 remembers the hard-fought battle to save the Municipal Light plant, which gave new meaning to the slogan "power to the people." Few would be surprised if this profit-hungry utility baron contributed to the problem.

Least surprised would be hundreds of laid-off utility workers, casualties of the drive to "cut costs" that has accelerated nationwide since deregulation began. □

## Capitalist greed short-circuits grid

*continued from page 1*

Science Monitor: "But deregulation itself was a misnomer. What really happened was that new laws and regulations were put in place, and a tried-and-true system that favored cost minimization was replaced with an untested system that favored profit maximization. It also fractured responsibility for the overall reliability of the system."

Changing the rules made it easier to close less profitable power plants, separate ownership of the plants from that of the transmission lines, and lay off lots of workers along the way. Control of the industry passed from smaller power companies to major energy corporations—and now to the banks and investment firms behind them.

### Who owns the industry? Big banks

"The major forces in the energy industry these days are not big natural gas and power companies but large banks like Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Citigroup," wrote the New York Times on Aug. 19. These Wall Street firms have moved "aggressively" into energy trading, and have bought up power plants, says the Times, because "the returns to be made on such assets are attractive and the unused capacity ... can be profitably traded on the open markets."

If you had a battery-powered radio in New York during the outage, you could listen to Bloomberg Radio, which calls itself "The World's Only Global Radio Station." Yes, the mayor, Michael Bloomberg, is also the billionaire owner of a financial

news and communications empire. While millions were still sweating it out, the story there was all about how well the city—meaning the mayor and other officials, of course—was doing.

Of course, Wall Street was one of the first areas where power was restored. The neon lights were flashing in Times Square, too, 12 hours before millions of city residents had working refrigerators, elevators or fans.

Traffic lights were still out in many areas. The subways were still down. Temperatures were rising in the concrete canyons and high rises.

In Detroit and Cleveland, millions were in even more dangerous trouble because, in addition to all the other problems, the outage had knocked out the cities' water pumps.

But down on Wall Street, "Power prices in the Northeast surged on Friday, the day after the blackout, to more than \$1,000 a megawatt-hour, up from the average price of closer to \$100." (New York Times, Aug. 19)

The Wall Street banks and investment firms that had recently bought into the power business were making a killing.

Will they use this money to rebuild the power grid? Even though there have been many warnings that disaster could strike, they haven't done it yet. These profits are already being distributed to the wealthy owners and stockholders.

The spin being put on what has been dubbed the Great Blackout of 2003 is that it was caused by a failure to build profitability into the process of improving the grid. That's the mantra of capitalism: if it ain't profitable, don't do it. A demand for

higher utility rates and government underwriting of the cost of better power lines is sure to follow. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham has already appeared on television to announce that consumers will likely have to pay up to \$50 billion in higher electric bills.

Both ways, the burden for any new construction will fall heaviest on the working class, especially communities of color, as consumers and as taxpayers without high-priced lawyers to find them loopholes. In addition, the industry will push even harder to gut environmental laws that it blames for limiting production, even though that wasn't the problem.

### Breakdowns get bigger and bigger

This breakdown was even worse than the massive power failures that shut down the Northeast on Nov. 9, 1965, paralyzed New York City on July 13, 1977, and, in the very hot summer of 1996, caused outages in 11 Western states, Alberta and British Columbia in Canada, and Baja California in Mexico. After those disasters, there was much examination of how the electrical grid worked. New organizations were formed—the North American Electric Reliability Council was the industry's response after 1965—and mechanisms put in place to isolate the problem in the event of a breakdown. Another rolling blackout was not supposed to happen.

But it did, and on a day when the temperatures had barely reached 90—not unusually hot for this time of year. And this time 50 million people in the U.S. and Canada were affected.

Individual capitalists may not be all that bright, but they have a lot of smart people working for them. Their class has been warned again and again that the power transmission system was antiquated and inadequate. Now there has been another collapse that has cost their businesses billions of dollars—not to speak of the disruption, inconvenience and danger that reached into tens of millions of households.

Yet, like the antiquated U.S. air traffic control system—which collapsed in the New York area just days after the blackout, and for unrelated reasons—even the costs of real disasters seem more acceptable to the class that rules than doing what is necessary to overhaul the infrastructure.

While this seems irrational, it is not the irrationality of individuals but of an economic system that became entrenched when the world was far different than it is today. Capitalism has revolutionized the means of production over the last 200 years, but it cannot reconcile the long-term interests of human society—made up mostly of workers who are now connected by a zillion threads in a global economy—with its need to show immediate profits for a privileged few.

Ironically, its lust for profit grows more acute as the system turns out cheap goods in ever greater abundance. The growing crisis of overproduction drives the stewards of capital to take ever greater risks and to make decisions that may enhance today's bottom line but magnify the potential for future disaster.

Politicians from Bush to Bloomberg made sure to praise the people for their calm and orderly conduct during the breakdown. It was a tactic, of course, to divert attention from the causes of the problem and their own roles as both pillars of U.S. capitalism and shapers of public policy.

What the ordinary working people showed, however, is that they don't need the Bushes or the Bloomborgs or the owners of the utility companies and banks. They have the skills to get the job done—any job.

Those who call for more government regulation of the power industry forget who owns the government. Not just Halliburton and Enron, but hundreds of other thieving corporations have been sure to get their people into the seats of political power. When the fox guards the chicken coop, the chickens end up as soup.

As capitalism becomes ever more dysfunctional, a way must be found to break the bonds of private property and bring economic wealth and the people back together. The Black Panthers had a slogan that sums it up: Power to the people. □

## Harvey Milk School under siege

*Continued from page 3*

rights that LGBT people still do not have.

The Harvey Milk School struggle is in itself the fight for safety and equality for LGBT students, many of whom have endured years of torment, discrimination and violence in other schools.

LGBT youth need even more safe havens like the Harvey Milk School. According to the Gay and Lesbian Student Education Network's 2001 National School Climate Survey, "Four out of five LGBT students report verbal, sexual or physical harassment at school and 30 percent report missing at least a day of school in the past month out of fear for their personal safety."

The Rev. Fred Phelps, a right-wing zealot, has issued a call for bigots to come to New York City to "boycott" the Harvey

Milk School on Sept. 8. An LGBT youth of color group, FIERCE, has begun organizing a multi-national, gay-straight alliance to counter Phelps if he comes to town.

On Aug. 13, State Sen. Ruben Diaz and the right-wing group Liberty Counsel filed a discrimination suit against the Harvey Milk School.

The Florida-based Liberty Counsel opposed the Supreme Court's ruling to overturn the Texas "sodomy" law, and has fought against recognition of same-sex civil unions and adoption of children by gay men and lesbians.

For years, the well-funded religious right has attempted to pit the multi-national LGBT communities against communities of color through alliances with conservative religious leaders. Councilperson Diaz, a minister from the Bronx,

told reporters, "My goal is to let the mayor, the chancellor know that this is wrong. It is segregation. ... They are leaving my children, my Spanish children, my Black children behind."

The fact is that 75 percent of students at Harvey Milk are LGBT youth of color. There are also non-LGBT students enrolled at the school—one student, for example, has lesbian parents.

The divide-and-conquer tactics by the right wing come at a time when the entire New York State education system is under attack. According to the watchdog group Advocates for Children, Gov. George Pataki proposes cutting \$448.5 million from the budget.

This is a time for unity—against oppression and against the budget cuts in education. □

## Under U.S.-British occupation

# Life is hell for Iraqis

By John Catalinotto

Oil pipelines burn, a devastating explosion outside United Nations headquarters in Baghdad kills a top UN official, and Pentagon troops kill a Reuters reporter filming near an Iraqi prison that had been shelled. Life in Iraq under U.S. occupation continues to deteriorate in mid-August.

Iraqis are the main victims of the U.S./British occupation. Twelve former Iraqi soldiers were killed in an ammunition dump in Tikrit Aug. 18. It exploded as the unemployed and destitute men were hunting for copper parts to sell.

U.S. troops, too, continue to fall to Iraqi resistance. One was killed Aug. 18 in Baghdad by what U.S. forces described as an "explosive device."

More than 120 U.S. troops have died—in combat and from accidents, illness and suicide—and thousands more have been wounded since Bush declared the war over on May 1. Even as they follow orders of a brutal occupation authority, the GIs are a second category of victim.

A third category of victim is journalists.

On Aug. 17, Reuters journalist Mazen Dana, a Palestinian from Hebron on the Israeli-occupied West Bank, became the 17th journalist to die in Iraq since the U.S.-British invasion began March 20. He was the second Reuters cameraperson to be killed by U.S. tank fire.

U.S. officers said the troops mistook Dana's camera for a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Dana's colleagues disagreed.

"We were all there, for at least half an hour," Stephan Breitner of France 2 television said. "They knew we were journal-

ists. After they shot Mazen, they aimed their guns at us. I don't think it was an accident. They are very tense. They are crazy." (Sydney Morning Herald, Aug. 20)

The Committee to Protect Journalists, a New York-based group that gave Dana an International Press Freedom Award in 2001 for his work covering the Hebron conflict, called on Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to conduct a full inquiry. Reuters and the Paris-based group Reporters Without Borders made similar demands.

The Pentagon brass face a choice of admitting either that U.S. forces target journalists or that the Iraqi resistance and a hostile Iraqi population have made the troops panicky and trigger-happy.

### Resistance grows more confident

In a television interview shown on Al-Jazeera on Aug. 17, five masked figures identifying themselves as resistance fighters made a statement showing a growing confidence:

"The Iraqi resistance, as it is well known, has started to make substantial progress on the domestic front, putting the enemy on the defensive rather than offensive. And [the Iraqi National Islamic Resistance Group's] varied and frequent attacks have prevented the occupiers from planting themselves on Iraqi soil . . .

"This resistance is not a reaction to the American provocations against the Iraqi people or to the shortage of services, as some analysts believe . . . but to kick out the occupiers as a matter of principle," one read from a statement.

"The enemy is suffering so many casu-



alties on a daily basis that this news is being severely blacked out by the media to protect Bush's chances in the forthcoming election and to protect the policies of the White House from the American public."

Along with popular mass demonstrations against the occupation, guerrilla resistance actions have been aimed directly at the occupation forces. In a story in the Aug. 16 Sydney Morning Herald titled "Inside the Resistance," a man identifying himself as a resistance fighter described a typical action:

"Yesterday we were told about the new movement of convoys, so we used a special car to take our RPG [rocket-propelled grenades] and guns up there. We struck at sunset, in an area surrounded by farms.

"We positioned ourselves as locals, just standing around. But as the convoy came into view we picked up the weapons, which we had lying on the ground. There were 19 soldiers. I could see their faces. I fired three grenades—two at a truck and one at a Humvee. Then we escaped across the fields to a car that was waiting for us."

Another type of direct blow at the occupation occurred when the pipeline delivering Iraqi oil to Turkey was hit for a second time on Aug. 16. The burning pipeline represented a loss of \$100 million that the

U.S. occupation authority was going to use to finance its efforts.

### UN headquarters destroyed

Other attacks not clearly aimed at the U.S. occupation began around Aug. 15.

These included the destruction of a 5-foot-diameter water main in northern Baghdad on Aug. 17. The break, which engineers described as a crack in the pipe, flooded streets and forced engineers to cut off water to all of Baghdad in 122-degree heat.

A truck-bomb explosion right outside UN headquarters in Baghdad on Aug. 19 was the most devastating. Fifteen UN civilian employees, including the top official, veteran Brazilian diplomat Sergio Vieira de Mello, were killed, along with at least five Iraqis. Dozens of others were injured or buried in rubble.

President George W. Bush blamed the attack on the UN office on "remnants of Saddam's brutal regime." As of this time, however, it is unclear who carried out this attack or the one on the water main. No one has taken responsibility for them.

What is clear, though, is that under U.S./British occupation the lives of ordinary Iraqis have grown more miserable, more insecure and more chaotic than ever. □

## COLOMBIA

# Coca-Cola workers face insult on top of injury

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

With the audacity characteristic of imperialist transnational corporations, the Coca-Cola Co. in Colombia has accused the leadership of the union SINALTRAINAL of libel and defamation. The union—National Union of the Food Industry Workers—represents workers in the Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia who recently launched an international campaign against the company for crimes committed against its workers and the failure of the company to address the union's requests and demands.

The "Unthinkable! Undrinkable!" campaign was announced July 22 through media conferences and other actions in several cities of the United States, Europe and in Colombia. This campaign has been receiving a very positive response worldwide from unions, churches and many progressive organizations, who are pledging to move and publicize it. Its success apparently has triggered a vindictive and cowardly response from the beverage giant.

The campaign is the latest action in a long-standing drive by SINALTRAINAL to achieve justice, not only for its members, but for the entire people of Colombia. It is part of the Permanent

National and International Campaign Against Impunity—Colombia Demands Justice, which was initiated in June 1998.

It unites nationally and internationally with other sectors of society who are victims of globalization, known in Latin America as the neoliberal process. It has held international opinion tribunals in the U.S. and Colombia and organized three hearings about the situation in the Coca-Cola plants—the first in Atlanta, Ga., the headquarters of Coca-Cola; the second in Brussels, Belgium; and the last in Bogotá, Colombia, last December.

These hearings were named after Héctor Daniel Useche Berón, the first SINALTRAINAL member assassinated by Colombian paramilitaries. His murder in 1986 marked the beginning of violent repression against the union. According to the union, it resulted in the killing of eight more unionists, the exile of two, the forced displacement of 48, death threats against 67, false accusations leading to the unjust imprisonment of 15 workers, and deaths and threats against family members of unionists.

This campaign of terror has undermined the union. It has lost more than 50 percent of its members, declining from 5,400 to 2,300. More than 10,000 Coca-Cola workers have been fired, replaced by

temporary workers who are subcontracted at lower wages with no benefits.

On July 2001 the union filed a suit against Coca-Cola in the Miami Federal Court under the Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA) for human rights abuses against union workers committed by Colombian paramilitaries on behalf of the company. Last March, in a partial victory for SINALTRAINAL, the court ruled that there were grounds for the demands and therefore the case could proceed.

This ruling acknowledges the complicity of the Colombian state and President Álvaro Uribe Vélez with the paramilitaries. A technical requirement of ATCA is that there must be a component of "state action" in acts of violence against the plaintiff. However, the ruling also limited any action taken by the court to Panamco Coca-Cola, the Colombian subsidiary. Its U.S.-based parent is exempt.

The collusion of the Colombian government and transnational corpora-



tions—in this case Coca-Cola—is highlighted in a new attempt by the company to criminalize the labor union struggle by pressing defamation charges against Luis Javier Correa and Edgar Alberto Páez, national president and vice-president of SINALTRAINAL, respectively, and five other leaders of the

union. This move also has the effect of undermining and putting at risk the legal case in the U.S. court.

Tellingly, the lawyer representing the company now, Jaime Bernal Cuellar, was Colombia's general prosecutor at the time several of the crimes alleged by the union were committed. He never responded to the union's requests for an investigation.

The union has requested that letters of protest be sent to Colombian and Coca-Cola officials. Their names, titles and email addresses are available at [www.sinaltrainal.org](http://www.sinaltrainal.org). Queries can be sent to [direccionnacional@sinaltrainal.org](mailto:direccionnacional@sinaltrainal.org). □



## Korea and energy

Every country in the world today, large or small, is dependent on a reliable flow of energy. That certainly was the message conveyed when a cascading shutdown affected the U.S. and Canada, bringing everyday life to a grinding halt.

Control of energy is also a formidable weapon. The U.S. foreign policy establishment, which for more than a century has been shaped to serve the interests of a capitalist ruling class with a global reach, has long viewed it as key to dominating other countries. That is the importance of the Middle East to strategists of both Republican and Democratic administrations: whoever controls the major oil resources of the globe can choke off the very lifeblood of countries that resist its dictates. It is not just U.S. consumption of oil, or even the profits that U.S. oil companies expect to reap in the future, that allowed the Bush administration to rally political support from both parties, over broad popular opposition, for its disastrous war and occupation of Iraq. It is Iraq's significance to their grand scheme for world empire.

Some of the bloodiest battles of World War II were fought in areas of the world—North Africa, Southeast Asia—where the two contending blocs of imperialist countries competed for control of oil. Only the Soviet Union was in the war for purely defensive reasons, resisting Hitler's invading armies.

The war loosened the control of the colonial powers of Europe and Japan over their "possessions." Korea, which Japanese imperialism had brutally exploited since 1910 as it raced to catch up with Western capitalism, was seen by U.S. strategists as theirs for the taking once Japan was defeated in 1945. But the Korean people thought otherwise.

Anti-colonial forces organized by Kim Il Sung and what was to become the Workers Party of Korea had fought a resistance war against Japan and its puppet government in Seoul, and they intended to build a truly independent nation. The U.S. military took over the south, but the north remained independent and in 1948 declared the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It ended landlordism and capitalist exploitation and began reconstruction on a socialist foundation—a move enormously popular with the workers and rural poor.

Even a massive invasion by the U.S. in 1950 failed to bring down the DPRK. The Korean War ended in 1953 with an armistice that maintained the division between north and south along the 38th parallel. Over the years, the North Koreans painstakingly rebuilt their country from total devastation. As much as possible, they tried to make their economy self-sufficient. But to be self-sufficient in energy is very difficult, especially in a harsh climate.

Now, 50 years later, bellicose voices in the U.S. political and military establishment are once again calling for a war against North Korea. James Woolsey, former head of the CIA, and retired U.S. Air Force General Thomas McInerney laid out a scenario for a 30- to 60-day war against the DPRK in a column published Aug. 4 in the Wall Street Journal. Their plan called for 4,000 missile strikes a day against the 25 million people of the north—compared to 800 a day in the recent assault on Baghdad.

Massive war games led by the Pentagon and involving the forces of four nations will be held in the area beginning Aug. 22.

The U.S. strategists and the entire capitalist media are trying to whip up popular support for yet another war by making the issue a "threat to world peace" posed by the development of nuclear weapons by the DPRK. What a monstrous lie!

The DPRK needs energy. For that reason, it started to build a nuclear reactor over a decade ago. Many other countries, including South Korea, already possess reactors for nuclear power. But the U.S. has used every trick in the book to deprive the DPRK of power. It got the North Koreans to shut down construction on their reactor by promising help in building a different type of reactor that would not produce plutonium—an ingredient in nuclear weapons—as a byproduct. It promised oil deliveries to tide the country over in the meantime. It has reneged on both promises. North Korea survived only by instituting the most rigorous conservation measures.

So the DPRK announced publicly last year that it was resuming work on the reactor. And it withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Faced with threats of war and the tightening of an economic noose by the U.S., what choice does the DPRK have but to strengthen its defenses? This is not proof of an aggressive intent—quite the contrary. Korean people in the north and south understand this. The aggression is all on the side of the world superpower that has occupied Korea for more than half a century, has troops and warships all over the globe, maintains a huge nuclear arsenal, and has engaged in countless foreign wars and interventions.

The anti-war movement must not let Bush & Co. launch yet another war of naked aggression. It must explicitly and unreservedly demand an end to Washington's hostile policy toward Korea, the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the signing, at long last, of a peace treaty that will allow the DPRK to pursue its economic development free of the shadow of war. □

## Tribunal's verdict

# U.S. crimes in Korea

An International Tribunal on U.S. Crimes was held in Pyongyang, DPRK, on July 24-25. The following are excerpts from its final verdict. The full findings were sent to the U.S. Congress and non-governmental organizations at the United Nations. Go to [www.iacenter.org](http://www.iacenter.org) to read the indictment and verdict in their entirety.

Democratic international organizations, progressive anti-war peace organizations and activists, and individual lawyers from different countries have examined the indictment brought by the International Joint Prosecution Team against all criminal acts committed in Korea since 1945 to 2003 by the United States...

On the basis of the thorough-going and detailed investigation of the criminal acts committed by the United States, the International Joint Prosecution Team accused presidents of the United States from the Truman administration to the present Bush administration; secretaries of the State Department; secretaries of the Defense Department; chairpersons of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force; directors of the Central Intelligence Agency; staff members of the National Security Council; national security advisers to U.S. presidents; commanders of U.S. forces in south Korea; and others under their command for the fact that they have interfered in the internal affairs of Korea, obstructed the unified democratic development of the Korean people and inflicted misfortune and suffering upon the Korean people, in violation of the UN Charter, international codes on war and other international instruments on humanitarianism, human rights and disarmament, as well as of the national laws of the U.S., the DPRK and other countries concerned. ...

On the basis of field visits and hearing of testimonies from victims and other witnesses on the atrocities committed by the United States;

Having reviewed the earlier reports made by the Commission of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the Commission of the Women's International Democratic Federation, the International Scientific Commission on Biological Warfare in Korea;

Having perused the report of the Korean Truth Commission on U.S. War Crimes; documents presented by the Central Committee of the National Democratic Front for Reunification; the complaints, white papers and reports of different democratic organizations in both the north and the south of Korea;

Having analyzed the minutes, verbatim records and other documents, photos and films about the war declassified in different countries of the world; and

Taking into consideration the objective facts confirmed by the Korea International War Crimes Tribunal held in New York in 2001;

The Pyongyang International Tribunal on U.S. Crimes in Korea holds that the following crimes have been committed by the United States in Korea:

After World War II, the United States divided Korea into two, occupying the southern part of Korea against the will of the Korean people, and cracked down on the South Korean patriotic democratic forces, killing more than 1 million innocent people.

The United States provoked the Korean War, in which it leveled the towns and villages in Korea by dropping over 600,000 tons of bombs, including napalm, and murdered more than 3 million people in the north and about 1.2 million civilians in the south by using biochemical and other weapons of mass destruction.

Even after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, they continued to deploy nuclear weapons and huge armed forces in south Korea in violation of the Korean Armistice Agreement and international law. It persistently committed crimes against peace and reunification on the Korean peninsula and ruthlessly encroached



Outside the Sinchon Museum, where evidence of U.S. atrocities in Korea during the war are depicted.

WW PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO

upon the democratic freedom and human rights of the south Korean people.

The United States, due to its hostility to the ideology and economic and political system of the DPRK, persistently imposed political and military pressure, economic sanctions and blockade upon the DPRK, and tried ideological and cultural infiltration into it. By doing so, the U.S. wantonly violated the internationally recognized basic rights of the Korean people, including their rights to self-determination, survival and development.

All these crimes were committed not accidentally by an individual citizen, or a civilian organization of the United States, but were planned and organized premeditatedly according to the official will of the U.S. administrations.

Recognizing that the above-mentioned acts of the United States are grave violations of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter and the principles of the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg, and the codes on crimes against human peace and security; and

Holding that the United States must take full responsibility for them;

The Pyongyang International Tribunal on U.S. Crimes in Korea has reached the following verdict:

1. The U.S. Government and the other accused mentioned in the indictment are guilty of the charges levelled by the prosecution and detailed in the indictment submitted to the Tribunal.
2. The U.S. Government must make an official apology for all its criminal acts in Korea, and make due compensation for physical, mental and material loss inflicted upon the Korean people. It is an obligation of the U.S., under international law, to make reparation to the Korean people for the damages inflicted on them.
3. The U.S. must find out all those involved in planning, preparation, organization, instruction, execution and backing of the crimes against the Korean people, and put them on trial and sentence them to criminal punishment.
4. It is obligatory for the U.S. to enact a relevant law for it to assume full responsibility for its crimes on the Korean peninsula, and establish a special institution in Congress and the administration with the mandate to investigate and address this issue.
5. The U.S. Government must immediately abandon its hostile policy towards the DPRK, put an end to its military threat against it, sign a non-aggression treaty with it, and settle the issue of peace on the Korean peninsula in a peaceful way through DPRK-U.S. talks. It is only by doing so that further commission of such crimes against the Korean people can be eliminated.
6. The U.S. must immediately pull its troops and all nuclear weapons from the south of Korea, and end its political pressure, economic sanctions and blockade, and psychological warfare against the DPRK.
7. The U.S. Government must refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Korea contrary to the will of the Korean people to reunify the country by the Korean nation itself in a peaceful way, true to the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration. □



# Japanese mourn A-bomb victims

## 'No war on Iraq or Korea'

Special to Workers World

Fifty-eight years ago—on the morning of Aug. 6, 1945—a B-29 bomber, the Enola Gay, flew over the city of Hiroshima, Japan. At 8:15 a.m., it dropped the first atomic bomb, innocuously called “Little Boy,” on a civilian population. Within seconds, the entire city was incinerated. Over 150,000 people—nearly half the population—were either dead or dying, many from radiation poisoning.

On Aug. 9, a second U.S. weapon of mass destruction—“Fat Man”—was dropped on Nagasaki, where another 150,000 people were killed or injured. People are still dying from the radioactivity.

Among the casualties were tens of thousands of Korean slaves—conscripted factory workers and “comfort women” for Japanese soldiers; countless numbers of people from China and Southeast Asian countries; and some U.S. prisoners of war. Even today the tens of thousands of Korean victims are mourned separately from the Japanese at monuments in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

For the anniversary of the bombings this year, a delegation from the Act Now to Stop War & End Racism coalition (ANSWER) in the U.S. was invited to Japan to join organizations in opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq. Sue Harris, co-director of Peoples Video Network (PVN), and Janet Mayes from the International Action Center joined in a week of protest activities in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Since World War II there has been a Peace Constitution in Japan, U.S.-imposed, but also supported by a war-weary population. Now, however, the U.S. government needs allies for the endless wars it has projected. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, representing Japanese militarists and industrialists, is trying to bend the constitution to allow the dispatch of 1,000 Japanese troops to Iraq, despite the opposition of over half the population, who are expressing strong anti-imperialist feelings more and more openly.

On Aug. 6, at the official commemorative ceremony in Hiroshima, Koizumi's speech met only scattered applause. The entire ceremony was punctuated by cries of “No war!” and “Remove Koizumi!” from a protest just outside Peace Park.

Street Action, a youth organization, held a spirited march through Hiroshima. They chanted “Don't send soldiers to Iraq,” “Stop the nuclear war drive,” “Block the road to war on North Korea,” “Remove Koizumi” and, in English, “No war! No more war!” Many demonstrators



PHOTO CREDIT: KIKUCHI

Answer delegates participate in Nagasaki anti-imperialist march on Aug. 8.

wore ANSWER's “No War on Iraq” buttons and stickers on their backpacks and guitar cases. One poster featured a huge photograph of an ANSWER rally in San Francisco. All had been obtained well before the delegation arrived.

Later, a larger meeting listened to a scientist debunk the idea that North Korea was a nuclear threat and contrast its defensive arsenal to the vast weaponry of the U.S. This sentiment was also demonstrated at the Hiroshima Peace Museum on a three-dimensional model that compared the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal to all other nuclear countries to make the same point.

In a PVN interview, physics professor Yohisi Yoshida explained that depleted uranium, which today coats many of the weapons and ammunition used by U.S. forces around the world, has been known by U.S. scientists as a weapon of mass destruction since 1943, according to recently declassified information.

The next day, 2,500 people listened to

representatives from Korea, China and the ANSWER delegation, all united in opposition to imperialism—both U.S. and Japanese. The crowd grew to 3,000 as it then marched through the streets of Hiroshima. More marches and rallies took place in Nagasaki.

A small group, tailed by six worried police cars, took the ANSWER delegates to view the Sasebo Naval base, where they were shown ongoing military collaboration between U.S. and Japanese naval vessels.

Audiences throughout the week enthusiastically supported ANSWER's call for simultaneous activities against the occupation of Iraq on Oct. 25. Organizers expressed commitment to building actions all over Japan on that day.

Both delegates said that the generosity, determination and bravery of their anti-imperialist comrades in Japan renewed their conviction in the unity of struggle throughout the world. □



PHOTO CREDIT: JANET MAYES

Rally finale before march through Hiroshima on Aug. 6.

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By Mumia Abu-Jamal

## Viva la revolucion CUBANA!

When one looks at Cuba today and contrasts it with what is happening in other parts of Latin America, Cuba, even under one of its most difficult periods in its history since the revolution, is in many ways a remarkable success story.

When measured against the U.S. Empire, which boasts some of the richest people in the history of the world, Cuba stacks up well in those human barometers of social well-being: health, education and welfare. The literacy rate in Cuba equals or excels that of its adversary to the north (the U.S.). There is little difference between the infant mortality rates of the two countries.

What is starkly different, of course, is the degree of social access to basic human services. In the U.S., while primary education is free, it is usually of poor or sub-par quality—especially for the nation's African American, Chicano or Puerto Rican youth. To get better, more comprehensive education, you must pay for it. The same can be said of health care. According to several sources, some 45 million Americans don't have true access to decent health care in the U.S. Again, if you can afford it, you can access it.

In Cuba, health, and education, from the primary to the highest levels, is free. ...

Cuba has demonstrated a profound respect for the peoples of the world, and yes, for human rights: the human right to learn, the human right to be treated when one is ill, the human right to help others when they are in need.

These are really profound achievements of the revolution that, in human terms, have made the lives of millions of people better.

What we all cannot afford to do, on this, the 50th anniversary of the [start of the Cuban] Revolution, is forget that they have made these achievements in the face of war; the secret and nefarious wars waged by the U.S. capitalists; their puppet media; and the “gusanos” in Southern Florida, what Cubans have come to call the Miami Mafia. That is a truly profound achievement.

The revolution was, and remains, the triumph of a bold and heroic people over the forces that wanted to keep Cuba a colony of crime and exploitation.

All throughout Latin America, the U.S.-trained armies of those nations are trained, not to resist foreign enemies, but to destroy domestic forces such as trade unionists, students, clergymen, and political dissidents. That has been the sad and ugly history of South America for most of the 20th century.

Do we hear calls for their removal? I ask you, did the U.S. support or oppose the Butcher of Chile, Gen. Augusto Pinochet? Did it support or oppose the blood-drenched dictators of El Salvador, Colombia, or anywhere else in the continent?

The criminal CIA has been unleashing death and disaster on the Cuban people, from the introduction of the swine fever into Cuban pigs in the 1970s, to the training, arming and protection of U.S.-trained terrorists who have attacked Cuban citizens, bombed their hotels, and tried to destabilize Cuban society and its economy. Indeed, the almost half-century of the blockade (strengthened by the sell-out Clinton regime, by the way) is itself an act of war, for it affects the trade and livelihood of average Cubans.

Despite these serious difficulties, despite profound betrayal, the Cuban thirst for independence, for self-determination continues unabated. That, in itself, is a profound achievement that should be applauded by us all.

Viva la Revolución Cubana! Viva Fidel!  
Viva el Pueblo de Cuba! □

**Prisionero cubano en los EE.UU. aclara:**

# ¿Quiénes son los disidentes cubanos?

Carta escrita por René González, uno de los Cinco prisioneros políticos Cubanos en prisiones de los EE.UU., en respuesta a la declaración de la Campaña por la Paz y la Democracia (CPD) denunciando a Cuba por el juicio a contrarrevolucionarios, que se llevo a cabo en Cuba, en marzo del 2003.

Joanne Landy dirigió la campaña de la CPD en contra de Cuba.

15 de Julio del 2003

Estimada señora Joanne Landy:

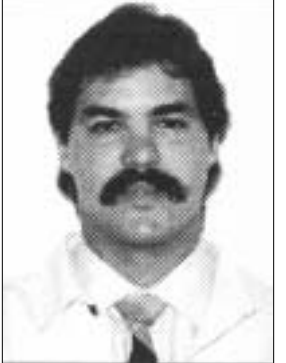
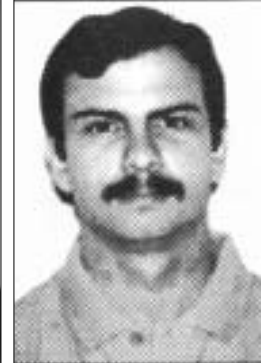
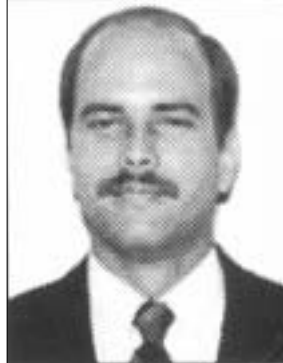
Siendo un revolucionario Cubano de toda la vida, habiendo peleado en Angola en contra de la invasión de Sudáfrica y estando actualmente encarcelado en una prisión federal de los EE.UU. por proteger al pueblo de Cuba de acciones terroristas apoyadas, alentadas y silenciadas por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos, espero que—si ser progresista aun significa luchar por un mundo mejor—se me otorgue el beneficio de ser considerado una persona progresista.

Al abrir una revista llamada precisamente, La Revista Progresista, y al leer un anuncio de la Campaña por la Paz y la Democracia pidiendo firmas para condenar a Cuba por su supuesta “represión en contra de los disidentes,” no lo podía creer.

No puede imaginarme que alguien que se considere una persona progresista haga suyas las palabras de calumnias endémicas y las mentiras mediáticas de los Estados Unidos con respecto a Cuba. Solo tomaría un poquito de honestidad intelectual y un poco de investigación para descubrir que el dinero pagado a los “disidentes” fue aprobado abiertamente y públicamente por las autoridades norteamericanas y distribuidos a través de las entidades como NED y USAID a aquellos que en la isla decidieron vivir de ser “disidentes.”

Quien le ha dado autoridad moral al gobierno norteamericano para crear una oposición pagada en Cuba? Que principios de leyes internacionales se aplican a esta conducta? Desde cuando el papel de un diplomático norteamericano es el de viajar por la isla organizando la oposición y repartiéndoles dinero?

Quien sea que en su país, reciba dinero de un poder extranjero para socavar a su gobierno, es considerado un traidor, ya sea en Cuba o en cualquier otra nación del



René González, left, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, Ramón Labañino

mundo, incluyendo los Estados Unidos.

Los llamados “disidentes” han tenido - contrario a lo que aparece en el anuncio - todo el derecho a expresar sus opiniones en Cuba. Todo lo que tienen que hacer es presentarse a una reunión de postulación de candidatos y explicarle a sus vecinos que quieren que su país regrese a los años antes del 1959, devolver la tierra cubana a la Compañía United Fruit, invitar a los terroristas que ahora viven en Miami a que vengan a la isla para devolverles sus propiedades, vender el país a las compañías multinacionales y convertirse en la clase política para defender los intereses de unos pocos. Si los vecinos estuviesen de acuerdo con ellos, serían nombrados sin gastar un dólar. Y no les pasaría nada por mostrarse ridículos, mientras expresan sus plataformas políticas en frente del electorado.

Pero si se enfrentarán a un electorado revolucionario - y sus vecinos son personas comprometidas con su país y apoyan al gobierno del pueblo, por el pueblo y para el pueblo; y habiendo peleado y muerto por su sociedad, no queriendo traicionar la memoria de los patriotas que han dado sus vidas por la soberanía e independencia de Cuba - ningún “disidente” sería postulado o ninguno de ellos obtendría un solo voto.

Y si ellos no merecen la confianza de su pueblo, no tienen el derecho de ir a la embajada americana - el último lugar que yo pensaría como un paraíso de democracia- para encontrar una fuente de soberanía que solo pertenece a los cubanos.

Cuba, por mas de 40 años, se ha enfrentado a un estado de hostilidad y guerra que ha causado más de 3,000



mueritos y mas de 2,000 heridos como consecuencia de acciones armadas y terroristas llevadas a cabo por traidores a sueldo, suministrados y entrenados por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Esos mercenarios se tuvieron que enfrentar al sistema legal. No fueron arbitrariamente declarados “enemigos” o combatientes “ilegales” o eliminados por un cohete para que Fidel pudiera posar para las cámaras y declarar que ellos ya “no son un problema” ni fueron juzgados por tribunales militares secretos, o las viviendas de sus familiares tampoco fueran destruidos por militares cubanos.

Se les dictaron sentencias de acuerdo a su participación en actividades terroristas, a diferencia del castigo irracional que se les dió aquí a los patriotas portorriqueños, simplemente porque estaban afiliados a una organización determinada, o el tratamiento vengativo que yo recibí junto a los demás acusados por proteger a Cuba de esos mercenarios que ahora con su dinero y sus conexiones con la administración de los EE.UU., apadrinan escándalos como los de los “disidentes” o alienan la emigración ilegal desde Cuba para justificar la política agresiva en contra de Cuba.

El pueblo de Cuba no tiene otra opción que aceptar sus pérdidas y continuar construyendo la sociedad socialista por la cual han luchado tantos, dejando que la historia haga justicia y confiando en su extrema paciencia y enorme valentía.

No se cuantas personas progresistas se han sumado a esta campaña en contra de Cuba, siendo las cosas aquí tan relativas que alguien pueda ser considerado liberal simplemente por comer hamburguesas con la mano izquierda y habiéndome acostumbrado para ver algunos en la TV, anunciándose como izquierdistas solo

porque ellos están un poquito a la izquierda de George Wallace.

Yo asumo que entre ellos debe haber algún progresista verdadero; personas que realmente se preocupan por los derechos humanos y que creen honestamente en la justicia, confundidos por medios perversos que los deja sin ninguna otra referencia cuando se trata de conocer lo que pasa alrededor del mundo.

A estas personas yo les quiero decir lo siguiente:

Consideren por un momento el enorme poder acumulado por el gobierno imperialista de los Estados Unidos. Consideren el enorme sentido de impunidad que en estos momentos puede ser sentido por este pueblo que acaba de terminar con una guerra de agresión desafiando al mundo entero, mintiendo en frente de todos como nunca se había hecho antes para justificar esa guerra, creando una doctrina criminal e ilegal de guerra preventiva, rompiendo cualquier principio de relaciones internacionales en el proceso de salirse con la suya. Comparen este poder enorme con la pequeña isla de Cuba, y no les será difícil ver cuanto daño este establecimiento fascista puede causar a mi país con tan poco.

Yo siempre he tenido un gran respeto por los americanos honestos que a pesar del inmenso poder de la maquinaria mas sofisticada nunca jamás diseñada, han sido capaces de ver mas allá y tener una visión de los eventos mundiales que hacen honor a este país. Se necesita de mucha inteligencia, curiosidad, coraje y sobre todo mucha sensibilidad.

Quiero hacer un llamado a la sensibilidad y con todo mi respeto, invitarlos a pensar en esto: Una cosa era ser un ciudadano romano con privilegios de acuerdo a una ciudadanía plena, discutir en el senado o en las calles de Roma sobre la libertad y la democracia; y otra cosa completamente diferente era pelear por esa democracia y libertad en los campos de batalla, en contra de todas las azares, bajo el sitio de las legiones de Pompeya, defendiendo su misma vida junto a Espartaco.

Sinceramente suyo,  
**René González Schwerert**  
Institución Federal Correccional  
Edgefield, South Carolina

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