

**U.S. deepens war
on Iraq** 'Bring the
troops home now!' 7

**From the mouth
of an aggressor**

Bush sermonizes about
'democracy' in Middle East 6



STEPHEN FUNK

Nov. 15 solidarity
with Marine resister 7

A tale of two soldiers

JESSICA LYNCH,
SHOSHANA JOHNSON
Up against the brass 6

LETTER TO EDITOR:

**Hartford Vets'
Parade** 'Heartened
by opposition to war' 6

Wall Street fears strength of grocery strike

Solidarity shifts balance toward union

By Sako Sefiani
Los Angeles

The momentum of the month-old strike/lockout of grocery workers has shifted in favor of the union. This has caught the bosses by surprise.

Signaling an unwavering resolve to hold the line against attacks on employees' benefits and wages by the three largest supermarket chains, striking workers from Southern and Central California will start picketing Safeway—owner of Vons and Pavilion—stores in Northern California, announced United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union spokesperson Greg Denier.

"The Northern California action is the first step in the nationalization of the supermarket strike," he said. In another sign of labor's determination to continue the fight, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney announced on Oct. 30 a national fund to support the striking workers.

On Oct. 31, the union pulled its pickets from Ralphs stores to focus on Safeway and Albertsons. The tactic seems to have worked. While Ralphs has seen a surge of shoppers since then, Vons and Albertsons have suffered an additional 5 percent to 10 percent drop in sales, according to the union. The picket lines are now larger and more effective, as a result.

Community support is also having an impact. "Picketed stores are doing only about 25 percent of their normal business, according to analysts and union estimates," the Nov. 8 Los Angeles Times reported.

Reviewing such sobering statistics led Smith Barney to downgrade Safeway's stock to a "sell," citing the "likely damaging effect" of the Southland-area supermarket strike. According to Merrill Lynch, the grocery chains involved—Albertsons, Vons and Ralphs—lost more than \$131 million in sales in each of the

last four weeks. (Los Angeles Times, Nov. 6)

The strike and lockout, which began with 70,000 workers in Southern California affecting 859 stores, has spread to 44 other stores in West Virginia, Kentucky and southern Ohio. (New York Times, Oct. 14)

Class Action Against Wal-Mart

EDITORIAL 10

Ann Arbor Support Borders Books strikers 4

The determination of the workers and the community support they have been receiving finally spurred Peter J. Hurtgen, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, to ask the two sides to the negotiating table on Nov. 10. FMCS usually intervenes when a strike threatens to spread to other regions or industries, especially when the union has the upper hand.

Poor little Fortune 500 corporations!

The three largest supermarkets in Southern California complain of a looming competition by non-union superstores like Wal-Mart, which pay starvation wages and no benefits to their employees. So, they want to do the same thing. After all, to them the take-backs are "an investment," as Safeway CEO Steven Burd said in an Oct. 10 conference call with investors.

The corporate media have once again made clear which side they are on. The New York Times reminds its readers that "for the supermarkets, the confrontation ... is a painful investment to ensure that they can survive against Wal-Mart and other low-cost rivals."

The Nov. 9 Los Angeles Times is even more blatant. James

Continued on page 4



SAN PEDRO, CALIF.

PHOTO: UFCW LOCAL 770

NOW THAT'S SOLIDARITY!

In a spirited show of solidarity for striking and locked-out grocery clerks, more than 6,000 union workers rallied in San Pedro, Calif., on Nov. 10. The demonstration was called by the International Longshore Workers Union to urge shoppers to stay away from Vons and Albertsons during the November holiday season. Members of

the Longshore Workers, Teamsters, Service Employees, and Hotel and Restaurant Employees unions came out in large numbers to support the Food and Commercial Workers union's fight to save health benefits and resist a two-tier wage system.

—By John Beacham

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This week ...



★ **National**

- Grocery strike 1
- Now that's solidarity 1
- Women's oppression & the Green River murders 3
- Activists protest war criminal Powell 3
- Justice for Peltier denied again 3
- Borders strikers ask for support 4
- Detroit City Council: 'End travel ban on Cuba' 4
- LA Palestinian activist gains support 5
- Philadelphia voters resist racist campaign 5
- A tale of two soldiers 6
- 'We support Stephen Funk'. 7
- Hartford Vets' parade. 7
- Eyewitness North Korea meeting 9
- Dec. 6-7 socialist conference 11

★ **International**

- Bush pontificates on 'democracy' in Middle East. 6
- U.S. resumes bombing of Iraqi civilians. 7
- Protest in Hague supports Milosevic 8
- Massive street battles in South Korea 9

★ **Editorials**

- Wal-Mart: David vs. Goliath battle raging 10

★ **Noticias En Español**

- iQue regresen las tropas a casa! 12

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Women's oppression & the Green River murders

By Jane Cutter and Kaz Susat
Seattle

On Nov. 6, Gary Ridgway pleaded guilty to murdering 48 women in King County, Wash., most of the murders occurring between 1982 and 1984. Most were street sex workers, often teenage runaways. He was dubbed the Green River Killer after a Seattle-area river where some of their bodies were first discovered.

In exchange for the guilty plea and his cooperation with investigators—he showed them the locations of previously undiscovered remains—Ridgway was sentenced to life without parole rather than the death penalty. Many, including some progressive people, are decrying this plea bargain as a miscarriage of justice. To paraphrase this argument, these people say that Ridgway would have gotten the death penalty if his victims had been men, or women from more economically privileged backgrounds.

Certainly it is true that police authorities acted as if the lives of the sex worker victims were of less value than others. Because of that, in the Seattle area in the

1980s a struggle was launched, mostly by sex workers and their supporters in the women's movement, to force the authorities to launch an investigation task force. Prior to that, the suspicious disappearances and murders of these women got little attention.

Ridgway, the deadliest serial killer in U.S. history, murdered women for more than 20 years before his arrest in November 2001. He was identified and arrested as a suspect in 1987, but then was let go. He was finally conclusively linked to six of the killings through improvements in DNA forensic technology.

The Ridgway case brings to mind the current situation of the many missing and murdered women in the border city of Juarez, Mexico. Authorities there have treated the brutal murders of young working women as a thing of no consequence. It is a slap in the face when the police, the only authorities under capitalism with ready access to the evidence and to the tools of investigation, refuse to take seriously the disappearance and murder of any woman, let alone a series of killings that follow a pattern.

Misogyny—hatred and oppression of women—is a cornerstone of class society. The oppression of women, as well as of lesbian, gay, bi and transgender people, became institutionalized when communal society was replaced by patriarchal family units based on private property. Women, who had been valued contributors to the commune, under class society became little more than the property of men and breeders of the next generation of heirs and slaves.

Since then, slavery has been replaced by feudalism and then by capitalism. But improvements in women's legal or social status have come about only as a result of struggle.

Ridgway represents the most extreme example of misogyny today. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, in 2000, the latest year for which crime statistics of this type are available, 1,805 women in the United States were murdered by men; 62 percent of them were killed by a male partner. In that year, 331 women—almost one per day—were killed by a male partner during the course of an argument.

Domestic violence is the number one reason for women to seek attention at hospital emergency rooms. Almost half of all women in the U.S. will be attacked by a rapist at some time in their life. Virtually all women in U.S. society experience some form of sexual harassment.

Certainly, if anyone deserves the death penalty because of the heinous nature of his crimes, it is Ridgway. But the death penalty applied by a racist, sexist and imperialist system can never be the means of dispensing liberation to women. It is important to note that most of the families of the 48 victims have not criticized the plea bargain. After all, an execution cannot bring back their loved ones. Gender oppression is a key element of class society; at the same time, the death penalty is a key component in the repressive apparatus of the state.

The death penalty is used alongside other tools of state repression—courts, prisons, police—to uphold capitalist control of society. The death penalty is used almost exclusively against poor people, and disproportionately against people of color. When the death penalty was being restored in many states, it was accompanied by a media focus on cases in which the person to be executed—like Ridgway—had admitted to committing a particularly repugnant crime. But the root causes of violence against women and other gender-oppressed people cannot be eliminated by the use of the death penalty or other instruments of state repression. The death penalty was restored in Washington state in 1975. Ridgway's murders were all committed after that time.

Women, other gender-oppressed people and their allies organize on a daily basis to make life safer through self/community defense, education and increased public awareness. But to end gender-based violence, we need to eliminate the system of exploitation that both needs and feeds the violence. □

Justice for Peltier Denied again

By Moonanum James

The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, bowing to political pressure from the FBI, denied parole for Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier on Nov. 5.

The court refused to take responsibility to right a terrible injustice. This latest denial should not surprise anyone in light of the way Native people have always been mistreated by this government. There are indeed no words in the language of the invader that can begin to describe the anger and frustration that Native people feel. Clearly the 10th Circuit Court was not interested in the truth.

During Peltier's previous hearing before the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals the government admitted and the court agreed that perjury had been committed, witnesses had been coerced and evidence had been manufactured, thus casting great doubt on the government's case against the Native leader.

As a leader of the American Indian Movement, Peltier was convicted of the June 26, 1975, killings of two FBI agents in a shoot-out at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. All the suppressed evidence shows that this case is a clear-cut political frame-up of a militant Native rights leader.

David Hill, Executive Director of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, puts it this way: "When there is no adherence to the law by the court system, when there are no decisions based on rationality, spirit of justice or moral rights, then we can't help but recognize that it is a time of injustice against all."

This injustice has been put upon Peltier over and over again as the courts slap him and all Native people in the face with this cowardly abandonment of justice. In the Spirit of Crazy Horse, this decision will not deter the determination to free Leonard Peltier.

James is a co-leader of United American Indians of New England.



Since 1970, Native Americans have gathered at noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth, Mass., to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday. Many Native Americans do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims and other European settlers. Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands and the relentless assault on Native culture. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest of the racism and oppression Native Americans continue to experience.

Dedicated to Leonard Peltier DAY OF MOURNING THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2003

12 NOON • COLE'S HILL
PLYMOUTH, MASS. (the hill above Plymouth Rock)

Join us as we dedicate the 34th National Day of Mourning to our brother, Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. Add your voice to the millions worldwide who demand his freedom. Help us in our struggle to create a true awareness of Native people and demonstrate Native unity. Help shatter the untrue glass image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism and homophobia.

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Activists protest war criminal Powell

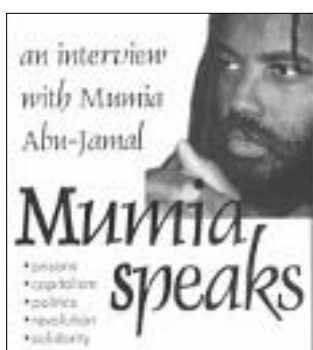
Some 250 activists took part in an emergency demonstration against Secretary of State Colin Powell at City College of New York, located in Harlem, on Nov. 10. The former general was speaking on campus. Most of the protestors at CCNY were young people, a significant number of them Black and Latino.

Speakers at the rally included Nellie Bailey, a leader of the Harlem Tenants Council; representatives from Hunter College Student Liberation Action Movement; Bill Doares from N.Y. ANSWER and others.

Powell is one of the main administration apologists for the Iraq war and occupation. During the first U.S. war against Iraq in 1990, Powell was the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Together with Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, Powell helped to carry out the slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqis.

—Monica Moorehead

For information on actions in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal and updates on his case go to www.Mumia.org and www.millions4mumia.org



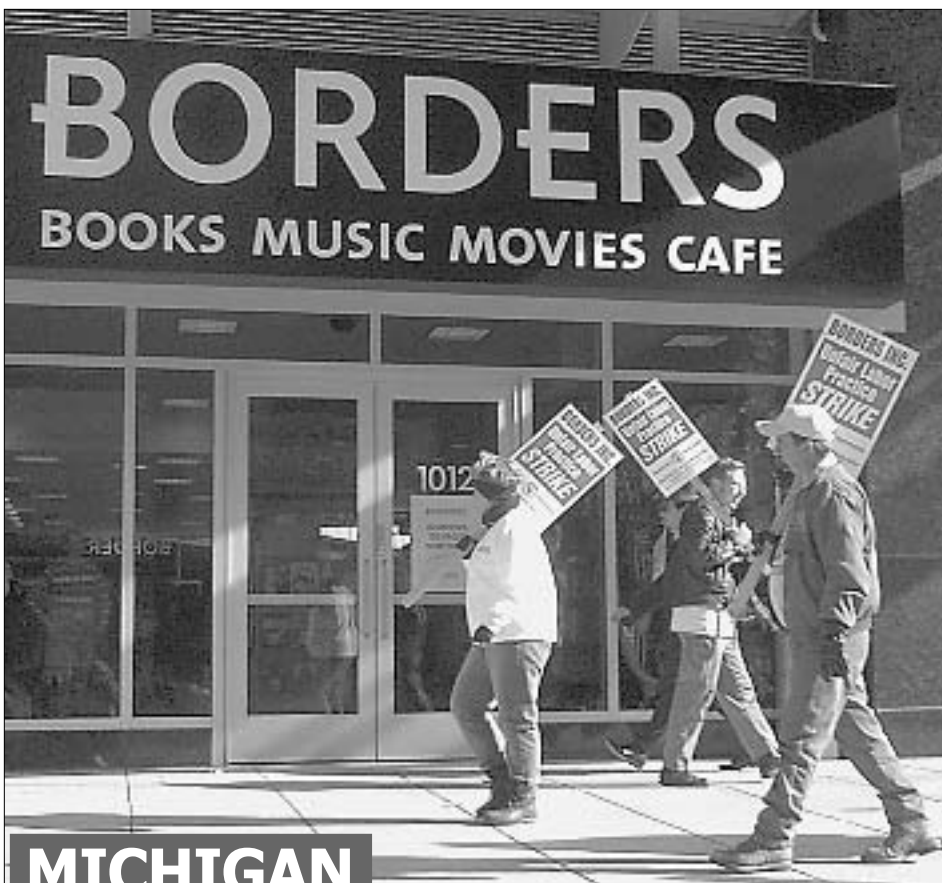
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MICHIGAN

Borders strikers ask for support

On Nov. 8, workers at Borders Books in Ann Arbor, Mich., called a strike against a corporate management that refused to bargain fairly with the union. On the morning of Nov. 10, they brought their struggle to an upscale venue in downtown Detroit, the new Compuware World Headquarters. A big day was dawning. News cameras and throngs of visitors lined up in the dark, eager to be among the first at the grand opening of two retail establishments, Hard Rock Cafe and Borders Books, at streetlevel in the marble and glass Compuware building. While Hard Rock Cafe got the news media, Borders Books got pickets.

The Borders Workers Union Organizing Committee is requesting solidarity actions from the public including boycotting all Borders, Waldenbooks, and Amazon.com; joining Borders Readers United, the community support coalition; volunteering to picket with workers in front of the store; calling Borders headquarters (734-477-1100) to express your support for the strikers; and signing an online petition: BordersReadersUnited.2ya.com

For more information, go to www.bordersunion.org

—Story and photo
by Cheryl LaBash

Detroit City Council: 'End travel ban on Cuba'

By Cheryl LaBash
Detroit

The Detroit City Council on Nov. 7 unanimously passed a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to repeal all trade and travel restrictions with Cuba. Submitted by Councilmember JoAnn Watson, the action responded to Bush administration threats to fine and jail U.S. citizens who travel to Cuba.

The U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange, an organization promoting worker-to-worker dialogue between the two countries, asked for the council's support.

Founded in Detroit in 1991, the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange is one of three organizations that have received request-for-information letters from the U.S. Treasury Department, a move that may be followed with fines.

The council action is part of a national campaign initiated by the National Network on Cuba to mobilize support for ending the trade and travel ban on Cuba.

While the Bush administration is stepping up harassment and legal action against people who have travelled to Cuba, in Congress, both the House and Senate passed identical legislation to cut funding for this enforcement.

The Detroit City Council resolution characterized the Bush administration's action as "attempting to thwart the vote of the House and Senate." It points out that "Cuba has developed important medicines and

vaccines that would be of great benefit" to Detroiters. The resolution also looked toward farm and manufacturing trade with Cuba to "help regenerate Michigan's economic situation." Significantly, the resolution also "urges that the President carefully review the inclusion of Cuba on the list of terrorist countries, based on actual evidence and not on political factors." The administration has accused Cuba of being a terrorist country, without a shred of evidence.

In fact, Cuba has been attacked numerous times since its 1959 revolution by U.S.-based terrorists. □



Chain reaction: Grocery strike spreads to more states

Continued from page 1

Flanigan, in an article entitled "Change and compromise are necessary for survival," admonishes the workers to accept the "changes," including a two-tier wage system.

Are these supermarket corporations really squeezed to make "a painful investment to ensure that they can survive"? Hardly.

- Safeway, Kroger and Albertsons are the three largest supermarket companies in the United States, with more than 7,300 supermarkets among them. All three are among the top Fortune 500 corporations.

- Over the past five years, operating profits at each of these companies have grown: Safeway up 47 percent; Albertsons up 123 percent; Kroger up 143 percent. Combined profits are up 91 percent.

- Fortune Magazine ranked the annual rate of total return to investors at all three companies as higher than that at Wal-Mart, which they claim to fear so much. From 1992 to 2002, Kroger's and Safeway's annual rates of total return to investors were far above the Fortune 500 average, and in fact surpassed Wal-Mart.

- Over the three-year period ending Dec. 31, 2002, the top 15 executive officers of Albertsons, Kroger and Safeway increased their compensation—salaries, bonuses, stock awards and other annual compensation—by more than 150 per-

cent, from an aggregate total of \$15.4 million in 1999 to \$40.3 million in 2002. Stated differently, their 2002 compensation is two and a half times larger than 1999 compensation. Including stock options, 15 corporate executives of these three corporations earned a total of \$70 million last year—up from \$35 million in 1999.

'Those greedy workers'

- In Southern California, approximately 65 percent of grocery workers are women and a large percentage are Asian, Latino or African-American workers. Many are single heads of households.

- Supermarket workers in Southern California average about \$12-14 per hour and put in an average workweek of 30 hours—about \$19,000 annually.

- If the bosses get their way, workers could face average weekly health care premiums of \$95, or a 50-percent cut in benefits over the term of the contract.

- The employers are also demanding a wage freeze for current employees and a permanent reduction in wages for new hires.

- Under the employers' proposal, the workers' pension fund would also be underfunded.

Lawrence Weiner of Culver City, who retired last year after working in the grocery business for 35 years, wrote in a let-

ter published in the Nov. 8 Los Angeles Times: "If the companies have their way, retirees will be asked to pay a full 25 percent of the upfront costs of our health-care coverage. There would be huge co-pays for all medical care and a large increase in the co-pay for prescriptions. Those of us who are living on fixed incomes will be asked to pay a huge portion of our pension toward health care, or we will lose our coverage permanently. And because we have no cost-of-living adjustments, those who have been retired the longest have the smallest pensions and, percentage-wise, would be hit the hardest."

'The stakes are enormous'

The struggle of the grocery workers in Southern California has far-reaching consequences. Indeed, this fight is not only for these workers' health benefits, but for the health benefits of all workers in the country.

Ruth Milkman, chair of the University of California Institute for Labor and Employment, told the Nov. 8 New York Times, "The stakes are enormous. If the employers succeed in their effort to extract large concessions, they will turn these into low-wage jobs, and other employers across the nation will see this as a green light to try to do the same thing."

UFCW Local 400 President Jim Lowthers stressed, "If three of the top 50 cor-

porations in the U.S. abandon health care benefits for their employees, the employment-based health care system could collapse. All workers are at risk of losing affordable work-based health benefits."

He added: "If Kroger gets away with this, other employers will try it. We're standing up for working families and demanding justice."

What the Big Three want is to ultimately do away with the union. That is why this fight has repercussions far greater than the immediate issues on the table.

Union fights back

UFCW has organized a number of rallies in front of different supermarkets. The latest one was on Nov. 10 on South Western Avenue in San Pedro. Thousands of workers—including many striking Metropolitan Transportation Authority workers—surrounded Albertsons and then Vons in a spectacular show of militant force not seen in Los Angeles for decades.

Store managers routinely call the police on the picketing workers in an attempt to intimidate them. In at least two separate incidents, groups of "skinheads" reportedly attacked workers at the picket lines with baseball bats.

On Nov. 9, outside an Albertsons in Laguna Niguel in Southern California, a striking worker was punched in the face

Palestinian activist:

LA8 struggle will be won in streets

By Scott Scheffer
Los Angeles

Michel Shehadeh, a Palestinian activist who was framed COINTELPRO-style by the U.S. government, offered a moving personal account of his jailing and ongoing 16-year-long battle against deportation at a public forum at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, Calif., on Nov. 9.

The meeting's success was apparent in the numbers—150 or more turned out. It reflected the growing awareness and anger about U.S. government attempts to suppress the movement against war and for social justice by attacking immigrant communities first. Not surprisingly, the largely student crowd was a reflection of the huge Arab-American and Latino pop-

ulations of the surrounding area.

Shehadeh, the most well-known figure in the so-called LA 8, is also a member of the International ANSWER steering committee. He is on the national steering committee for the Free Palestine Alliance, and is a board member of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

The Nov. 9 program also included also included David Cole, a volunteer staff attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights who has worked tirelessly to defend the LA 8 since 1987, and Shehadeh's co-defendant Khader Hamide. Both Hamide and Shehadeh still face the possibility of deportation under provisions in the Patriot Act and the now repealed McCarran-Walter Act.

Earlier this year, an immigration court

ruling that seemed to be a good development for the case buoyed progressives who have rallied to the side of these community leaders. [see "LA 8: One step closer to victory" by Muna Coobtee, Workers World Newspaper, July 24, 2003]

Now there is mounting concern that the government will try to make examples of the only two LA 8 defendants who still face charges, in order to send a message to political activists, especially immigrants.

In his talk, Shehadeh pointed out the irony that stands out in the events surrounding the LA 8. "When I lived in the West Bank it was dangerous to speak out. The repression was constant and fierce. I



Michel Shehadeh

came to the U.S. and enjoyed the idea that I could express my opinion. I studied all the issues that were important. Lesbian and gay rights, U.S. intervention in Central America. And I spoke at length on all of them. I was reveling in the freedom of speech that I thought I had found. Little did I know that 16 years later I would be fighting charges of terrorism because of exercising that right."

Shehadeh expressed confidence that the struggle of the LA 8 would ultimately be won by the movement in the streets, and he said he was inspired by the community's response to his case.

The meeting was sponsored by the Committee for Justice for the Los Angeles 8. □

Philadelphia mayoral election

Voters resisted racist campaign

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

On Nov. 4, voters in the country's fifth biggest city responded to the Bush administration's interference in the mayoral election by re-electing African American incumbent John Street with a margin of nearly 80,000 votes. This was 16 percentage points over Republican challenger Sam Katz.

Record turnout was reported, particularly in African American communities where support for Street was nearly unanimous. Despite Katz's racist appeal

in predominantly white areas to "take back our city," Street also received 25 percent or more of the votes in those districts.

Street, a longtime community activist and former city council president, had strong support because his administration had made rebuilding Philadelphia's decaying neighborhoods a priority. Backing for the Katz campaign seemed to come from corporate interests.

The October discovery that the FBI had planted a bug in Street's City Hall office, and was investigating the Street administration's practices in awarding city con-

tracts to businesses owned by people of color and women, led to a resurgence of activism reminiscent of the 1960s voter registration drives spurred by African Americans.

Philadelphia's African American communities, workers and oppressed, demonstrated that it's not only possible to fight back against the Bush administration but that united, they can win.

Rallies were held throughout the African American communities—in churches, union halls and on busy street corners. Broadcasters on WHAT, 1340-AM radio, the station known as the

"voice of the African American community," discussed the politics behind the attack on Street and racist interference from John Ashcroft's Justice Department.

By a four to one margin, voters also passed a measure put on the ballot by a coalition of community, labor and health-care advocates to amend the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to prepare a plan for universal health care in the city.

Reminiscent of the election day 2000 in Florida, Katz supporters attempted to disenfranchise African American voters by confronting them outside polling places and demanding to see identification. But one protester's response was to walk around Center City Philadelphia with a sign reading "FBI=Framing Black Incumbents."

In his victory speech, Street promised to award even more city contracts to firms owned by people of color and women during his second term.

But the real agents of change are not one politician or the Democratic Party, but the masses of people, organized and acting collectively in their own interests. One election won't change the fundamental problems facing Philadelphia or any other U.S. city. The systemic problems of capitalism—racism, poverty, unemployment, the lack of affordable quality housing, education, and health care—can't be alleviated at the ballot box.

For example, while Street has made improvements in housing, his "anti-drug" program has led to increased police occupation of many communities and Philadelphia's schools are being privatized.

Lowering the wage tax, which Street is being pressured to do, will surely result in cuts in city services. Such a measure holds no promise of high-paying jobs for city residents as long as global capital encourages companies to build export factories where the wages are low and workers are denied union protection.

The momentum that brought out voters to stop the FBI attack on Street needs to build, to oppose the Bush administration's plans to spend \$167 billion for war. That is money that could instead pay for all the social services, jobs, housing and more that communities so desperately need. □

by one of several bat-wielding youths. The attackers had also earlier driven by the store and tried to run down the picketers. (Los Angeles Times, Nov. 11)

The assailants fled only after a security guard fired a shot in the air. They were later arrested and released into their parents' custody.

In a separate incident, witnesses said four people in a car pulled up in front of another store in Palm Springs and assaulted the picketers. After one of the attackers allegedly fired three rounds from a .25-caliber pistol, they fled. Police stopped the car and found two handguns, ammunition, two large knives and metal pipes inside.

The union has launched a Web site to help spread the truth about the strike/lockout: www.saveourhealthcare.org. It is also asking members of the community to "adopt a store" by supporting the striking employees of a particular store in any way they can.

In addition, the Community Action Project to Support Labor has thrown its full support behind the workers. CAPSL is a project of the Los Angeles Chapter of the International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War and End Racism—Coalition.

Since the start of the strike, ANSWER has been cutting its volunteer meetings short so the participants could join the picketing workers at the nearby Ralphs and Vons stores. ANSWER will kick off a "community food drive" in front of the Vons store at Pico and Fairfax at 11 a.m. on Nov. 15, to help the employees endure the hardships of the strike.

The corporate bosses are on the offen-



sive. Taking advantage of a tight labor market, they are trying to cut wages and benefits. It's all to increase their bottom line and profits for the large shareholders—big Wall Street speculators, bankers and billionaires. They have made strides in recent years: last year a record number of people lost their health care, rais-

ing the number of uninsured people to 44 million, while another 38 million are under-insured.

The struggle of the grocery workers to push back the bosses' attack is being watched with utmost interest by all corporate bosses who want to attack wages and benefits of their own workers. □

Despite U.S. boot heel on Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine

Bush pontificates on 'democracy' in Middle East

By Richard Becker

On Nov. 6, in a highly ideological and condescending speech whose actual authorship is unknown, President George W. Bush outlined his administration's "vision" for a "democratic" Middle East. The speech was greeted by near-universal condemnation in the region.

"He wants democracy and the U.S. is occupying Iraq and its ally Israel is killing Palestinians? Arabs just don't buy it," said Moghazy al Badrawy, a political analyst based in the Gulf.

"Mr. Bush has not read history," another Gulf-based writer noted, pointing out the unparalleled role of U.S. foreign policy in undermining progressive development and popular democracy in the region for more than a half-century.

Speaking appropriately enough to the 20th anniversary meeting of the National Endowment for Democracy, Bush called for reshaping the Middle East to suit the interests of Corporate America. The region, said the president, "must be a focus of American policy for decades to come."

The NED was established in 1983 as an instrument of the Reagan administration's crusade to overthrow the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba and the rest of the socialist camp.

Bush's address to the same group two decades later reaffirmed his administration's intention to overturn any and all governments in the developing world, socialist or otherwise, that fail to follow Washington's dictates.

Bush's speech focused on the Middle East in general and Iran and Syria in particular. But he also targeted the governments of Cuba, Zimbabwe, Myanmar and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for "regime change."

Colonialist, fundamentalist & anti-communist

The Nov. 6 speech's colonialist, Christian fundamentalist and anti-communist character is illustrated by a few choice lines:

"Liberty is the plan of heaven for humanity."

"A religion that demands individual moral accountability and encourages the encounter of the individual with God is fully compatible with the rights and responsibilities of self-government."

"The success of freedom is not determined by some dialectic of history."

"Successful societies privatize their economies and secure the rights of property."

"The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution."

lution."

The uninformed would hardly know that Iraq had just been invaded and recolonized by the very leader uttering such glowing tributes to "freedom"!

Heightening the sense of absurdity, Bush praised U.S. client states and puppet regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Afghanistan and Iraq, while at the same time he condemned Syria and Iran.

Saudi Arabia is a U.S.-created theocratic family dictatorship. Even the mildest dissent is punishable by torture and execution. There has never been an election in Saudi Arabia. Women are deprived of even the right to drive a car. It is also the number-one oil producer in the world. Bush's praise for the Saudi government's "first steps toward reform" referred to a recent announcement that the regime is considering holding restricted municipal elections.

President Hosni Mubarak presides over a police state in Egypt, the most populous of the Arab countries. His regime is dependent on billions of dollars annually in U.S. support. When the Egyptian people attempted to demonstrate against the war on Iraq, they were viciously attacked by thousands of U.S.-armed Egyptian cops.

In Afghanistan, the U.S.-installed puppet president, Hamid Karzai, must have a personal protection unit made up of U.S.

special forces to survive. His government's rule does not extend outside of the capital, Kabul.

With only unintended irony, President Bush stated that in Iraq, "the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council are also working together to build a democracy." The CPA is headed by L. Paul Bremer, appointed by U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. The CPA and the U.S. military are the real rulers in occupied Iraq.

The appointed Bremer in turn appointed a 25-member "Iraqi Governing Council," a group of mostly wealthy exiles. Together, according to Bush, the appointees and the U.S. generals are now "securing democracy in Iraq."

"Iraq democracy will succeed, and that success will send forth the news from [Syrian capital] Damascus to [Iranian capital] Tehran that freedom can be the future of every nation," said the president.

Whatever their shortcomings, both Iran and Syria have functioning parliamentary systems in which women participate as both voters and representatives.

As Egyptian analyst Gamal A.G. Soltan wrote: "Praising Saudi Arabia and criticizing Iran. It's not fair at all. The spectrum of freedom available in Iran is much

Continued on page 8

Jessica Lynch and Shoshana Johnson

A tale of two soldiers

By LeiLani Dowell

Stories about Pfc. Jessica Lynch are appearing all over U.S. television and in the print media. She has appearances on ABC's Dateline and on the David Letterman show, and will be featured on the cover of Time magazine and Vanity Fair. In addition, an authorized biography, "I Am a Soldier, Too," is being released to coincide with the viewing of NBC's movie dramatization, titled "Saving Jessica Lynch," of what happened to her in Iraq.

However, important elements of the story that the U.S. government issued after U.S. troops stormed the Iraqi hospital where Lynch was being treated for her injuries have been denounced—by none other than Lynch herself. She has called them a fabrication and a manipulation to promote the war. In addition, not only are the stories of other soldiers being ignored, but the charge of racism has been raised by the family of one African American soldier captured and injured at the same time as Lynch.

On April 1, Lynch received national headlines when the Army released a video of what appeared to be a dramatic, high-stakes operation performed by U.S. soldiers to "rescue" her from a hospital in Nasiriyah.

At the time, front-page reports attested to Lynch's heroism, saying that she had received knife and bullet wounds while emptying her weapon at her attackers before being captured.

However, later investigations determined that Lynch's injuries came when the U.S. Army vehicle she had been riding in crashed into the truck in front of it, and not from knives or gunfire. Also, her



Jessica Lynch and Shoshana Johnson

weapon had jammed before she could even fire a round. She received a head injury and broken bones in her right arm, right leg, thigh and ankle in the crash, and was taken to the hospital by Iraqi people.

In addition, Lynch denies reports that she had been slapped around during her hospital stay. She is reported to have told ABC's Diane Sawyer: "From the time I woke up in the hospital, no one beat me, no one slapped me, no one, nothing. ... I mean, I actually had one nurse, that she would sing to me." (New York Times, Nov. 7)

Lynch also revealed that Iraqi soldiers had left the hospital the day before the rescue. When asked if the military's portrayal of the rescue bothered her, she criticized the Pentagon, saying, "Yeah, it does. It does that they used me as a way to symbolize all this stuff. Yeah, it's wrong."

In an article in the Nov. 9 Observer of London, Edward Helmore wrote, "Lynch

has become a metaphor not for the heroism of pretty young Americans captured by a devilish foreign enemy, but for the confusion that has marked Bush's Operation Iraqi Freedom from the start."

Little mention of the thousands wounded

As the ruling class media spends an entire week dedicated to a false story of heroism and patriotism, the stories of other soldiers are barely mentioned.

An article in the Nov. 9 Los Angeles Times discusses the influx of wounded U.S. soldiers into U.S. military hospitals. The article states that nearly 1,900 wounded have been sent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, 1,500 to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and several thousand to other smaller hospitals and clinics. One of those soldiers, Staff Sgt.

Tarik Jackson, is from the same unit as Lynch, was shot four times, and may be in treatment for the next year.

Injured and sick soldiers awaiting treatment at Fort Stewart in Georgia have been complaining about the conditions there, saying they have to wait for months in filthy barracks for medical treatment, are housed 60 to a barracks and are forced to pay for their own toilet paper.

On an open-line show on C-SPAN the first week of November, the entertainer Cher called in after a visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. She demanded that the stories of the "devastatedly wounded" soldiers there—50 of them amputees—be told.

Media time isn't the only aspect of selective attention being given. Communities are in an uproar about the disproportionate treatment another soldier, Shoshana Johnson, is receiving. Johnson was taken as a prisoner of war at the same time as Lynch, and was held six days longer. Unlike Lynch, she did fire at her captors. Unlike Lynch, she was shot in the melee—once in each ankle.

However, while Lynch is receiving an 80-percent disability pension, in addition to making money from publicity about her case, Johnson was informed that she will be receiving only a 30-percent disability pension—a difference of \$600 to \$700 a month. She has had little media coverage—and then only after protests.

Why the lesser benefits for someone who clearly displayed more "heroism" and received more injuries? In a statement, the Army said that the two women are receiving different benefits because a military Physical Evaluation Board placed

Continued on page 8

Panicking as resistance grows

U.S. resumes bombing of Iraqi civilians

By Deirdre Griswold

With all the news from Iraq showing that the crisis for the U.S./British occupation forces there is deepening, the Bush administration has pushed the panic button.

With indecent haste, it summoned the U.S. overseer of the occupation, L. Paul Bremer III, back to Washington for an emergency two-day session of the National Security Council on Nov. 10 and 11. Bremer had to cancel a meeting with the president of Poland—who Washington hopes will send a token force to Iraq to bolster its fiction of an “international coalition”—in order to dash home.

At the same time that the NSC was meeting, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the over-all commander of U.S. troops in Iraq, held a heavily guarded press conference in

central Baghdad on Nov. 11, an area that has been hit repeatedly by Iraqi mortars. Sanchez discarded much of the cheerful rhetoric used by civilian officials and described the situation in Iraq as “war”—the first time that word has been used by a top U.S. official since George W. Bush boastfully declared the war over on May 1.

Sanchez confirmed what a CIA report had just disclosed: that attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq have risen to between 30 and 35 a day—a level five to six times greater than when he took command five months ago. He also said that 40 U.S. soldiers had been killed over the previous 10 days, including those aboard two helicopters, a Chinook and a Black Hawk, that were shot down by the resistance.

Accounts fed to the media of the emergency NSC meeting at the White House focused on instructions to Bremer to go

back and effectuate a swifter handing over of authority to “an Iraqi governing body.” This comes after speculation that the U.S. might dump the current hand-picked Iraqi Governing Council because of its inability to help dampen the resistance.

The Nov. 12 Washington Post hinted at disarray in the White House: “Administration officials said yesterday that a decision on how to proceed could be delayed by divisions within the Bush administration as well as within the Iraqi Governing Council. Some senior Pentagon policymakers favor a separate proposal that would basically hand over sovereignty to the council, despite widespread indications that vast numbers of Iraqis do not accept the body as legitimate.”

Oxymoron: Appointing a sovereign authority

Efforts by the U.S. occupiers to create the semblance of an independent Iraqi authority have been clumsy and transparently a fraud. So much so that, in a recently released Gallup poll of Baghdad residents taken in September, “Three-quarters of those polled said they believed the policies and decisions of the Iraqi Governing Council—whose members were appointed in July by Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator L. Paul Bremer—were ‘mostly determined by the coalition’s own authorities,’ and only 16

percent thought the council members were ‘fairly independent.’

“Only 5 percent of those polled said they believed the United States invaded Iraq ‘to assist the Iraqi people,’ and only 1 percent believed it was to establish democracy there. Almost everyone interviewed—94 percent—said Baghdad ‘now is a more dangerous place than before the invasion.’” (Washington Post, Nov. 12)

This is the administration’s dilemma. While it wants to create an Iraqi buffer force to stand between its troops and the resistance, it cannot trust the Iraqi people, whom it has thoroughly alienated with its brutal wars, sanctions and occupation. Even its hand-picked collaborators, most of them flown back after years spent abroad, are unable or unwilling to give the occupation a credible Iraqi face.

Therefore, while talking of a quicker transition to Iraqi governance—something that might play well for a little while with war-weary U.S. troops and their families back home—the White House and Pentagon are beginning a new and even more destructive phase of the war/occupation, with a return to bombing towns and cities from the air.

More lethal phase begins

“Although the coalition can be benevolent, this is the same lethal instrument that

Continued on page 10

Hartford Vets' parade:

'Heartened by opposition to war'

I am certain that our experience here in Hartford, Conn., with the Veterans Day parade was not unique but it is worth sharing. The regional paper, the Hartford Courant, reported that attendance this year was down significantly, from as high as 25,000 in previous years (if you believe police estimates) to numbers in the hundreds this year. But probably more significant than the low numbers themselves was the mood of the people that did come. I had the opportunity to participate with the Veterans for Peace contingent and wanted to share my observations.

There were about 20 people in our contingent, about half of whom were veterans and half (like myself) were supporters. Dave Ionno, who faithfully registers the group to march every year, says this is the best turn out for the VFP contingent so far.

[We] caught flak from the organizers of the parade. Because Dave had registered us, we were listed in the official printed program, and we “shaped up” right where we were told. About a half hour before stepping off, we were approached by some brass, who told us that we were not a recognized group and that we would not be allowed to participate because we were a “political organization” and the Veterans Day parade was “not political.” This seemed rather strange since we were about 20 feet from a flatbed truck carrying painted signs reading “Support Our Troops in Iraq.” We pointed this out to them but oddly enough they were not persuaded by the logic of our argument.

What the organizers were persuaded by, however, was the threat to haul their sorry asses into court if they failed to allow a recognized and duly registered veterans group to march, while permitting non-veteran groups such as high school marching



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

Members of the anti-war contingent in New York City Veterans Day march on Nov. 11.

Letter to the editor

bands and fife and drum corps to participate. Dave and the other vets were great and really held the line on this.

The organizers came back to us two or three times after that and eventually conceded that we would march “at the end of the parade.” After conferring with the participants and reflecting the general consensus that being seen by the public was the most important objective of the day, Dave told them that we would march where they put us.

Shortly after that, however, the guy who originally had told us where we were to march came back and said that he wasn’t changing the order ... we would march right where he had said. This may have reflected him being pissed off because of outside interference with his logistics, but we had the sense that there was some genuine discomfort with the idea of trying to throw out a veterans group from the Veterans Day Parade.

So off we went—directly in front of the Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Veterans contingent, which I can assure you did not have any of the many, many P&W vets who are union members in it! The P&W bigshots did not seem particularly happy to see us, and held some distance back.

The reception from the public was very,

Continued on page 8

Nov. 15 at Camp Lejeune:

'We support resister Stephen'

Anti-war activists from New York will join others in the South on Nov. 15 to show solidarity with military resister Stephen Funk, who is imprisoned at the Camp Lejeune Marine base in North Carolina. The Nov. 15 meeting in Jacksonville, N.C., near Camp Lejeune, will demand Funk’s freedom.

Funk is a Filipino gay Marine reservist who refused to be sent with his unit to Iraq last spring, citing his conscientious objector status. Instead of being sent thousands of miles away to kill and possibly be killed, Funk became an inspirational voice at anti-war rallies as he explained why he refused to fight the Iraqi people.

On April 1, he turned himself over to the Marine authorities. On Sept. 6, he was sentenced to six months in prison at Camp Lejeune after he was found guilty of “unauthorized absence.”

Funk’s supporters—including his mother, Gloria Pacis—will travel to Camp Lejeune Nov. 15 to demand clemency for the heroic reservist. Funk represents the growing numbers of young GIs who are seeking various ways to avoid being sent to Iraq to become a part of the occupying force there.

Gloria Pacis told a New York City meeting of the International Action Center on Nov. 11: “My son’s incarceration is simply the physical embodiment of the oppres-

Gloria Pacis, like her son, Stephen Funk, below, refuses to be silenced.



sion and injustice that we as American citizens are experiencing now.” She added, “SNAFU [Support Network for an Armed Forces Union] and ANSWER have been the best groups as far as going to bat for Steve, as far as keeping his story alive.”

Funk is clearly a political prisoner. To sign a petition demanding clemency for Funk and to get more information about GI resistance, go to www.join-snafu.org.

—Monica Moorehead

Protest in The Hague

'Free Milosevic, jail Bush!'

By John Catalinotto
The Hague

Hundreds of people marched three miles from the center of The Hague, Netherlands, to Scheveningen Prison on Nov. 8 to demonstrate support for political prisoner Slobodan Milosevic, former president of Yugoslavia. Many came from Germany and the Netherlands, and there were also representatives from other European countries, the United States and Canada.

"Free Milosevic, jail Bush," read one banner.

Milosevic has been imprisoned since June 28, 2001. He was kidnapped from Belgrade and brought before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to face charges for alleged war crimes.

The United States and other NATO governments—those that waged an aggressive war against Yugoslavia—set up the court

under United Nations aegis. Many legal experts, including former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, have argued that the tribunal is completely illegal and that the UN has no right to set up such a court.

The Nov. 8 demonstrators demanded that the tribunal grant Milosevic two years to prepare his defense case. The prosecution has presented its case for over 18 months, aided by enormous resources and preparation. Milosevic has defended himself ably with little outside assistance and very few resources, according to observers of the trial.

Milosevic also has to contend with a life-threatening level of high blood pressure and imminent danger of heart attack, according to rally speakers.

'Don't let aggressors rewrite our history!'

After the long march on Nov. 8, representatives of the International Committee

for the Defense of Slobodan Milosevic from Italy, Ireland, Britain, the United States and the Yugoslav diaspora addressed the crowd. They shouted greetings across the prison walls to Milosevic and the other political prisoners.

"Don't let the aggressors write our history," read one of the banners. Mischa Gavrilovic from Britain, representing the Yugoslav diaspora, told those gathered that this was the demonstration's theme.

"In the diaspora we cannot do much," said Gavrilovic, "to liberate our occupied country. We have no weapons, no TV station. But we can stop them from taking our history from us."

Speakers said U.S. President Bill Clinton and officials of his administration were the real war criminals for planning and carrying out aggression against Yugoslavia.

Costas Alyssandrakis, a member of the European parliament from the Com-

munist Party of Greece, said of the imperialists: "They even erased the name Yugoslavia. There was one person they considered an obstacle: Slobodan Milosevic."

Klaus Hartmann of the German section of the International Committee for the Defense of Slobodan Milosevic compared the Yugoslav leader's trial to that of the Bulgarian anti-fascist, Georgi Dimitroff. Dimitroff defended himself before a Nazi court in the 1930s for false charges that he set the German Parliament—the Reichstag—on fire.

Gavrilovic, who chaired the rally, thanked Wil van der Klift of the New Communist Party of the Netherlands for his party's help in organizing the demonstration in The Hague. And he promised that people will return for future demonstrations as the illegal trial proceeds.

Catalinotto represented the ICDSM and the International Action Center at the protest.

Bush on 'democracy' in Middle East

Continued from page 6
wider than Saudi Arabia.

Qatar's Al-Sharq newspaper editorialized, "As the crisis in Iraq deepens, the United States is trying to open a new front in the region, especially with Syria."

'Democracy': cover for U.S. goal of domination

The reality is that the Bush administration could not care less about democracy and freedom—other than the freedom of capital to go anywhere, exploit anywhere. Believing that Bush and his ghoulish team have the slightest interest in the rights or welfare of any of the peoples of the Middle East can only lead to confusion.

Iran is a dramatic case in point. This year is the 50th anniversary of the CIA coup that overthrew the first democratic government in that country's history. It was a nationalist bourgeois government led by a man named Mohammed Mossadegh.

Iran had been a virtual British colony for about 40 years when Mossadegh took office in 1951. The country's rich oil resources were owned and controlled by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co., today known as British Petroleum. Iranian oil workers lived in indescribable poverty in Abadan, the Iranian oil center, while many Anglo-Iranian shareholders lived in luxury in London. Anglo-Iranian paid more in taxes to the British government than it did in royalties to Iran.

After coming to power, Mossadegh nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. In retaliation, Britain and the United States slapped a worldwide oil embargo on Iran. After 18 months of destabilization, the CIA—under the direction of Kermit Roosevelt, a grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt—carried out a successful coup.

The ousted shah (king) was returned to power. The United States trained a brutal secret police force, the SAVAK. For the next 25 years the Iranian people were subjected to horrific repression and the wholesale looting of their natural resources. The primary beneficiary was now U.S. rather than British capital. Iran became the pivot of U.S. military power in the Gulf region, home to two-thirds of the world's oil supply.

The SAVAK to a very large degree destroyed the secular, left and progressive organizations in Iran. It is estimated that more than 100,000 people, mostly young

people, were arrested, subjected to torture and executed over a quarter of a century. The destruction of the secular and left movements opened the way for the triumph of the Islamic forces when the Iranian people rose up against the shah and his U.S. sponsors in the 1978-79 revolution.

U.S.: main obstacle to development and democracy

The Pentagon and the CIA also intervened seeking to destroy the nationalist and socialist movements and governments in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Algeria, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Oman, Dhofar, Libya, Lebanon, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the region over the past 50 years. U.S. leaders have used not only overt and covert military means, but also economic sanctions, often with devastating effect.

The United States, of course, played the key role in creating the Israeli state, which has since its formation served as a beachhead for Western imperialist interests in the Middle East. The super-militarized Israeli state not only dispossessed the Palestinian people of their homeland, it has severely distorted and limited development in the area.

The Israeli leaders have always made

clear their eagerness to carry out the agenda of the Western powers, especially the United States. No neighboring government could decide to embark on a new course—especially one running counter to imperialist interests—without having to contemplate the consequences it might suffer at the hands of Israel.

A dramatic example was Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956—followed shortly thereafter by a combined British-French-Israeli invasion.

When the United States wanted to crush the Lebanese left and the Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1970s and 1980s, the Israeli military invaded Lebanon, occupying most of the country in 1982, carpet bombing the capital, Beirut, for months, and killing more than 20,000 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians.

In the case of "the Israeli-American protectorate of Jordan," as the writer Tariq Ali has called it, the Israeli Army stood ready to invade in 1970-71, when it looked as if the Palestinian majority in that country might overthrow the CIA-sponsored King Hussein.

Reflecting on this history and responding to the colonialist tone of Bush's speech, the Syrian daily al-Thawra news-

paper wrote: "The people of the region are not in need of lessons in democracy and freedom. ... Can there be democratic revolution by occupying sovereign countries' land? Can it be by jets and cannons and destructive weapons?" □

'Heartened by opposition to war'

Continued from page 7

very good. We were not booed or jeered once on the entire route, and probably around one-third of the onlookers cheered us. Dave and I were in the front with a generic Veterans for Peace banner, and I noticed that in a lot of instances people just gave us a funny look, till they saw the second banner, 20 feet behind, reading "Bring the Troops Home Now" and THEN the smiles, cheers and yells started. Peace signs were popping up all over, including from a family wrapped up in a blanket reading "United We Stand America."

Partway through the route, an African American Vietnam vet joined us. He told Dave that he had never marched in a Veterans Day parade before but wanted to march with us. He pointed out, "The government talks about supporting these boys now, but when they come back, they come back to nothing: no jobs, no education, no nothing."

Here's what I think we learned from participating in this event. First, you couldn't find a rank-and-file soldier or family member to give us a hard time for being publicly anti-war, and that speaks volumes about what people are thinking, even if they can't speak out. Second, even the sector of the public that is supposedly the most "pro-troops" still is riddled with anti-war sentiment.

Third, the slogan "Bring them home now" is obviously the correct one. ... We actually heard onlookers yelling it to US on the route.

We were tremendously heartened by this barometer of opposition to the war. Clearly, the Pentagon cannot win the hearts and minds of the American people any more than it can win those of the Iraqi people for this violent and illegal occupation.

— Peter Goselin
Hartford, Conn.

Lynch and Johnson

Continued from page 6

them in different categories.

Many believe those categories were "Black" and "White."

For while Lynch is 19, white and blonde and, in the words of Syracuse professor of television and popular culture Robert Thompson, "fits the profile of the type of casting American television has done for years," Shoshana Johnson is a 30-year-old African American woman.

The two women and their families have issued statements supporting one another.

Racist war and occupation

The anti-war movement has condemned this racist war and its evolution into a racist occupation. That racism touches even the U.S. soldiers enlisted to fight the war. African Americans continue to serve in the military in numbers dis-

proportionate to their population in the United States—19 percent of the Armed Forces, 13 percent of the U.S. population.

Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson has rallied to Johnson's cause, helping bring her case to light and demanding fair treatment. In a Nov. 4 column in the Sacramento Observer, Jackson wrote:

"For Johnson and thousands of other Iraqi troops, the real indignity comes when they return. ... President Bush likes to say that Sept. 11 changed everything. But it didn't change this administration's callous disregard for the lower ranks—for the soldiers, the workers ... It didn't change the special interest politics that choose the benefit of the few over the common good of the many."

LeiLani Dowell, a member of Workers World Party, is running for Congress in 2004 in the Eighth Congressional District (San Francisco) on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket.

SOUTH KOREA

Worker suicides lead to massive street battles

By Deirdre Griswold

South Korean workers are telling the world in the most unmistakable way that their conditions of life and work are intolerable. They flooded the streets of downtown Seoul on Nov. 9 in a demonstration of 40,000 union members against repressive labor legislation. And when they were attacked by police, they responded with hand-to-hand combat and even molotov cocktails.

These workers have been moved to the core by the self-sacrifice of three of their comrades, who immolated themselves in separate incidents in October as a desperate outcry over their desperate situation.

The first to die was Kim Joo-Ik, former president of the Hanjin Heavy Industries Union, who was found dead on top of a 150-foot crane within the factory grounds in Pusan on the morning of Oct. 17. He had hung himself on the 129th day of a sit-in he conducted on top of the crane. Kim had started his protest on June 11 to draw attention to the company's merciless policies toward the workers.

Found inside his pocket were two notes, one to his fellow workers and the other to his family. An editorial in Minjok-Tongshin, a Korean-language daily based in Los Angeles, describes their contents: "In the first note, the deceased lashed out against the company management, citing their dual policy of repressing the workers and the trade union while generously compensating top management and shareholders. He questioned how workers could be expected to accept wage freezes when the company was earning record profits, with management and major shareholders reaping the gains. The long history of oppression against the workers and the trade union, insincere negotiation practices, layoffs and job changes for trade union activists, and wage levels not enough to cover living costs were all mentioned in his note. But perhaps at the heart of Kim's and the workers' grievances were the new tactics which the company had employed

to repress workers."

Kim, only 39 years old and the father of three young children, asked his family to leave his body at the top of the crane until the workers' struggle was victorious. His fellow workers are guarding the site in respect for his wishes.

The suicide of this worker was followed by one in Taegu on Oct. 25 and another in Kwangju on Oct. 26. Their plea was heard by the hundreds of thousands of workers in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, which called the Nov. 9 demonstration.

Bosses can seize workers' property

The unions are trying to roll back laws that allow a company to sue unions and individual members for "damages" if they sustain losses due to a strike. The big corporations that dominate the South Korean economy are using the laws to bankrupt the unions and their members. In Kim Joo-Ik's case, the bosses not only had won huge payments from the union he headed, they actually seized his wages and his house.

South Korea is under the fist of the United States, which has almost 40,000 troops stationed permanently on its soil. The rationale given by U.S. administrations, Democrats and Republicans alike, is that the troops are there to protect South Koreans' "freedom" from an alleged threat from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North—an argument that is rejected by the majority of South Koreans, who want the U.S. troops out and their divided country reunited.

The DPRK lost several million people when the U.S. invaded the North in 1950-53, but it resisted becoming a neocolony of Washington and Wall Street, forcing the Pentagon to withdraw and remaining independent of U.S. capitalist control. Its industries and land are socially owned, unlike the capitalist South, and it rebuilt from the ashes of war as part of the bloc of socialist countries that stretched at that

Workers from Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) confront police at protest near city hall in Kwangju on Nov.



time from Eastern Europe to the Korean peninsula.

Beginning in the 1970s, U.S. and Japanese capital invested heavily to build up South Korean industry, but this development was completely export driven and tailored to suit the profit needs of the imperialists. It could not be sustained.

After the Asian economic crisis began in 1997, the capitalist governments there followed austerity programs drawn up by the imperialist-controlled International Monetary Fund. A 1998 IMF loan to South Korea demanded heavy concessions from the workers. The struggle between bosses and workers in heavy industry and in parts of the service sector became intense.

South Korean workers today face a perilous job situation. More than half the workforce are either temporary, part-time or what are called "atypical" workers, those who are hired on a three-month contract with minimal benefits, if any. (Asia Times Online, Aug. 22)

On Oct. 16 the South Korean daily Joong Ang reported that 40 percent of the country's college graduates were unemployed. Another daily, Chosun Ilbo, reported on Oct. 20 that 4,234 people had applied for 11 job openings at Yuhan-

Kimberly, "leaving a ratio of job seekers to jobs at 385 to one."

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun was elected a year ago in a decisive victory over the candidate favored by Washington. His popularity was based on his pledge to continue the process of dialogue with the North known as the "Sunshine Policy." He also had been a labor lawyer, and was seen as more disposed toward the workers.

But the U.S. hostility toward North Korea has grown more acute. And the Roh government has responded to Washington's pressure by agreeing to send troops to Iraq, touching off big anti-war demonstrations. It has also continued to follow IMF dictates to privatize state industries, evoking massive strikes by the union movement. With the economic suffering of the workers growing worse, the stage is set for even bigger battles to come. □

LOS ANGELES

Meeting builds solidarity with N. Korea

By Muna Coobtee
Los Angeles

The International Action Center, Mindullae and Minjok-Tongshin sponsored a public meeting here on Nov. 7 entitled "Eyewitness: North Korea." Three panelists shared their personal stories and photographs from recent trips to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with a multinational audience of over 70 people.

A touching and powerful slideshow presentation documented the panelists' journeys in the DPRK. It was followed by an open discussion between panelists and the audience.

Maggie Vascassenno from the IAC served as a delegate to the International Conference on Peace and Reunification, held in Pyongyang, capital of the DPRK. Her presentation included a detailed history of the United States' assault on Korea and the suffering inflicted on the people

of the North over the past several decades. She retold moving stories she had heard from women directly affected by U.S. atrocities. Vascassenno further reflected on the admirable strength and determination of the people to successfully rebuild their war-torn country despite isolation.

Kilnam Roh, editor of the online news source Minjok-Tongshin (www.minjok.com), read widely by Koreans around the world, informed the audience on the history of the peace movement in North and South Korea and its efforts to reunify the peninsula as one Korea. Roh's presentation included photographs taken on the third anniversary of the July 15, 2000, North-South Joint Declaration, which was signed by Chairman Kim Jong-Il of the National Defense Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and former President Kim Dae-Jung of South Korea. With the historic Joint Declaration, both countries pledged to work together

toward reunification of the Korean peninsula.

Youngbin Yuk, a leading Korean-American activist and director of Mindullae, shared impressions of his first trip to North Korea. His travels helped dispel the anti-North propaganda he experienced growing up in the U.S. He "felt the sincerity, honesty, and simplicity of a people living in a collective frame of mind. The people of North Korea realize that they are not living in a Utopia, but are willing to sacrifice for their nation because the nation sacrifices for the people."

The meeting was moderated by Hyong Chong Kim of One Korea L.A. Forum. The meeting also included a statement of solidarity with the Korean people's struggle against U.S. imperialism given by the Free Palestine Alliance. A Ralphs supermarket employee who has been locked out from her job for over four weeks urged broad community support for the more than 70,000 striking and locked-out grocery

workers currently fighting for healthcare and wages in Southern California.

The panelists and participants all pledged to continue the fight for self-determination and reunification of Korea.

The images and stories of North Korea shared by the panelists are largely unavailable to the U.S. public. Instead, they are bombarded with the words of known liars like George W. Bush, who deemed North Korea part of his so-called "Axis of Evil." The U.S. government's vicious words and policies attempt to dehumanize North Korea's people and delegitimize their socialist government.

This important public meeting challenged these lies. As the panelists' stories and photographs displayed, the U.S. government's attempts to infringe on North Korea's right to self-determination will fail because of the remarkable strength displayed by the Korean people in their continuing struggle against U.S. imperialism. □

Class action vs. Wal-Mart

It is truly a David-versus-Goliath struggle. In an inspiring example of courage and determination, nine Mexican immigrants who worked as janitors at Wal-Mart in New Jersey are suing the world's largest retail corporation. They charge Wal-Mart and its cleaning contractors with failing to pay overtime and with other violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The suit accuses the parties of conspiring to make them work seven nights a week, usually for 56 hours a week, with no health and pension benefits, and under unsafe working conditions that violated state compensation laws.

This legal challenge has enormous significance for the struggle against the immigrant bashing that has been so much more widespread since 9/11.

These Mexican workers were among 250 immigrants who were rounded up and arrested in late October when federal immigration officers launched coordinated midnight raids at 60 Wal-Mart stores in 21 states.

Their legal struggle has far-reaching importance for the union movement, which has been trying to organize Wal-Mart. This corporation has used every anti-union illegal weapon conceivable to keep the labor movement from reaching oppressed immigrant workers.

Wal-Mart is Wall Street's model of the race to the bottom being forced on the service-oriented, multi-national workforce, primarily women.

The suit has been gathering momentum. It has become a class action suit that seeks to represent thousands more—mainly immigrant workers—whose legal rights have also been violated. The charges have now been escalated to cover a pattern of

fraudulent and criminal practices involving Wal-Mart and its corrupt and conspiratorial contractors. The class action suit calls for remedies under the Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO).

Coinciding with this splendid action, in Alameda County a superior court judge has certified the class action suit of more than 100,000 Wal-Mart workers in California who charge the giant chain store with taking away their lunch and rest breaks and forcing them to work off-the-clock without pay. In a collective voice, strengthened by their numbers, these workers have begun to create a whole new relationship of class forces. But their battle needs the support of the entire AFL-CIO and its affiliates.

The labor movement must view this struggle as the next stage of the momentous mobilization that on Oct. 4 brought out over 100,000 workers—organized and unorganized, low-paid and under-employed, part-time and temporary—to say no to the exploitation of immigrant workers in a rally dedicated to the union organizing that is so desperately needed.

Wal-Mart and its co-conspirators are the criminals, not the heroic immigrants, whose only crime is to struggle to overcome the poverty that has plagued them, their families and loved ones—poverty created by capitalist exploitation and greed. Their struggle must be the springboard for a class-wide mobilization of the labor movement, the anti-war movement and all progressive and class-conscious organizations.

The first step is to get these victims of persecution out of incarceration so they can pursue the struggle and their dreams. There are no borders in the workers' struggle. □



Washington, D.C., Oct. 25.

WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

U.S. resumes bombing of Iraqi civilians

Continued from page 7

removed the previous regime, and we will not hesitate to employ the appropriate levels of combat power," General Sanchez said in the same press conference. "What we are embarking on here is the absolute necessity to defeat the enemy," in pursuit of which the "application of all combat power that is available to us" would be used. (New York Times, Nov. 11)

This new "get even tougher" policy had already gone into effect. On Nov. 8 U.S. fighter jets bombed civilian neighborhoods in Tikrit and Falluja. The raids were described as retaliation for the downing of the two helicopters, which had been shot down near these cities. The media have not been allowed in to assess the damage, but the "lethal instrument" referred to by General Sanchez undoubtedly delivered much death and destruction to the people there.

While bragging about their military power, the White House and Pentagon don't like to dwell on Iraqi casualties and the hatred this causes toward U.S. troops. But a report released recently by the medical charity Medact, based in Britain, estimates that as many as 55,000 Iraqi civilians have lost their lives as a result of the war. Entitled "Continuing Collateral Damage: the Health and Environmental Costs of War on Iraq," the report says that the U.S. and British occupying authorities have the responsibility for meeting the enormous health needs of the besieged population under international law.

Even those who collaborate with the occupiers can be killed by them—just because they are Iraqis. General Sanchez confirmed that the U.S.-appointed "mayor" of Sadr City, a Baghdad suburb of about 2 million Shiite Muslims, had been killed by a U.S. soldier on Nov. 9. According to Sanchez, Muhanad al-Kaadi had tried to drive into an area forbidden to vehicles, then had engaged in a "wrestling match" with a U.S. soldier dur-

ing which the soldier's gun had "gone off." "It was a very unfortunate incident," the general said.

Sanchez also admitted that interrogations of 20 people suspected of links to Al Qaeda had failed to confirm such links. The 20 had been rounded up by U.S. troops with much publicity, shortly after a massive car-bomb attack in Saudi Arabia. Despite many attempts by the Bush administration to link Iraq to Al Qaeda and the 9/11 attacks in the U.S., it has utterly failed to do so.

Huge protests expected in London

Bush will soon be going to Britain, where his early requests for glorious photo ops riding with the Queen in her carriage and speaking to Parliament have been dashed. Instead, huge demonstrations are expected and a political struggle has opened between Prime Minister Tony Blair and the City of London over U.S. demands that much of the city be "locked down" for security during Bush's visit.

Said Lindsey German, a spokesperson for the Stop the War Coalition: "It is an outrage that the most unwelcome guest this country has ever received will be given the freedom of the streets, while a movement that represents majority opinion is denied the right to protest in the heart of government."

ABC News Online reported from London on Nov. 12 that "A poll in Tuesday's Times newspaper showed 60 percent of British voters strongly disapprove of Mr. Bush's handling of Iraq and that anti-Bush feeling is particularly high among women.

"The spectacle of Bush arriving with an entourage of up to 250 Secret Service agents, 15 sniffer dogs and handlers, 50 White House political aides, two motorcades of up to 20 armored vehicles each, as well as at least three aircraft is unlikely to increase warmth towards him." □

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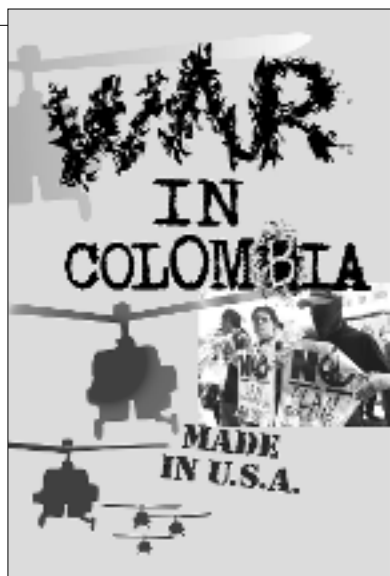
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YOU'RE INVITED!

Dec. 6-7 socialist conference gains momentum

By Monica Moorehead
New York

A national conference focusing on the important question, "How can the struggle for worldwide socialism be revived?" could not come at a more important juncture for the movement here and abroad.

This is especially true because of the impact the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp more than a decade ago had on the struggles of the workers and liberation movements around the world.

This event, scheduled for Dec. 6-7 in New York, is sponsored by Workers World Party. The conference will help to intensify the important process of reaching out to the broadest sectors of the progressive movement to discuss in an open and friendly manner the fact that of all the problems the movement for fundamental change faces on a global scale, the one that has the deepest impact is the need for socialist and communist leadership.

Various sectors of the world's movement have been relying on forms of struggle of a more liberal bourgeois character to help fill the void in independent anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, revolutionary leadership.

Take the occupation of Iraq. What is the biggest political issue facing the worldwide solidarity movement to end that brutal, colonial occupation? It is whether the United Nations should replace the United States as the occupying force. For some in the anti-war movement, the UN is the alternative. If there were a strong worldwide movement for socialism, the real issue would be defending the Iraqi people's right to self-determination.

The absence of a worldwide socialist movement has affected an important domestic development: the 2004 presi-

dential election. Sectors of the anti-war movement are orienting toward this election while putting the need to build a strong anti-imperialist movement on the back burner until the election is over.

These sectors believe that the way to stop President George W. Bush's endless war is to get him out of office in 2004 by replacing him with a Democrat. They are opting for the "lesser evil" candidate—even if that candidate is retired Gen. Wesley Clark, who himself is a war criminal.

The U.S. labor movement faces a similar dilemma regarding the elections. The labor leadership is putting valuable resources into supporting a Democrat for president instead of putting all their energy and effort into organizing millions of unorganized, low-paid workers, especially immigrants.

These are among the many issues that the conference will examine.

Cross section of activists to attend

The conference, still several weeks away, is already creating a steady buzz within the movement. Activists from as far away as Canada, South Africa, Italy and Indonesia have expressed interest in attending. For many, calling a conference on socialism inside the biggest imperialist country is a timely and welcome development.

Cheryl LaBash, a national outreach organizer for the conference, told Workers World: "Ever since this conference was announced in early October, we have been receiving a daily stream of registrations from activists who want to attend."

"They have informed us of some of the issues and developments that they want to see raised at the conference, including Iraq, Palestine, Colombia, dialectical materialism, revolution, the anti-war

movement, economics and much more. A woman from Levittown, N.Y., stated that she is an activist who likes to help others and wants to find out more about socialism.

"So it is becoming crystal clear that the conference will help bring together a cross-section of activists and class-conscious forces that will share their diverse political experiences. It is important that this conference address in a popular way as many international and domestic issues as time will allow, all within the framework of fighting for worldwide socialism including inside the United States."

A special conference website has been set up at www.workers.org to download leaflets in English and Spanish, to register, and to read articles on Marxism, struggle and socialism. It would be especially important to get out the socialist conference literature on college campuses and at high schools. □

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¡Que regresen las tropas a casa!

Por qué es la consigna correcta para el movimiento anti-guerra

Por Brian Becker

Un debate político ha surgido entre las fuerzas estadounidenses contra la guerra sobre los lemas más apropiados para el movimiento antibelicista de hoy. Durante la manifestación de 100.000 participantes del 25 de octubre en Washington, D.C. el lema principal fue “Regresen las tropas ahora—fin a la ocupación de Irak.” Este lema fue aceptado por las dos coaliciones principales que organizaron la protesta—Actuar Ahora para Detener la Guerra y Terminar con el Racismo y Unidos por Paz y Justicia, (ANSWER y UFPJ por sus siglas en inglés respectivamente.) La coalición ANSWER ha estado usando este lema desde la conquista militar de Bagdad por el ejército estadounidense el 9 de abril del 2003.

La UFPJ aceptó apoyar la manifestación de ANSWER bajo este lema, aunque sus miembros mantienen una amplia variedad de opiniones sobre el punto del retiro inmediato de las tropas.

Antes de la manifestación del 25 de octubre, algunos grupos en el movimiento se opusieron a esta orientación y abogaron por cambiar el lema a “Entregar la seguridad y la reconstrucción [de Irak] a la ONU”. Este pensar sobre el cambio se basaba en que “el retiro inmediato de todas las tropas estadounidenses probablemente crearía caos y anarquía, una situación que sería mucho peor a lo que es hoy.” El problema central de “entregar la seguridad y la reconstrucción a la ONU” es que esta demanda está en contraposición al derecho fundamental del pueblo iraquí a determinar su propio destino. Irak había sido técnicamente un país soberano por 80 años y genuinamente soberano por los últimos 45 años—desde la Revolución Iraquí de 1958. Su soberanía ha sido suspendida solo por una invasión y una ocupación ilegal.

Aquellos que abogan por la toma de la ocupación por la ONU argumentan que sin una fuerza extranjera “neutral” supervisando que pueda proveer recursos de reconstrucción, Irak descendería aún más al caos y la anarquía. Este argumento se basa en dos creencias falsas: 1) que la actual ONU puede jugar un papel independiente y progresista en Irak, y 2) que el pueblo iraquí estaría contento con algo menos que una independencia total para su país.

Es la ocupación por los Estados Unidos y Bretaña—cuya autoridad fue totalmente ratificada el 22 de mayo en la Resolución 1483 del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU—la cual ha llevado a la condición que ellos mismos llaman “caos y anarquía.”

Durante el tiempo en que Irak estuvo bajo su misma autoridad, esta condición no existía.

Si las tropas estadounidenses se retiraran inmediatamente y la soberanía fuera restituida a Irak, se formaría un nuevo gobierno. Nadie sabe con seguridad si habría una lucha entre las facciones contendientes en Irak. Esto es verdaderamente posible, dado el “caos y la

anarquía” creada por la violenta destrucción causada por fuerzas extranjeras. Pero a menos que la soberanía sea restituida, el actual caos y anarquía continuará inevitablemente.

Observaciones de Dennis Halliday

Los iraquíes no quieren que ninguna fuerza imperial extranjera sea árbitro de su proceso político y económico y así lo ha mostrado con sus acciones. Ni tampoco estuvieron de acuerdo que las Naciones Unidas, como institución, sugiriera que tiene los intereses del pueblo iraquí como su primera prioridad, particularmente dada las presiones aplicadas a la ONU por los Estados Unidos.

Esta opinión ha sido confirmada por los comentarios de Dennis Halliday, el ex Coordinador Humanitario de la ONU para Irak. Justo después del bombardeo del Cuartel de la ONU en Bagdad en agosto—en el cual perecieron 23 personas, muchos de los cuales era amigos y colegas de Halliday—Halliday comentó sobre la aguda diferencia en la percepción de las Naciones Unidas entre los iraquíes y la gente en los Estados Unidos y otros países occidentales: “El oeste ve a la ONU como una organización benigna, pero la triste realidad en gran parte del mundo es que a la ONU no se le ve como benigna,” dijo Halliday.

“En Irak la ONU impuso sanciones que probablemente mataron a un millón de personas. Los niños morían de malnutrición y de enfermedades conducidas por el agua. Los Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido bombardearon la infraestructura en 1991, destruyendo los sistemas de electricidad, agua y alcantarillado en contra de los acuerdos de la Convención de Ginebra. Esto fue un gran crimen contra Irak. Los trece años de sanciones hicieron imposible la reparación de los daños causados. Es por eso que tenemos grandes resentimientos e ira en contra de la ONU en Irak.

Hay la percepción de que la ONU humilló al pueblo iraquí y a su sociedad. Yo usaría el término genocidio para definir el uso de las sanciones contra Irak.

Varios millones de iraquíes están sufriendo de cáncer debido al uso de uranio reducido en las bombas. Eso es una atrocidad. ¿Se pueden imaginar la amargura por todo esto?” (Sunday Herald, agosto 24)

Colonialismo económico bajo la cubierta de reconstrucción

El gobierno imperialista de los Estados Unidos definitivamente tiene una deuda con el pueblo de Irak. Debería ser forzado a pagar reparaciones por la muerte y la destrucción cometidas contra este país. Pero eso no pasará. Al contrario, bajo la cortina de la reconstrucción humanitaria, todos los sectores de este país ricos en recursos están ahora abriéndose para los intereses de las empresas y los bancos, especialmente aquellos de los Estados Unidos. De esto se trató la guerra.

Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloom, quien estudió en los EE.UU. y trabajó para empresas

petroleras estadounidenses en Kuwait, y además es descrito como campeón de inversiones extranjeras y privatización (Wall Street Journal, 25 de sept.), anunció el mes pasado que Bagdad da la bienvenida a propuestas de empresas petroleras extranjeras para desarrollar los recursos petroleros de Irak. Él fue escogido de inmediato por el prócónsul de los EE.UU. en Irak, L. Paul Bremen III, para ser el Ministro de Recursos Petroleros de Irak.

Hassan al-Musawi, un oficial del concilio gobernante creado por los EE.UU., dijo que las compañías petroleras de los EE.UU. podrían tener un “trato preferencial en la negociación de contratos como señal de agradecimiento” por haber tumbarlo el gobierno anterior.

Los recursos petroleros y de gas natural que permitieron a los iraquíes disfrutar un rápido desarrollo social y económico en el pasado serán ahora volcados a empresas petroleras extranjeras. Las ganancias no serán utilizadas para el desarrollo de Irak, sino para el beneficio de los inversionistas.

Oficiales de Irak actualmente están trabajando con la Corporación de la Inversión Privada en Ultramar (Overseas Private Investment Corporation, OPIC), que ayuda a promover las inversiones de los EE.UU. Este organismo esta mantenido por los impuestos pagados por estadounidenses y proporciona garantías subsidiarias a las corporaciones de los EE.UU. para que ellos no fallen en beneficiarse de sus inversiones en el extranjero. Esto acelera el ritmo y la rapidez de la inversión de los EE.UU. en Irak mucho antes de que resuelva la inseguridad que prevalece ahora en Irak.

Utilizando las garantías de préstamos de la OPIC como su protección más segura, la administración de Bush le está diciendo a los monopolistas petroleros y a otras grandes corporaciones que “ustedes pueden invertir en Irak ahora, porque si falla su inversión, los impuestos que paga el pueblo de los EE.UU los cubrirán.” En resumen, la administración de Bush se está apresurando por reorganizar la economía iraquí, incluso la industria petrolera que anteriormente era propiedad del estado, antes de la creación de un Irak políticamente soberano.

El supuesto período de transición no es sino el robo masivo y el pillaje de Irak por la Autoridad de Ocupación de los EE.UU. Esto no es un secreto. Sin embargo, el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU, en la resolución adoptada el 22 de mayo, otorgó a la Autoridad de Ocupación un estatus plenamente legal y todo el control sobre la reorganización de la economía de Irak.

El mismo día en que la ONU resolvió otorgar a la Autoridad de Ocupación pleno control sobre Irak, el Presidente George W. Bush lanzó la Orden Ejecutiva 13303 que proporciona completa impunidad a todas las empresas petroleras y otras empresas de la industria de energía que inviertan en los recursos petroleros iraquíes. La orden explica que las empresas petroleras tienen que estar exentas y quedar impunes de cualquier

demanda porque una demanda tiene el potencial de “obstruir la reconstrucción ordenada de Irak”.

La constitución bajo el gobierno del partido Baath protegió al país de algunas de las peores características de lo que ahora se refiere como globalización. Estas medidas constitucionales ahora están en proceso de ser eliminadas por decreto y proclamación bajo la nueva autoridad antes de la formación de un nuevo gobierno.

Bajo la constitución previa, la inversión extranjera estaba limitada a ciudadanos residentes de países árabes. El 19 de septiembre, la Autoridad Provisional de la Coalición promulgó la Orden 39 que permite la propiedad y el control extranjero de un cien por ciento en la mayoría de entidades empresariales.

El 21 de septiembre, el Ministro de Finanzas de Irak, Kamel Al-Gailani—también escogido personalmente por Bremen—anunció que los nuevos dueños extranjeros de compañías iraquíes les sería permitido “la remesa completa de toda ganancia, dividendo, interés y derecho de autor” a los inversionistas de su país de origen. En vez de que las riquezas de Irak sean utilizadas para financiar el desarrollo doméstico, serán extraídas por corporaciones transnacionales.

Los bancos extranjeros que estaban prohibidos en Irak ahora les será permitido entrar como sucursales y subsidiarios”, según el decreto del 21 de septiembre sobre reformas financieras. El decreto también “permite a seis bancos extranjeros comprar hasta el cien por ciento de los bancos locales dentro de los próximos cinco años”.

Estos hechos considerados conjuntamente indican que la ocupación de Irak por parte de los EE.UU. no se compara en ninguna forma a un esfuerzo humanitario genuino. Lo que está pasando es la recolonización económica de Irak.

Soldados de los EE.UU. y sus familias, muchos de los cuales marcharon en contra de la ocupación de Irak el 25 de octubre en Washington, están entrando en el movimiento antiguerra porque se dan cuenta que han estado engañados por la administración de Bush. Muchos se enlistaron dispuestos a arriesgar su vida y ser heridos mientras creían la aseveración del presidente de que Irak era un peligro grave e inminente para el pueblo de los Estados Unidos. Después de descubrir que esto era mentira, la idea de sacrificar hasta una sola vida más se vuelve en algo imposible de soportar.

Abrazando la consigna, “Que las tropas vuelvan a casa ahora, alto a la ocupación de Irak”, el movimiento antiguerra envía un mensaje al pueblo de Irak y a los soldados de este país. Afirma su apoyo al derecho básico de autodeterminación para Irak, mientras declara a los soldados de los EE.UU.: Esta es una guerra de los ricos. La vida y la dignidad suya son demasiado preciosas para ser malgastadas por intereses imperialistas.

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