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## NO 'THANKSGIVING'!

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# Bigger bombs fail to 'pacify' Iraq

By Leslie Feinberg

The "shock and awe" of Operation Iron Hammer is proving no more effective at crushing Iraqi guerrilla resistance or intimidating the civilian population into submitting to colonial-style occupation than did the opening terror bombings of the imperialist invasion.

Since the launch Nov. 12 of this massive aerial bombardment of and around Iraqi cities, in which the Pentagon has dropped some of the biggest weapons in its arsenal, U.S. occupation forces have taken some of their worst hits—militarily and politically.

The brass are scrambling to rewrite the story of how two GIs died in the northern city of Mosul on Nov. 22. Widespread media accounts reported that the soldiers' vehicle crashed after being hit with a volley of stones and gunfire, and that a crowd of local residents, including youths, then slashed the throats of

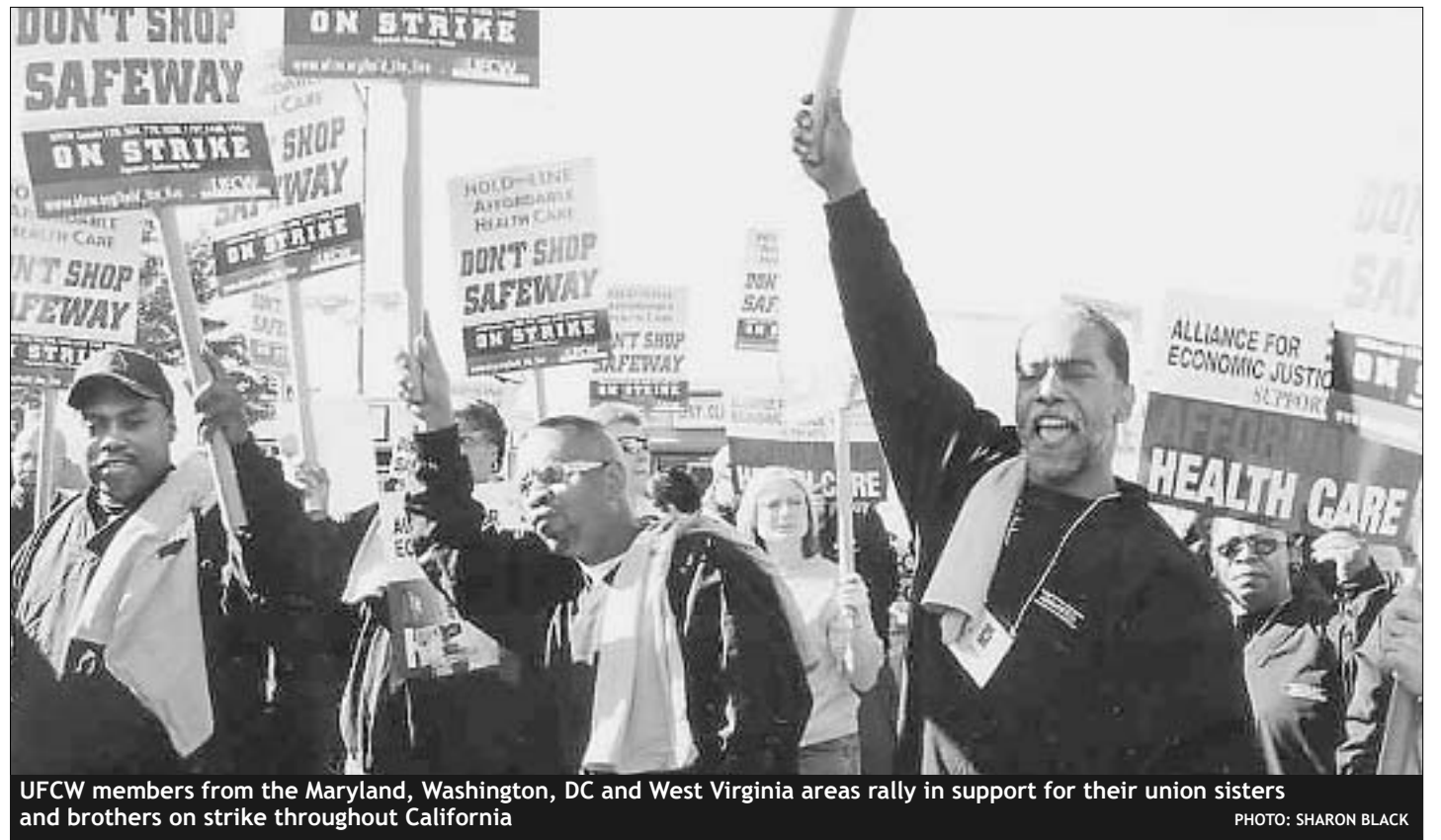
the troops, pummeled their bodies and dragged them through the streets.

Grim-faced Brig. Gen. Mark T. Kimmitt, at a Nov. 23 briefing in Baghdad, confirmed the deaths but refused to discuss the details. But coverage of the killings of the two soldiers, meant to vilify the Iraqi people, triggered a collective flashback: Somalia. Mogadishu. Black Hawk down.

The reporting of the rage in Mosul, a city of some 2 million Kurds and Arabs that had allegedly welcomed the arrival of U.S. occupation forces, was too evocative of Oct. 3, 1993. Then, tens of thousands of Somali people, mostly civilians, fought off an attack by helicopter-borne U.S. Rangers and Delta Force commandos in a crowded market in Mogadishu. They jubilantly dragged the bodies of dead troops through the streets of the capital city.

It was the Pentagon's biggest battle loss since the Vietnam

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UFCW members from the Maryland, Washington, DC and West Virginia areas rally in support for their union sisters and brothers on strike throughout California

PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

## In show of splendid solidarity

# Teamsters respect grocery picket lines

By Monica Moorehead

On Nov. 24 at 12 noon, 70,000 striking/locked-out grocery workers received a significant boost of solidarity when at least 8,000 Teamsters, including truck drivers and warehouse workers, announced they would honor the picket lines at 20 grocery distribution centers throughout Southern California.

Jim Santangelo, president of Teamsters Joint Council 42, stated that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters will honor the picketlines for the "duration of the strike." Santangelo stated, "We either end this thing together or we die together." (Los Angeles Times, Nov. 24)

The grocery workers, members of the United Food and Commercial Workers, began a strike on Oct. 11 against Vons and Pavilions stores, owned by Safeway. The following day, Ralphs, owned by Kroger, and Albertson's locked out their union workers. The UFCW decided to call the strike because these bosses threatened to cut health benefits, along with proposing lower wages and woeful benefits for new hires.

Honoring the picket lines means that the Teamsters are not obligated to come to work to load, unload and deliver to these food chains. Teamsters who honor the strike will be paid benefits from the local and international Teamsters union.

While a spokesperson for Vons attempted to dismiss the Teamsters' actions, saying, "Most people have done their holiday shopping already," a spokesperson for the Strategic Resource Group, a retail industry consultant in New York, had a more realistic view: "This is an absolute crippler for the supermarket chains. It raises the stakes and ensures that between the three chains, they'll lose over half a billion dollars collectively between October and November from the strike," stated Burt Flickinger. (Los Angeles Times, Nov. 25)

Albert Grigorian, a member of Teamsters Local 630 and a warehouse worker in Los Angeles, told WW why the Teamsters are honoring the strike: "We felt that what is happening to the 70,000 grocery workers is an attack on all the unions. Many of the workers in warehouses believe that if the striking grocery

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# TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

*This week ...* **WW Calendar**

## 39 precious lives honored

By Joe Delaplaine  
Los Angeles

The Transgender Day of Remembrance, now an annual event, began after the killing of Rita Hester, an African American trans woman found stabbed in her Boston apartment on Nov. 28, 1998. The police wouldn't investigate her death and the commercial media reported her murder with enormous disrespect and bigotry.

One goal of the Transgender Day of Remembrance is to educate the larger community about the violence and prejudice trans people face daily.

In November 1999, a year after Rita Hester's murder, a candlelight vigil was held in San Francisco. Each year the memorial grows larger and more international. This year, 92 cities worldwide held events, including 21 cities in France, Australia, Israel, Scotland, Canada and Italy.

This year in the U.S. 39 transgender people were officially recorded as killed in particularly brutal and violent ways. This is despite the under-reporting of many deaths of transgender people, which are often not officially recorded as such. Many of these lost lives, many of them people of color, have been under-investigated by police, if they are investigated at all.

In this year's Transgender Day of Remembrance, 71 cities in the United States raised the visibility of this injustice. High school and college students, from Sarah Lawrence to Humboldt State, organized events. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities large and small held panel discussions and invited speakers.

Across the country, candlelight vigils were held in Salt Lake City, Utah, and in front of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Indigenous Two-Spirited people sang and drummed in Denver as volunteers extinguished candles in a ceremony called Tennebrae, to honor the dead. People marched in New Orleans, Boston, San Diego and San Francisco, just to name a few cities.

In West Hollywood, 300 spirited trans people and their allies—including youth and many people of color—marched in the streets, chanting and shutting down the main thoroughfare for a mile until they



Honoring trans lives claimed by violence  
**Top row:** Amanda Cerda, Cassandra Do, Bella Evangelista

**Middle row:** Erika Johana, Nireah Johnson, Roberta Morris

**Bottom row:** Nikki Nicholas, Emonie Spaulding, Kim Young

reached Matthew Shepard Memorial park. Once there, speakers demanded their own memorial for trans victims of this bigotry-inspired violence.

The four-hour event began with a multi-media tribute to Gwen Araujo, a transgender teenager murdered last year in Newark, Calif. A panel of trans speakers took the microphone.

In a particularly moving moment, 39 trans people, each representing a person whose life was claimed this year by violence, stood and read the names of the dead aloud and a description of how they died.

Calpernia Adams was the final speaker before the march. Her boyfriend, 21-year-old Pfc. Barry Winchell, was beaten to death with a baseball bat in 1999 by another soldier as he slept in his base barracks at the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky. He died the next day.

Winchell had been the target of six months of anti-gay epithets and harassment after he began dating Adams. Soldiers in Winchell's company reportedly complained to their officers about the treatment he was suffering. Yet the officers did nothing. Despite protests by Winchell's family and LGBT groups and activists, the commander of Fort Campbell at that time, Maj. Gen. Robert T. Clark, appears to be getting another promotion as a U.S. Army officer.

At the end of this year's Day of Remembrance here, Shirley Bushnell, a key organizer of the event and a leader of L.A.'s Transgender Menace, urged support for the effort to create the first national memorial in West Hollywood for victims of anti-transgender violence. □

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# Behind the headlines on Michael Jackson

By Leslie Feinberg

The plight and suffering of children and teenagers who are subjected to sexual and other forms of abuse cannot be relieved by a reactionary campaign to foment racism, anti-gay bigotry and hatred of gender and sex variance.

It's imperative to keep this reality in the political forefront as sensationalized media coverage about Michael Jackson's arrest dominates the news.

On Nov. 19—the day Epic Records released a collection of Jackson's greatest-musical hits—police armed with a search warrant carried out a 12-hour raid on Jackson's ranch and amusement park. The next day, Jackson turned himself in to authorities, was booked on felony charges of sexual abuse of a 13-year-old, and was released after posting bail.

The facts about the case have not yet been fully revealed. Nevertheless, Jackson has already been virtually tried and convicted by the media.

The Santa Barbara County prosecutor's office will not file formal charges until late November.

The 45-year-old African American, a child star as the lead singer of the Jackson Five, is a legendary, internationally renowned pop star. Since the late 1980s, he has been the brunt of public ridicule in the media for having an increasingly "womanly" appearance and complex gender expression.

He has been dogged by tabloid scandal and a district attorney since 1993. At that time, Tom Sneddon, the district attorney of Santa Barbara, Calif., tried to bring charges against Jackson, alleging sexual abuse of a 13-year-old boy.

Sneddon, a prosecutor nicknamed Mad Dog, "first came to international prominence when he investigated child molestation accusations against Jackson in 1993-94. The singer was reportedly stripped naked and photographed as part of the investigation." (AFP, Nov. 21)

But no charges were ever filed. Jackson settled financially with the boy's family, saying he wanted to avoid a long court battle.

However a Lexus search of keywords "Tom Sneddon" and "Michael Jackson" between 1994 and 2001 reveals that the district attorney has continued to hound Jackson in the media. (talkleft.com/-archives)

The perception of a vendetta by the district attorney and demonstrable media bias have led Jackson's family, many prominent African American entertainers and political leaders, and fans of all nationalities to voice their outrage.

In a statement by the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said that Michael Jackson was being tried by the media and expressed his organization's "grave concerns" about how the Santa Barbara district attorney's office is handling this case.

The civil rights leader described the raid of the Neverland ranch by more than 70 police—some in flak jackets—accompanied by doctors and an ambulance as "overkill." Jesse Jackson added that during the Nov. 19 news conference by the sheriff's department about the arrest warrant, Sneddon "proceeded to make several jokes which were completely inappropriate."

Jermaine Jackson said his family supports his brother Michael. "This is nothing but a modern-day lynching."

The singer's mother, Catherine Jack-

son, told the online version of Germany's Bunte magazine on Nov. 24 that there are two interpretations of the law in the United States: "one for whites and one for Blacks."

## Odious campaign

Media coverage of Michael Jackson, both before and after these formal charges, has been damning, lurid and seemingly unending. Television stations pre-empted normal broadcasts for live coverage.

After Jackson voluntarily turned himself in to authorities at the Santa Barbara airport, media helicopters hovered in the air as a convoy of police cars and other vehicles escorted him to the county jail. More than one pundit referred to the procession as reminiscent of the slow-speed car chase that preceded O.J. Simpson's 1994 arrest on murder charges.

Over 100 reporters and photographers thronged outside the county jail as sheriffs brought in the 120-pound singer with his hands manacled behind his back.

A Nov. 22 New York Times editorial judged that "there is no doubt that Mr. Jackson is guilty of trying too hard to protect his innocence," which it defined as a child-like "infantilism."

An inordinate amount of prejudicial coverage focused on Jackson's appearance.

Reporting by the New York Daily News was characteristic of tabloid treatment of the case. A four-page feature on the "Jackson sex scandal" on Nov. 21 taunted Jackson for a mug shot "that showed him wearing more makeup than a prom queen." A caption under a photo of Jackson flashing a "peace" sign outside the jail said the singer was doing "his best Richard Nixon impersonation." And an article described Jackson's bedroom as his "creepy lair."

Perhaps the adjective the media use most frequently about Michael Jackson is the word "freak." That epithet needs to be confronted head-on. It lifts a rock on this odious and right-wing campaign and shines light on it.

National Basketball Association superstar Dennis Rodman was also the target of this poisonous barb when he came out publicly as a cross-dresser.

How is it possible for such a dehumanizing slur to be so widely used against internationally acclaimed and popular Black stars in entertainment and sports? Because even with celebrated skills, money and prominence, they are African Americans in an economic and social system permeated with racism.

The term "freak" has always been steeped in racism, anti-transgender bigotry and the dehumanization of disabled people.

From 1840 to 1940, "freak shows" were heavily marketed to rural areas, towns and large urban areas in the United States. They were considered one of the most popular forms of entertainment in this country—and they were lucrative.

Bearded women and those billed as mixed sex—"half-man, half-woman"—were among those displayed in dime museums, world's fairs and circus sideshows. With the rise of colonialism and the expansion of imperialism, people from Africa, the Pacific Islands, Asia and South America were captured and "exhibited" in these shows.

"The presentation of imported non-Westerners was big business," notes author Robert Bogdan in his book "Freak Show." Bogdan stresses that this business was saturated with an imperialist world view and did not confront racism. "On the

contrary, what [the public] saw merely confirmed old prejudices and beliefs. ... These attitudes also provided good support for the United States' exploitation of the non-Western world during the late 19th century."

The depictions of African peoples in particular, Bogdan writes, "arising as they did from racist attitudes, helped sustain first the institution of slavery and later systematic, unfair, and unequal treatment of nonwhites."

And Bogdan concludes, "Whenever we study deviance we must look at those who are in charge—whether self-appointed or officially—of telling us who the deviant people are and what they are like."

## Turning down the volume

The volume and intensity of coverage of Michael Jackson's arrest virtually drowned out all other world developments, including news about the Pentagon unleashing massive bombing raids on the civilian population of Iraq in its "Operation Iron Hammer."

Jackson's ranch was raided the day after the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage.

Reactionaries have long tried to justify their bigoted crusades with the groundless accusation that all people who are sexually attracted to those of the same sex, or are perceived as gender variant, "prey" on children. Progressive people need to deny the right wing an opportunity to use the high-profile coverage of the Jackson case as a propaganda weapon against the right of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to teach school, coach sports teams, adopt or gain custody of their children.

The biased publicity against Jackson has done nothing to reveal the depth and breadth of child sexual exploitation and abuse in this country, much of which takes place within families. A 1986 interview of 930 women in San Francisco by sociologist Diana Russell, for example, demonstrated that 16 percent of these women were incest survivors. The most common offenders were uncles, male first cousins, fathers, brothers and other male relatives.

Defending the bodies and lives of children requires a political movement that can raise public consciousness about the



Michael Jackson supporters rally in Paris after his arrest

fact that child abuse is institutionalized. It is an outgrowth of class society in which women and children are considered private property within the patriarchal nuclear family.

Right-wing scapegoating lets the government and legal branch off the hook for stripping children and married women of so many basic rights.

## Hands off Jackson's body!

A torrent of mocking about Michael Jackson's reported plastic surgeries has been unleashed by this case. He is labeled "bizarre" and "monstrous."

If undergoing plastic surgery were a crime, a bevy of socialites—and not just women, either—would be forced to endure the "perp walk" in handcuffs on prime-time news. The jails and prisons in this country could not hold everyone who has undergone body and facial alterations. "Nose jobs," face-lifts, liposuction, weight lifting, dieting, hair replacement—the list is long.

Cosmetic surgery cannot be extricated from shame in an economic and social system as oppressive and unequal as capitalism. But the bottom line is the right of individuals to make decisions about their own bodies and identities. That's at the heart of the struggle, for example, for women's reproductive rights. It's not the right of the state or the church—or the media—to determine.

Sex reassignment, like tattooing and piercing, is an ancient feature of human society. Even before the rise of class society and all the oppression it brought, there were people who, through physical alteration and/or social acceptance, lived in a sex that appeared to contradict genital sex.

The public derision of Michael Jackson for a "womanly" appearance is anti-woman. It obscures the reality of sex and gender variance in the human population. And it's an attempt to further cleave human diversity into "difference"—the essence of "queer" baiting and the distillation of divide-and-conquer strategy. □

# Break-in at the Mumia Abu-Jamal office

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

The group International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal has reported that there was an apparent political burglary at their offices here on Nov. 19. The break-in resulted in the theft of computers, files, databases, and vandalism of a copier and other non-portable equipment.

No items of monetary value other than the computers appear to have been taken. ICFFMAJ feels it's clear that the intention was to obtain documents and databases used in the international movement to free African American death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

In 2000, when ICFFMAJ was in the midst of filing for non-profit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status, a similar break-in at the same office resulted in the theft of lists of



FREE MUMIA

financial donors. At the same time records needed for the tax-exempt process were stolen from a truck belonging to a ICFFMAJ supporter.

Coming on top of the revelation that the FBI has instructed local law-enforcement agencies to gather data on the organizers of last month's anti-war protest, the attack is a strong reminder that COINTELPRO-type programs are very much alive and well.

ICFFMAJ demonstrated at the Federal Building on Nov. 1 and met afterward to formulate plans for a Dec. 13 rally and conference in Philadelphia to build momentum to free Abu-Jamal. Pam Africa, coordinator of ICFFMAJ, told Workers World that the latest attack will not deter their efforts to build the December event, designed to prepare supporters for the next phase of Abu-Jamal's appeals. □

## Stores picketed from coast to coast

# 'DON'T SHOP SAFEWAY!'

By Sharon Black  
Washington, D.C.

On Nov. 22, several hundred members of the Food and Commercial Workers union, along with supporters and striking workers from Southern California and West Virginia, rallied at the Safeway supermarket on Piney Branch Road NW in Washington, D.C.

The battle is for health care.

E.J., a striking worker from Southern California, described herself as a breast cancer survivor. She explained that without her health-care benefits she could not have received treatment.

Jackie Mills, a locked-out worker from Albertsons, is a single parent. She has a toddler and two other youngsters. Without union benefits, she worries about what will happen to her children if they get sick or injured.

Rose Carson, who is close to receiving retirement benefits, was angry. "The company is not making millions, it is making billions," she shouted.

These were just a few of the workers who spoke about why they were making sacrifices to walk the picket line.

Food and Commercial Workers Executive Vice President Marc Perrone, who introduced these workers, proclaimed, "There is a single word: solidarity!"

He held his fist in the air and produced a document that he described as company



Josylyn Williams, President Washington, D.C., AFL-CIO.

lies, tearing it up to the cheers of workers.

This spirited event stopped traffic and shoppers.

To the beat of a lively new union hip-hop song entitled "Hold Your Picket Signs in the Air," workers waved and shouted to passersby. The ralliers called on shoppers from "the Chesapeake Bay to the San Francisco Bay" not to shop at Safeway.

Washington D.C. AFL-CIO President Josylyn Williams introduced U.S. Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton and called on the crowd to support the campaign for Washington D.C. statehood. Williams explained that Norton supports labor rights but does not have a vote in Congress.

He also introduced AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. Sweeney pledged the support of 13 million union members and announced a growing strike fund. The Service Employees leads the list of unions

in donations to the strikers.

"The community is joining the fight for justice," proclaimed the Rev. Graylan Hagler, minister of the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ. He had just returned from the protests against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas meeting in Miami.

Along with 70,000 striking workers in Southern California, 4,000 striking Kroeger workers from West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky continue to walk the picket line for the sixth week. Members of the Laborers union along with the Service Employees, AFSCME and the Coalition of Labor Union Women joined the action. □



Teamsters support striking UFCW in El Monte, Calif., Nov. 24

## Teamsters respect picketlines

Continued from page 1

workers don't win the strike, then the bosses will be able to take back all the gains that we have won through the labor movement. The bosses will then try to come after us. For a couple of months, the Teamsters have been discussing going out on strike in solidarity. Everyone was anticipating this to happen. For the past two weeks, our morale was rather low because we hadn't gotten any word that this was going to happen. Once the union told us to sign in for our shift and then leave on Monday, 99 percent of us did not cross that picket line.

"The Teamsters will support the grocery

strike for as long as it takes. In fact, we are, in essence, carrying out a solidarity strike in support of our sisters and brothers by not showing up for work. Even though we cannot officially join the grocery workers on their picket line, we are able to bring them food and drinks to aid them and yell to any scabs that do cross the picket line."

Grigorian went on to say, "Once we honored the picket line, the company called out armed Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) squads to the warehouses to intimidate us. This development is very educational for our union because it shows vividly which side the cops are on and for sure, it is not the side of the workers." □



Protest in Michigan against privatizing of water.

PHOTO CREDIT: NREC.ORG

## Support environmental activists targeted by FBI

By Cheryl LaBash  
Detroit

Michigan is known as the Great Lakes State. The Great Lakes Basin holds 20 percent of the world's fresh water. But who owns and controls this vital resource?

That issue is at the heart of the FBI harassment and grand jury subpoena of Marie Mason and Frank Ambrose.

According to the Sweet Water Alliance website (www.waterissweet.org), the activists were ordered to provide DNA samples and fingerprints to a federal grand jury in Grand Rapids, Mich., by Nov. 4. The deadline was extended after complaints flooded the U.S. attorney's office denouncing the FBI's intimidation tactics. A motion to quash the subpoenas will be heard in Grand Rapids within weeks.

The focus of the federal grand jury is the alleged attempted sabotage of an Ice Mountain pumping station in late September.

Ice Mountain's parent company, Perrier, plans to pump 400 gallons per minute of spring water that feeds the headwaters of the Little Muskegon River. Perrier is a subsidiary of Nestle.

Local activists have strongly opposed the corporate plan, with both court action and demonstrations at the plant. Those in the forefront of the opposition include three Native groups of the Odawa, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, as well as the Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation.

Mason and Ambrose are members of the Sweet Water Alliance and the Highland Park Human Rights Coalition. They united the struggle against high water bills and racist water shut-offs with the environmental fight to stop the diversion of Great Lakes water.

This potentially powerful merger threatens to expose and combat a global industry that has sucked wells dry in India to provide water for Coca-Cola bottling plants and privatized water distribution and sewerage treatment facilities originally built for the public good.

Donations for Mason and Ambrose's legal defense can be made out to "Water Defense Committee" and sent to PO Box 44173, Detroit, MI 48244. Email endorsements (name and organization) to vorps@yahoo.com. □



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

## Pickets defend right to demonstrate

Two weeks after police routed a street-corner protest in Dearborn, Mich., and followed the demonstrators out of town, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice returned on Nov. 21 to defend the right to demonstrate against the occupation of Iraq.

In a related action, MECAWI and the Greenhouse Peace Project responded to an attack on a MECAWI/Greenhouse demonstrator in Oxford, Mich., by mobilizing a Nov. 16 picket against the war. At least half of the drivers passing by honked in support. □

## New Medicare bill

# Drug companies make out like bandits

By Deirdre Griswold

Who are the big winners in the new Medicare bill?

No surprise here. It's the multi-billion-dollar drug companies and hospital corporations.

Even the Wall Street Journal of Nov. 18 admitted that—or bragged about it, considering who they write for. Since the bill became public, drug company stocks have soared on Wall Street.

The \$400 billion bill, which allows private corporations to milk the Medicare program even more than in the past, has passed both houses of Congress. President George W. Bush will sign it into law with flowery phrases telling seniors it will help them with prescription drug coverage.

The hopes of many older people who have been crushed by the high cost of medicines in the United States were raised by ads taken out by the American Association of Retired Persons, which is spending \$7 million to publicly endorse the bill. But quite a few stunned AARP members don't buy it. And they have been flooding the organization's offices with letters, emails and calls accusing it of selling out.

The AARP officials have a material interest in this bill. "Over the years AARP has become much more than an advocacy and service organization for older Americans. It receives more than \$150 million each year in commissions on insurance, mutual funds and prescription drugs sold to its members," wrote Paul Krugman in the Nov. 21 New York Times.

The Nader group Public Citizen points out that "while AARP might be considered primarily a membership organization, it has in many ways become a business—one that derives approximately 60 percent of its revenues from a variety of insurance-related ventures, and only 29 percent of its revenues from membership dues."

### Vote first, read it later

What else is wrong with the bill? Probably more than anyone knows yet, since not even members of Congress had the chance to read it before the vote.

Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa told CNN: "It's about 1,100 or 1,200 pages, and we got it dated November the 20th. No one's read this bill. Nobody knows what's in it."

So the public is relying on summaries, provided by the bill's sponsors, which are circulating in the mass media—which itself earns billions of dollars every year from ads placed by the pharmaceutical industry.

One thing definitely in the bill, however, is a continued ban that prevents U.S. residents from importing much cheaper prescription drugs from other countries, like Canada.

On average, the same drugs purchased outside the United States cost half what they do here. The difference is great enough that many seniors travel abroad to buy medicines. They'll be breaking the law.

So much for the promises of "free trade" and NAFTA.

The U.S. government has built a razor-wire security fence around the profits of the huge pharmaceuticals. South Africa negotiated for three years with Washington, as millions of people were becoming infected and/or dying, before Washington allowed it to buy cheaper generic AIDS drugs on the world market. China has announced it will provide free medicines to any of its people who are

The health-care crisis shows in the clearest way possible why capitalism and human well-being are incompatible. Profit cannot be the motive force for protecting people's health.

HIV-positive, but so far can only make older, more dangerous drugs available because U.S. patents block its manufacture of the newer medications.

Both countries have been threatened with heavy penalties for violating U.S. "intellectual property" rights.

Now seniors here who try to bring pills back from Canada are in the same boat as these countries trying to find a way around Washington's monopoly on medicine.

### Attack on public health

A major criticism of the bill is that it undermines Medicare as a public health-care program by pitting it against private, for-profit health insurers.

There is to be a three-year "trial period" in which corporations, while getting government subsidies, will have the chance to show they can administer health care more efficiently. But there's a catch. They will be able to pick and choose their customers, meaning they can refuse insurance to the sickest, while Medicare must by law cover everyone.

Guess who will win the "competition" on this uneven playing field?

This bill, then, was written by those linked to and lobbied by the drug/health industry. It is meant as an opening wedge to weaken the limited government health insurance that exists here, in the same way that voucher schools are undermining public education.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist pushed hardest for the bill. His family fortune comes from the for-profit hospital dynasty Columbia/HCA, which gets a big share of its proceeds from Medicare and Medicaid.

Since so many sick people get no assistance from their bosses or insurers or the government in paying for medicine, and the prices keep going up all the time, they are hoping this bill will help. But the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities says that the bill will force millions of beneficiaries to pay more, not less, for drugs, thanks to a provision that cuts off supplemental aid from Medicaid.

The pharmaceutical industry is the most profitable sector of the U.S. economy, by far. The statistics are staggering. This is not an industry that needs a boost from the government to survive.

On the contrary, it's an industry whose enormous wealth allows it to penetrate every branch of the government and dictate

what is law.

### 'The most lucrative industry'

"America's Other Drug Problem: A Briefing Book on the Rx Drug Debate" is a valuable, authoritative and detailed 81-page study released in 2002 by Public Citizen. Using government and industry figures, it shows that prescription drugs are "the most lucrative industry in America."

In 2001, a year when the stock market was plummeting, people were losing their jobs and many businesses were going under, an analysis of the Fortune 500 companies showed that drug companies "enjoyed a return on revenues that was eight times higher than the median."

The 10 biggest U.S. drug companies saw their gross profits increase by one-third that year, climbing from \$28 billion in 2000 to \$37.3 billion in 2001. Pfizer, the biggest as well as the most profitable company, earned more in 2001 than all the Fortune 500 companies in the homebuilding, apparel, railroad and publishing industries combined.

Advertising of prescription drugs, which a compliant government now allows, has been a major factor in boosting drug sales. "In 2001, Fortune 500 drug companies devoted nearly three times as much of their revenue to marketing and administrative costs than to research and development," says Public Citizen's briefing book.

Merck spent more money—\$160 million—hyping its drug Vioxx than PepsiCo spent on advertising Pepsi or Anheuser-Busch spent on Budweiser.

The cost of prescription drugs rose at more than six times the rate of inflation in 2001. The average cost of a prescription for the 50 most "popular" drugs—which translates into those most advertised—

was \$71.56, compared to a \$40.11 average prescription price for all other drugs.

Vioxx and Celebrex, two anti-arthritis drugs that have been heavily advertised, accounted for 9.2 percent of the entire increase in the cost of prescription drugs in 2000. Yet, according to the Food and Drug Administration, they are no more effective than the much cheaper ibuprofen at reducing pain and inflammation.

### How to stop this monster?

Back in 1989, a similar but smaller bill to "expand" Medicare was repealed after seniors discovered what it really meant for them.

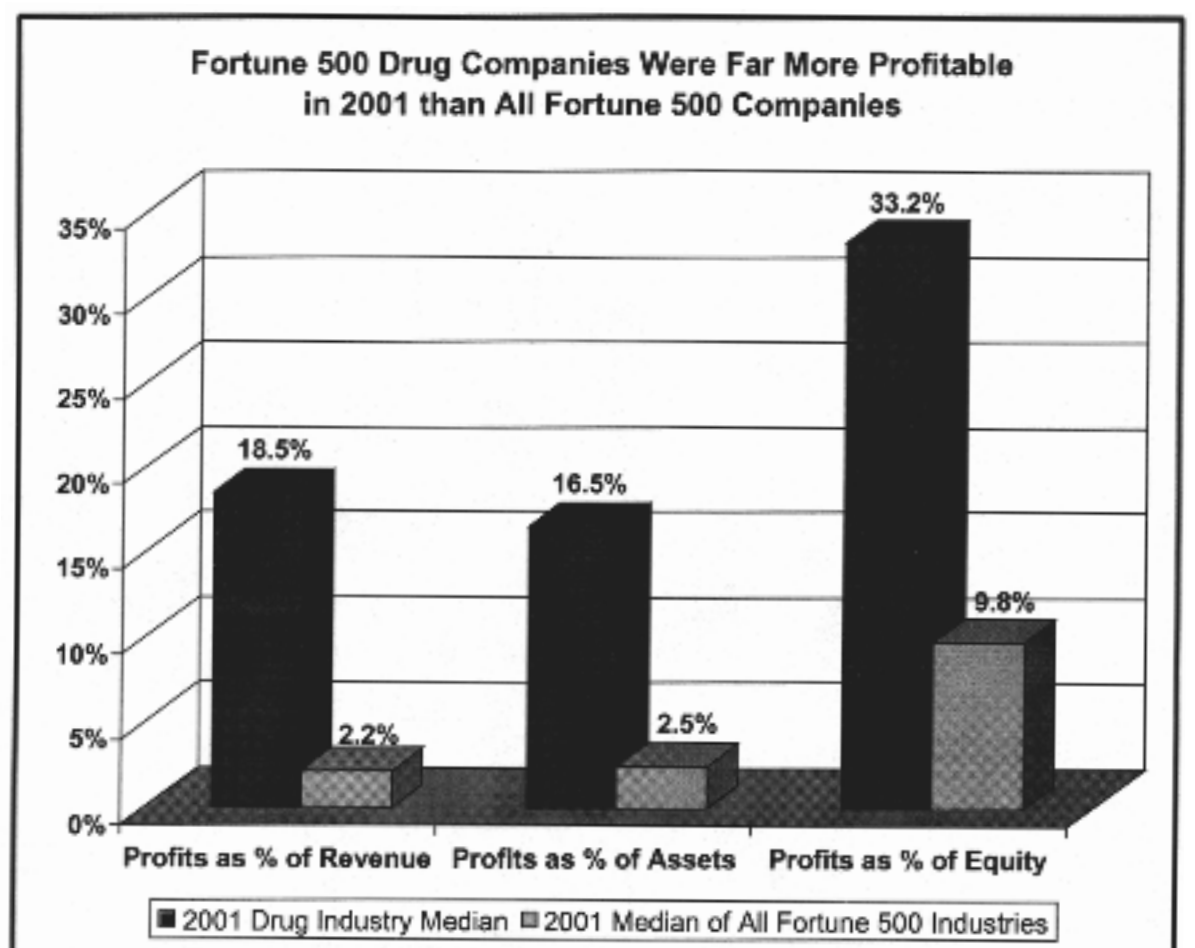
"For Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., then powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, it all boiled over on a hot day in August when he failed to sell the new coverage to elderly activists at a seniors' center on Chicago's North Side. Brandishing canes, some waving signs saying 'Rostenkowski,' they chased the sweating, panicked lawmaker to his car. When they surrounded his car, he got out and ran down the street." (James Kuhnenn, Knight-Ridder, Nov. 23)

A revolt like this all over the country is what is needed to not just save Medicare but expand health coverage to include everyone. Way more money is spent on health care in the United States than anywhere else. And the result is nothing but a patchwork of inadequate programs that leaves out tens of millions of people and bankrupts millions more—while the drug companies and HMOs make out like bandits.

The health-care crisis shows in the clearest way possible why capitalism and human well-being are incompatible. Profit cannot be the motive force for protecting people's health. The corporations will only use the system to promote their own profits ahead of everything else.

It is not only realistic but absolutely necessary to fight for a planned, socially owned economy and socialized medicine.

If little Cuba can have the best health-care system in all Latin America—a fact that is confirmed by all international health organizations—imagine what socialized medicine could mean in a large, developed country like the United States. □



## Anti-FTAA protests show

# Repression can't break spirit of unity

By Teresa Gutierrez  
Miami

On Nov. 20, Miami was the scene of pitched battles between progressive forces on one side and police and government officials on the other.

Tens of thousands of unionists, community and anti-war activists, anti-globalization forces and a huge number of students and youths all converged here to protest the meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas. The protest was called by the AFL-CIO, which secured a permit for a legal demonstration.

The FTAA is an attempt to negotiate an international trade agreement with the countries of this hemisphere to allow deeper imperialist economic domination of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In what some legal observers are describing as one of the most unprecedented shows of state repression at recent mass demonstrations, Miami police brutalized and incarcerated an unknown number of protesters.

Tear gas, pepper spray, grenades, stun guns and rubber bullets were all used against demonstrators. Protesters were grabbed seemingly at random and pulled behind police lines three rows thick. The police did everything to intimidate protesters with sheer terror, including wearing eerie Darth-Vader-like outfits.

One of the legal observers reported that what appeared unusual was that police arrested protesters in small groups at a time, rather than sweeping up massive numbers together, in an attempt to minimize media attention.

"Snatch squads" of police patrolled the city for days. They grabbed people, including many legal observers, off the streets. People arrested have reported beatings.

The arrests and brutalization of anti-FTAA protesters comes on the heels of one of the most important recent demonstrations in the United States.

The ANSWER coalition issued a statement urging support for those arrested and calling on anti-war activists to send messages of protest to Miami's mayor and police chief.



PHOTOS: INDYMEDIA

Union and political activists confront corporate plunderers in Miami.

The statement reads in part, "The attack on the protesters gives lie to the claim that the U.S. is fighting for democracy abroad—when people who participate in political dissent at home are subject to brutal systematic police abuse and government repression."

The fact that union members joined with community activists to protest the meeting of corporate, bank and government representatives in Miami is significant. Anti-war forces came to show solidarity as well as protest the U.S. war in Iraq. The anti-globalization movement

that has been protesting gatherings of corporate vultures for some time organized significant numbers of people.

The media and government tried to divide the anti-FTAA movement by pitting the union demonstration against the

*Continued on page 8*

## Thousands protest at training school for death squads

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Fort Benning, Ga.

For two days, Nov. 22-23, the road leading to the main gate of Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga., pulsed with the energy, camaraderie and solidarity of thousands of protesters. They were here demanding that the combat-training school for Latin American soldiers, known for decades as the School of the Americas, be closed.

In 2001, the U.S. Army officially closed the SOA. They then immediately reopened it under the control of the Defense Department as the "Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation."

The annual demonstration is organized by SOAWatch. This group was founded by

Thousands march to demand "Close down the SOA" in Georgia.

the Rev. Roy Bourgeois after soldiers trained at Fort Benning brutally murdered six Jesuit priests, a housekeeper and her teenaged daughter in El Salvador on Nov. 19, 1989.

A common feature of many of the most horrifying massacres, assassinations and political coups that have taken place in Latin America is the role of SOA graduates as the actual killers and behind-the-scenes plotters. Across Latin America, it is called the School of the Assassins.

From labor unionists and church leaders to whole Indigenous communities, all elements of civil society who threaten the interests of the entrenched elites of Central and South America—who threaten the multinational corporations' profits and the U.S. government's strategic interests—have suffered at the hands of military forces educated at the SOA in combat, counter-insurgency tactics and torture techniques.

This year's protest—the 14th annual event—brought out huge numbers of high school and college-age youth from across the United States. More than 200 members of the Auto Workers union came from Michigan, New York, Oklahoma and Georgia wearing a specially-designed T-shirt calling for solidarity with "our brothers and sisters" in Latin America. Religious women and priests traveled from dozens of cities, bringing their banners emblazoned with the names of their orders. Demonstrators came from Canada, Europe and from the many countries where the SOA has ravaged civilian populations.



Among the estimated 10,000 people gathered at Fort Benning were dozens who had been in Miami earlier in the week for the protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas, an economic pact to open every Western Hemisphere country except Cuba to the unbridled economic exploitation of U.S.-based corporations.

They testified to the police brutality and martial law that ruled the streets of Miami. And they collected funds from the crowd to support legal defense for the many hundreds who were arrested at the FTAA protests.

Among those at the Nov. 22 rally were Sister Helen Prejean, the fiery anti-death-penalty activist and author of "Dead Man Walking"; Rania Masri of the Iraq Action Coalition; Amy Goodman, host of Pacifica Radio's "Democracy Now"; Jennifer Harbury, whose Guatemalan husband was tortured and killed by the military of that country; and revered singer-activist Pete Seeger.

After a solemn Nov. 23 funeral procession where the names of the dead and disappeared were intoned with everyone responding with the word "presente" after each name, police arrested 30 people for taking their protest onto SOA property.

One hundred seventy people have

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WW PHOTO: JULIA LA RIVA

## Israeli official unwelcome in Los Angeles

On Nov. 19, demonstrators gathered in front of the Beverly Hills Hotel to protest the visit of Daniel Ayalon, Israel's ambassador to the United States. Initiated by the International ANSWER Coalition and Free Palestine Alliance, the action drew a diverse crowd that demanded an end to the brutal occupation of Palestine and supported the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, including the Right of Return. As a parade of limousines approached the hotel, the vibrant and determined demonstrators insured that Ayalon and his supporters would not go unnoticed by giving them a loud and unfriendly reception, shouting, "Free Palestine!"

—Muna Coobtee

# British demonstrations say 'Bush go home!'

By Deirdre Sinnott  
London

At least 200,000 people marched in the streets of London Nov. 20, to tell U.S. President George W. Bush to go home.

This was the biggest London demonstration ever held on a work day. Organizers—from the Stop the War Coalition, the Muslim Association of Britain and the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament—announced that the demonstration had shut down major sections of central London.

Masses of angry demonstrators chanted "George Bush, go home," "Who let the bombs drop? Bush, Bush and Blair!" and "George Bush terrorist," as they poured through city streets and simultaneously closed down two major crossings of the River Thames.

After intense negotiations with authorities, the coalition had won the right to march past the British Parliament building and rally in Trafalgar Square. The Bush administration, citing "security concerns," had tried to insist that London authorities create an exclusion zone in central London and close off parts of the underground train system.

In recent years when the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and trade-zone negotiators have met in cities around the world, worried imperialists have demanded that officials close down criti-

cal parts of the host cities to protect the participants from vigorous protests.

Bush, who arrived with a 700-person entourage, had to severely curtail the scope of his visit.

He was unable to get the customary ride in an open carriage with Queen Elizabeth that normally accompanies a state visit. And he had to scrap plans to tour many other areas of London.

A speech before Parliament was also canceled for fear that "unruly" members of Parliament might heckle Bush with cat-calls.

Several current and former members of Parliament—including George Galloway, an outspoken critic of the war and sanctions against Iraq—spoke before the cheering crowds at Trafalgar Square.

"Because of the demonstrations, George Bush has been on virtual lockdown in Buckingham Palace for almost his entire visit," Galloway announced.

As part of the demonstration, artist activists pulled down a 20-foot-high papier-mache statue of George W. Bush holding a missile. The crowd chanted, "Pull him down, pull him down" as activists threw rope around the effigy. A massive cheer went up as the effigy hit the stage.

Students from high schools and colleges came from all over Britain to participate, ignoring police threats to detain them on the basis of truancy laws. The British pub-

lic was outraged at the high cost of protecting Bush. His unpopularity on the streets was clear, as demonstrators got much encouragement from the sidelines.

Signs at the demonstration included one that read: "George Bush an American War Wolf in London."

This massive demonstration was the culmination of a series of activities that pulled together various sectors of the peace and anti-war movement.

Kicking off the activities on Nov. 18, some 2,000 activists overflowed the Quaker Friends Meeting Hall in Euston Square. Speakers at that rally included playwright Harold Pinter, former British Labor Party Members of Parliament Tony Benn, who has also been a cabinet minister, and George Galloway of the Stop the War Coalition, Caroline Lucas of the Green Party, Kate Hudson from the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament and, from the United States, Deirdre Sinnott for the ANSWER Coalition and author, anti-war activist and disabled U.S. Vietnam veteran Ron Kovic.

"The question really is how can we develop the movement into a global movement so powerful that no government can disregard it?" Tony Benn asked the crowd that had packed into the hall. "Imperialism is motivated by economic concerns and it has seized power for its own interests."

Ron Kovic described his transformation from gung ho soldier to a leading anti-war



WW PHOTO

Bush effigy before being toppled by anti-war protesters in London

activist, which he documented in his book "Born on the Fourth of July": "I'd like to say to those who'd like to glorify war, how disgusting. We are going to change society and we will do it together. We have a rendezvous with history."

On Nov. 19 demonstrators staged an alternative State Processional in an open horse-drawn carriage. There was a constant demonstration near Buckingham Palace, where Bush and entourage were being hosted by Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles.

The Lord Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, hosted a different kind of gathering: a "peace reception" for Ron Kovic at London's City Hall. "Most mayors in the United States wanted to have me arrested—not honor me and other peacemakers in City Hall," commented Kovic. □

## U.S. anti-war leader declares in London

# 'Bring the troops home!'

Following are excerpts from remarks given by Deirdre Sinnott, co-director of the International Action Center, which is an ANSWER steering committee member, at a Stop the War Coalition meeting in London on Nov. 18, two days before the massive anti-Bush, anti-Blair protest took place:

We in the U.S. have plenty of experience demonstrating against Bush. I remember going to jail in 1999 to try to stop the execution of Shaka Sankofa, an innocent African-American man who was a minor when he went to death row in Texas. As governor, George Bush signed more execution orders than any other governor. I've been involved in many, many demonstrations against Bush since then.

Last month in Washington, D.C., 100,000 people came out to say, "End the occupation of Iraq" and "Bring the troops home now." There was a coalition for the demonstration of the two largest anti-war organizations in the U.S., the International ANSWER Coalition and United for Peace and Justice. One of the major contingents for the demonstration was the Military Families Speak Out and there were feeder marches by Black Voices for Peace and the Muslim American Society. It was a great demonstration and it showed that rather than fading into the past, the anti-war movement is alive and well.

All over the country activists are setting up "Bring the Troops Home Now" committees and laying the groundwork for very significant demonstrations on March 20 around the United States. We will be organizing demonstrations at the same time people around the world will be doing just the same thing.

There are those who call for the U.S. military to be replaced by the United Nations in Iraq. I just want to review what the UN, particularly the Security Council, is responsible for carrying out in Iraq.

While it's true that there are many UN agencies that have a clear humanitarian mission, the UN Security Council imposed the deadly sanctions against Iraq and repeatedly reaffirmed them again and again over a 12-and-a-half-year period.

The UN's own agencies reported that the sanctions directly killed over 500,000 children and more than 1 million people in Iraq. The UN inspections regimes, particularly UNSCOM, were used by the U.S. and Britain to prolong the sanctions as a way to overthrow the Iraqi government, not to find weapons of mass destruction.

The UN allowed the U.S. and Britain to partition Iraq with "No Fly Zones" and after 1998 carry out almost daily bombings of different Iraqi facilities, including civilian facilities.

The UN Security Council is, to a large extent, controlled by the U.S. Last winter's vote, where France and Russia, under great pressure from the world anti-war movement and with lucrative oil contracts with the Iraqi government at stake, threatened to veto the U.S.'s cover plan for war, was a deviation from the role that the Security Council played all along and still plays. Replacing one imperialist with another is not the answer.

We stand in solidarity with the people who are resisting the colonization of their country and their economy. The Iraqi Ruling Council on orders from Paul Bremer, the Pentagon's man in Iraq, kicked open the door to foreign capital. Businesses can now be owned 100 percent



WW PHOTO

Nov. 20 London demonstration, Deirdre Sinnott, third from left on front banner.

from outside, the Iraqi banking system is ready to be sold to the highest bidder, and there is no requirement for the money earned from the businesses in Iraq to be held in Iraq for any length of time. Everything is being privatized. The gold rush in Iraq shows that the Iraqi Ruling Council doesn't represent the Iraqi people, not even the Iraqi ruling class. The Iraqi Ruling Council represents the U.S. and British ruling class.

The oil industry is going to be the next thing on the auction block. Controlling the oil is the long-term objective of U.S. imperialism. Oil is both an economic and a strategic resource. That oil belongs to the Iraqi people not to Exxon, Texaco or British Petroleum.

The CIA just described the resistance in Iraq as having widespread support and much success in winning over the people there. There are between 30 and 40 attacks on occupying troops per day. The CIA is in a split with the Pentagon over the direction the occupation should take. The CIA suggests a "rapid change of course" if the U.S. intends to hold onto the situation at all. I know the CIA is not for ending the occupation, just changing the form of the occupation to a puppet regime.

The Pentagon's answer is "Operation Iron Hammer." Sounds fascist, doesn't it? Right now in Iraq there are buildings in towns all over being destroyed by the U.S., 500-pound bombs are dropping on

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# Community-based health care saves lives in the Philippines

By Hillel Cohen  
Mindanao, Philippines

There has never been a power outage because there has never been electricity. Floods can't knock out the sewage system because there isn't any. Water never gets turned off because water has never been piped here.

The closest water is a stream that's at least a 20-minute walk down a steep hill and another 20 minutes back up.

In this rural community on the Zamboanga Peninsula of Mindanao, getting to town means an hour's "cab" ride down the mountain. The "cab" is a moped, and as many as four passengers might squeeze behind the driver. Mopeds—motor-bikes—are the only type of vehicle that can make it down and up the muddy mountain road, provided it hasn't rained recently and the mud isn't too deep.

If someone is ill, an ambulance is out of the question. None could make it up the mountain, but none is available anyway. Even if someone who is ill could get to town, she or he wouldn't have enough cash for medication, let alone the fees of a clinic or hospital.

Most families grow corn. Very few own their own land. Each year the farmers have to give a big part of their crop to the landlords for rent. Often, the corn left for food does not last the year.

Caribou (oxen), used for plowing, are rare. Many households do have a few chickens or even a pig that can be sold or consumed on special occasions.

Very few in this community have ever seen a nurse, let alone a doctor. Birth and death occur at home.

These conditions are common throughout the rural areas of the Philippines.

Crops and terrain may differ but the hardships of daily life are similar for as many as 40 million to 50 million of the 80 million people of the Philippines.

I visited this rural community as part of an "exposure" trip organized by the Council for Health and Development in conjunction with the International Conference on Challenges in Health Work Amidst Globalization and War. CHD is a national organization of over 50 non-government community-based health programs that work throughout the Philippines. One of these, the Zamboanga Peninsula Health Extension Program, hosted my visit in this part of Mindanao.

Community-based health programs started in the Philippines about 30 years ago when the country was under the U.S.-backed martial-law regime of Ferdinand Marcos. Doctors, nurses, midwives and others with health skills volunteer to work with rural communities.

Unlike "relief-style" health missions, the CBHP philosophy does not emphasize providing health services that are not sustainable and that would disappear when the volunteers can no longer stay. Instead, the focus is on training community-based health workers—community members who volunteer to take training on condition that they will provide volunteer service to their community.

Almost all of the community health workers are women. Most have an elementary school education—six years—though some have less. The communities cannot afford even basic medical supplies so the training concentrates on basic sanitation, first aid, tooth extractions, birth delivery, herbal medicines, and techniques like acupuncture and acupressure that do not require expensive equipment.

Health workers also learn to diagnose life-threatening diseases like typhoid fever that may require a trip to a provincial hospital if one can be arranged.

While not overtly political, the CBHP volunteers also encourage community health workers to think about the economic and social conditions that create such difficult conditions, and how health requires basic needs like food, shelter, sanitation and safe drinking water. They also discuss international politics that affect them directly or indirectly.

In a meeting with three community health workers here we discussed the latest developments of the U.S. war on Iraq as well as the impact of the World Trade Organization.

## Deep concern over imperialist intervention

About a year ago U.S. troops were on Mindanao, not far from here. Bush had sent them as part of the "war on terrorism." Filipino activists believe the troops were an advance guard to re-establish U.S. bases here.

A people's struggle had forced the Pentagon to close two large bases in the Philippines a decade earlier. The Pentagon brass want to come back. Substantial oil reserves have been found on Mindanao, and the Philippines is strategically located near the major shipping routes of the Pacific.

Filipino farmers are also greatly concerned about the WTO and the International Monetary Fund. Debt service to the IMF has led to big cutbacks in the national budget. The WTO has made it harder for farmers to sell their crops in the local markets because of competition from international agribusiness.

In this remote rural community, with no TV, no newspapers and only an occasional transistor radio, these community health workers seemed more informed and concerned about international affairs than many of my co-workers in New York.

Community health workers and CBHP volunteers are sometimes arrested or harassed by the military who claim that the health workers are agents of local insurgencies that exist in many rural areas. A

couple of years before our visit at least two community health workers in the area were killed by the military or right-wing militia.

Although the CBHPs are legally recognized organizations, the government often assumes that anyone who volunteers to help their neighbors must be a dangerous threat to the status quo.

Our host's mother, who lives a dozen yards away, came over to chat. She told us that her daughter was one of 13 children that she bore, but that 10 of the children died before the age of 5.

Our host herself was pregnant with her sixth child, but so far she had not lost any. She attributed the improvement to the modest training that she and her neighbors had received through the community-based health program.

Like her neighbors, she had a latrine (an out-house). Simple as it was, it had been rare in that neighborhood when she was a child, and the community organizers had to carry out a substantial education campaign to explain why every household should have a latrine to contain human waste, a potential source of disease.

As night fell and we were about to go to sleep, I inquired about the mosquitoes, as we had no nets. Our host proudly exclaimed, "I'm a community health worker. There are no mosquitoes in my house." When I asked how she accomplished this, she said that she made sure there was no standing water in or around the house, and that every day she made a smoky fire in the cooking area since mosquitoes flee from smoke. These simple acts help protect her family's lives and health.

Mosquitoes, of course, are not the only problem for these landless farmers. The landlords and the globalizing capitalists of the WTO are problems that cannot be overcome with simple measures. However, I sensed that our host and her neighbors were just as determined to liberate themselves from the legacy of colonialism.

Their experiences with a community-based health program reinforced the awareness that whatever they accomplish would require their own efforts—and gave them more confidence that they could find the ways to do it. □

## Anti-FTAA protests

Continued from page 6

actions of the anti-globalization forces.

The direct-action activists do not secure permits. They attempt to challenge the police directly. For example, one tactic was an attempt to bring down the steel fence that protected the corporate vultures from the protesters.

Union officials issued a statement that recognized both the attempt to divide the movement and that all forces should be free to carry out actions as they see fit.

The union demonstration was significant for many reasons. It brought out rank-and-file workers to protest a capitalist policy that will greatly affect them. It made the anti-globalization fight-back thoroughly multinational, as Black, Latino and Asian union members came out from around the country.

Despite a climate of fear that was promoted days before the events, Black and Latino workers from Florida also came out. One of the main organizations organizing for the anti-FTAA protests was Root Cause. This is an organization made up mainly of Haitian, Jamaican and Latino people.

One of the most inspiring acts that came out of the Miami events was a recognition by mainly young, white anti-globalization forces of organizations such as Root Cause. A concerted effort was made by these activists to respect the communities of color that will be most affected by the FTAA.



At one point, a Root Cause contingent marched into the area. Dozens of anti-globalization activists stood and gave the contingent a standing ovation as they marched.

This show of solidarity is exactly what the Florida and Washington officials want to curtail.

But the Miami protests show that despite repression the movement will move forward. And perhaps one of the greatest outcomes of the anti-FTAA protest will be a rise in class consciousness, not only of the student and youth movement but of the rank-and-file members of the many labor unions who came to Miami.

They know that police troops never protect them when they are on strike against the robber barons laying them off and cutting their health care. This is a lesson that can elevate the anti-globalization movement to one that will end not only the corporate domination of Latin America but the Pentagon domination of Iraq and the world. □

## Protest at school for death squads

Continued from page 6

served or are currently serving three-to-six-month sentences in federal prisons for their political actions against SOA since the protests began in 1990.

In 1999 and 2000, so many thousands crossed the line onto Fort Benning property that police authorities were unable to arrest and process all those who defied the law banning political protest on military bases.

Since 2001, the base entrance has been sealed with an eight-foot metal fence. For the last three years, protesters have turned the fence erected to prevent their entrance into a massive memorial to those who have died at the hands of SOA graduates. Literally every inch is covered with pictures, signs, flowers and crosses inscribed with the names of SOA killers' victims. It becomes a powerful visual image of the

horror and brutality of U.S.-sponsored state terrorism in Latin America.

During the weekend's activities, people directed much attention to the ongoing civil war in Colombia. U.S. intervention in that country is expanding: billions of dollars in military aid as well as U.S. soldiers in combat operations against the popular forces.

SOAWatch called for everyone to boycott Coca Cola for its collaboration with paramilitary death squads in Colombia. These death squads target labor union leaders for assassination, "disappearances" and torture. (For more information, go to [www.killercoke.org](http://www.killercoke.org))

In closing this year's protest, Bourgeois promised, "We're going to keep coming back every year in greater and greater numbers until the school is shut down."

The writer is a member of UAW Local 10. □



## Not what it sounds like

# U.S. to pull troops back in Korea

By Scott Scheffer

The Pentagon will soon begin to implement a plan to reposition as many as 15,000 of the nearly 40,000 U.S. troops stationed along the 38th parallel on the Korean peninsula. They will be moved to several "hubs" south of the Han River. The South Korean regime of President Roh Moo-hyun is busy acquiring the land necessary to make the shift happen.

What does this move mean? Is it intended to ease the confrontation on the Korean peninsula—or make it worse?

Many Koreans, in the north and south, see the repositioning of troops as part of a plan to get them out of the range of the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the event of a new U.S.-DPRK war. Pentagon planners feel that their high-tech weapons give them the advantage of being able to fight from a longer distance.

The U.S. military threat against the north has not waned for 50 years. The people of North Korea have been as vigilant in defense of their beloved country as any people in the history of the world.

The 1950-53 war against the Korean

people was the first U.S. war that didn't produce an outright imperialist victory. The army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, led by the nation's founder, Kim Il Sung, nearly drove the imperialist army into the sea, and in the end was able to secure the northern half of the peninsula.

However, the Truman administration held on to the southern half of Korea, which has remained under U.S. dominion ever since. The result has been the division of a people with a 5,000-year-old history. A narrow strip of land cutting across the peninsula—the demilitarized zone—divides the 26 million Koreans in the socialist north from the 47 million in the south.

Under socialist leadership, the Korean Workers Party developed the economy in the north after nearly total destruction during the war. All the cities of the north, which had been completely destroyed, are now rebuilt. Despite serious hardship caused by a series of natural disasters in the late 1990s, the death of the nation's founder, Kim Il Sung, and the loss of their biggest trading partner when the Soviet Union collapsed, the national priorities have not changed. These priorities are feeding, housing and providing health care for the population.

Because of that, the DPRK has been able to rally its people to the cause of national defense. It has built an army that has stayed the hand of a succession of hostile U.S. administrations. At times it has faced down the possibility of U.S. nuclear attack.

The south has been fundamentally a U.S. colony, occupied by 40,000 U.S. troops. Touted as one of the Asian "tiger economies," along with Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, the Republic of Korea was given a steady flow of credit and allowed to develop by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. By the 1990s, it had become the 11th-largest economy in the world.

However, when capitalist overproduction brought about the Asian economic crash of 1997, the U.S. rulers tried to turn the crisis to their advantage. U.S.-controlled banks took control of all of the ROK's financial agencies and its currency. They attacked the "Chaebol"-style capitalist economy, which had reserved the dominant role in the economy for Korean capitalists.

For millions of South Korean workers this meant massive layoffs, an increase in homelessness, and a severe attack on living standards in general. All this resulted in a militant labor upsurge that strengthened the broader movement against the role of U.S. finance capital and the presence of U.S. troops.

In June of 2002 a U.S. military vehicle struck and killed two young schoolgirls. This led to a series of huge demonstrations throughout the country. Chants of "U.S. troops out" made news around the world.

The sentiment against the U.S. military became so strong that it became dangerous for U.S. soldiers to leave their bases alone. The U.S. Defense Department was forced to issue a warning advising them not to do so.

As President George W. Bush built his case for war against Iraq, the South Korean people became a central part of the worldwide resistance. Tens of thousands have been demonstrating in coordination with the anti-war movement around the world.

Now, under relentless pressure from the Bush administration, the South Korean regime has agreed to send troops to help in the U.S. occupation of Iraq. This can only lead to an increased struggle by

the Korean people against the U.S. forces that are occupying their country, too.

The Pentagon decision to get U.S. troops away from the capital city of Seoul has to be seen in this context. The Bush administration is hoping to kill two birds with one stone. It is logistically preparing for the possibility of a new war against the DPRK, and at the same time desperately

hoping to take the wind from the sails of the anti-war, anti-U.S.-troop movement in the south by getting its army out of sight.

At demonstrations, teach-ins and public meetings in the United States, anti-war forces like the ANSWER Coalition are making sure to raise the issue of Korea along with their struggle to end the occupation of Iraq. □

## Bombs fail to 'pacify' Iraq

*Continued from page 1*

War: 18 elite troops dead and 73 wounded. It was a turning point that led to a hasty U.S. withdrawal from Somalia.

But the Bush administration has already made it perfectly clear that it is hunkered down and prepared to "stay the course" in Iraq. U.S. finance capital feels it has too much at stake in the Middle East—financially, militarily and politically.

The day after the soldiers were slain in Mosul, Pentagon officials announced plans to keep some 100,000 troops on the ground in Iraq through 2006.

And by that evening the Pentagon generals had changed their tune. Media reports amended the narrative of what had happened in Mosul: "Terrorists" were said to have ambushed the GIs, who were killed by gunshots to the head. Their bodies were not mutilated or dragged through the streets, said the general.

### Operation Hammer galvanizes resistance

The deaths in Mosul were part of a barrage of resistance throughout Iraq that weekend. At Baghdad airport on Nov. 22, insurgents hit a DHL cargo A300 Airbus with two missiles shortly after it took off, forcing an emergency landing. The missile strike caused Pentagon authorities to announce the suspension of civilian flights at the airport, which is also a major base for the U.S. military.

The day before, resistance fighters had hit some of the most heavily fortified and defended targets in Baghdad. Guerrillas blasted the Palestine and Sheraton hotels on the banks of the Tigris with rockets that sailed over a double row of 20-foot-high concrete blast walls installed by the Pentagon.

Rockets also exploded at the Oil Ministry, headquarters for the imperialist looting of Iraq's petroleum wealth. They had been concealed in creative "low-tech" donkey-pulled carts covered with hay.

Washington's warlords fear the mounting GI casualties will broaden and deepen domestic anti-war sentiment.

Since the invasion began, more than 9,000 U.S. troops have been killed, wounded or evacuated due to injury or illness. (Democracynow.org, Nov. 18)

The rising toll of guerrilla warfare on the occupation foot soldiers is discouraging European and Asian leaders allied to Washington from deploying their own troops.

They are not eager to inflame anti-war sentiments in their own populations by risking casualties.

And the UN has rebuffed Secretary of State Colin Powell's request to send its staff back to Iraq.

### Salivating for slice of profits

Despite bitter competition, other imperialist powers don't want to see the penetration of outside capital fail in Iraq—they

just want some of that capital to be their own.

Bonn has acquiesced to Washington's pressure to back debt reduction to aid Iraq's "reconstruction." Because of years of sanctions, Iraq's foreign debt to the U.S., Germany, France, Japan, Russia and the rest of the 19-country Paris Club is \$40 billion. Bush cabinet members have been debating whether to press other countries to write off as much as 90 percent of this IOU.

In return, the U.S. is about to begin an accelerated bidding program for projects in Iraq like oil-field repairs and electricity generation, all necessary to create a pipeline of profits out of the country. Companies from the other imperialist countries are eligible to bid.

Guerrilla resistance has stalled out these projects and stanching the flow of profits from looted oil.

The U.S. and other imperialist powers want to paste a fig leaf of "self rule" over the naked military occupation by constructing a supposedly sovereign government that could extend its "invitation" to foreign troops.

But Washington wants to wait until next June to create a seemingly sovereign government, and its rivals—eager to secure their slice of the profits—want it now.

### A marionette labeled 'sovereignty'

The U.S. has appointed Rend Rahim Francke to be Iraq's diplomatic representative in Washington. Few people in Baghdad would recognize her. She was born there but spent most of her life outside the country. She is a familiar face in Washington, though, where for years she had lobbied political policy makers to topple Saddam Hussein's government.

Francke came to the U.S. in 1981 and became a citizen six years later. She worked as a banker and currency trader in London, Lebanon and Bahrain.

She said she will speak "for the nascent Iraqi government." "It is awkward," she added, "because technically Iraq is still a country under occupation." (New York Times, Nov. 23)

Technically? There are 155,000 foreign troops currently acting as a boot heel on Iraq; all but 25,000 are U.S. troops.

Some members of the current puppet Iraqi Governing Council have announced they want to stay in power after next June as a legislative body—if the U.S. authorities will let them.

The Pentagon is trying to train a national Iraqi army and police force, too, to share the casualties of occupation.

But this fledgling state is still small, poorly trained and paid, and in the crosshairs of the anti-occupation resistance. The simultaneous detonation of two huge bombs at police stations 20 miles apart north of Baghdad on Nov. 22, killing six Iraqi police, sent a powerful message that the resistance will not tolerate collaboration with imperialism. □

## LONDON

### Anti-war leader speaks

*Continued from page 7*

Iraqi cities, they are bringing in the "Blackhawk" and "Apache" attack helicopters described as "killing machines" to shoot groups of people, and they are rounding up thousands in mass arrests, up to 5,000 people in one last week. There have been attacks and firefights in north and south Iraq, including a battle with the Kurdistan Workers Party. What was already a brutal occupation just got more brutal.

The resistance is fighting to get back control of their country. They are picking targets that will destabilize the occupiers and anyone who assists them or who is even seen as assisting the occupation. They are trying to make Iraq ungovernable. I know that people are very worried and very sincerely so about what will happen if the troops were pulled out but for me, I'm not going to presume to tell the Iraqis what to do with their own country. I'm for Iraqi self-determination.

And as for the troops who are fighting and dying in Iraq, they know they've been manipulated. They know they are putting their lives on the lines for a bunch of lies. Soldiers on leave are calling GI Rights hotlines and the number-one question is: What happens if I just don't go back into combat?

Did you know that in the U.S. the press is not allowed to show the coffins returning from Iraq? The press is barely allowed into the overflowing military hospitals to interview injured soldiers. Bush knows that if the U.S. public knew how the rank-and-file soldiers felt, how deeply betrayed they feel, how many have been injured in mind and body, the opposition to the war and occupation would surge out of control. We want that deep opposition to come out into the streets like people will be doing here on Thursday.

We want to support the soldiers and say bring the troops home now, alive—not in body bags. Self-determination for the Iraqi people! No more blood for oil! □



## Native names robbed

In discussing the oppression of Indigenous peoples on this continent, names are important. Many Native people consider the holiday on the last Thursday of November, for example, to be not Thanksgiving Day but a National Day of Mourning. Native names that sports enterprises steal, often for use alongside offensive caricatures, have justly aroused protests.

On top of these gratuitous insults is the misuse of Native names for Washington's murderous weapons of modern war. The Tomahawk cruise missile, for example. The Apache, Black Hawk, Kiowa and Iroquois helicopters. Do the Pentagon brass believe they can so easily take the honest courage of the Native warrior and apply it to these weapons of oppression? That they can steal the names of oppressed peoples and misuse them against other oppressed people, as they did this year in Iraq?

The weapons may have Native names, but those using the weapons are the cavalry. The ancestors of these same cavalry units were sent into Native lands in the West in the 19th century. They were invaders then, too, slaughtering tens of thousands of Native people and almost exterminating the source of their livelihood, the buffalo. It was all to open up the West to the railroads and the ruthless expansion of capital.

One of the units that was the driving force in the invasion of Iraq last spring was none other than the Seventh Cavalry. The Seventh was "special." No longer on horses, but moving by tanks and helicopters, it continued the history of racist slaughter it had begun in 1866 against the Native peoples

of North America.

Its major role at that time was to crush Native uprisings. The Seventh massacred Cheyenne people in 1868 in Native territory that would later become Oklahoma. It escorted surveyors, prospectors and others into the Black Hills in Dakota Territory to steal gold and land from the Lakota people in the early 1870s. So it is grimly appropriate that among the U.S. military organizations that slaughtered the peoples of Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, and are now doing it again in Iraq, are the same cavalry units that massacred Native people here in the 19th century.

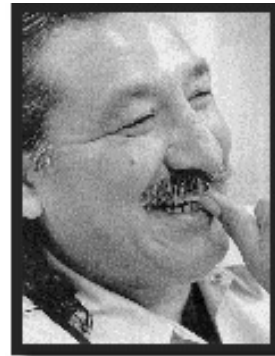
The other thing that stayed the same is the inability of the officer corps to correctly assess the strength and determination of the oppressed. In Iraq, Bush and the Pentagon officers announced last April that the war was won, that Iraq was theirs. But they are hunkered down now in fortified bunkers, fearing to venture out among a population that fiercely wants them to leave. When they do go out to bust into houses and round up whole families, even the children defy the heavily armored invaders, slinging stones against this vulnerable Goliath.

The Seventh Cavalry had that problem in 1876, too—the problem of underestimating. That's when its leader, Gen. George Armstrong Custer, led them into battle at Little Big Horn in Montana. Some 2,000 Native warriors wiped out the 260 members of the unit.

The whole Pentagon occupation army in Iraq seems destined to repeat that error. □

# Why Peltier should be freed

Excerpts from a talk by San Diego ANSWER leader Carl Muhammad at a meeting in Los Angeles on political prisoners.



Free Leonard Peltier! This great person is a citizen of the Anishinabe and Lakota nations, a father, a grandfather, an artist, a writer and an Indigenous rights activist. He has spent the last 27 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

Schoolteachers, activists, congresspersons, diplomats, actors, musicians, laborers and housewives have come out in support of him and call his incarceration a grave miscarriage of justice.

His humanity and love for his people led him to assist the Oglala Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota in the mid-1970s. Members of the American Indian Movement, along with local traditionalists, carried out a 72-day occupation of Wounded Knee to protest injustices against their tribes, violations of the many treaties, and current abuses and repression against their people.

After a government-sponsored military-style assault against the protesters, various officials promised hearings on local conditions and treaty violations. These hearings were never convened.

The next three years came to be known as the "Reign of Terror." The FBI carried out repeated arrests, harassment and legal proceedings against AIM leaders and supporters, with the collaboration of tribal chairperson Dick Wilson. At least 64 local Native people were brutally murdered. Three hundred were harassed, beaten or otherwise abused. All the victims were either affiliated with AIM or allies.

In May 1975, disputes were building on Pine Ridge over the Black Hills and strip-mining. Multinational corporations wanted to prospect for uranium. Dick Wilson supported the efforts, but traditionalists were very much opposed.

On June 26, 1975, two FBI agents entered the Jumping Bull ranch, allegedly to arrest a young Native American, Jimmy Eagle. No one knows who began shooting first, AIM sup-

porters or the agents, but when the skirmish ended, the two agents and a Native man were dead.

Today, the U.S. attorney admits that no one knows who fired the fatal shots. Freedom of Information Act documents show that the FBI attack had apparently been planned.

Leonard Peltier was one of several high-level AIM leaders present during the shootout. Murder charges were brought against him, Dino Butler, Bob Robideau and Jimmy Eagle. Butler and Robideau stood trial separately from Peltier, who fled to Canada. At the trial of Butler, the jury found both men not guilty on grounds of self-defense.

Leonard was extradited from Canada. On April 18, 1977, after a trial filled with inconsistencies, Leonard was convicted of murder and later was sentenced to two consecutive life terms.

From behind bars he has helped establish scholarships for Native students and special programs for Indigenous youth. He has served on the advisory board of the Rosenberg Fund for Children, and has sponsored children in Central America. He has donated to battered women's shelters, organized the annual Christmas drive for the people of Pine Ridge Reservation, and promoted prisoner art programs.

Recently he wrote a letter of solidarity to Cuba and its revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, calling for an end to subversion and aggression against the Cuban government and people.

He has accepted the California Peace and Freedom Party nomination to run for president of the United States in 2004. □

## Anti-Cheney protest

By Beverly Hiestand  
Buffalo, N.Y.

Vice President Dick Cheney toured the upstate New York cities of Rochester, Syracuse and Buffalo Nov. 17 in a political fundraising effort for the Bush re-election campaign. Cheney's appearance in Buffalo brought out over 250 anti-war activists.

Local police, FBI and Secret Service agents tried to force protesters into a fenced-in pen where they would have been invisible to most passing traffic and Cheney's motorcade. Police refused to negotiate any space outside the pen, even blocks away, for the anti-war protest.

But activists resisted. Several members of the local chapter of ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—walked across the street from the police pen and set up their banner, which read, "Stop the occupation of Iraq, bring the troops home."

Their banner could be seen by Cheney, who was speaking at a \$1,000-to-\$2,000-a-plate dinner at the Park Lane restaurant across the street.

Gradually, more and more protesters left the penned area and joined

those defiantly holding the banner.

Police immediately began to threaten activists, pressuring them to move. Protesters slowly began to move down the block until they reached a very busy traffic circle, where many rush-hour drivers could see their banner and signs.

Police then demanded that all protesters leave the area or face arrest. The cops began to move in with squad cars and position themselves to carry out arrests.

At that point, one activist began reading loudly from the U.S. Constitution about the right to peaceful assembly and protest. Demonstrators chanted, affirming their right to protest, and refused to move.

The police backed off.

For the next half hour, hundreds of drivers passed, many of them honking in support of the demonstrators' anti-war message. And eventually, Cheney's own motorcade had to drive past the loud, determined demonstrators.

At a time when Buffalo's big bosses say there's no money, laying off teachers and firefighters, they forked over more than \$400,000 to Cheney to keep Bush in the White House. □

## NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SATURDAY & SUNDAY

PROGRAM SCHEDULE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

9:00 am	Registration	
10:00 am-12:15 pm	Opening Plenary	Auditorium
<b>Reviving the Worldwide Struggle for Socialism Strengthening Internationalism = Defeating Imperialism</b>		
12:15 pm-12:45 pm	Lunch in the Cafeteria	
12:45 pm-2:45 pm	First Set of Workshops	
	1. The Repressive State: Linking the Struggles Against Racism, Sexism and Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Transgender Oppression	
	2. Marxism/ABCs of Socialism	
	3. Revolutionary Internationalism vs. Capitalist Globalization from the G7 to Africa	
	Unity Against Imperialism in:	
	4. Latin America and Caribbean	
	5. Middle East	
3:00 pm-5:00 pm	Second Set of Workshops	
	1. Workers' Resistance: How to Build Class Solidarity	
	2. The USSR: Its Achievements, Its Collapse, and the Lessons for the Struggle for World Socialism	
	3. The Antiwar Agenda: Strategies and Tactics	
	Unity Against Imperialism in:	
	4. Middle East	
	5. Asia	

## Conference in India declares:

# 'U.S. imperialism is main threat'

By Heather Cottin  
Kolkata (Calcutta), India

A Nov. 15-16 convention here, called by the All India Anti-Imperialist Forum, condemned "U.S. imperialist attacks on the peoples of the world climaxed by the invasion, devastation and occupation of Iraq and the intensification of U.S.-backed Israeli brutality on the Palestinian freedom fighters."

A representative from the International Action Center of the United States joined in the historic conference.

Since 1995 the forum has held a yearly conference in Kolkata. Delegates represent every state in India, along with international anti-imperialist groups able to send representatives. AIAIF was organized by the Socialist Unity Center of India, a party formed in 1948.

The founders of SUCI participated in armed resistance against British colonial

rule during India's struggle for independence. However, the pacifist movement led by Gandhi won the leadership of the independence movement. The result was an Indian government that preserved the class system and permitted most of India's wealth to remain in the hands of foreign and national capitalists. Conditions have only worsened since then.

SUCI headquarters are in Kolkata, a city of 10 million people, most of whom live in absolute wretchedness. One-tenth of the population is homeless. SUCI organizes thousands of people across India in women's groups, labor unions, student groups, peasant associations and anti-imperialist centers. Its members in every Indian state are involved in a variety of struggles, from defending the rights of rickshaw drivers to organizing massive student protests against the privatization of colleges.

SUCI is but one of many left parties in

India. Millions of Indian workers, peasants and intellectuals consider themselves socialists and/or communists.

At the conference, anti-imperialists from France, Syria, Palestine, Bangladesh and the United States joined with representatives from India in calling U.S. imperialism the greatest threat to the people of the world. The audience of over 2,000 was rapt. Many were familiar with the anti-war marches in Washington organized by the International ANSWER Coalition, and with the International Action Center's anti-imperialist stance.

Conference resolutions called for the unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and British occupation forces from Iraq, a boycott of U.S. goods, and support for the Palestinian Intifada and right of return. They also called for worldwide resistance to U.S. threats against Syria, and for the creation of a "mighty global anti-imperialist struggle."

The Indian ruling party, the BJP, has done little to oppose the U.S. war and occupation of Iraq. Washington supports the reactionary BJP government, its nuclear buildup and its huge army. India is in the clutches of globalization, and U.S. transnational corporations are looting the country with government permission.

The Indian delegates denounced the willing lackeys of imperialism who are privatizing everything, from the water to the schools and hospitals. The BJP government is entirely indifferent to the suffering of the 70 percent of the Indian people who live at or near the poverty level.

The Indian ruling party was condemned for its connections with the U.S. and Israeli governments. The convention ended with a resolution that the delegates return to their home regions to "build up broad-based anti-imperialist organizations from the grassroots level." □

## Italy's answer to militarist propaganda

# Protests call for removing troops from Iraq

By John Catalinotto

On Nov. 22, tens of thousands of people demonstrated along the entire Italian "boot" and in Sardinia to demand that Italian troops withdraw from Iraq.

The protest was the first answer to a militarist and patriotic propaganda offensive by the government of Silvio Berlusconi. This offensive followed a car-bomb attack in Nassiriya, Iraq, that killed 19 Italian occupation troops.

Berlusconi has been trying to use mass sympathy for the soldiers the way the Bush administration used the mood in the United States after Sept. 11, 2001, to get

backing for "endless war." The Italian premier and media magnate has proclaimed that the Italian forces "will not be driven out of Iraq."

The anti-war movement and its allies, meeting at the European Social Forum in Paris just after the attack, confronted this propaganda assault by demanding that Italian troops withdraw. The Nov. 22 mobilization was the first mass answer to Berlusconi's offensive.

While not as many participated as during last winter's buildup toward war, there was a Nov. 22 protest that reached out to the masses of the population in nearly every city in Italy, big and small. As an

organizer in Bologna put it, the protest was aimed at combating the "mood that is similar to that of World War I, when everyone was mobilized behind family and country to support the war."

Among those participating were veterans of Italy's own resistance to German occupation from 1943 to 1945. That experience of partisan resistance in Italian history predisposes more people to support the right of an occupied population to resist. The largest labor union confederation, the CGIL, supported the protest.

Thousands marched in the northern financial center of Milan, hundreds in Turin, a thousand in Bologna, and several

thousand in Cagliari, Sardinia. In Tuscany, there were demonstrations in eight cities, including 5,000 people marching in Florence.

The biggest demonstration was in Rome, the capital, where demands to withdraw the troops were combined with those for jobs and a living minimum income. Organizers were pleased they were able to unite these two strong movements.

One banner showed a picture of a smiling, 36-toothed Berlusconi, saying, "We promise you a million jobs in Iraq." □

# SOCIALISM

DECEMBER 6-7 Martin Luther King, Jr. Auditorium

5:15 pm-6:30 pm	Second Plenary	Auditorium
<b>Reviving Socialism: Organizing Against Capitalist Oppression</b>		
6:30 pm-8:00 pm	Dinner Outside	
8:00 pm-9:00 pm	Cultural Performances	Cafeteria
<b>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7</b>		
9:00 am	Registration	
9:00 am	Meeting on Organizing Support for G.I. Resistance	Teachers Cafeteria
10:00 am-11:15 am	Third Plenary	Auditorium
<b>Reviving Socialism: Stopping "Endless War" and Occupation</b>		
11:30 am-1:30 pm	Third Set of Workshops	
	1. The Repressive State: Linking the Struggles Against Racism, Sexism and Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Transgender Oppression	
	2. Marxism/ABCs of Socialism	
	3. The Antiwar Agenda: Strategies and Tactics	
	4. Workers' Resistance: How to Build Class Solidarity	
	Unity Against Imperialism in:	
	5. Latin America and Caribbean	
	6. Asia	
1:30 pm-2:30 pm	Lunch in the Cafeteria	
2:30 pm-3:30 pm	Closing Plenary	Auditorium

As of Nov. 25, 2003. Check [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) for updates on the conference schedule.

Partial List of Speakers for Dec. 6-7

### NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIALISM

Larry Adams, former president, NPMHU Local 300  
 Brian Barraza, AMAT Association of Mexican American Workers  
 Sharon Black  
 Brian Becker  
 Richard Becker  
 Judi Cheng  
 Muna Coobtee  
 Ronald Crenshaw, Friends of Zimbabwe  
 LeiLani Dowell  
 Ben Dupuy, Haiti Progrès  
 Leslie Feinberg  
 Sara Flounders  
 Fred Goldstein  
 Deirdre Griswold  
 Juan José Gutierrez, Latino Movement USA

Teresa Gutierrez  
 Jesse Heiwa, Queers for Peace and Justice  
 Imani Henry  
 Larry Holmes  
 Yoomi Jeong, Korea Truth Commission  
 Berta Joubert-Ceci  
 Steve Kirschbaum  
 Gloria La Riva  
 Esperanza Martell, ProLibertad  
 Monica Moorehead  
 Milt Neidenberg  
 John Parker  
 Elias Rashmawi, Free Palestine Alliance—USA  
 Sarah Sloan  
 Wilson Spencer, Fuerza de la Revolución (Forces of the Revolution)  
 Brenda Stokely, President, District Council 1707 AFSCME

Unless otherwise indicated, the speakers are members of Workers World Party. As of Nov. 22, 2003. Check [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) for updates on the conference speakers.



EDITORIAL

## Comerico Imperialista

Todos los ministros de comercio de 34 países del Hemisferio Occidental—excepto el de Cuba socialista—han sido invitados a Miami en el esfuerzo más reciente del imperialismo por abrir esta mitad del mundo a más pillaje por parte de los monopolios transnacionales basados en los Estados Unidos.

La campaña de Bush para ganar el consentimiento a la llamada Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas, ALCA, enfrentó obstáculos primero en la Ciudad de Québec en 2001 y luego en Cancún, México el pasado septiembre. Los manifestantes protestaron afuera contra cualquier dominación imperialista. Y adentro, casi todos los gobiernos protestaban los términos que ofrecían los EE.UU.

Los trabajadores y campesinos de Latinoamérica y el Caribe, y cualquier gobierno con un mínimo nivel de autonomía, se oponen a la versión de “libre comercio” de Bush. El ALCA, como el anterior Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte (TLCAN), otorga a las industrias y agronegocios de los EE.UU. la capacidad de ahogar a las economías de países que están menos desarrollados y por eso con menos posibilidad de protegerse del poder abrumador del capital monopolístico.

TLCAN ya demostró qué significa esta clase de “libre comercio” para el hemisferio. El pueblo de Chiapas en México, por ejemplo, ya descubrió que su maíz, producto base de su economía por generaciones, no es competitivo en este mercado. Actualmente, México importa una gran parte de su maíz de los EE.UU.—forzando a los campesinos mexicanos a salir de su tierra natal en busca de empleo. Mientras tanto, trabajadores en empleos sindicalizados en los EE.UU. y en Canadá han perdido sus empleos por la gerencia buscar el costo más bajo de producción entre esos países y México.

El ALCA significaría la eliminación de aranceles y otras protecciones contra las inversiones extranjeras en la mayoría del hemisferio. También eliminaría los derechos legales de trabajadores y protecciones ambientalistas que se consideran como obstáculos a la maximización de ganancias.

Las reglas del ALCA impondrían una igualdad formal entre corporaciones gigantescas de los EE.UU. y las economías de países menos desarrollados. O, como un economista cubano lo calificó, conduciría a la “integración entre los tiburones y las sardinas”. (El Tiburón y las Sardinas” era también el título de un libro escrito por Juan José Arévalo, ex presidente de Guatemala que fue derrocado en un golpe de estado perpetrado por la CIA en 1954. Ese golpe estableció las bases para una dictadura militar y eventualmente una época de masacres donde perdieron la vida miles de trabajadores y campesinos guatemaltecos.)

Una movilización masiva a través del continente se va a llevar a cabo el 21 de noviembre para hacer lo posible para bloquear el ALCA. Organizadores de los movimientos contra la globalización esperan que decenas de miles de personas participen en la protesta en las calles de Miami, incluso delegaciones de organizaciones sindicales y de campesinos a través del hemisferio. En Brasil, donde el presidente Ignacio “Lula” da Silva, ha hecho campaña a favor de mejores términos de comercio, la movilización será a nivel nacional, y varias protestas también ocurrirán a través de Latinoamérica.

El ALCA no es nada menos que el equivalente económico de la adquisición militar abierta que el imperialismo de los EE.UU. está intentando imponer en Irak. Es una amenaza a largo plazo contra los pueblos de Latinoamérica. Lesiona al pueblo trabajador de los EE.UU. y beneficia sólo a los multimillonarios basados en los Estados Unidos a los que la administración de Bush y sus subcontratistas latinoamericanos sirve. □

# Último estallido de la lucha Latinoamericana: huelga paraliza Santo Domingo

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Un ladrillo más del castillo imperialista neoliberal de los Estados Unidos se desmenuza al sur del Río Grande, sacudido por el mismo temblor de la miseria y del hambre que arrasa la región de América Latina y el Caribe.

El 11 de noviembre el pueblo de la República Dominicana efectuó una huelga general de 24 horas que paralizó al país en repudio de las políticas neoliberales del presidente social demócrata Hipólito Mejía. Murieron diez personas, por lo menos 60 quedaron heridas y más de mil detenidas. Esta huelga, en los talones de la de Bolivia que destituyó al presidente Sánchez de Lozada, debe tener a los imperialistas pensando fuertemente.

Mundo Obrero habló sobre este desarrollo con Narciso Isa Conde, portavoz de la Fuerza de la Revolución (FR) en Santo Domingo. Su organización es parte de las organizaciones que componen el colectivo que llamó a la huelga, la Coordinadora para la Unidad y la Lucha, que agrupa sindicatos, organizaciones de mujeres, de campesinos, de estudiantes y otros grupos—60 en total.

Según Isa Conde, esta huelga era la continuación de las acciones basadas en los principios de unidad y de lucha del colectivo, que habían comenzado con dos jornadas nacionales de protesta en julio y agosto pasado. “fue quizás la huelga más total que se haya hecho en los últimos años. Porque además de tener un fuerte componente de carácter popular y de estar conducida por las organizaciones populares que han mantenido las posiciones más consecuentes y más combativas, tuvo también una fuerte participación de la izquierda y especialmente de la FR y además pudo reunir a pesar de la composición popular y de las fuerzas revolucionarias que le acompañaban, a casi toda la sociedad dominicana y esto se relaciona con la gran crisis que afecta el sistema económico, las instituciones políticas, los partidos tradicionales y la gran crisis de gobierno.”

(Incluso) “en la capital que es tan difícil de paralizar por sus características de alta concentración de población y la diversidad de su composición social, nunca se había paralizado en esa dimensión como lo hizo ahora.”

Preguntado por una discrepancia evidente en el número de las muertes—siete a ocho muertes fueron reportadas durante la huelga—Isa Conde explicó que los medios no cubrieron la “Operación Centella” de los militares ni la operación “Güaragüao” de la policía. Ambas operaciones de registros y allanamientos que comenzaron hace dos años bajo la presidencia de Mejía, son para intimidar a la población con la excusa de confiscar armas ilegales. La noche

antes de la huelga, casas y oficinas fueron registradas, incluyendo la sede donde se coordinaba la huelga. Dos muertes resultaron de esta “operación especial” y varias personas heridas, incluyendo miembros de la FR.

### Condiciones deplorables en la República Dominicana

“Además de las demandas que están contenidas en el pliego, que tocan la oposición al acuerdo con el FMI, la recuperación de las empresas privatizadas en el campo de la energía eléctrica, el reajuste y aumento general de salarios, los apagones, que son los elementos más sentidos, más movilizados en el presente; todo esto se mezcla con un sentimiento de indignación frente al gobierno.” dijo Isa Conde.

El desempleo es oficialmente 27-30% en la República Dominicana, pero el subempleo es más alto. Hay más de un 40% del campesinado que está subempleado. La pobreza está alrededor del 70%. En los dos años de la presidencia de Mejía, el Peso se ha devaluado de 17 a un dólar hasta el corriente valor de 40 Pesos por dólar. Los precios de comestibles y de otros artículos básicos han aumentado grandemente. La gasolina ha aumentado también, con el sistema de energía nacional al borde del colapso.

En el precario sistema de servicios, la privatización ha agregado más miseria. Los hospitales funcionan desabastecidos y el precio de medicamentos se ha triplicado. Hay una crisis aguda en el sistema que proporciona el agua potable; y la contaminación y degradación de los ríos empeora la situación.

Encima de estas condiciones calamitosas, el estado ha agregado el componente de la represión violenta. Además de las “operaciones” de los militares y la policía ya mencionadas, dice Isa Conde, “hay ejecuciones extrajudiciales, es decir, son las personas que la policía diariamente viene asesinando en nombre de la lucha contra la delincuencia pero también penalizando el movimiento social popular, matando activistas también de los barrios o sino, lisiándolos. Les disparan, los capturan, presos, y les disparan en las piernas. Con disposición expresa de dejarlo inválido. A algunos ha habido que cortarles las piernas. Esto se ha denunciado y es

muy importante que en todos los mecanismos de DDHH se hable de esto. Todo esto es la intolerancia del gobierno frente a toda manifestación pública abierta. Durante los Juegos Panamericanos el disolvió violentamente las manifestaciones de protesta que se organizaron aún estando en el marco absoluto de la ley.”

El gobierno y la clase dominante son cómplices de negocios sucios. Dijo Isa Conde, “esta huelga también repudió la impunidad de los crímenes de estado y de la corrupción de estado que ha llegado a niveles enormes de complicidad entre el sistema financiero y los grupos privados del sistema financiero, como las llamadas quiebras financieras protegidas por funcionarios del estado. Han defalcado ya 3 bancos y el gobierno quiere hacerle pagar el robo a los depositantes con nuevos impuestos a la población.”

Pero el pueblo dominicano no desea darle rienda suelta al gobierno y a la clase dominante. Por eso se están preparando para el paso siguiente.

“Hay un sentimiento a favor de la renuncia del presidente que estuvo latente en todo el curso de la huelga.” Isa Conde puntualizó. “ha estado muy presente en la conciencia de l@s dominican@s el movimiento que se ha desarrollado en Bolivia. Y en este caso para l@s dominican@s se hace muy cuesta arriba pensar en 9 meses más de este gobierno que ha empobrecido de manera bestial a la población dominicana pero no solo como gobierno sino porque es una expresión, un administrador del modelo neoliberal que ha metido al país en una crisis profunda.”

Más acciones son posibles en los próximos meses para destituir al presidente antes de las próximas elecciones de mayo. La Coordinadora nacional de la huelga le dio 30 días al presidente, hasta el 11 de diciembre, para rectificar y satisfacer las demandas de los huelguistas. “De lo contrario,” dijo Isa Conde “el movimiento va a plantear una huelga de mayor dimensión y contundencia y duración y yo diría que de más contenido político”.

Mientras tanto, las acciones locales continúan y se esta organizando una Asamblea Nacional Popular para finales de noviembre donde se decidirá el carácter de la próxima huelga. □

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