



100,000 in DC, 35,000 in San Francisco 'FREE, FREE PALESTINE'

Why was this demonstration 'historic'?

A new anti-war movement in the U.S. has broken through the legacy of inaction and boldly affirmed the historic legitimacy of the Palestinian liberation struggle. What were its obstacles? **4**

ON THE BUS

Many were on their first 16-hour bus ride from Chicago to Washington, D.C., to protest. They returned home with buttons, tee shirts, kaffiyas and deep feelings. **9**

Heroic defenders of Jenin

Using fertilizer, soda cans, cell phones and sheer determination, they held off the most powerful military in the Middle East for a full 10 days. The Palestinians of Jenin have become a symbol of resistance. **8**

GIMME SHELTER

There's a national housing crisis. Homelessness is rising. Who's to blame? What's the solution? **3**

The dirty truth on 'Clear Skies'

It was Earth Day, and George Bush hugged a tree. Then he pushed an environmental plan that lets power plants spew more poisons. **3**

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By Monica Moorehead
Washington, D.C.

Some 100,000 people made history April 20 by chanting, "Free, free Palestine," and, "Stop U.S. aid to Israel," as the biggest pro-Palestine rally ever here defiantly transformed Washington into liberated territory.

While there were many issues raised at the demonstration—including opposition to U.S. intervention in Iraq, Colombia, the Philippines and elsewhere—the struggle in Palestine assumed central importance.

Heroic resistance in the Occupied Territories had spread around the world and crossed the Atlantic to the United States.

A large majority of the people who descended upon this political and military nerve center of U.S. imperialism were Palestinians and other Arab and Muslim peoples. Many were children and youths, waving the red, black, green and white colors of the Palestinian flag and wearing their traditional dress including the beautiful kaffiya scarves.

They along with thousands of anti-war and revolutionary activists from the Black, Latino, Native, Asian, Jewish, lesbian/gay/bi/ trans communities, came to protest the brutal Bush/Sharon war against Palestine.

The size and political significance of the protest compelled some of the big-money media, including the Washington Post and Los Angeles Times, to report the day's events. In addition, C-Span and Al-Jazeera—the world's largest Arab-based TV network—both showed live coverage of the White House rally.

Millions of people worldwide—and especially in the Arab world—know what happened here April 20.

Many mosques and Islamic centers as well as other sectors of the Arab-American community organized hundreds of buses to show support for the current phase of the Palestinian Intifada. People in 100 U.S. cities mobilized for the actions.

They used every form of transportation to get here—including car caravans, trains, vans and planes.

As speakers and rally literature pointed out, the Bush administration had tried to use the attacks last Sept. 11 not only to push the United States into new war adventures from Afghanistan to Iraq, but also as an excuse to intimidate and demonize the most vulnerable and marginalized sectors of U.S. society—namely Arab, South Asian and Muslim communities.

The turnout here April 20—and the crowd's mood—showed that the heroic Palestinian resistance to U.S./Israeli aggression in the occupied territories has helped reverse the reactionary tide of intimidation and paralysis

Continued on page 6



April 20. Top of page: United We March Coalition (left) and ANSWER coalition (right) in Washington, D.C. Above, San Francisco.

THE WAR AT HOME

Gimme shelter

By Greg Butterfield

“Gimme Shelter” was a hit song for the Rolling Stones in 1969. But in 2002 it’s the refrain of many working-class people who find themselves forced out of house and home.

While Washington sends millions of dollars a day to Israel, helping the apartheid government there as it bulldozes Palestinian homes into rubble, homelessness in the United States jumped by 13 percent last year. That means 798,000 people are homeless on any given night.

In major cities it’s worse. Homelessness grew 22 percent in Chicago, 20 percent in San Francisco, and 32 percent in Washington, D.C. In New York, the number of homeless families has risen 30 percent in the last two years. (Washington Post, Dec. 21, 2001)

A Colorado Department of Human Services study found that families make up 65 percent of Denver’s homeless population. That’s up from 25 percent 12 years ago. (Denver Post, Feb. 27)

Mary McAtee of Connecticut’s Coalition for the Homeless said that state is “turning away record numbers of people” seeking

emergency shelter—11,241 last year.

State and local officials feign surprise. But they helped the federal government lay the groundwork for this crisis by shifting money away from social programs and putting it into the pockets of the rich.

A prime example: the 1996 welfare “reform” law signed by Bill Clinton.

The welfare repeal took away the right to public assistance. The labor movement of the 1930s and the civil-rights movement of the 1960s had fought hard to win that right. They had to, because capitalism can never provide enough real, living-wage jobs for everyone who needs them.

Tens of thousands were forced to take workfare jobs with no rights, employment guarantees or wages other than a meager assistance check. Workfare provides a source of cheap, disposable labor to government agencies and private companies, helping them undermine unions.

In December, the lifetime limits on aid mandated by the 1996 law started to kick in—just as the number of available jobs hit rock bottom.

That’s not all. Public housing programs were cut back during the 1990s while rents rocketed. The government aided landlords

The dirty truth on 'Clear Skies'

By Joyce Chediac

President George W. Bush has discovered Earth Day. He commemorated the 32nd anniversary of this anti-pollution marker in front of the media by romping in the snow in New York state’s Adirondack mountains, and by pushing his environmental initiative.

“With Clear Skies legislation,” he said, “America will do more to reduce power plant emissions than ever before in our nation’s history.”

The White House claims its initiative is much better than the Clean Air Act, now in effect. Environmental groups, however, say just the opposite is true—the Bush proposal allows more emissions than under the Clean Air Act. What’s needed, they say, is for the government to enforce the Clean Air Act.

“It is now painfully clear that this is the most anti-environmental presidential administration ever,” said Gregory Wetstone of the Natural Resources Defense Council. “On issue after issue, federal agencies have been promoting the agenda of corporate polluters at the expense of our clean air, clean water, protected lands and forest, and even our planet’s climate.”

On the question of power plant emissions, the Bush plan allows three times more toxic mercury emissions than current law would allow, and postpones forthcoming mercury limits by a decade.

It would allow 50 percent more sulfur emissions—which cause acid rain and premature death from respiratory disease—than current law. And it would push back clean-up standards from 2012 to 2018.

It would also allow hundreds of thousands of tons of additional smog-forming nitrogen-oxide pollution, and delay their cleanup for a decade beyond current requirements.

“Delaying cleanup of these plants will cause more asthma attacks and more car-

dio-pulmonary disease for thousands of Americans. And we will see thousands more premature deaths,” John Walke, director of NRDC’s Clean Air program, said.

Bush pro-polluter policies

Bush has been so openly pro-big-business at the expense of the environment that a top Environmental Protection Agency official resigned in February to protest the administration’s so-called clean air policies. Eric Schaeffer, head of the EPA’s Office of Regulatory Enforcement, drew the line at White House efforts to weaken tough emissions standards for power plants.

In his resignation letter, Schaeffer said he was tired of “fighting a White House that seems determined to weaken the rules we are trying to enforce.” He expressed particular frustration with the administration’s close relationship to industries that the EPA is supposed to regulate, and at Bush’s unwillingness to pursue legal action against polluters.

Meanwhile, the White House’s energy policy calls for \$34 billion in tax subsidies to polluting energy industries.

Origins of Earth Day

Earth Day began 32 years ago as a campus-led movement to protect the environment. This movement has grown worldwide, targeting profit-hungry corporations and the imperialist military as the biggest polluters—from the deforestation of the Amazon basin to the depletion of the ozone layer to the many toxic dumps in communities of color.

It is the cheapest of shots for the Bush administration to try to expropriate Earth Day to push a pro-big-business, pro-polluters agenda. This attempt will surely backfire, and make environment-conscious people even angrier at the Bush administration and the corporate powers it so shamelessly represents.

Today the Bush administration continues to slash the tattered remains of the safety net while offering tax breaks to the rich & billions more to the Pentagon

in their price-gouging by easing restrictions on rent hikes and cutting back enforcement of fair-housing standards.

Today the Bush administration continues to slash the tattered remains of the safety net while offering tax breaks to the rich and billions more to the Pentagon.

Racism by landlords, banks

Two new studies show how racism fuels the housing crisis.

On April 3 the National Fair Housing Alliance released its annual “Trends Report” documenting illegal discrimination against tenants based on race, national origin, sex, disabilities and other factors.

The group studied 24,000 complaints compiled from government agencies and local fair-housing organizations—“a small fraction of the annual incidence of housing discrimination across the United States,” according to NFHA. The Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates over 2 million people actually face discrimination in renting or buying a home every year.

Race was the most common basis for housing discrimination, found in 32 percent of the cases. Disability was next with 24 percent, then familial status with 15 percent.

Most reported cases of racist discrimination involved African Americans. But discrimination against Latinos and Asians is seriously underreported,

NFHA says. A rental audit in Fresno, Calif., Houston and San Antonio found that Latino renters faced discrimination 70 percent of the time.

The report suggests that sexual harassment of female tenants also goes largely unreported.

An April 2 study released by New York Sen. Charles Schumer’s office found that banks continue to discriminate against New York’s Black homeowners, forcing many to take loans from high-cost, abusive lenders.

These so-called subprime lenders provided 43 percent of home loans in Black neighborhoods, but only 9 percent in white neighborhoods.

The study showed that banks denied loan applications from Black people at nearly twice the rate for whites, even when they had similar incomes. Black people with incomes over \$67,440 were rejected more often than whites with incomes under \$45,000. Overall, the rejection rate for Blacks was 28 percent, compared with 15 percent for whites.

Schumer suggested a modest program to match up banks with prospective home buyers in Black neighborhoods. But that won’t solve the problem of institutionalized racism, poverty and unemployment.

What’s needed is a militant grassroots movement of tenants, working-class homeowners and the homeless to proclaim, “Housing is a right!”



Protest at pro-Israel banquet

5,000 people came out April 22 to confront the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which was meeting in the Washington Hilton, and cap a weekend of protests in Washington. A coalition of Palestinian and Arab groups, including the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee, American Muslims for Jerusalem, Al-Awda (Palestinian Right to Return Coalition), the Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian People and the Free Palestine Alliance-USA sponsored the protest.

AIPAC is the major lobbying group — with a \$12 million budget and 60,000 members — seeking to get the

U.S. government to strengthen its ties to Israel, according to its press releases. Three former Israeli prime ministers — Ehud Barak, Binyamin Netanyahu, Shimon Peres — and U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld spoke; 90 members of the House of Representatives, 45 senators, and a number of top White House staff attended its banquet April 22.

The protesters, waving Palestinian flags and chanting “free, free Palestine,” made it clear that the real issue is ending U.S. support of Israel and ending the U.S. presence in the Middle East.

—photo and story by G. Dunkel

Why the April 20 protest can be called 'historic'

Palestine now on agenda for anti-war movement

By Brian Becker

The writer is a co-director of the International Action Center and a member of the steering committee of the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) coalition.

How will the April 20 mobilization in Washington, D.C., be remembered in the history of the anti-war and anti-imperialist movement in the United States? What are the most important lessons to be learned from this mobilization that drew more than 100,000 people in the biggest protest to date against the Bush administration's foreign and domestic political program?

Since there have been many Washington demonstrations over the years organized by both progressive and reactionary organizations, it requires something special to suggest that a particular demonstration has achieved a lasting or historically noteworthy status. Very few mass actions take on decisive importance in the historical process, the exception being revolutions or counter-revolutions—but a mass demonstration assumes special “historical” importance if it signifies the development of something new in society, or at least a sharp turn or breakthrough for a mass movement.

By that definition, the April 20 mobilization will be remembered as a historical moment.

Its historical value resides not only in the singularly important fact that it was the biggest demonstration in solidarity with the resistance movement of the Palestinian people in U.S. history. It also constituted a breakthrough for the U.S. anti-war movement and a repudiation of the shameful, backward political legacy of ignoring the just cause of the Palestinian people.

The fact that the demonstration represented something entirely new was not lost on the dominant big-business media in Washington. “Demonstrators Rally to Palestinian Cause” was the banner headline on the front page of the Washington Post under a three-column color photo of the huge throng. The article cited organizers at the ANSWER coalition rally at the White House who asserted that the event was the biggest pro-Palestinian event in U.S. history.

The Post article also quoted the police estimate of 75,000 people at the various converging demonstrations. Everyone familiar with police crowd estimates knows they are notoriously low for progressive activities.

While many issues were raised at the April 20 events, it was clear to all that the Palestinian resistance to U.S.-supported Israeli occupation was central. Support for the Palestinian struggle in the United States is out of the closet, so to speak.

Its historic legitimacy—which important sectors of the traditional peace and pacifist movement have denied for decades—has been boldly affirmed by a new anti-war movement that has arisen in the United States. This growing momentum for solidarity with the Palestinian people is bound to resonate throughout the entire progressive movement.

Bravely resisting the racist furor

The April 20 mass mobilization had far-reaching consequences in one other way: It represented the courageous reassertion

of mass, public political life by the Arab-American, South Asian, and Muslim communities in the United States after Sept. 11, 2001. That tens of thousands of people from these communities came to the White House rally was remarkable given the racist frenzy since Sept. 11.

These communities have been demonized as “terrorists.” Thousands have been illegally detained. Tens of thousands have been “visited” by the FBI.

Even mainstream organizations and charities like the Holy Land Foundation have had their offices and assets seized for “aiding terrorists” because they made political statements in support of the Palestinian cause.

Two coalitions: two political orientations

The April 20 mobilization was primarily the work of two distinct anti-war coalitions: the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) coalition, and the United We March Coalition. There were many differences in the two coalitions' political program and strategic orientation. The most notable had to do with the struggle of the Palestinian people.

From the beginning, both coalitions had addressed many issues related to the Bush administration's so-called war on terrorism. But ANSWER had specifically embraced the cause of the Palestinian people and their anti-colonial resistance to Israeli occupation. The United We March coalition stated that they could not come to a consensus within their coalition. So for a long time they had no official position on the conflict.

Why ANSWER was able to focus on Palestine

After Ariel Sharon launched the murderous reoccupation of the West Bank on March 29, the ANSWER coalition announced that it was elevating the Palestinian struggle as the central focus of its still multi-issue demonstration.

ANSWER could quickly respond to the new political/military developments because its national steering committee had spent months before the March 29 invasion discussing how to elevate political support for the Palestinian struggle in the United States. It had organized mass indoor events on Palestine that took place in New York on Feb. 23, and a week later in San Francisco and Los Angeles, with the aim of raising consciousness about the Palestinian struggle.

On April 20, the principal slogan of the ANSWER demonstration at the White House was “Free Palestine, No New War Against Iraq.” The White House rally drew a very large crowd. CNN put the figure at 60,000 in its coverage from the site, and organizers estimated a higher number of people present.

Organizers from the United We March rally estimated that 20,000 to 25,000 participated in their rally at the Washington Monument. While most participants in their rally were sympathetic to the suffering of the Palestinian people and a number of speakers denounced the recent Israeli atrocities in the West Bank and Gaza, the United We March coalition opted for a more general peace or anti-war message, rather than amending their six demands to include a specific call to support the people of Palestine.

Issues in the united front

The issue of Palestine and its potential prominence—or potential lack of prominence—in the demonstration was one focus of several disputes between the two coalitions as they negotiated over whether to form a united front on April 20. After seven weeks of negotiations, the two coalitions eventually agreed to hold a co-sponsored concluding rally near the Capitol. One of the most contentious issues in the talks had concerned Palestine and Palestinian participation at the concluding rally.

Some of the forces inside the United We March Coalition were enthusiastic in their support for a united-front action that ANSWER had proposed. This was especially true of the New York City Labor Against War coalition, as well as others. But some members of that coalition, especially representatives of a group called the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition, cited political objections to ANSWER's united-front proposals.

For instance, both sides agreed that Amy Goodman, the noted broadcast journalist with “Democracy Now!,” should be an emcee at the concluding rally. ANSWER proposed that there be a co-emcee—namely, Randa Jamal, a Palestinian student and activist leader. The ANSWER proposal was motivated by the premise that a Palestinian co-chair would signify the centrality of the Palestinian struggle at this moment. The National Youth and Student Peace Coalition representative immediately rejected the idea of having a Palestinian co-chair. “That idea will never get through” the youth and student coalition, because the Palestinian issue is just “one issue,” asserted the NYSPC representative.

The United We March coalition officially agreed to ANSWER's united-front proposal by including a Palestinian co-chair for the concluding rally.

Both coalitions ended up drafting a unity agreement one week before April 20. The agreement stipulated that both coalitions would converge in a massive street march after their opening rallies.

Why the backwardness on Palestine?

Why is it that “Palestine” and deep criticism of Israel was almost a taboo in the mainstream peace movement in the United States since 1967?

This same movement supported the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and opposed the war in Vietnam. Yet when Israel launched the 1967 war against the Arab countries and seized the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and the Sinai, only the most radical voices in the U.S. movement demanded that the Vietnam anti-war movement embrace the Palestinian and Arab cause as part and parcel of the anti-colonial movement sweeping the world. The larger peace movement turned a cold shoulder.

And history repeated itself in 1982. Then, this self-imposed taboo allowed the moderate peace organizations and some sectors of the pacifist movement to turn a march for peace and in opposition to nuclear arms—an activity on June 12, 1982, that drew more than a million people in New York—into a near irrelevancy when they refused to address, much less condemn, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon that had begun the week before. Twenty thousand Lebanese and Palestinian people



Brian Becker shown speaking on big screen at the White House rally.

eventually died during that invasion, as the Israeli Defense Forces led by Gen. Ariel Sharon drove Yassir Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization from Beirut.

The reason for the historical political backwardness toward the Palestinian cause is frequently misunderstood or misrepresented as the result of the Jewish supporters of Israel who are active in other anti-war struggles but politically tied to Israel and thus unable to support the just cause of the Palestinian people. While this may be a factor it is not the decisive one.

What is the decisive factor?

The problem lies in the strategic orientation of some sectors in the progressive movement who are looking to forge a left-center coalition, sometimes called a coalition of “broad forces” and the like. The goal is to reform the Democratic Party, to rebuild its so-called liberal wing in the national leadership.

This orientation flows from the conception that the main goal of the progressive movement is to prevent the triumph of the extreme right wing in the capitalist political establishment, and to defeat their foreign and domestic policies by promoting more “liberal policies.” In order to secure the support of the liberal capitalist establishment, or at least to bloc with some of its leading lights, according to this approach, the progressive movement must limit its political program in a way that is acceptable or non-threatening to the liberal wing of the capitalist establishment.

The U.S. political establishment was deeply divided over continued involvement in the Vietnam War and later about U.S. support for apartheid South Africa. Consequently, there were significant expressions of support for the anti-war and anti-apartheid movements from politicians and even in the big-business media.

In the case of the Middle East, this left-center-type orientation has required this sector of the movement to abstain from showing solidarity with the Palestinian people because in the U.S. capitalist class there has been virtually no split over support for Israel. U.S. imperialism supports Israel because it serves as a heavily armed and relatively stable client state in the region where two-thirds of the world's oil is found. Groups looking to limit their political program in the hopes of winning substantial support from the liberal establishment have thus been required to neglect support for the Palestinian people.

The ANSWER coalition shares the tactical objective of uniting with all possible forces against war, racism and repression, but not by liquidating its principled and strategically vital anti-imperialist political orientation.

The April 20 mobilization was historic because it broke through the legacy of inaction and put the issue of solidarity with the Palestinian people on the front burner.

SAN FRANCISCO

50 organizing centers mobilize 35,000 throughout West

By Brenda Sandburg
and Adrian Garcia
San Francisco

As in Washington, D.C., the San Francisco protest of 35,000 people on April 20 marked an historic turning point. Never have so many people in the United States protested for Palestinian rights.

A sea of Palestinian flags filled the march route from Dolores Park to the Civic Center. The multinational crowd included thousands of families and youths from the Arab and Muslim communities.

The march was so big it took 90 minutes to leave the park. The demonstration was an opportunity for Muslims, Palestinians and their supporters to come out and express their rage about the genocide the Israeli military committed with the backing of the U.S. government.

The demonstration had been called by the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) coalition to protest war, racism and poverty after the Pentagon began bombing Afghanistan last fall. But on March 29 the Israeli military began a brutal attack on the West Bank cities of Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nablus, Hebron, Qalqilya, Tulkarem and Jenin refugee camp. The ANSWER coalition then shifted the focus of the protest to support of the Palestinian people.

“It’s about time that the people here, the anti-war movement, the peace and justice movement, stood with the Palestinian people — because their struggle is the same struggle against colonialism and for liberation and for justice,” said Richard Becker, West Coast coordinator of the International Action Center and a member of ANSWER’s national steering committee. “No peace or anti-war movement today is worthy of the name unless it raises high the banner of the long-suffering, long-struggling, never-to-be-defeated Palestinian people.”

Fifty organizing centers throughout California and the Pacific Northwest sent more than 40 buses to the protest, including 10 from Los Angeles, five from Nevada City and others from San Diego, Riverside, Sacramento, Fresno, Eureka, Santa Cruz and Mendocino County. One organizer from Orange County called the International ANSWER Coalition 48 hours before the demonstration to request two buses.

Signs of resistance against U.S. foreign policy were evident in San Francisco even before the protest began. As masses of people entered the city in buses, they were pleasantly surprised to see altered billboards containing defiant messages like “Stop U.S. Aid to Israel” and “Free Palestine.”

The protesters who descended upon Dolores Park represented a wide variety of groups and organizations. Speaker after speaker addressed the barbaric attacks being waged against Palestinians by the Israeli government with the financial backing of the U.S. government.

Confronting the global empire

“We are standing strong against the annihilation of our people,” said Eyad Kishawi of Free Palestine Alliance-USA. “Not only because we have to live and exist,

but it is also because we want to confront the global empire of the United States of America.

“We salute you from Haifa and Yaffa. We salute you from Ramallah, from our dear Al Quds in Jerusalem, from Golan, from 5-1/2 million Palestinians living in exile, all demanding the right to go home to our beloved Palestine,” Kishawi said.

“As I speak, our people in Jenin are scrambling through the rubble to pick up what is left of their loved ones, bits and pieces, barbarically bulldozed in their own homes because they refused to leave.”

Hatem Bazian, a University of California-Berkeley professor and well-known Islamic leader in the Bay area, noted the worldwide support for the Palestinian people. “The streets of Palestine are a juncture where the world is meeting,” Bazian said. “The streets of Washington, the streets of Madrid, the streets of London, the streets of Rome, the streets of Paris, the streets of South Africa, the streets of Venezuela, the streets of Mexico, every street in this world is recognizing that the Palestinians are standing on behalf of justice. And they are also undermining the United States foreign policy and their puppet regimes in the Arab world and throughout the world.”

Kate Raphael of Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism reported on her recent experience visiting refugee camps outside Bethlehem. She said she saw stores devoid of food and houses ripped apart. She heard volleys of machine gun fire sounding the end of curfew and daring people to go outside.

At a mosque in Jenin, she said, the military ordered women to take their clothes off and walk in the street. The women refused. “At that moment I was so ashamed to be a Jew and an American because it is our money, our F16s flying overhead and our tanks rolling,” Raphael said. “Yet I am also proud to be part of a growing anti-Zionist Jewish movement in this country and around the world.”

John Parker of Workers World Party evoked the chilling image of the lynchings of Black people in the South, comparing them with the fascist terror against Palestinians by Israel and the United States. He also spoke of the root cause of the oppression of Arab people in the Middle East: capitalism. “Reforms are good but they have to be for the purpose of changing the system,” Parker said.

Other struggles were also highlighted at the demonstration. Los Angeles activist Ana Duarte spoke on behalf of the National Committee to Free the Five Cuban Political Prisoners. She spoke of the heroism of these Cubans who were convicted by the United States for defending their country



WW PHOTOS: BILL HACKWELL

San Francisco, April 20. Anti-war activists unite with Palestinian community to bring their message downtown.

from terrorist attacks. She also denounced the Human Rights Commission’s recent vote against Cuba, which was engineered by the United States.

“How dare the United States accuse Cuba of human-rights violations,” Duarte said. “The United States that has blockaded that island for 43 years... The United States that gives billions of dollars in weapons to Israel, the United States that has killed almost 2 million Iraqi people through sanctions.”

Lilia Carreon, a Filipino who works as a bag screener at San Francisco Interna-



tional Airport, spoke of the abuse and pressure against immigrant bag screeners. Out of 1,200 workers, 850 are non-citizens; 450 stand to lose their jobs immediately.

Although five unions have begun organizing drives among bag screeners, because of the U.S. Patriot Act and the fact that screeners are to become federal employees, all bag screeners will be prohibited from joining unions.

The opening and closing rallies were chaired by Gloria La Riva of the International Action Center, the Rev. Dorsey Blake of the Church for the Fellowship of All People, Miguel Molina of KPFA Radio and Noura Erekat of Students for Justice in Palestine.

Mumia Abu-Jamal sent a taped message to the demonstration. Other speakers included International Longshore & Warehouse Local 10 President Richard Mead, American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee San Francisco President Osama Qasem, Tony Gonzalez of the International Asian Treaty Council, Barbara Lubin of the Middle East Children’s Alliance, M.C. Ettinger of Jews for a Free Palestine, Zulma Olivera of the Vieques Support Committee, and Cobi Kwasi Harris of the Vanguard



Public Foundation.

“This was the greatest thing,” an Arab organizer from Orange County told a member of ANSWER after the demonstration. “I didn’t know there were North Americans who supported the Palestinian cause.”

100,000 in DC, 35,000 in San Francisco

'Free, free Palestine'

Continued from page 1

that had plagued the movement for social justice here and worldwide since Sept. 11.

Ever since the U.S.-backed Israeli terrorist killing machine elevated its murderous assault on the Palestinians beginning on March 29, the whole world has watched in horror as the Israeli military destroyed whole neighborhoods in Jenin, Jerusalem, Nablus and Ramallah.

Many at the march carried signs showing graphic images of those who were either slaughtered or injured at the hand of the apartheid-like Israeli regime. An estimated 1,500 Palestinians have been massacred—500 in Jenin alone—and thousands injured.

Besides the Washington, D.C., protest, another 35,000 people marched in San Francisco in support of the just cause of the Palestinian people. International solidarity protests were also called for April 20 in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; San Salvador, El Salvador; Managua, Nicaragua; Basque Country; Madrid, Spain; the cities of Tabasco, Oaxaca and Mexico City, Mexico; Montreal, Canada; Belgium; Japan; and South Africa.

The International Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) coalition issued a call for activists to converge on the White House to demand an end to the U.S.-backed onslaught by the Israeli military against Palestinian civilians, and an immediate end to the 54-year-old illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine.

ANSWER leaders said they made the conscious decision to build a pro-Palestinian demonstration to illustrate that supporting the Palestinian people's right to self-determination is part and parcel of the overall struggle against imperialist war and racist repression.

Before the march began, 50,000-60,000 people gathered at the Ellipse, behind the White House. They heard a diverse group of speakers express solidarity with the Palestinian people, who have put themselves on the front lines in the struggle against President George W. Bush's declaration of war against the peoples of the world.

Thousands of printed ANSWER signs—"Free Palestine, no war on Iraq"—were held throughout the crowd, as well as "Stop



Larry Holmes, above, and Randa Jamal, below.



Plan Colombia," "Stop bombing Afghanistan" and "Money for jobs, schools and housing, not racist war." There were also dozens of banners and hundreds more placards hand-made by participants.

"We are all Palestinians" theme of White House rally

The three-hour rally included speakers of all nationalities, all ages, and those of religious and non-religious backgrounds, who came to declare that on April 20, "We are all Palestinians."

Co-moderators of the rally included Jennifer Wager, mid-Atlantic coordinator of IFCO/Pastors for Peace; Teresa Gutierrez, a co-director of the International Action Center; and Mehdi Bray, national political director of Muslim Public Affairs Council.

Among the Palestinian speakers were Randa Jamal, of the Free Palestine Alliance and the Al-Awda Palestine Right to Return Coalition. Also speaking from Al-Awda were Samia Halaby and Amer Jubran. Representatives from Cuba, Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and of issues like the struggle to rid Vieques, Puerto Rico, of the U.S. Navy, all declared their unwavering support for Palestinian rights. Sara Flounders, spokesperson for the Iraq Sanctions Challenge, told the crowd to be prepared to



Martin Luther King III, above, and Julia Beatty, below.



fight Bush's new war plans against the Iraqi people.

Tariq Ali, a Pakistani author and political activist representing the London Stop the War Coalition, also spoke at the rally.

Larry Adams, president of Mailhandlers Local 300, spoke on behalf of the New York City Labor Against the War coalition. Hillel Cohen, a Jewish labor activist, presented a resolution passed by his union, the 1199 Service Employees International Union in New York. The resolution included the demands that the occupation and U.S. aid to Israel end now, and it supported the Palestinian people's right of return to their homeland.

There were other signs that a growing number of workers are making the connections between the deepening economic crisis at home and the struggle against war abroad. The April 21 Baltimore Sun reported that march participant "Rodney Ward, 36, a former U.S. Airways flight attendant who lost his job amid the post-Sept. 11 airline industry layoffs, held U.S. aid to Israel partly responsible for his small unemployment checks. 'The U.S. government immediately gave billions of dollars to corporate bailouts, war and oppressive governments like Israel,' said Ward, of Boston. 'But it took the government six months to find a measly 13 extra weeks of unemployment for people like me.'"

Peta Lindsay, a 17-year-old African American organizer with ANSWER, told the crowd: "It seems that the rest of the world is beginning to learn what the Palestinian people have proven through their heroic resistance: that there will never be peace in the Middle East until there is justice for Palestine. ... I go to a school right here in D.C. public schools ... which are notorious for their under-funded, understaffed classrooms, but somehow our military budget is skyrocketing."

A delegation of Orthodox Jews Against Zionism came to the rally, even though it was on their Sabbath, to express their solidarity with the Palestinian people. The mostly Palestinian and Muslim crowd gave them a warm welcome, just as they applauded any speakers who announced that



Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, above, and Ray LaForest, below.



they were Jewish.

Another group of 25,000 anti-war protesters led by the United We March coalition held a simultaneous morning rally at the Sylvan Theater near the Washington Monument. Once the ANSWER participants poured onto Pennsylvania Avenue, the two large groups merged to march side by side past the Justice Department.

There, the marchers demanded the repeal of the repressive USA Patriot Act. This law, promoted by ultra-right Attorney General John Ashcroft, has led to raids and detentions of members of the Arab and Muslim communities within the United States.

Unified rally at the Capitol

The march then wound its way to the Capitol for a unified rally by the two major coalitions. Amy Goodman from WBAI-Pacific Radio and Randa Jamal, a Palestinian activist who lost relatives in the Israeli assault on Ramallah, co-chaired the rally.

Some of Jamal's relatives are still being held hostage in Ramallah. She told the crowd, "What they are going through are crimes against humanity."

Congressional Black Caucus member Rep. Cynthia McKinney from Georgia took up the plight of the U.S. poor: "We have not dealt well with our diversity and too many of our citizens suffer needlessly. Each day millions of Americans suffer poverty, hunger, the sting of discrimination ... arbitrary arrest, racial profiling, and brutality from rogue police ... inadequate health care, drug abuse, and unemployment. For the millions of poor Americans, ours is not a just society."

The Rev. Lucius Walker, executive director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, condemned "U.S. complicity with the genocide of the Palestinian people." He also warned of the dangers facing Iraq and was strong in his support for the advances of the Cuban Revolution in the face of a 40-year-long U.S. blockade.

Egyptian feminist writer Nawal El-Saadawi said, "The Egyptian women, men and children are with you here. All the people of the world are exploited by the same government and by capitalism. George Bush and Ariel Sharon should be brought to justice as war criminals."

Fadia Rafeedi from the Free Palestine Coalition-USA, said that "the fate of Pales-



WW PHOTO: MICHELLE GORE-BUTTERFIELD



Nawal El-Saadawi



Fadia Rafeedi, left, Cynthia McKinney, above, and Lucius Walker, right.



Mehdi Bray with Hasidic rabbis.



Amy Goodman, left, and Phyllis Bennis, above.

tine is linked to the fate of Iraq, of Venezuela, of Colombia. We have to end the criminal partnership between the U.S. and the state of Israel. ... We must oppose the exclusionary character of the Israeli state."

Larry Holmes, a co-director of the International Action Center, spoke on behalf of the ANSWER coalition. "Something magical has happened," he said. "Finally the anti-war movement has merged with the Palestinian and Arab and Muslim community and embraced the Palestinian cause. ...

"This movement is anti-colonialist and anti-racist, it is not against Jewish people. ... Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney can't wait to send the U.S. Army in to invade Iraq. But we have to stop that war right here, and organize here to struggle against it. ...

"We will fight for jobs, fight for funds for

education, fight to keep Social Security, fight for all our rights at home, but we have to make sure that while we do this we show solidarity with the struggling people of the planet."

Two teenage Palestinian women from Jenin also addressed the crowd, confidently assuring the U.S. demonstrators that whatever horrors the Israeli military carried out, "We will continue to struggle until liberation."

Ray LaForest, representative of New York City Labor Against War, said, "I am speaking on behalf of the working people who built this society and now we are being asked to give our blood for these greedy bosses. ... NYCLAW demands money for displaced workers, not corporations since 9-11. We also want an end to the U.S./Israeli occupation of the West Bank."

Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, co-founder of

the Partnership for Civil Justice, said, "The USA Patriot Act is a vicious assault on civil rights and civil liberties. It's an attempt to shut down political dissent—and we're not going to let them do it."

Julie Beatty, president of the United States Student Association, Martin Luther King III and Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies were also among those speaking.

The ANSWER newsletter announced the group will hold a national organizing conference in New York on June 1 to continue the effort to build a strong, independent, anti-war, anti-racist movement.

Bryan Pfeiffer contributed to this article.



Above, Hillel Cohen reports on his union's resolution demanding an end to Israeli occupation and of U.S. aid to Israel. Left Philippine contingent in Washington.

WW PHOTOS ON THIS SPREAD: MICHELLE GORE, G. DUNKEL, JOHN CATALINOTO, GARY WILSON

1,500 march in Seattle

Some 1,500 people rallied and marched in Seattle April 20 against war and racism, at an action called by Wake Up Washington. Palestinians, activist youths, and others from the peace and religious communities crowded into downtown Westlake Center, in convergence with marches in Washington, D.C., San Francisco and internationally.

Among the featured speakers were African American minister the Rev. Robert Jeffrey and Lena Khalaf Tuffaha of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. The anti-war fervor was so great that the rally turned into an unscheduled march to Capitol Hill, in the face of a large police presence. There the marchers rallied again at the site of an anti-World Bank/International Monetary Fund event.

—Jim McMahan



Jenin resistance inspires struggles to come

By Joyce Chediak

The Israeli military has reduced the West Bank camp of Jenin to rubble. United Nations Special Envoy Terje Roed-Larsen, who toured the camp after the Israeli assault, called what he saw “horrific beyond belief.”

But Jenin is not only the site of Israeli war crimes. Great heroism is part of the story of this camp. Jenin has become a symbol of Palestinian resistance.

Armed with only a few rifles and a little ammunition, Jenin’s population held off the Israeli invaders for 10 days. People used fertilizer, soda cans, cell phones and determination to strike a stinging blow against the most powerful military in the Middle East.

Many fought to the death, meanwhile killing 23 heavily armed Israeli soldiers and wounding 75 more in hand-to-hand combat, and giving both Israel and its U.S. backers reason to pause.

The defiance of Jenin’s youths in the face of death is already legend. The Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, speaking to 25,000 at a Palestine solidarity event in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 15, told the story of a young Jenin man, who, about to die, called his friend and said: “Tell me a joke. I want to die laughing.” (Beirut Daily Star, April 16)

Jenin affirms the mass character of the Palestinian struggle, and how deeply the armed resistance is rooted in the population. The defenders of Jenin have exposed the weakness of the Israeli military. The most sophisticated weapons in the world cannot extinguish the struggle of a whole population committed to fight for their rights.

Heavily outgunned

Even the New York Times (April 21), certainly no friend of the Palestinian people, wrote that “the mismatch in force or arms was stark.” The Israeli Army used “Vulcan anti-aircraft guns, able to shoot 3,000 rounds a minute, inside the camp.

“It used Cobra helicopters with thermal detection capability to fire TOW missiles—

intended for use against tanks on open battlefields—through walls of houses, some with noncombatants inside. It deployed scores of Merkava tanks and armored vehicles equipped with machine guns. It used bulldozers to raze civilian homes, crushing more and more of them with less warning, Palestinians said.

“Buzzing drones and balloons carrying cameras monitored the fighting from above, and from a hilltop encampment just outside Jenin, officers coordinated the combat, using detailed maps and sophisticated communications

“The Palestinians were armed with Kalashnikov rifles and crude explosives, generally made from fertilizer.... Soda cans were strung in the alleys, soldiers said, giving away the patrols’ positions when they bumped into them.”

The Times explained that the Israeli military thought it would subdue the camp within 48 hours, and did not expect the resistance encountered. Then, “on Tuesday, April 9, the Israeli Army received the biggest shock of its West Bank operation.

“Four soldiers walked into a courtyard near the center of the camp, and straight into an ambush. Four or five Palestinian gunmen opened fire and killed them all. When other Israelis rushed to the scene, they were also surprised, and nine more were cut down....

“Elsewhere in the camp at about the same time, a booby trap detonated a string of explosives, bringing down three buildings,” continued the Times, citing Israeli military sources. What ensued then was the Israeli destruction of the camp.

What do Palestinians say happened at Jenin?

After the camp fell, hundreds of its residents were arrested. They were later released in Taibeh, a small Palestinian village inside the military cordon and accessible only after a hike of several kilometers across the border and through almond orchards. A reporter from the Canadian Globe and Mail made that hike, and interviewed Jenin residents who had defended the camp.

The following account appeared in the

April 11 issue of that paper:

“They fought as long as they could in the Jenin refugee camp, the young Palestinian man said. They hid in alleyways and fought with rifles against attack helicopters and tanks. Buildings collapsed on them....

“Israel said yesterday that it controlled all but a small corner of the camp, now a heap of smoldering rubble. Several hundred fighters reportedly gave themselves up yesterday, after running out of ammunition; others are believed to have fought to the death....

“The story of the ambush on Tuesday that felled 13 of those soldiers was being told and retold yesterday. ‘One, dressed like a soldier, speaking Hebrew, told them to come, come,’ one man recounted in the street of Taibeh to approving nods from his listeners.

“‘And when they ran after him into a building, he exploded himself and then the building fell in on them; it was wired to explosives,’ and then others shot at them.

“How did a small group of Palestinian fighters hold off the might of the Israeli army? Their familiarity with the warren-like camp gave them an advantage over the Israeli soldiers, but the fighters in

Taibeh yesterday offered other reasons.

“The fighting, they said, was not led by any central command; the Palestinian Authority led the fight against an earlier Israeli incursion, but this time, much of the population took up weapons.

“They are a very strong people, who said, ‘This is my home, my land, my camp, and even though I have only primitive weapons, I am willing to die in the camp,’ said a 26-year-old man named Mohammed, his head swathed in bandages.

“Mohammed said the fighters at first used cell phones to communicate, but soon ran out of charged batteries when the electricity was cut off, and fought on their own.

“Hussein, who said he was a farmer, also attributed the fighters’ tenacity to their motives: ‘The Israelis are not fighting with a very strong belief. We are defending our beliefs and our honor and our land.’...

“‘We learned from our parents and our grandparents who left their land [ahead of the Israeli army] in 1948 and 1967,’ said a man who gave his name as Ahmed. ‘We learned: Do not leave your land at any cost.’”



Washington, D.C., demonstration shows how resistance to massacre in Jenin inspires a worldwide movement.

WW PHOTOS: G DUNKEL

Who came to protest?

A bus ride to history

By Beth Semmer
Chicago

I was responsible for organizing the bus captains for four of the eight buses the Chicago Coalition Against War and Racism organized to go to the April 20 demonstration in Washington. Four buses were leaving from a mosque in Villa Park, but my four buses were leaving from Grant Park.

As I was trying to get ready, I had to wonder whether the weekend ahead would be as historic as the actions that had taken place in the very location of our departure at the time of the Democratic Convention in 1968, when young people opposing the Vietnam War clashed with the Chicago police in a battle heard round the world.

Knowing that many of the participants were first timers at a national protest, I certainly hoped the D.C. police would be a lot more restrained than Mayor Richard Daley's police had been in 1968.

I remembered the chant of those long-ago demonstrators: "The whole world is watching." I knew that the groundswell of support for Palestine in the last few weeks could set the stage, for the first time in the over 50 years of Israel's existence, for tens of thousands in this country to demand an end to the occupation of Palestine and confront the U.S. government for its funding of Israel's brutality.

I was running late. I decided to take a cab. My cab driver was from Palestine. I told him where I was going, and that I knew of eight buses and at least 15 vans that were going to D.C. to support Palestine.

He told me his wife had participated in several of the protests in Chicago at the Israeli Consulate and he had honked his horn in support when he came upon one of the many demonstrations or vigils that have been happening around town, but that he didn't know about the protest at the White House.

A sign of great things ahead

When he saw the number of people waiting for the buses in the park he was thrilled. As we parted, I told him to watch the ANSWER rally on CSPAN on Saturday [April 20] and he told me he was on his way to drive by the weekly Friday afternoon demonstration at the Israeli Consulate so he could honk his horn. I took the whole encounter to be a sign of great things ahead for the weekend.

The bus I was captain of was not coming back until Monday evening [April 22]. Those on my bus were planning to go the protest on Saturday, April 20, as well as participate in activities in support of the mass struggle in Colombia on April 21 and 22, and the demonstration at AIPAC on the evening of April 22.



The two main organizers of all of the buses were CCAWR members Dorothy Pagosa, a Franciscan nun from the Eighth Day Center for Justice, and Bill Massey, an activist with International ANSWER.

Organizing the buses had been a roller coaster ride. In early April, when we had to pay for the first two buses, it meant desperately trying to come up with funds before all the tickets had been sold. But by April 15, the number wanting seats had Dorothy and Bill scrambling around trying to find more buses.

Most riders had never been to a national demonstration. Most of those were students from DePaul, Columbia College, Northwestern and the School of the Art Institute. There were also several middle-aged women who had never been to a national protest.

Gay pride for Palestine

In the hold of the bus was the Chicago Anti-Bashing Network's banner for their contingent. CABN is planning a contingent in the Gay Pride Parade in June in solidarity with Arabs, Muslims and South Asians as well as denouncing the U.S. war drive.

There were several banners that Columbia students had done. One depicted Uncle Sam holding a moneybag over an Israeli Defense Forces soldier shooting a Palestinian. The slogan was "Whether you bought the bullet or pulled the trigger, it's the same."

Alex, a veteran of World War II and a member of Vets for Peace, was the oldest on our bus, at 84. Drew, a student from DePaul, was the youngest, at 18.

Bill and Mary Alice had attended the historic March on Washington in 1963 when Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his "I Have A Dream" speech. Bill had participated in the civil rights movement, and relatives had taken Mary Alice as a child. Most of these bus riders weren't born yet in 1963.

Reza had been an activist with the Iranian Students Association back in the 1970s. He had two mild heart attacks and angio-

plasty in January and February, but he was determined to go to Washington in support of Palestine.

Asmaa is a DePaul student and a member of United Muslims Moving Ahead and the newly formed Students for Justice in Palestine. She sat across from Lupe, who was from the DePaul Alliance for Latino Empowerment. Both Asmaa and Lupe planned to protest the occupation of Palestine on Saturday and Monday evening as well as Plan Colombia on Sunday and Monday morning.

No one on our bus was arrested. Sister Dorothy and some of the DePaul students came very close at the Colombia protests on Monday morning. They were marching with those who did not want to get arrested when police on horseback surrounded them. Luckily, all got out of the situation okay.

On the way back everyone was sporting newly purchased buttons, T-shirts and kaffiyas. All had a deep feeling that their participation among the hundred thousand who came out for Palestine made them a part of history.

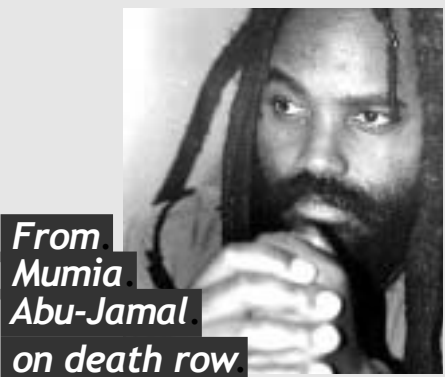
All vowed that they would continue to



WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO



From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row

Blitzkrieg in Palestine

April 11—With Palestinian villages crumbled under the tread of American-made, Israeli-manned tanks, thousands held in detention, and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yassar Arafat confined under virtual military house arrest (sans running water or electricity), the tiny area of earth now called Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, is on the minds of millions the world over.

What the world is witnessing is the primacy of arms over words. While the airwaves, teletypes and news print of the world's media dutifully report the sweet words of diplomatic double-speak about "Resolution 242," "peace," "occupied territories," and the like, the tanks and troops of Sharon (the former Israeli general seen by many Arabs as "the Butcher of Beirut") are writing a new pact, in the blood, tears and bile of the Palestinian people. Rarely has the world seen an alleged U.S. "ally" ignore, dismiss, or unilaterally reject the dictates of the United States.

What the world is witnessing is the dark night of Palestinian hopes, the twilight of their dreams, the greatest threat to their national aspirations. It is seeing the ironic swing of history that transforms one people, who were once the objects of continental humiliation, into those who today are the lords, masters, and humiliators of another people.

What the world is witnessing is the impotence of Arab states, as well as the inability of the so-called "international community," which watches a nation, Israel, violate the terms of international law, with utter impunity.

For, international law, embodied in the resolutions of the United Nations, doesn't determine what happens in the real world; armed power does.

For decades Israel has either ignored or expressly violated UN Resolutions 242 and 338. UN Resolution 242 calls for Israel to withdraw to its pre-1967 borders.

Israel responded by importing tens of thousands of its people into Arab lands, building settlements that pockmark the territories, and building access roads that lead to and from the settlements which are segregated for Jewish use only.

If the Palestinians had skin the color of coffee instead of olives, the world would recognize their degraded social status as akin to the apartheid regime of South Africa. But they are Arabs, in a world and in a time when Arabs are demonized in the corporate, majoritarian media as "terrorists." As such, they are fair game. And Israel amasses military power to "batter" and "break" a captive, occupied people's will (to quote Prime Minister Ariel Sharon). For the Israelis, the Arabs are a convenience for their cheap labor, but an expendable one. They dream of an Israel that is Arab-free. What historic irony for a folk who, a few decades ago, were objects of an Aryan judenrein (or Jew-free) policy. For Arabs, their present is their nightmare.



Fighting fascism in France

The bad news is that an outright fascist, racist and former torturer of Algerian liberation fighters got one-sixth of the French vote. He came in second in the first round of France's presidential election.

Additional bad news is that the only choice for French voters in the May runoff election is between this fascist, Jean Marie Le Pen, and right-wing President Jacques Chirac, who represents the French and European imperialist ruling class.

But there's good news, too. Tens of thousands of high-school and university students—many of whom didn't even take part in the voting—have already come out to tell the fascist, "Le Pen, you're dead meat, the youth are in the street."

Additional good news is that organized labor will mobilize for May Day and join with these youths and students to say no to fascism in the streets of Paris, Lyon, Rennes, Montpellier, Marseilles and the other working-class strongholds.

Le Pen is a veteran paratroop officer who personally tortured captured rebel fighters during Algeria's war of liberation against imperialist France. Members of his party, the National Front (FN), have murdered North African immigrants and their descendants in more recent times. It's quite correct that the youths have chanted, "F for fascist, N for Nazi, down with the National Front."

The French and European ruling-class establishment will throw its support to the rightist Chirac. Like Jorg Haider of Austria, Le Pen's ascendancy is not helpful to the ruling-class plan to establish a united Europe dominated by the big transnational monopolies. Also facing the opposition of organized labor, Le Pen has almost no chance of winning the election against establishment politician Chirac.

But Le Pen's participation raises the volume of anti-immigrant and pro-cop propaganda that the right-wing and center-left candidates allowed to dominate the election contest. Both Chirac and the Socialist Party candidate, Premier Lionel Jospin, pandered to

racism and ignored the worker's pressing interests, causing many voters to complain that they couldn't tell the two major candidates apart. The Socialist Party is socialist in name alone, and has been taking turns running the capitalist government for decades. There was heavy abstention of voting compared to usual French standards.

French elections are divided into two rounds. In the first round, dozens of parties run, including those described as "extreme left, left, centrist, right and far right," pro-environmental parties and even a pro-hunting party. Voters feel free to choose the party they really want. Then the top two vote-getters—usually the slightly leftist Socialist Party led by Premier Lionel Jospin and the right-wing Gaullist party, the Rally for the Republic, led by current President Jacques Chirac—compete in a runoff election two weeks later.

Chirac and Jospin have shared government power for the past seven years. They have carried out major privatization of industry, chipped away at social benefits and led France into a European Union dominated by big capital.

They directed French participation in two U.S.-led imperialist wars against Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. That the French Communist Party participated in Jospin's government through this only served to discredit that party—once the leading representative of France's industrial workers and the main alternative for all progressive people.

Le Pen's electoral gain has allowed racism and chauvinism to raise its head higher in France. But it has also aroused resistance. The young people are already showing their resistance in the streets, building solidarity between French workers, youths of European origin and those of African and North African origin, and spurring on participation by the growing anti-globalization movement.

This mobilization will do more than show Le Pen and his potential backers that they have a big fight on their hands. It will also show Chirac that his racist pandering won't be tolerated.

Nicaragua Indigenous leader targeted

I recently returned from a Pastors for Peace caravan to Chiapas, Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua, and would like to express my sadness and outrage at the brutal murder of Francisco José García Valle, esteemed professor at the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (URACCAN) and husband of Dr. María Luisa Acosta, internationally renowned Indigenous human-rights lawyer.

Francisco Valle was assassinated in his home on the evening of April 8 in Bluefields, Nicaragua. At the time of his murder, his wife Dr. Acosta was meeting with the caravan to brief us on one of the current land struggles of the coast. Had she not been away from her home at the time she could have also been the victim of this brutal murder.

While a police investigation is under way, the police in Bluefields have said they have no motive for the murder and no information is available on who is responsible for the crime. However, Dr. Acosta herself has said, "I believe that the assassination of my husband is due to the defense that I do of the Indigenous towns."

The 1987 Nicaraguan Constitution, along with the 1995 reforms, guarantees the collective rights of the Indigenous communities of Nicaragua. Rights. These include: control of their natural resources and communal lands; protection against discrimination; protection of the Indigenous forms of social and governmental organization; and protection of the Indigenous traditional languages and cultures.

However, the courts and the wealthy of Nicaragua ignore these rights, and are working hand in hand with the rich and the corporations of the United States to privatize and sell the Indigenous peoples' land in order to exploit the resources.

The Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua has a vast supply of natural resources, including coastal rainforests which are second only to those in Brazil in diversity, incredible marine life and mineral resources and which have the potential to yield \$5 billion.

Foreign companies and people are granted concessions by the central government in Managua to take over the land and extract vast amounts of these resources without approval or even consideration of the Indigenous communities that live on the land. The extraction of the resources has left massive pollution, erosion, and poverty for the Indigenous people.

In one of Dr. Acosta's current cases she is representing the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic Coast (RAAS) against an American citizen, Peter Tsokos, who has illegally "purchased" and occupied the

Pearl Cays, seven small islands off the Atlantic Coast—land that the Nicaraguan Constitution and the 1988 Atlantic Coast Autonomy Act guarantee to local Indigenous communities. And according to the Nicaraguan Constitution, Indigenous land cannot be "bought, sold, or mortgaged."

Tsokos "bought" the land six years ago for a total of \$30,000 (U.S. dollars). Since the "purchase" he has turned around and "sold" some of the islands for half a million dollars each, finding international buyers over the Internet.

Over 17 communities live, work and survive off of this land. The Indigenous peoples that live on the coast, those that have survived the colonial experience, include the Miskitu, Sumu, Rama, Creole, and Garifuna. One of the islands that was

"purchased" by Tsokos contains the only source of fresh water for the Miskitu community of Setnet Point, an adjacent island. Peter Tsokos and his buyers have hired armed guards to keep the local people from getting to this fresh water source. They have verbally harassed and physically attacked local Indigenous people, environmental workers and government officials.

We feel that the reason the Acosta family was targeted is because Dr. Acosta is the coordinator of the Center for Legal Assistance to Indigenous Peoples (CALPI) located in Bluefields, Nicaragua, and is a strong voice on behalf of the Indigenous communities. The government of Nicaragua has yet to guarantee the protection of Attorney Acosta and her family.

All of us on the Pastors for Peace caravan urge all Workers World readers to:

Express your outrage at the senseless murder of Francisco José García Valle and concern for the security of Maria Acosta and her family, who have been at the forefront of the struggle for Indigenous rights in the region.

Demand that the security of Maria Acosta and her family be ensured by the government of Nicaragua and that a rigorous, stepped up investigation into the murder begin now.

Demand that the assassins be immediately apprehended and brought to justice.

Demand that the president and the courts of Nicaragua uphold the 1987 Constitution, the 1995 reforms, and the 1988 Atlantic Coast Autonomy Act. Demand an end to the illegal sale of Indigenous lands of the Atlantic Coast and the control of their natural resources and communal lands back to the Indigenous communities.

You can address letters to President Enrique Bolaños to: The Nicaraguan Ambassador, The Republic of Nicaragua, 1627 New Hampshire Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20009. Telephone: (202) 939-6570; fax: (202) 939-6574. You can also email the President's office: presidente@presidencia.gob.ni. You can email Pedro Joaquin Rios Castellón, Primer Secretario, Asamblea Nacional-Managua, Nicaragua at secreta1@correo.-asamblea.gob.ni.

You can find more information on the land struggles of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua on the Pastors for Peace Web site: <http://www.ifconews.org/p4p.html> and the Nicaragua Network website: http://environment.nicanet.org/-indigenous_lands_index.htm.

**In solidarity,
Kristin Michaels
Oakland, CA**

HIDDEN AGENDA U.S./NATO takeover of Yugoslavia

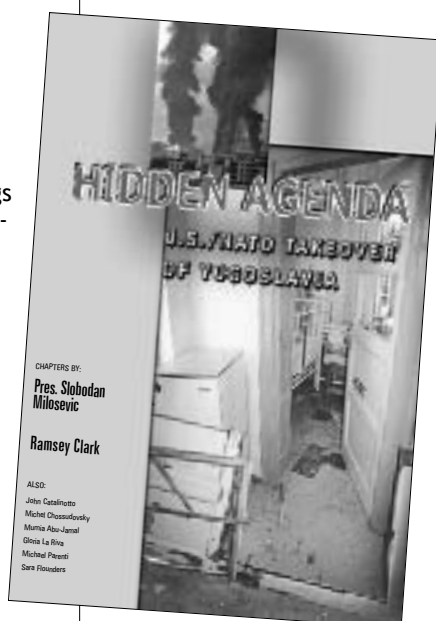
This book presents evidence gathered by dozens of nongovernmental hearings in 1999 and 2000 that the NATO countries engaged in a decade-long conspiracy to foment war in Yugoslavia in order to split it up.

Now NATO has military bases all over the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. They are the Roman legions for Western transnational corporations and Big Oil.

In the 40+ essays presented here, leading anti-war activists and analysts from many countries including former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic take up The Hague Tribunal, the occupation of Kosovo, media lies, war crimes and the blatant illegality of NATO aggression. Ramsey Clark writes on "Blaming the victim."

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Levantamiento popular derrota golpe de estado por la CIA en Venezuela

Continúa de página 12

barril de petróleo para Cuba”.

Otro golpe de estado ‘Hecho en EE.UU.’

El modelo del golpe de estado fue uno comprobado por el tiempo con todos los rasgos de un complot confeccionado por la CIA de los EE.UU. La alianza de la elite empresarial con el liderato reaccionario sindical; el intento de utilizar las conexiones con el estado mayor en los intereses del capital grande; el pretexto de disturbios de las masas para justificar intervención militar para “restaurar el orden y estabilidad” —todos estos fueron elementos usados en golpes de estados apoyados por los EE.UU. más notablemente en el caso de Chile en 1973.

A pesar de la negativa por la mayoría del mundo de reconocer el golpe de estado—el Grupo de Río de 19 naciones latinoamericanas condenaron la “interrupción del orden constitucional” el 13 de abril—el gobierno de los Estados Unidos abiertamente aceptó a los organizadores del golpe.

Una creciente montaña de evidencias muestran el extremo hasta el cual los Estados Unidos estaban envuelto en el golpe:

- El 16 de abril, la administración de Bush reconoció que Otto Reich, asistente al secretario para los asuntos del hemisferio occidental, estuvo en contacto telefónico con los líderes del golpe en la mañana del atentado. El 17 de abril el periódico The New York Times reportó que la admisión da la apariencia de que Reich estaba “dirigiendo el apoderamiento.” Reich tiene una larga historia de relaciones con las operaciones contrarrevolucionarias de la CIA en América Latina, particularmente contra Cuba y Nicaragua.
- La edición del 14 de abril del boletín de prensa STRATFOR, detalla los reportes de que tanto la CIA como el Departamento del Estado tuvieron una mano en los eventos que llevaron al golpe.
- El 15 de abril la agencia de información Reuters reportó detalles del relato por Chávez sobre un avión civil con registración de Estados Unidos parqueado cerca a donde el estuvo detenido durante el golpe.



- El 16 de abril, el The New York Times publicó lo que podría ser lo más cerca a una admisión oficial del gobierno estadounidense sobre su involucramiento en los eventos. “Nosotros no desuadimos a nadie” de llevar a cabo el golpe, según “un oficial del Departamento de Defensa quien estuvo envuelto en el desarrollo de la política hacia Venezuela.”
- El 22 de abril la edición de la revista Newsweek reportó que elementos del ejército venezolano habían estado en contacto con la Embajada de los Estados Unidos en febrero para discutir los planes del golpe. El gobierno de los Estados Unidos reconoce haberse reunido pero niega exhortar al golpe.
- En febrero, la AFL-CIO unió sus fuerzas con la famosa organización anti comunista la National Endowment for Democracy, (NED), para servir de anfitrión a los líderes de la derechista federación laboral CTV en Washington. La NED tuvo un papel de líder en la coordinación de la campaña política contra la revolución Sandinista en Nicaragua.
- Dos de los principales militares organizadores del golpe, Comandante en Jefe del Ejército, Efraín Vasquez y el General Ramírez Poveda, fueron graduados de la famosa Escuela de las Américas en los Estados Unidos, una escuela con una larga lista de organizadores de golpes y organizadores de escuadrones de la muerte entre sus alumnos antiguos.

Las masas populares devuelven el golpe

A pesar de la alianza entre los reaccionarios venezolanos y la administración de Bush, un derrame de gente obrera y pobre deshicieron el derrocamiento del gobierno de Chávez.

En Caracas, unas 200.000 de los barrios obreros descendieron hasta el Palacio

Presidencial en Miraflores exigiendo el regreso de Chávez. Barricadas fueron erigidas por toda la ciudad. Las masas populares se enfrentaron a las unidades policiales anti Chávez. Cientos de partidarios de Chávez perecieron o sufrieron heridas en los enfrentamientos.

Campesinos de todas partes de Venezuela se dirigieron a Caracas en autobuses para protestar contra el golpe.

La masiva manifestación de ira por las masas dio fuerza a la decisión de la unidades militares pro Chávez. Por toda la ciudad soldados con boinas rojas—el símbolo de los partidarios de Chávez—se unieron a las manifestaciones y rehusaron disparar contra la multitud. Soldados de las filas se fraternizaron con las masas.

La fuerza de intervención masiva dividió las filas militares y oficiales subalternos junto con algunos oficiales de más alto rango sin duda ansiosos de encontrarse en el lado ganador, de los reaccionarios conspiradores del golpe.

En pocos días, la presión de las masas pro Chávez forzaron el colapso del golpe desde adentro. Carmona renunció como “presidente interino” en la noche del 13 de abril. Chávez fue puesto en libertad temprano en la mañana del 14 de abril.

Carmona y unos 100 militares más y participantes políticos en el golpe fueron arrestados y acusados de rebelión, aunque muchos de ellos fueron luego puesto bajo arresto residencial esperando un juicio.

¿Ahora hacia dónde?

La victoria del pueblo venezolano en derrocar el golpe auspiciado por los Estados Unidos electrizó a los partidarios progresistas y obreros en toda América Latina y el mundo. Fue avergonzante para el imperialismo estadounidense, el cual arrogantemente desestimó el poder de las masas y sobre estimó su propia habilidad de dominar por orden.

En una muestra de increíble cinismo, Condoleeza Rice, la Asesora de la Seguridad Nacional de George Bush y defensora de los conspiradores del golpe, demandó que Chávez “respete los procesos constitucionales” una vez que regrese el poder. “Esta no es hora de una caza de brujas,” advirtió ella.

De hecho, los primeros mensajes de Chávez al retomar el poder fueron de conciliación. El pidió a sus partidarios a que

regresaran a sus hogares en paz. El hizo un llamado de unidad nacional. “Yo no tengo sed de venganza,” dijo él en un discurso a las cinco de la mañana del 14 de abril.

El 16 de abril, Chávez invitó a sus oponentes políticos a tomar parte en un consejo consultivo que discutiría las diferencias, una movida que ganó un apoyo reservado del Departamento de Estados de los Estados Unidos.

Pero en una señal de que él no estaba haciendo echando pié atrás a sus políticas, él anunció que el petróleo fluiría de nuevo a Cuba.

Las fuerzas pro-Chávez, aquellos están comprometidos al proceso que ellos llaman la Revolución Bolivariana, están en posición de tener una fuerza sin precedente. Ellos han sobrevivido los primeros intento de una contrarrevolución. Los autores del golpe se están escondiendo.

Los lealistas de Chávez tendrían todas la bases legales para enjuiciar a las organizaciones envueltas en el golpe—desde la jerarquía de la iglesia católica hasta el liderazgo de la CTV y hasta los propietarios pertenecientes al FEDECAMARAS. Ellos estarían dentro de sus derechos de llevar a cabo investigaciones masivas de los conspiradores y sus lazos con el imperialismo estadounidense.

Las masas pobres y obreras han mostrado su voluntad de lucha para al avance el proceso revolucionario que Chávez encabeza.

La principal pregunta es el extremo al cual las fuerzas pro-Chávez están organizadas para llevar a cabo estas tareas. La tarea principal en cualquier revolución es la creación de órganos con poderes populares que puede luchar y defender los intereses de las clases revolucionarias.

Ya, Chávez ha fomentado los “Círculos Bolivarianos”, grupos armados en barrios para defender la Revolución Bolivariana, exactamente para este propósito. No es accidente de que una de las tareas militares del régimen del golpe fue dirigido a los círculos Bolivarianos.

La Revolución Bolivariana en Venezuela ha sobrevivido su primera gran prueba. Su habilidad de resistir asaltos futuros e intentos de golpe, al igual que su habilidad de atender las necesidades sociales de la clase obrera, dependerá en la habilidad del liderazgo de profundizar la organización de la clases obreras y pobres.

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Stop Plan Colombia!

Part of the actions for the April 19-22 weekend in Washington, D.C., were protests of U.S. policy regarding Colombia. Washington has stepped up its military and economic intervention under the cover of the so-called Plan Colombia. Activists demonstrated against this policy on April 21.



Levantamiento popular derrota golpe de estado por la CIA en Venezuela

Por Andy McInerny

El proceso revolucionario que ocurriendo actualmente en Venezuela pasó una prueba crítica durante el fin de semana del 13 y 14 de abril. Cientos de miles de trabajadores y campesinos se pusieron de pie a través del país para derrotar un intento a un golpe de estado apoyado por los Estados Unidos y organizado por la clase capitalista de Venezuela en contra del Presidente Hugo Chávez.

Fue una victoria genuina del poder popular en la primera confrontación abierta entre clases sociales en el país suramericano con grandes riquezas de petróleo. Pero la victoria revela crudamente la cuestión fundamental de la Revolución Venezolana: como organizar a las clases populares—trabajadores, campesinos, soldados y estudiantes—para defender la revolución contra más asaltos por la oligarquía adinerada y el peso del imperialismo estadounidense.

La Revolución Venezolana, un proceso que abrió con la elección de Chávez en 1998, se encuentra en una encrucijada decisiva. Su avance requiere solidaridad internacional de parte de toda la gente progresista, especialmente dentro de los Estados Unidos.

Chávez y la “Revolución Bolivariana”

Venezuela es un país de América del Sur rico en minerales con costa caribeña. Es el tercer más grande exportador de petróleo del mundo para los EE.UU., que fue el exportador más grande cuando Chávez ganó la elección en 1998.

Pero las riquezas enormes que genera la industria petrolera nunca ha tenido un impacto en las vidas de la clase trabajadora de Venezuela. Más de un 80 por ciento viven en condiciones de pobreza. Un tanto por ciento de la población es dueño de un 60 por ciento de la tierra cultivable.

Las desigualdades sociales tremendas han causado explosiones de ultraje popular. En 1989, la clase dominante desató un asalto militar contra decenas de miles de personas que estuvieron demandando una baja en los precios de comestibles; más de 3000 personas fueron masacradas.

En 1992, oficiales militares de rango bajo encabezado por el Tte. Col. Hugo Chávez montaron un golpe de estado inexitoso en solidaridad con las grandes manifestaciones en contra de las medidas de austeridad dictados por el Fondo Monetario Internacional.

Después de pasar dos años en la cárcel, Chávez hizo una gira por el país abogando por lo que describió como una “Revolución



Bolivariana” en contra de la oligarquía venezolana que favorece a los EE.UU. Nombrado por el gran líder de la independencia, Simón Bolívar, el significado del bolivarismo ha llegado a ser el uso de las riquezas de Venezuela para beneficio de los pueblos de América Latina, así como la unidad latinoamericana en contra de la dominación de los EE.UU.

Su elección de 1998 fue el resultado de una alianza entre su Movimiento Quinta República, basado en los oficiales militares de rango bajo y los soldados y los partidos de la clase trabajadora e izquierdistas. Su nuevo gobierno comenzó a desarticular la base política del poder de la oligarquía rica. Los dos partidos políticos principales de la clase dominante —la Alianza Democrática y el Partido Social Cristiano COPEI— básicamente colapsaron. Una nueva constitución y Asamblea Nacional formalizaron e institucionalizaron muchas de las características políticas progresistas de la nueva República Bolivariana.

En el ámbito de relaciones extranjeras, el gobierno de Chávez evitó la postura tradicional de servilismo frente al imperialismo estadounidense. Chávez viajó a Iraq para visitar con el Presidente Saddam Hussein. Él alentó a un OPEP independiente. Él negoció un acuerdo proporcionando petróleo con condiciones favorables a la Habana, República de Cuba. Rehusó participar en la campaña militar del Pentágono contra las insurgencias marxistas en Colombia.

Comenzando en junio, el gobierno vene-



zolano empezó a cambiar el enfoque de su atención desde el ámbito político hacia la economía. En noviembre, Chávez firmó un paquete de 49 leyes dirigiéndose a las desigualdades sociales del país. Lo principal de estas leyes fue una reforma agraria y una legislación dirigida a restringir el poder de la antigua oligarquía en las empresas estatales, especialmente la compañía estatal petrolera, Petróleos de Venezuela.

La clase dominante de Venezuela que favorece a los EE.UU. se ha estado quejando desde las elecciones de 1998 sobre la política extranjera independiente de Chávez e igual en contra de su retórica populista. Pero cuando comenzó a hacer cosas afectando a sus riquezas vastas y la propiedad privada, el quejar se volvió en oposición verdadera.

Patrones encabezan oposición a Chávez

El centro de la oposición al gobierno de Chávez es la FEDECAMARAS, la asociación nacional de empresas privadas. El 10 de diciembre, los propietarios de negocios e industrias cerraron sus puertas en un cierre patronal en un intento de forzar a Chávez de reversar a su política económica.

Los patrones de FEDECAMARAS han podido contar con el apoyo del liderato reaccionario de la federación sindical CTV. Tradicionalmente, la CTV ha sido un órgano del partido Acción Democrática, uno de los dos partidos tradicionales de la elite venezolana. Pretende representar a un 18 por ciento de la fuerza laboral, casi totalmente en las industrias donde los trabajadores reciben salarios relativamente más altos.

Más allá de ser corruptos y odiados por millones de trabajadores venezolanos, el liderato de la CTV es completamente controlado políticamente por la elite pro imperialista. Por ejemplo, los líderes de la CTV fueron entre los primeros a condenar el acuerdo petrolero del gobierno de



Venezuela con Cuba.

El intento de golpe de estado del 12 de abril fue precedido por tres días de manifestaciones auspiciados por FEDECAMARAS, y apoyado por la CTV. El pretexto de las manifestaciones fue los intentos de Chávez de restringir a los poderes de la elite política en la gerencia de Petróleos de Venezuela.

A pesar del fomento desbordado de la prensa principal de Venezuela, todavía la propiedad y controlada por elementos de la clase dominante, las protestas fallaron en apoyo más allá de las clases medias más adineradas. El periódico británico, The Independent describió la escena en la ciudad capitalina de Caracas el 11 de abril, durante el segundo día de las protestas: “En la zona céntrica y los distritos del oeste de la capital, generalmente más pobre que en las partes del este, los negocios siguieron operando casi normalmente, con la mayoría de la gente ignorando la llamada a la huelga. El tránsito pesado llenó las calles como siempre y la mayoría de las tiendas se quedaron abiertas”.

Con la falta de apoyo amplio, los organizadores contrarrevolucionarios decidieron organizar una provocación. El 11 de abril, encabezaron una manifestación para confrontar a los partidarios de Chávez, concentrados frente al palacio presidencial en Miraflores.

Chávez mandó a la guardia nacional separar a las dos manifestaciones. Pero los derechistas no aceptaron ser denegado su pretexto por la violencia. Francotiradores abrieron fuego contra la multitud en pro de Chávez, matando a dos personas de inmediato. Policías leales al alcalde de Caracas, opositor a Chávez, Alfredo Peña, también abrieron fuego contra la manifestación en pro de Chávez.

De las 11 personas reportadas muertas, seis eran partidarios de Chávez. Observadores reportan que la mayoría de los cientos heridos en la batalla que ocurrió entonces también fueron de entre los partidarios de Chávez.

La batalla si sirvió su propuesta. Durante las horas de la madrugada del día 12, elementos militares arrestaron a Chávez y declararon al jefe de FEDECAMARAS, Pedro Carmona como presidente. Este gobierno ilegítimo de inmediato reveló su cara reaccionaria. La Asamblea Nacional, una victoria destacada de la campaña de Chávez fue abolida y partidarios de Chávez se escondieron. Todas las leyes económicas de Chávez fueron rescindidas.

Un gerente de Petróleos de Venezuela, Edgar Paredes, dijo a una conferencia de prensa el 12 de abril: “Ni siquiera un solo



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