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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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PHOTO: PETER MAIDEN

Marine resister Steven Funk and Hari Dillon.

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Bush sends new troops to Iraq

Talk of handing over authority is election ploy

By Deirdre Griswold

As anti-war forces opposing the occupation of both Iraq and Palestine prepare for global demonstrations on March 20, the Bush administration is desperately trying to divert attention at home from the disaster it has created in Iraq. Even as tens of thousands more troops are being sent to the Middle East, Bush is jumping before the cameras to bash same-sex marriage or claim improvements in the economy—anything but talk about the casualties coming home and the tens of thousands of new troops being sent over there.

Democratic front-runners John Kerry and John Edwards are also softpedaling the issue of the war. What they do say differs little from Bush. Kerry's web site says he has a plan for "winning the peace in post-Saddam Iraq, trying the former Iraqi leader, and building a lasting coalition to support our operations." Edwards seldom

speaks of Iraq, but his web site reminds readers that he was a co-sponsor of the resolution that gave Bush the authority to wage the war.

Meanwhile, the misery and instability for millions of Iraqi people created by the U.S. war and occupation won't go away, not even to accommodate the political ambitions of the U.S. commander-in-chief.

In a country that once could boast of a modern economy and model education and health systems, and that survived a decade of sanctions because of a food rationing program declared one of the best in the world by the UN, life has become so precarious that further resistance is inevitable.

Bush claims to have a plan to reduce U.S. forces in Iraq. It's not happening. Thousands of U.S. soldiers are finally coming home now, but they are being replaced by fresh troops, including 25,000 Marines and thousands more

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Saturday
March 20
Global Day of Action

End Colonial Occupation from Iraq to Palestine & Everywhere!



Bring the Troops Home Now!

Stop the Attacks on Civil Rights & Civil Liberties!
Stand Against Racism Here & Abroad
Money for Jobs, Health Care & Schools, Not for War!

Call Initiators and Endorsers Include:

A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition
Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition
Arab Muslim American Federation
Free Palestine Alliance
Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation
Muslim Student Association
National Lawyers Guild
and others

NEW YORK: 12 noon
Opening Rally, Madison Sq. Park
Madison Ave. and 23rd St.

SAN FRANCISCO
Gather at 11 am at Dolores Park
(18th St. & Dolores St.)
with a march to Civic Center

LOS ANGELES
March & rally gathering at
12 noon at Hollywood & Vine.

CHICAGO
The March 20 Anti-War Organizing Coalition
Gather at 12 noon. March step-off
from Michigan & Pearson,
one block north of Chicago Ave.
1:30 PM Rally at Federal Plaza,
Dearborn & Adams.

Enron indictments meant to hide economic failures

By Heather Cottin

The day after Enron's chief executive, Jeff Skilling, did the "perp walk" for the TV cameras at his Feb. 19 federal indictment, Business Times called the event "the grand finale of the government's assault on corporate crime." Skilling could face an \$80 million fine and 325 years in prison. But his expensive lawyers are not worried.

For U.S. capitalism, this is far from its first brush with widespread scandal. From the railroad barons buying up the land for a song in the 19th century through to the Teapot Dome scandal in the 1920s, capitalism's growth here was synonymous with theft. The difference this time is that instead of a corollary to rapid growth the theft is an attempt to cover up decline.

Reuters reported Feb. 19 that lawyers "would not be surprised if this case ended without any charges against Enron head Ken Lay," a major contributor to George W. Bush's past election campaigns. Most other capitalists who profited from corporate scandals that netted billions of dollars in the past several years face no indictments, fines or jail time.

During the heyday of the corporate scandals, "even as investors were losing 70 percent, 90 percent, even all of their holdings, top officials were getting immensely, extraordinarily, obscenely wealthy." (Fortune, Sept. 2, 2002)

During the past two administrations, failing firms managed to loot pension funds and investors of hundreds of billions of dollars by lies, accounting deceptions, and other forms of capitalist chicanery. Martha Stewart, who allegedly pocketed a mere \$51,000 from illegal stock tips, and a tiny handful of unlucky managers and investors face charges or are in jail for fraud and insider trading. Most of the big perpetrators are free.

When frauds at Enron and WorldCom, Adelphia, Tyco, Global Crossing, Quest, Xerox, MicroStrategy, ImClone, AOL-Time Warner, K-Mart, Citigroup and J. P. Morgan Chase were revealed, Washington came to the rescue of Wall Street to assure investors this could never happen again.

Congress passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. But it was just for show. One senator commented after President Bush signed it, "Given the tough law, they're basically saying, 'We're not going to use it.'" (Washington Post Nov. 8, 2002)

Washington then took 500 FBI agents off corporate crime investigations and deployed them in the "War on Terror."

Washington needs the public to believe the perpetrators were bad apples in an otherwise moral and righteous self-correcting capitalist system. And Washington is wary of alienating its corporate cronies. "We're not going to have what I would call a lynch-mob mentality with respect to any corporate executive," said Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson, head of the inter-agency Corporate Fraud Task Force.

The twin ploys of indicting a few managers and writ-

ing a couple of "get tough" laws is supposed to reassure investors. "As far as messages to the corporate community, the indictment does the trick." (Reuters, Feb. 18)

But that's a lie. All this duplicity is intrinsic to the capitalist system.

What did Skilling and his partners in crime former chief accounting officer Richard Causey and chief financial officer Andy Fastow—who's in prison already—actually do?

They sold nothing for something. They appropriated what wasn't theirs, or what wasn't there, and sold it for billions of bucks.

In selling worthless stock, cooking the books, disguising losses as profits, Skilling and the other thieves not only defrauded investors and stole the pensions, jobs and security of their employees, they exemplified the system of capitalism.

Karl Marx's analysis over a century ago showed that commodities are the basis of the capitalist system. Their production and sale, and the surplus value made from the labor of the workers, create profits for the capitalists.

Now the world, despite globalization, is in a deep economic crisis. The sale of commodities and services has fallen. In the United States every corporation, financial institution, almost every worker, every state and certainly the federal government are in debt.

Capitalism has entered a period of massive overproduction. Capitalists have laid off tens of millions of workers globally—3 million in the United States in the last three years alone.

Despite their World Trade Organization, Free Trade Area of the Americas, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, despite their global investment frenzy, despite their control over the creation of banking and bankruptcy laws—there is nothing the capitalists can do about saving their own system.

Globalization has only spread the stench of corporate corruption. Major U.S. firms are embroiled in major frauds and conspiracies and have been indicted in India, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. While Washington decries corruption in other countries, criminal practices dominate U.S. business.

They dress it up and call it "white collar crime." At over \$400 billion a year, U.S. corporate criminals steal 20 times what is taken in burglaries, theft and street crime. And they rarely go to jail. The FBI doesn't even keep track of their crimes.

The frauds perpetrated by owners and executives at Adelphia, WorldCom, Quest, Enron and dozens of other firms, investment houses and banks in the past few years involved a deception that made investors believe that a company that was losing money was actually making profits.

The fact that this practice is widespread shows that capitalist system is in deep trouble. It is this truth that is obscured by the media circus over Jeff Skilling, Martha Stewart, and the token executives whose indictments will do nothing to save the rotting system. □

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LOS ANGELES

Every Friday

Workers World Party weekly meetings at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 7. At 422 S. Western. Phone (213) 500-0529 for info.

NEW YORK

Fri., Feb. 27

Workers World Forum on "The 2004 Capitalist Elections—the Lesser Evil or Class Independence." 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) At 55 W. 17th St., 5th fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

Sat., Feb. 28

Emergency demonstration against a new coup d'etat in Haiti. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. beginning at Utica Ave and Eastern Parkway and marching to Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn. The committee includes Fanmi Lavalas, Patisan Jezikri, the Haiti Action Committee, the Haiti Support Network, Ajoupa, OBNH, Plusieurs Organisations Regionales, Leve Kanpe, Komite Sipou pou PPN, and the International Action Center. For more information call (212) 633-6646 or (718) 434-8100.

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SEXISM & SPORTS:

the playing field of profit

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The historic struggle for women's liberation in the United States, celebrated in March, continues today from legislatures to factories—to the sports arena. Title IX, the landmark legislation passed by Congress in 1972, prohibited sex discrimination at schools receiving federal money. It also launched an exciting expansion of women's athletic teams and participation by women in sports at every level, from high school to professional.

But sexism and oppression are still serious factors in women's relation to sports. This is seen in the recent spate of "sex scandals" at NCAA Division I schools like the University of Colorado-Boulder football program.

Katie Hnida, a former place-kicker for Colorado, recently revealed in a Sports Illustrated interview that she had endured years of verbal and physical sexual abuse at the hands of male teammates—groped in team huddles, called sexually graphic names, and, one night as she sat watching TV, was raped by a teammate she had thought of as a friend. (Sports Illustrated, Feb. 23)

Hnida, an honor-roll student, now plays for the University of New Mexico, where this season she made football history by becoming the first woman to score in Division I football by kicking two points-after-touchdown in a Lobos victory.

In response to Hnida's comments, Head Coach Gary Barnett made sexist and dismissive remarks. For this, Barnett has been suspended by the president of UC.

Six women, non-players, have now come forward to say they were sexually assaulted by football players since Barnett became coach in 1999.

Three of the women who came forward have filed a lawsuit against UC. Their testimony shines a blazing light on athletic programs' big-business practices.

In order to recruit top high-school prospects, college sports programs put on "sex parties," hire call girls, "escorts," and strippers, and lure young college women to serve as "hostesses" to entertain the 16- and 17-year-old high-school players who come to campus expecting sex.

A former Northwestern lineman, Chris Leeder, says: "Selling sex to recruits is not

something they invented at Colorado. Every school does it." (Sports Illustrated)

The result? Sexual abuse, rape and victimization of women who are then assigned blame for the situation. Joyce Lawrence, co-chair of the UC Board of Trustees, questioned why the raped women were "putting themselves in a very threatening position." (Sports Illustrated)

In addition to sexism, racist attitudes in sports are shockingly common. Male athletes, often young men of color, are demonized as "criminal" and inherently violent, or as incompetent.

Examples abound: for example, the vilification of Philadelphia 76ers basketball star Allen Iverson for his hip-hop style; or ESPN commentator Rush Limbaugh's attacks on Donovan McNabb, Philadelphia Eagles All-Pro quarterback and former NFL Player of the Year. Both Iverson and McNabb are African-American.

What is really going on here? Sports sociologist Richard Lapchick, director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida, estimates that one out of seven female college students is sexually assaulted on campuses. He says: "I really don't believe that athletes are disproportionately involved. They're part of a huge problem in our country. And where a climate of a low regard for women is created ... then it's kind of open season." (Associated Press, Feb. 21)

The Miles Foundation reports that 30 percent of female U.S. armed-service veterans report rape or attempted rape during active duty. Reports of male troops raping and sexually abusing female service members in Iraq are so serious that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has had to order a Pentagon inquiry.

Brutal impact on women

Economic pressures in a declining economy and cutbacks in student-loan accessibility under the Bush administration are having a brutal impact on college-age women. Some are turning to sex work or prostitution to survive.

Juli Parker, director of the Women's Resource Center at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, told Workers World: "I have women students who strip for money, and they do it because they

need the money. Why wait tables three nights a week when you can strip once a week for the same amount of money?"

Young women are also living in an era when the women's liberation movement has opened up chances for them to connect to the power of their own physical capability and sexuality. Parker says: "I can see why women would volunteer themselves to do something like this [hostessing for recruiting parties], both if they are financially strapped and also if they might want to explore their sexuality.

"Women are trying to explore their sexuality. I see young women who are more comfortable in their bodies, even letting bodies show when they don't fit the comfortable Barbie doll image, women who are more confident at bodily self-expression.

"They might think they are exploring their sexuality in a safe place but then they are not. There is a lot of promotion around women's sexuality that can be taken, utilized and twisted."

Who benefits?

And who benefits from this brutal twisting of women's lives? The big business of college sports and related corporate sponsors.

According to Linda Robertson of the Miami Herald: "Today, the college sports behemoth must be fed tons of cash—for the \$2 million football coach's salary, for the weight room and athletic department offices that get renovated five times as often as the cancer lab, for debt service on the stadium and area ... for booster-club cocktail parties. These athletic programs have become corporations." (June 19, 2003)

An NCAA study in 2000 showed that the average total revenue per institution in Division I-A sports was \$21.9 million. The highest reported total revenue for a Division I-A university was just over \$73 million. If institutional support was excluded from the budgets, there had been a nearly 124-percent increase in profits in athletic programs in two years.

Corporations invest millions of dollars in sports to reap billions. According to the Daily Pennsylvanian, the Ivy League University of Pennsylvania athletic program gets from \$500,000 to \$1 million

annually from contracts with businesses seeking a high-class showcase. General Motors signed a \$600 million contract with NBC to be "the car and truck of the U.S. Olympic team" through 2008. The 11 top sponsors of the Sydney Olympics, which included McDonald's, Nike and Coca-Cola, paid a total of \$605 million.

And corporations are putting their names on stadiums—names that come and go with the boom-and-bust capital fortune of the companies, as Enron Stadium in Houston is renamed Minute Maid Park and the National Car Rental Center in Florida becomes the Office Depot Center.

Meanwhile, the young athletes recruited by the colleges struggle to graduate, with many students of color disproportionately affected. The graduation rate for African-American male basketball student-athletes at Division I-A institutions is 38 percent. Also, athletes sometimes suffer serious injuries. If these are incurred in "voluntary" off-season workouts, the student-players are not covered by the school's insurance.

The pressures are most intense in the revenue-producing sports. "The further a sport is from the money, the higher the graduation rate," Indiana University-Bloomington English Professor Murray Sperber said in a 2002 interview.

Some male student-athletes in California are attempting to unionize to win better health coverage and improve sports scholarships that now don't cover the actual cost of attending school. Compared to the huge streams of revenue these athletes generate for colleges, their compensation is small.

The breaking scandal at the University of Colorado is finally drawing attention to the way women are used, attacked and discarded in the competition to make profits out of sports. It is apparent how this special exploitation of women is tied together with the regular function of capitalism in college sports.

Marx and Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "It is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private." □

Cop goes free in Stansbury slaying

By Imani Henry
New York

On Feb 17, a Brooklyn grand jury refused to bring any charges against white New York City police officer Richard S. Neri Jr. for the shooting death of unarmed African-American youth Timothy Stansbury Jr. Neri had shot Stansbury in the chest on Jan. 24 as the youth opened the door to the roof of his building in Brooklyn's Louis Armstrong housing developments.

Stansbury was on his way back to a birthday party with two friends. He was crossing the roof to get to the adjoining building because the front-door intercoms to let people in seldom work, according to neighbors.

Stansbury, who was 19, had a job at McDonald's and just finished getting his General Education Diploma. He planned to go on to a community college and start a family with his girlfriend.

There has been much outrage from

Timothy's family and community about the verdict. Because Brooklyn District Attorney, Charles J. Hynes had given lip-service to bringing charges and Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly proclaimed the shooting was "unjustified," many in the community had hoped that the grand jury would have brought criminal charges.

According a Feb. 18 New York Times article, Officer Neri told the grand jury that he fired unintentionally when he was startled as Stansbury pushed open the rooftop door. The article went on to say that the grand jury determined that the shooting was more accident than crime—that Officer Neri's conduct was not a "gross deviation" from what would be expected from a normal person in that situation.

The boyfriend of Stansbury's sister told the media, "We understand they are here to serve and protect, but if I shot a cop, they'd put me under the prison, not in it."

The following day, Feb. 20, supporters and members of the Stansbury family took

their outrage to New York Police Department headquarters and to City Hall. Nearly 100 protesters, led by Timothy Stansbury Sr., City Councilmember Charles Barron and members of the December 12 Movement, marched into the middle of 1 Police Plaza. There they formed a circle and shouted "Justice for young Timothy, murdered by New York police" and "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!" under the glowering, hate-filled eyes of New York City cops.

Stansbury Sr. told the crowd that he had never even received an apology or word of condolence from the police or killer cop Neri. He spoke of Timothy's life and dreams and put his murder in a pattern of police violence against the Black community.

The protesters then marched through crowded Lower Manhattan streets to City Hall Park, where December 12 Movement organizers Omawale Clay and attorney Roger Wareham called for organizing to shut the city down as the only effective



Timothy Stansbury Sr.

PVN PHOTO

way to stop racist police violence and terrorism.

Feb 19 was the fifth anniversary of the murder of West African immigrant Amadou Diallo in the Soundview section of the Bronx in 1999. Amadou was shot at over 41 times, as he held his wallet in his hands. Though the Diallo family won

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California supermarkets

Community, labor back workers' struggle

By John Beacham
Los Angeles

At a militant, spirited Feb. 19 rally and mass picket, community and labor joined together to turn up the heat as negotiations continued between the Food and Commercial Workers union and the greedy grocery bosses. The action took place at a Vons in Los Angeles. Some well-known people in California and Los Angeles labor and others blocked the store's entrance in an act of civil disobedience.

Some of those arrested were: Dolores Huerta of the United Farm Workers, Service Employees Local 660 President Alejandro Stephens, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 11 President Maria-Elena Durazo, the Rev. William Johnson of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, and State Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg.

At the predominantly working-class rally, UNITE President Bruce Raynor put bosses throughout the country on notice: "We built this country. It's our country. If they think they can take it back, they've got another thing coming. This is a national fight. If these bastards think they're fighting 70,000 workers, they're wrong. They're fighting 13 million and more."

Dolores Huerta (shown in photos at right), greeted warmly by the broadly multi-national picketers, said: "This is the beginning of a big war against labor. But don't worry, they will never break the spirit of workers. We will win."

The Feb. 19 rally and picket showed once again that in the five months of the strike here in Los Angeles, community support has grown and strengthened. ANSWER's Community Action Project to Support Labor was on the spot once again to participate in the action. The Los Angeles Strikers Solidarity Organization and the National Lawyers Guild were also there.

That same day, six other coordinated rallies were held throughout Southern California. □



WW PHOTOS; PRESTON WOOD

Meeting builds solidarity with MOVE 9

By Imani Henry
New York

On Feb. 22, a packed audience enjoyed an evening of poetry and politics here at the International Action Center office in solidarity with the MOVE organization—the catalyst behind the international movement to free African American political prisoner and journalist Mumia Abu Jamal.

MOVE is currently raising funds to place a full-page ad in the African American newspaper Philadelphia New Observer during the week of May 13 to commemorate the bombing of the MOVE house back in 1985.

The May 13, 1985, bombing of the MOVE Organization, in which Philadelphia state and local police agencies dropped a bomb in an African American residential neighborhood, killed 11 MOVE members including children. It also marked the state's second major assault against the MOVE organization.

In 1978, the police had assaulted the Move headquarters and residence. Nine MOVE members—Chuck Africa, Debbie Africa, Delbert Africa, Edward Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Mike Africa and Phil Africa—were arrested and convicted of killing Police Officer James J. Ramp. All were given prison sentences ranging from 30 to 100 years.

All remain in prison except Merle Africa, who died in prison in 1998 under mysterious circumstances.

The ad will call for the release of the remaining eight MOVE political prisoners.

On the Feb. 22 program were poets Black August and Queen Goddess, and the hip hop

group Seeds of Wisdom, who are youth members of MOVE. The featured speaker was MOVE Minister of Communications Ramona Africa, who is the only adult survivor of the 1985 bombing of the MOVE headquarters.

"I was asked once, 'What makes MOVE unique,'" Ramona Africa said. "It's that after 30 years, we are still here, still strong. ... There is no other option but to do this work. This system has murdered people all over the world. This why we must get rid of this system."

For more information on the ad campaign, the MOVE Organization can be reached at (610) 499-0979. □

Stansbury slaying

Continued from page 3

money in a civil action the four white cops were acquitted of murder charges in a state court.

This racist travesty of justice was no accident, demonstrating the role the courts play in cases of racist police brutality. It is rare that cops are even brought up on criminal charges for the murders of African-American people and other people of color. With the exception of Abner Louima's case—a Haitian immigrant who was beaten and raped with a handle of a plunger in the bathroom of a police station in the summer of 1998—no cops have served jail time.

In recent years, following mass political struggle families of police brutality victims have won awards in civil suits. But the state has defended its front-line instruments of repression even where there actions arouse the communities they occupy. □

ON THE PICKET LINE
SUE DAVIS

NYC teachers reject contract

New York City's billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg jumped into the anti-union ring on Feb. 6 in what promises to be a long and bloody fight. His administration offered the teachers' union an eight-page contract that would eliminate work rules and other provisions which for more than 40 years have spelled out the rights of the city's 80,000 teachers. On top of that, no raises were offered.

Calling the contract "a total kick in the teeth," United Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten warned that negotiations will go nowhere as long as such a contract is on the table.

Proposed terms, for example, would end class size limits and seniority rights except in cases of layoffs or reassignments based on changes in school staffing needs. And the city would be able to award merit pay to teachers, a traditional anti-worker, divide-and-conquer tactic.

Weingarten charged that the city had violated state labor law by discarding the existing contract that expired last May 31 and drawing up a totally new one. "I think [the mayor] has decided that he can't improve the schools, so why not try and create the teachers as a scapegoat."

It's no secret that Bloomberg, who expanded the mayor's power when he took over management of the city's schools last year, is itching to trash the longstanding teachers' contract.

Hotel & Restaurant organizing in D.C.

Dozens of labor, community and student activists staged a lunchtime sit-in at the posh Garden Café in Washington's State Plaza Hotel on Feb. 4. Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 25 organizers organized the sit-in to support the State Plaza workers, mostly Latino and Vietnamese immigrants, who voted in the union by a two-to-one margin last fall.

The activists, who occupied most of the tables during the restaurant's busiest hour, ordered only coffee or tea to highlight the injustice of the highly profitable restaurant refusing to pay workers a livable wage. After generously tipping the wait staff, the activists marched out singing, "We shall not be moved." Maybe that will make State Plaza owner Richard Bernstein reconsider his refusal to negotiate with Local 25. (Union City, Feb. 9)

Washington parking workers saw their recent 3.8-percent wage increase wiped out by a 4.4 percent hike in health-care costs. That's just one of many reasons why they're organizing to join the union's Parking & Service Workers Local 27. Their campaign is winning community support. The tenants of 1101 17 Street held a picket line in front of their building Feb. 12 to support the parking workers.

Wal-Mart forced to pay overtime

A federal jury in Portland has ruled that 83 workers at 18 Wal-Mart stores in Oregon are entitled to compensation for unpaid overtime hours worked from 1994 to 1999. Payments are expected to range from a few hundred dollars to several thousand for each worker.

About three dozen similar lawsuits against the world's biggest retailer—Wal-Mart employs some 1.2 million low-paid, non-unionized workers in 3,500 U.S. stores—are pending nationwide. (New York Times, Feb. 18)

Boycott Boston Market

Auto Workers Region 9A took its boycott of Boston Market to Manhattan's 23rd Street on Feb. 14. The union set up an informational picket line at a branch of the restaurant chain to educate people about its three-year campaign to organize Chef Solutions, a 170-worker bakery in North Haven, Conn. Boston Market is one of the bakery's customers. Lufthansa Airline, the bakery's parent company, is also included in the boycott.

Chef Solutions' labor history stinks. A National Labor Relations Board investigation found that bakery officials forced several women workers to have sex with them, made death threats against a worker if he testified at a labor hearing, and fired two workers illegally. The board found that Chef Solutions had racked up more than 20 unfair labor practices. In a recent settlement with the Labor Board the company promised not to engage in further anti-union activities. Meanwhile, the organizing drive continues.

Unionize Chef Solutions! Boycott Boston Market!

Whole Foods struggle

Whole Foods, the national chain that boasts of being environmentally friendly, sure isn't friendly to union organizing. After the workers at its Madison, Wis., store voted to affiliate with Food and Commercial Workers Local 1444 in July 2002, Whole Foods' management, led by owner John Mackey, stepped up an anti-union campaign aimed at decertifying the union.

When it was discovered that anti-union staffers were soliciting signatures on company time, the Labor Board stepped in and began conducting an investigation. Meanwhile, Madison workers have set up a Web site explaining why they need a union: wholeworkersunite.org. Be sure to sign the petition supporting the workers when visiting the site. □

While Kerry, Edwards posture about jobs

Desperate Bush lashes out at same-sex marriage

By Fred Goldstein

On Feb. 8 President George W. Bush went on NBC's "Meet the Press" and told interviewer Tim Russert, "I'm a war president." Most of the interview was taken up by Bush stoking fears of terrorism and hatred for Saddam Hussein.

Bush was facing falling poll numbers just at the moment that his presidential campaign was going into full swing. He was trying to change the subject from the debacle in Iraq, with its growing cost and casualties, the jobless recovery, tax cuts for the rich, bankrupting the treasury, and many other disagreeable topics that make him politically vulnerable. The interview had a tone of political desperation.

Since then, there have been more U.S. casualties. More Iraqi police and collaborators have been killed. The plans to "legitimize" a puppet regime by June 30 have fallen apart.

At home, the economic "recovery" is still all on the profit side, enriching the bosses without re-creating even a fraction of the 3 million jobs lost over the past two and a half years. Infant mortality has risen in the U.S. for the first time in over 40 years.

Bush's close advisers had decided it was time to change the subject again. So Bush came out for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage. This was a gambit calculated to placate the right wing and also to push politics to the right all across the board.

In a solemn, right-wing demagogic style, Bush declared that "after more than two centuries of American jurisprudence, and millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization." He then declared the "preservation of marriage a matter of national importance."

Bush was reacting to a genuine rebellion from below that surfaced in San Francisco as thousands of same-sex couples flocked to the city from all over the country and the world to get married. It was the first time that any organ of capitalist government had legally recognized same-sex marriage, and it opened the flood gates for the lesbian-gay-bi-trans communities across the country to pressure local and state governments for marriage licenses.

It is a measure of Bush's political vulnerability that he had to recognize the right of states to enact some form of civil union. That was a genuine concession forced upon a right-wing president and shows the power of the mass movement. But it is meant to stop the struggle for full equality in its tracks and limit it to civil union, which does not confer the same rights as marriage. It leaves the lesbian-gay-bi-trans communities with the onus of struggling in every state house and every city hall across the country for rights that, in places where they can be won, must be negotiated state by state and city by city.

Reaction above, rebellion below

The Bush forces are showing a certain narrow-minded consistency with this proposal. Once again they have subordinated the broader interests of the capitalist class and U.S. imperialism to their narrow electoral concerns. Placating the right-wing in order to shore up his electoral base shows

the world that the U.S. capitalist government at the national level has used bigotry and intolerance to counter the growing grassroots movement which is surging forward fighting for its democratic demands and making breakthroughs from San Francisco to New Mexico to Massachusetts.

This ruling is bound to backfire, not just on Bush, but on the capitalist establishment as a whole. A section of the ruling class has resigned itself to the fact that they can no longer hold back the tide. They were hoping to limit concessions by managing the process in an orderly way. This constitutional amendment is bound to stoke the fires of resistance and engender splits even in the Republican camp.

It further shows the self-serving character of Bush and how quick he is to abandon his previous position, which was to leave things to the states. He is willing to precipitate developments with far-reaching consequences, sacrificing the interests of millions of people, to get a minor political advantage. This harsh proposal to codify discrimination in the Constitution could further open the eyes of the general population to the injustice of the treatment given to the lesbian, gay, bi and trans community and lay the basis for broadening solidarity.

Kerry and Edwards: election demagogy

John Kerry and John Edwards, the establishment candidates running for the Democratic nomination, both have positions that are reactionary and opportunist on this issue. They are both against same-sex marriage but in favor of civil unions. Of course, they both distanced themselves from Bush's constitutional amendment proposal, but just to be sure that no one made the mistake of thinking that had anything to do with being in favor of same-sex marriage, they each said that the federal government should stay out of it and let the states decide.

The electioneering demagogy of Kerry and Edwards is not confined to the question of lesbian-gay-bi-trans rights. Both are softly denouncing the quagmire in Iraq; both are claiming that they will bring jobs; both are promising to restore U.S. imperialism's status in the world; both are promising to rescind parts of Bush's tax cuts. In general, both are pandering to the people in an attempt to unseat Bush.

Of course, they both voted for the war. In fact, Edwards was a co-sponsor of the war resolution. And, since the Iraqi resistance has undermined all the triumphalist expectations of the ruling class, both have denounced Bush for carrying out the war that they voted for. Each has made the remarkable discovery that the Pentagon cannot subdue the Iraqi people alone. Thus each of them is calling for the internationalization of the occupation.

Edwards is unapologetic about voting for the war. Kerry tries to pretend that if he had known what Bush was going to do, he would have voted the other way. What is a war resolution for, except war? Bush had already declared the UN virtually irrelevant at the time of the vote, so it was clear what his intentions were. Thus, as far as war goes, both are loyal servants of imperialism.

Jobs programs and capitalism

As for the question of creating jobs, both have varying versions of tax breaks and financial incentives that they would give to capitalists for investing, for not exporting jobs, etc. In other words, in the guise of creating jobs, both have schemes to give money to the bosses and hope they will create some jobs. But their programs are not to create jobs by hiring workers and paying them. That would be a real jobs program.

Both are attacking Bush for losing jobs. That is understandable in a capitalist election campaign. But the truth is that the jobs have been lost because of capitalism. For one thing, it has gone through a cycle of boom and bust. But even more importantly, the scientific-technological revolution has given the monopolies a vastly improved capability to speed up workers, to increase the rate of exploitation—known as productivity, and to distribute the production process across the globe in search of lower wages and higher profits. These are inherent developments in capitalism, which operates according to its own laws.

Giving money to bosses for them to create jobs only works when there are profits to be made and labor is required for exploitation. It is an unsatisfactory and temporary measure at best. Neither Bush, who promised 2.6 million jobs, nor Kerry nor Edwards can create jobs for the working class except by forcing the bosses to hire them, by hiring them in government jobs and by forbidding layoffs. In other words, a true jobs program under capitalism can only be implemented by waging a class war against the capitalists and their government and forcing concessions. Anything else is just election demagogy.

Creating jobs, like stopping war, requires an independent struggle of the working class, not just going to the election booth to pull the lever for which representatives of the millionaires and billionaires will rule.

Right now the masses are being inundated with electioneering by three capitalist candidates—Bush, Kerry and Edwards. Other candidacies have been deliberately and totally marginalized by the capitalist media, in accordance with rules established by the lords of communication at NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, FOX, and all the weekly magazines and dailies newspapers in the capitalist establishment. It is an

exercise in long practiced and perfected self-censorship, more effective than government censorship because it is voluntary and has the trappings of a free press.

Nader and the liberals

In the midst of the campaign, the media permitted Ralph Nader to momentarily insert himself into the spotlight. He announced his independent candidacy and on Feb. 22 was given time on "Meet the Press" to put forward his program. He declared Washington to be "corporate occupied territory."

Nader declared his determination to "challenge this two-party duopoly that's trending towards one-party districts all over this country." He told Russert: "The problem is that corporate government remains in Washington, whether it's Democrats or Republicans. The military-industrial complex, as Eisenhower pointed out, is getting bigger and devouring half of the federal government's budget's discretionary expenditure." And he said to Tim Russert, who challenged him over the differences between the Democrats and Republicans: "They're taking our country apart: massive poverty, massive child poverty, massive consumer debt, environmental devastation. That didn't occur, that didn't get worse under the Democrats? So basically, it's a question of both parties flunking, Tim: one with a D minus, the Republicans; one with a D plus, the Democrats. And its time to change the equation."

For declaring his independent candidacy, Nader provoked a storm of vitriol and invective from the liberal establishment. The Nation had written him a vicious, patronizing letter urging him not to run. Others followed suit. The morning after his appearance on the Russert show, he gave a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington where he pulled way back, at least for the moment, from his earlier fire and brimstone against the Democratic Party as a tool of big business culpable in the crimes against the people. Even though oversimplified, this had been the progressive content of his politics, which is embedded in a totally pro-capitalist utopian ideology.

The scurrilous attacks on Nader, regardless of how his campaign ultimately plays out, reveal the subservient nature of the liberals. They agree with him on the war, the Patriot Act, monopoly domination and so on, but they demand that he and everybody else remain within the confines of the two imperialist parties that have brought such devastation to the workers and oppressed over the last century.

This debate should only encourage genuine militants, opponents of imperialist plunder and capitalist exploitation, to stick to an independent, anti-capitalist struggle based upon promoting class-conscious ideology and action on the ground. □

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The history behind the unrest in Haiti

The talk excerpted here was given by Pat Chin at the New York Workers World Party Black History Month forum on Feb. 20.

The racist demonizing of Haiti continues today, aided and abetted by the capitalist media that accuse the Haitian government of human-rights violations, corruption and the use of armed gangs. These media call for the capitalist version of democracy while promoting opposition forces funded by the United States, much like they do with Cuba, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Yugoslavia and other countries that dare take an independent path. They did the same thing to Michael Manley's government in Jamaica in the 1970s and 1980s, and he wasn't even a revolutionary.

The first U.S. foreign aid—by slave owners George Washington and Thomas Jefferson—went to help the French suppress the Haitian revolution. The first U.S. sanctions ever were leveled against the new Haitian state.

Haiti has been vilified and kept in wrenching poverty as punishment for having had the audacity to free itself from slavery, while today resisting the restructuring dictates of U.S.-dominated financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

There are hundreds of thousands of Haitian immigrants in the United States. Many of them are refugees and undocumented. But that did not stop them from

joining the huge demonstration for immigrants' rights last October in Queens, N.Y. In Boston, the majority of the members of the bus drivers' union are Haitians. And they are present in large numbers in other unions.

Goods can be sold cheaply in the United States because Haitians are paid a dollar a day. The maquiladora production process is based primarily on the Haitian model.

The U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship that was finally overthrown by the masses in 1986 created stability for the cheap-labor model of exploitation to emerge and flourish. But with the revolutionary upsurge of the 1980s that ended Baby Doc Duvalier's regime, some of these companies fled Haiti to Central America, where conditions for the exploitation of sweatshop labor were more stable and hence more profitable.

Haiti provided Simon Bolivar with sanctuary, material and other support to carry out South America's liberation. The only thing the Haitians asked in return was for an end to slavery there. When you look at the flags of Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador you see the blue and red of the Haitian flag.

There were up to 27 foreign military incursions into Haiti from 1804, the year of independence, to 1915. In 1915, the United States invaded—and then occupied the country for decades. The year before, in 1914, U.S. Marines had invaded and seized the country's gold reserves,

which were later deposited into New York's National City Bank.

Haiti's first communist party was founded prior to a 1936 decree outlawing such parties. Nevertheless, in the 1950s and 1960s there were several communist parties. But they were basically run out of Haiti and many of their leaders killed by Duvalier. Armed resistance fighters were caught, killed or imprisoned and tortured with help from the CIA.

The Haitian Communist Party itself was infiltrated and taken over by Duvalier. Many young revolutionaries joined and then were either brainwashed into the Duvalierist way of thinking, were killed or imprisoned. One of the principal CPs that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s was the Haitian Liberation Movement. After 1986, when the masses forced Baby Doc Duvalier to flee Haiti, leaders of the Unified Communist Party returned home. But some of them opposed Aristide and the popular Lavalas movement that was sweeping the nation.

The destruction of the left under Duvalier created a vacuum, which gave rise to the liberation theology forces. Duvalier had expelled every foreign priest and prelate, including the head of the Haitian church, and installed Haitians loyal to him. But there were still many active priests in the movement, including Aristide, who led the struggle for justice and dignity along with other groups in the popular movement.



WW PHOTOS DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Pat Chin

The popular movement comprises mostly peasant organizations. One component of Haiti's popular movement is the National Popular Party, which evolved out of the mass movement known as the National Popular Assembly. Its Creole acronym is the PPN.

The PPN is a national revolutionary and anti-imperialist party based in the peasantry. The PPN is fighting for Haiti's national independence and against imperialist domination. The PPN is today on the barricades against the death-squad gangs trying to take over the country. The PPN defines itself as a democratic nationalist party but informally the leadership has a Marxist analysis and approach.

The U.S. and French imperialists have instigated another coup and the prospect of foreign military occupation to regain control of Haiti for super-economic exploitation. We must make our voices heard for the people of Haiti, in this their bicentennial year, and in solidarity always. □

The racist vilification of hip-hop

The talk excerpted here was given by Imani Henry at the New York Black History Month forum on Feb. 20.

Marxists must understand the historical legacy of slavery and racism on this generation of young urban people of color.

For example, as of 2003, AIDS is the number one killer of African-Americans between the ages of 18 and 25. In 2002 the U.S. Census Bureau reported that in 2001, 12 percent of people in the United States were living under the poverty line—and 23 percent of them were Black people.

Of the Black households headed by single women, 58.1 percent make less than \$25,000 a year. Thus, for Black children under 18, the percentage living in poverty is three times as high as that of white children.

Thirty percent of all Black children are born into poverty.

This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the ways that young people of color have been economically disenfranchised.

What I now want to focus on is the hip-hop culture, which was born out of the struggle for self-determination, specifically of Black and Latino urban youths.

Right now in almost every country, there is a hip-hop scene. Of course this is partially due to the billions of dollars used by the music conglomerates to market hip hop. But at the same time, hip-hop has by design always been a mass and accessible art form that did not lend itself to formal elitist study.

Its birthplace was New York City during the early 1970s. It was rooted in some of the most economically devastated communities like the South Bronx and Brooklyn.



Imani Henry

There are four elements of hip-hop as told by KRS One, a pioneer in the South Bronx movement. KRS One is of Caribbean heritage and was homeless as a youth.

There is "MCing" or rapping; "DJing", the spinning of the records; Break Dancing; and artistic expression through graffiti. Break Dancing, made popular in the 1980s, is rooted not only in African dance but also in Capoeira, a form of martial arts said to have been used by enslaved Africans in 1630 in Brazil during revolts against attacks by the Dutch and Portuguese armies.

Hip-hop culture, just like the communities it originated from, fell under heavy attack in the United States, ranging from national censorship campaigns to police attacks on hip-hop concerts.

Today, rap music is part of mainstream culture and hip-hop artists are some of the biggest celebrities in the music world. Most commercial forms of hip-hop culture have unfortunately praised misogyny, promoted anti-gay bigotry and glorified senseless violence, all in the name of making money. At the same time, the music industry on the whole also praises misogyny, is anti-gay and projects white supremacy, all in the name of making money.

To only target, criticize and demonize rap music for its backwardness when the entire music industry is backward is the real issue at hand. It is one thing when the Black community wants to debate the situation of the hip-hop scene today—and another when the media and the government launch racist attacks.

Major hip-hop artists have created foundations and programs that give back to the communities they come from. This includes the creation of anti-violence initiatives. Artists like Queen Latifah and TLC have become highly visible as spokespeople for AIDS prevention among youth. Hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons, the founder and head of Def Jam records, was the one of the first celebrities to speak out against the war on Iraq. When have the heads of Elektra or Arista Records come out for anything progressive?

Here in New York City, twice when the public schools were facing funding cuts, hip-hop artists like Sean "P. Diddy" Combs called for student walkouts to demand that there be no cuts.

Recently, there was a protest mounted in New York against Combs by the anti-sweatshop movement after it was revealed that his clothing line called "Sean John"

was produced by sweatshop labor. P. Diddy called a news conference within hours to apologize and to denounce the use of sweatshop labor. What does it mean when mostly white college students put an equal sign between a young Black businessperson and the multi-million-dollar corporations like Nike and the Gap? There can be no equal sign between peoples of oppressed nations and the white oppressor nation, regardless of their social status.

With all of his millions of dollars, P. Diddy is an African-American raised by a single mother. He has donated hundreds of computers to New York schools and given proceeds of his sneaker line to aid in the national struggle for reparations.

Would any rock star or white celebrity be made to feel guilty for bourgeois success? If you are a descendant of slaves, the message is: You cannot achieve the same success as your white counterparts.

There are many progressive hip-hop artists who use their talent as a weapon in the struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mumia embodies the struggle against the state and its prisons, cops and the racist death penalty.

Workers World Party is fighting so that urban youths of color will not have to face such oppression. We are fighting a system where getting a record deal or sport contract is seen as an alternative to selling drugs because higher education isn't an option.

We are fighting for a system where education and health care are free, where there is cure for AIDS, and where the racist death penalty is of the past. That system is socialism.

Henry is a well-known poet and cultural artist.

National oppression and the struggle for socialism

The talk excerpted here was given by Monica Moorehead at the New York Workers World Party Black History Month forum on Feb. 20.

As a Black person growing in the South during the 1950s, I experienced a “separate but equal” society: racist segregation.

As a 12-year-old living in Talladega, Ala., I eyewitnessed a white male cop going into a white-only women’s bathroom to “escort” my mother out.

In 1967, I attended a majority-white high school in Virginia whose fight song happened to be the pro-slavery anthem “Dixie.”

I began to seriously question whether all white people were born racist.

My questions on the origins of racism began to be answered once I met the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, a mass unit of Workers World Party. My introduction to the Party would eventually begin my journey of helping to put my personal experiences within a worldwide political context.

Marxism is the only scientific tool and guide for understanding revolutionary theory and for carrying out revolutionary action. The Party opened my eyes to the fact that racism is an ideology rooted in the economic system of capitalism, and perpetuates class divisions in order to maximize profits.

Racist ideas do not originate with white workers, who are more susceptible to these poisonous ideas; they come from a predominantly white ruling class that relies on racism, sexism, homophobia to maintain the status quo.

National oppression, an outgrowth of imperialism, confirms that the vast majority of Black, Latino, Indigenous, Asian and Arab peoples are not just victims of institutionalized racism but are members of



Monica Moorehead

oppressed nations that are super-exploited and super-oppressed for who they are, where they live and where they come from. These factors and others help to define their relationship to capitalism and imperialism.

Understanding the roots of national oppression means understanding that there are oppressed nations and a white oppressor nation. Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution that led to the birth of the Soviet Union, helped to theoretically define the colonial question at a time when national-liberation movements began erupting in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and elsewhere against the onslaught of imperialist plunder and exploitation.

Many of these liberation movements have been led by nationalists who adhere to diverse ideologies, some of them bourgeois and some of them more anti-imperialist, and then there are the movements lead by socialists and communists. Even

though we have more of a political affinity for those nationalists who consider themselves revolutionary Marxists, in general we defend the leadership of genuine national-liberation movements and those leaders of oppressed countries seeking some degree of independence and sovereignty. We take this principled position because imperialism has been the biggest obstacle in putting the brake on independent economic and social development for the poorer countries.

The struggle for reparations represents the unfinished revolution for bourgeois democratic rights that have never been fully won by Black people in the United States, in Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere.

The reparations demand addresses the internal colonization that Black people are still subjected to in a country like the United States, dominated by whites based on their greater numbers and various degrees of privilege.

Only a socialist revolution, the total expropriation of the means of producing everything in society by the multinational working class, can liberate labor from capitalist slavery. As we continue to fight for progressive reforms under capitalism, only socialism can win and guarantee full democratic rights including the right to housing, education, health care, jobs, food, equality and much more.

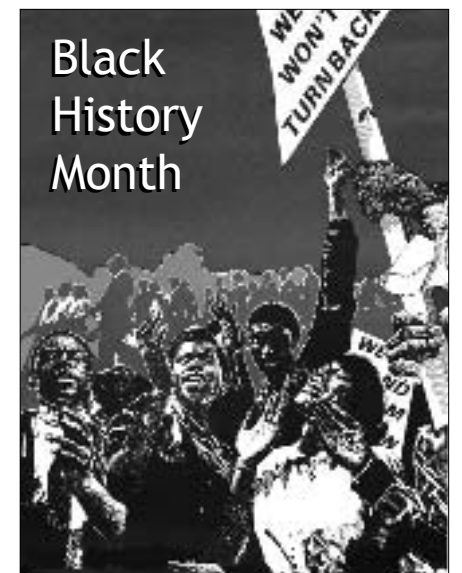
While imperialism is an economic system based on carving up the world’s resources and displacing and impoverishing hundreds of millions of people to make profits, socialism is an economic system based on an affirmative-action process of systematically eradicating all the inequalities based on the existence of classes.

The George Bushes and John Ashcrofts would not be working overtime in build-

ing more prisons, passing extreme reactionary, repressive laws like the Patriot Acts I and II, attacking reproductive rights and same-sex marriage, or carrying out bloody wars for empire if they were not fearful of the inevitable united upsurge of the workers and oppressed.

Our attitude toward nationalism of the oppressed is not one of being on the defensive, but rather deepening our resolve to show our anti-imperialist solidarity by fighting racism and at the same time promoting our multinational, working-class, pro-socialist perspective.

We are duty bound to support the right to self-determination for oppressed nationalities, including the right to separation. We don’t advocate separation, but defend it as a political demand to build solidarity. Revolutionary socialists and communists of all nationalities must understand that to support and defend the struggles of nationally oppressed peoples here and abroad against imperialism and colonialism is part and parcel of the struggle for worldwide socialism including right here in the United States. □



GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Repression in western New York state

The talk excerpted here was given by Julius Dykes at the New York Workers World Party Black History Month forum on Feb. 20.

Bush’s so-called war on terrorism is being felt in Buffalo, N.Y. One of the first cities to really feel the effects of the U.S. Patriot Act is the nearby town of Lackawanna.

What the Bush administration really needed was to make up a situation where they could scare the community by creating a so-called terrorist threat or terrorist cell, so people would support this imperialist, racist war on Iraq.

They targeted a small group of young people in the Yemeni community of Lackawanna who had traveled to Afghanistan in 2001, supposedly to train at an Al-Qaeda training camp. The government openly admitted having no evidence of these people having any ties to “terrorist activities.”

In December, two of the “Lackawanna 6” were sentenced to eight to 10 years in prison—through a plea bargain that would make it impossible for them to be freed earlier, even if the “anti-terrorist” law is found to be unconstitutional.

The reason these U.S. citizens took this plea bargain is because they knew they

could be tried as enemy combatants and sentenced to Guantanamo Camp. One day after their sentencing the 9th Circuit Appeals Court in San Francisco struck down the same part of this law that these men were tried under.

But these laws haven’t just been limited to these young men and their families. In Buffalo, back in October several white transit police attacked a 15-year-old, 110-pound African American high school student when she ran away from them in fear rather than be questioned by them.

At the time of this attack, an African American bus driver who tried to come to the young student’s aid by protesting the attack was violently pulled from her bus and arrested.

There’s been a long history of police brutality in Buffalo, but this incident has brought out in protest many elements within the African American and progressive community. The Coalition against Police Abuse and Racism has had several rallies at the transit station, as well as a march and rally of more than 100 people on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday.

All of these events have attracted a very good media presence. Elizabeth Oliver, the victimized bus driver who was also suspended from her job as a result of the arrest, had a court date on Feb. 10 where



Julius Dykes

she flatly refused to take a plea bargain.

Oliver has been through tremendous emotional and financial strain. She has several young children and is under threat of losing her home. Despite all the emotional trauma she is going through on a daily basis, she remains strong and defiant in the face of this racist injustice.

These recent developments reflect a

deep-rooted reality throughout U.S. society. This reality is that the state machinery—the cops, courts, prisons and military—are not in existence to protect the lives and livelihood of workers and oppressed peoples.

These armed bodies and instruments of repression exist in this class-divided society for the purpose of maintaining the power and privileges of the wealthy ruling class in their insatiable hunger for greater and greater profits.

They are a boot heel on the necks of the working class, which has the most to gain from overturning the profit-driven capitalist economic system and replacing it with a planned economy that can produce to meet the needs and wants of all.

This view of the state, first developed by Lenin, Marx and Engels, has been a strong pillar of our party for 45 years, and has really helped distinguish us from the rest of the left parties.

Our party would wholeheartedly support a transitional demand of community control of police. This is a political expression of the right to self-determination, and this demand becomes more important if there is a mass struggle behind it!

But ultimately the police, as a force of repression against the majority, must be eradicated! Branch and root! □

SAN FRANCISCO

Dinner rally builds for March 20

By Nancy Mitchell
San Francisco

Over 250 people filled the Green Room of the War Memorial Building in San Francisco's Civic Center Feb. 22 for an historic awards dinner to honor those on the front lines of the struggle against war and racism. The event was a benefit for the International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War and End Racism—Coalition.

A huge ANSWER banner hung from the historic building welcoming people as they arrived. The event was hosted by Veterans For Peace and "Bob Basker" Post 315, an unusually progressive post of the American Legion.

Hari Dillon, president of the Vanguard Foundation, was a key honoree. Dillon has been a longtime leader in the civil-rights and anti-war struggles in the Bay area. He and the Vanguard Foundation have provided instrumental assistance in building and broadening the anti-war movement of the past two years.

In a salute to the ANSWER Coalition's hard work, he said: "We need to act now to stop war and end racism, and that's what your organization has been doing. Your leadership has been unyielding and courageous."

Dillon made a resounding call to the progressive movement to embrace the Palestinian struggle for self-determination: "If we are to maintain our integrity as a movement and our dignity as a people, we cannot march to stop the war in Iraq and ignore the decades-long struggle against occupation of the people of Palestine."

Vanguard also honored 10 youth activists of the anti-war movement.

Other honored guests of the dinner included former U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney, Marine resister Steven Funk, who was released earlier in February from the Marine Corps brig after serving his term, United Farm Workers co-founder Dolores Huerta, San Francisco Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Walter Johnson, Michel Shehadeh of the Los Angeles 8, and Marion Greene of the LEF Foundation.

Presenters/masters of ceremony included leading ANSWER activists Elias Rashmawi of the Free Palestine Alliance, Mario Santos of BAYAN, Barbara Lubin of Middle East Children's Alliance, LeiLani Dowell, Gloria La Riva and Richard



At war memorial in San Francisco, ANSWER hangs its banner.

WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL



PHOTOS: PETER MAIDEN

Top, Cynthia McKinney. Above left, Marine resister Steven Funk. Right, Hari Dillon, president of the Vanguard Foundation, amid ten young anti-war activists honored at dinner in San Francisco, Feb. 22.

Becker of the International Action Center.

Speakers reflect recent struggles

Virtually all of the core ANSWER activists attended, either as volunteers or as guests. A beautiful 32-page commemorative journal of ads and solidarity statements, with a full page March 20 flier on the back cover, was prepared for the event.

Reflecting recent political struggles within the anti-war movement, several speakers emphasized the need for the movement to include unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, along with demanding an end to the occupation of Iraq and bringing the troops home, defending civil rights and liberties, opposing racism, and demanding money for people's needs, not war. Many participants promoted the

March 20 International Day of Protest against the occupation of Iraq.

The War Memorial is across the street from City Hall, and several speakers referred to the historic developments there regarding same-sex marriage during the past two weeks. Some speakers also discussed the struggle to save the life of Kevin Cooper and end the racist, anti-worker death penalty.

Many attendees remarked that the evening was a one-of-a-kind event, a celebration and recognition of the behind-the-scenes contributions of so many to the movement, as well as a united show of solidarity with many struggles.

Among the many organizations participating were KPFA Pacifica Radio (outgoing station manager Gus Newport and "Flashpoints" host Dennis Bernstein), the

San Francisco Labor Council, Letter Carriers Local 214, Veterans for Peace, BAYAN USA, the Free Palestine Alliance, Allied Sign and Display Local 510, Students for Justice in Palestine-Berkeley & Davis, Middle East Children's Alliance, A Jewish Voice for Peace, San Francisco Day Laborers Program, Cesar Chavez Parade Committee, and Inkworks Press.

Also the National Lawyers Guild, the Not In Our Name Project, LEF Foundation, Workers World Party, National Committee to Free the Cuban 5, General Union of Palestine Students-San State, the San Francisco Women's Building, Comite '98 por un Puerto Rico Libre, and others. GI resisters from the first Gulf war—Aimee Allison, Erik Larsen, Jeff Paterson and Azania Howse—were also among the attendees. □

LA8 struggle focus at civil liberties forum

By Bill Massey
Chicago

Michel Shehadeh, a Palestinian activist who was framed COINTELPRO-style by the U.S. government, was the keynote speaker at a Feb. 19 Chicago forum on the future of civil liberties.

More than 150 people turned out on a weekday evening to hear Shehadeh and a panel of other speakers. The topic was: "Silencing dissent: political repression and the Patriot Act."

The event was sponsored by the Chicago Coalition Against War and Racism.

One highlight was a solidarity greeting via phone from Rabi Haddad in Lebanon. Haddad lived in the United States for many years, went to college, worked in Ann Arbor and was the emir of the local mosque. He was arrested on Dec. 14, 2001. Haddad was held in solitary

confinement in both Ann Arbor and Chicago for a good part of his imprisonment, which ended with his deportation on July 15, 2003. Though the government smeared him as having "aided terrorism," no charges were ever brought to back up the allegation.

Michel Shehadeh and Khader Hamide are green card holders who have been in the United States for three decades and have applied for citizenship. The Department of Homeland Security is targeting both for deportation. The DHS is using provisions of the McCarran-Walters Act that were declared unconstitutional by a federal district court in 1989 and repealed by Congress in 1990. The DHS is also seeking to add new charges under the USA Patriot Act.

Shehadeh and Hamide were first arrested along with six other student activists in 1987. Seven of the students

were Palestinians and the eighth was from Kenya and married to one of the other students. They were held for 23 days in maximum security cells, charged with "aiding terrorism." The basis of this charge was that they sold the magazines Palestine Focus and Democratic Palestine. But so did bookstores around the country, and the magazines were on file in school libraries.

Even former FBI Director William Webster testified to Congress that after an extensive three-year FBI investigation the Los Angeles 8 "have not been found to have engaged themselves in terrorist activity." Webster admitted that "if these individuals had been U.S. citizens there would not have been a basis for their arrest."

And yet after 17 years the government is still trying to use its bogus case against Shehadeh and Hamide as a weapon against the rights of all immigrant peo-

ples, and ultimately against everyone's freedoms. As Michel Shehadeh states, the government always attacks the most vulnerable first in order to take everyone's freedoms away. Thus it is necessary to rally to the cause of Michel Shehadeh and Khader Hamide—an attack on them is an attack on all.

The other speakers included Standish Willis of the National Council of Black Lawyers, Michelle Morales of the Boriqua Human Rights Network, Emma Lozano of the immigrant support group Pueblo Sin Fronteras, Gwen Blakely of Enough Is Enough, an organization that fights police misconduct and racist injustice, Suzanne Adely of the Arab American Action Network, and Emile Schepers of the Chicago Committee to Defend the Bill of Rights. A representative of the Chicago Coalition to Free the Cuban Five also took part in the discussion period. □

HAITI

U.S. backs Aristide's opponents

By Pat Chin

As we go to press on Feb. 25, the crisis unleashed in Haiti remains unresolved. President Jean-Bertrand Aristide continues to insist that he will serve out the term to which he was elected by the Haitian people, but he has accepted a U.S.-backed plan that would bring business-led opposition political groups into the government. However, these groups have rejected the plan, demanding that Aristide step down so that they, self-styled "democrats" who have not been elected to anything, can take over and run the country.

Meanwhile, heavily armed gangs led by former soldiers and known death-squad leaders have shot their way into towns and cities in the north, including Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city. Popular organizations in Port-au-Prince have erected barricades on the roads leading into the city expecting that the coup forces may attempt to take the capital. And the U.S. has sent in 50 Marines, supposedly to guard the U.S. Embassy there.

Washington is embroiled in Haiti on many levels. Semi-official groups like the National Endowment for Democracy and the International Republican Institute have for some time been giving open financial and political support to the opposition political groups led by Haitian business owners. The U.S. media gave credibility to these groups' charges that elections in 2000 were "fraudulent," even though Aristide and his Lavalas party are acknowledged by all observers to have clearly won the popular vote. These forces have been preventing new parliamentary elections by boycotting the process. Haiti now has no legislature because of this.

At the same time, secret U.S. agencies like the CIA have a history of collaborating with the armed assassins and coup makers from former dictatorships who have attacked and taken over the northern cities. While claiming to respect the Aristide government, Washington has not denounced the coup leaders as the terrorists they are, instead giving them time to

take more territory and put pressure on the popular forces around Aristide. The coup leaders, in turn, have been urging the U.S. to intervene, and some of the gunmen even wear shirts made of U.S. flags.

However, Washington has to be careful not to be seen as aiding a coup against a popularly elected president. That would set off a firestorm of protest in many parts of the world, something neither the Bush administration nor the U.S. ruling class need at this time.

The Haitian opposition is clearly hoping that the upsurge in violence will force Aristide to resign. Washington had even announced beforehand that any international assistance to stop the armed onslaught was contingent on an agreement between the two sides.

Bush and 'regime change'

The U.S. capitalist establishment started years ago laying the groundwork for the bloody chaos now engulfing Haiti. It has long wanted to replace the Aristide government with one more compliant to corporate globalization interests. Even though its pressure forced Aristide to implement IMF restructuring plans, Washington still wasn't satisfied. But it did cause him to lose some popular support, which the U.S. is also exploiting.

Bush might not have declared Haiti a part of his "axis of evil," but in April of last year Attorney General John Ashcroft made a ruling that Haitian refugees presented a "national security" threat to the United States. This was part of the White House "regime change" strategy, backed by the European Union, that has long put pressure on Aristide to force his total capitulation to capitalist financial interests, or be ousted.

For example, \$500 million in loans promised in 1994 were indefinitely frozen. The money, on which Haiti is still forced to pay interest, was designed to stimulate the economy. An aid embargo, imposed in 2001, froze humanitarian projects, undermining basic humanitarian services related to water, housing and medical care. This destabilization campaign has been

unleashed on the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, where many people must walk for miles to get water, family members sleep in shifts because of the dire shortage of adequate housing, and the infant mortality rate is over 100 per 1,000 live births, the highest in the Western Hemisphere.

Washington also funded and backed the anti-Aristide "opposition" made up of the big landowners, many media bosses, the business elite, their armed gangs and others. U.S. media coverage greatly exaggerated the size of opposition protests while ignoring larger demonstrations in support of the government.

'U.S. is playing games'

"The United States is playing games with Haiti," said Haitian-born Robert Fatton, Jr., chair of the Government and Foreign Affairs department at the University of Virginia. Referring to the National Endowment for Democracy, he said, "Politically connected groups within the country are openly funding Aristide's overthrow while the Bush administration is saying publicly that Aristide should finish his elected term." (www.bet.com, Feb. 20)

The Feb. 19 web edition of Black Commentator said, "Washington had expected to remove the former priest through massive demonstrations—a counter-revolution by acclamation—hopefully before this year's celebrations of Haiti's 200th anniversary. U.S. and European media tried mightily to paint a picture of overwhelming popular disaffection with Aristide. However, the Haitian people are intimately familiar with the faces and history of the 'opposition,' gathered opportunistically under the banner of Group 184. ..."

Sweatshop magnate Andrew Apaid is an opposition leader. After a trip to Haiti, U.S. Congressperson Maxine Waters, who represents a largely African American district in Los Angeles, roundly denounced Apaid at a Feb. 11 press conference in Washington, D.C., in which she detailed a long list of his shady dealings.

She said she was "deeply concerned about the growing violence organized by the so-called opposition and what now appears to be gangs in the northern part of the country being supported in their violent activities by this so-called opposition."

She challenged the U.S. government to denounce Apaid and his Group of 184: "How can the State Department remain silent while Andre Apaid, who allegedly holds an American passport, creates so much dissension, disruption and violence in this small, impoverished country?"

Waters has also criticized Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega—whom she labels "a Jesse Helms political appointee"—as the author of "right-wing garbage" attacking Haiti. (www.bet.com, Feb. 20)

At first the White House feigned a hands-off policy towards the turmoil it helped to create, giving the armed opposition a chance to advance. It was only after France, Haiti's former colonial power, took a more active role that the Bush White House "shifted" its policy by co-sponsoring the power-sharing plan.

Aristide has lost some support among the masses because of Haiti's disastrous economic decline, exacerbated by the aid and loan embargo and his implementation of the IMF's structural adjustment program. But a Feb. 20 poll of 600 Haitian Americans by the Pacific News Service found that, although disillusioned over the worsening economic situation, 52 percent believed Aristide should remain in office. Only 6 percent supported the armed wing of the opposition. "Over half of Haitian Americans, 55 percent, believe that the opposition movements are just interested in power; only 22 percent said those groups are fighting for democracy," reported the news service.

Hundreds of Haitians and U.S. progressives demonstrated against a coup on Feb. 13 in front of the UN. Another demonstration is planned for 11 a.m. on Feb. 28, gathering at Utica Avenue and Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn and marching to Grand Army Plaza. □

Bush sends new troops to Iraq

Continued from page 1

National Guard soldiers. Some Army troops, like the 233rd Heavy Transportation Co. based in Fort Knox, are being sent back to Iraq for a second tour of duty. The 233rd is needed for what is being called "the largest U.S. troops movement in history."

Among those coming back, or still in military hospitals in Europe, are thousands with excruciating disabilities, both physical and mental, inflicted on them by the architects of this predatory, imperialist war that is all about profits for the huge oil monopolies and the banks that finance them.

Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, on the huge Ramstein U.S. Air Force base in Germany, reported in January that it had received 9,433 medical evacuees from Iraq by the end of the year. A Feb. 19 UPI report said that 1,000 of the evacuations to Landstuhl were for psychiatric reasons. U.S. soldiers continue to die in Iraq at the rate of more than one a day. Suicides among U.S. troops also appear to be high, although the Pentagon does not release overall figures.

Casualties among the Iraqi people are

many times greater. The monitoring group IraqBodyCount.net conservatively estimates that over 10,000 Iraqi civilians have now died as a result of the invasion and occupation. That is nearly 20 times the number of U.S. dead. Iraqis are not only living with death and injuries from the war and continued fighting, but also with a collapsed infrastructure and astronomical unemployment.

Richard Nixon claimed to have a secret plan to end the Vietnam War when he ran for president in 1968. His presidency ended in impeachment in 1974 as the war dragged on.

Bush's plan—in which the U.S. is to turn over authority to an Iraqi governing group by June 30 of this year—has no credibility in Iraq or the rest of the world, either. Who are the Iraqis who will supposedly take over? Will they have any authority other than that conferred on them by the continued presence of U.S. troops?

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld tried to answer that in the affirmative when he made a surprise visit to Iraq on Feb. 23. He toured a training facility for Iraqi police in Baghdad and told the young recruits: "We're looking forward to

Iraqis taking over the security of your country."

But at that very moment, in the northern oil city of Kirkuk, a suicide bomber attacked a police station, killing 13. The message was very clear: Iraqis will not accept a U.S. puppet regime.

The Bush administration has had to abandon its talk about handing over power to a government chosen by democratic elections. That rosy projection soon faded away as it became clear that direct elections would bring to power Iraqis not willing to be mere U.S. puppets. Now Paul Bremer, the U.S. overseer in Iraq, says that Iraq is not going to be ready for elections by June, that they will have to be held at least a year from now—in other words, after the U.S. elections, if ever.

A Feb. 20 AP story datelined Washington reported, "Anthony Cordesman, a close observer of the Iraq situation as a strategist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said that if political control was turned over on July 1 to an Iraqi body that is not elected, it likely would align itself with U.S. objectives and therefore welcome a continued U.S. military presence. But once elections were

held, the U.S. role would be in doubt, he said."

As things stand now, the U.S. will be handing over authority on July 1 to the Iraqi Governing Council, whose members were hand-picked by the U.S. occupiers. U.S. troops will remain for an indefinite time after that date.

Gen. Peter Schoomaker told Congress recently that current Pentagon plans are to keep roughly 100,000 U.S. troops in Iraq for at least two more years. (AP, Feb. 20)

While getting U.S. troops out of Iraq will not be addressed in the contest between Bush and Kerry or Bush and Edwards, troop withdrawal will be a focus of the March 20 demonstrations. As with the Vietnam War, the struggle against this vicious oppression of an entire nation is in the streets. □

HAITI A Slave Revolution 200 YEARS AFTER 1804

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SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: Political football or boomerang

Workers World welcomes fully the actions of over 6,400 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who committed mass civil disobedience by getting married in California in defiance of state and federal laws, to the cheers of thousands more of their families and friends. They've done this despite the reactionary 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and a 2000 California version of this law mandating that "real" marriage is only between a man and a woman.

Bush has a decidedly different reaction. He announced his support of a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriages for the first time, saying the "Preservation of marriage is matter of national importance." What his campaign committee hopes is that the president can use this issue as a political football to mobilize his most right-wing supporters on a thoroughly reactionary basis, just as his father did with the racist Willy Horton ad. They'd like to see lesbian and gay people get kicked around.

Despite his obvious appeal to his fundamentalist followers, Bush himself hedged by allowing for "civil unions," showing his fear of losing all but his most reactionary electorate.

The Democrats' first reaction was to back off from confronting the issue, pandering to reaction. Front-running Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry also spoke out against same-sex marriage, though he supported civil unions. And remember it was Democratic President Bill Clinton, of "don't ask, don't tell" infamy, who signed DOMA into law in the first place. Now the Democrats' position is Bush-lite.

The right to same-sex marriage is an important bourgeois democratic right now unjustly denied to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. The

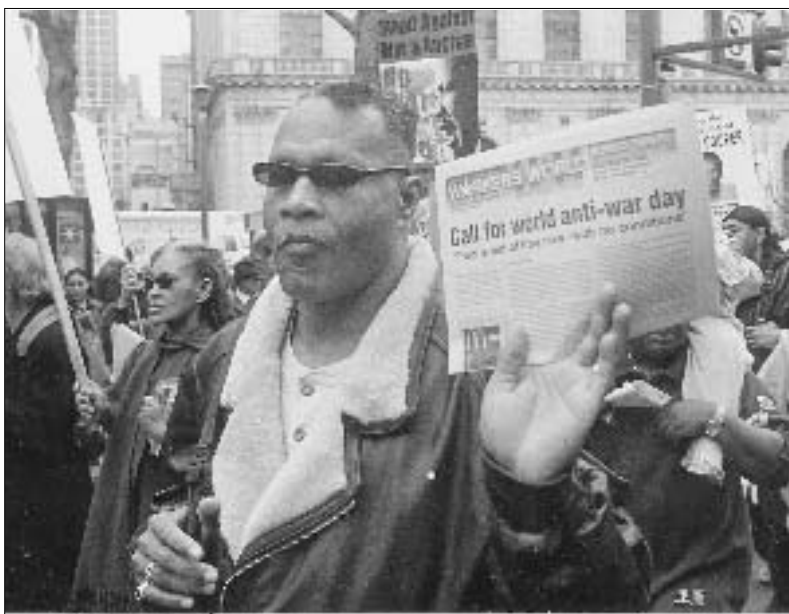
current legal and economic benefits of heterosexual marriage—like access to social security, medical insurance, and hundreds of others—must also be granted to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender couples.

It is typical that U.S. presidential campaigns result in the two parties of big business in a political football game competing over which one will best serve the interests of capitalism by playing to the most reactionary forces in society. They put on a half-time show to the strains of "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

In this case the good news is that more and more of the population have recognized that it is only right and just that everyone have the right to these benefits. It would be a heathy event if this political football bounced back and hit the reactionaries in the face. From football to boomerang. But it will need help from outside the electoral arena.

Since the revolutionary uprising of the Stonewall rebellion in 1969, the gains of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement have come from its political independence. Access to HIV/AIDS medication, local job and housing protection, the right in some states to have custody of children, the recent historic Lawrence decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that reversed the so-called "sodomy" statutes and granted full federal civil rights to gay people—all of this was won by 30 years of dogged, creative, defiant mass action and independent organizing.

Under Bush's attack the lesbian-gay-bi-trans community is already redoubling its effort to win these rights. an effort that deserves the full support of all in the working-class and progressive movement to win over all wavering forces in U.S. society and put anti-gay bigotry in the garbage dump of history. □



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COLOMBIA

Letters expose repression

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

On Feb. 9 I received an email from Justicia y Paz (Justice and Peace), a Colombian human-rights organization whose members I'd met during a December 2002 visit to Colombia. Their messages have come more frequently since the beginning of 2004, with detailed accounts of violent paramilitary incursions in the CAVIDA Nueva Esperanza settlement, home of many displaced Afro-Colombians in the northwestern region near Panama.

After reading so many horrifying accounts of the paramilitaries' cruelty and viciousness, it was impossible to fathom anything worse. But the Feb. 9 message was somehow different. Its subject line read, "To the humans of the world."

The plea of Justicia y Paz was made on behalf of all the people in Colombia who are subject to political repression by a government that bends only to U.S. corporate interests. It was a condolence message to the relatives and friends of a murdered human-rights activist in Meta, in central Colombia.

It read in part: "From our territory of life, from our humanitarian spaces, from these immense jungles that belong to us and to all the humans in the world but that the powers-that-be want to wrest from us, we want to express our indignation and pain at the assassination of human-rights advocate Maria Lucero Henao and her 16-year-old son Yamid Daniel, who were victims of paramilitary action in complicity with the 21st Battalion of the Colombian Army.

"We are not the only ones in the country who bear the weight of the policy of 'democratic security' of President Alvaro Uribe Velez ... This murder shows their intention of not allowing the possibility of organizing the communities to defend our life and our territory."

The message continued: "You are not alone, neither are we since we are a great family of resistance in Colombia with our indigenous brothers and sisters from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador. ... and many more from the American continent, and we also have the solidarity of those in Europe, Southern Africa, USA, Canada ..."

"Count on us; we encourage you to continue strengthening all possible forms of organization to defend our rights as peoples, to continue united as a real organized civil resistance that refuses to sell out our minds and our hearts. In the name of all the victims of the paramilitary strategy of this government, let us move forward."

Silencing the opposition

The message from Justicia y Paz is just one of many being circulated by Colombian organizations in an effort to bring international attention to "Democratic Security"—President Uribe's new program to silence opposition to his pro-Washington, pro-International-Monetary-Fund economic and social measures.

On Feb. 9, the Colombian Communist Party in Bogotá denounced the assassinations, detentions and threats to its members in different regions of the country. In a news release headlined "Stop the genocide now," the Colombian CP demanded that Uribe end the government witch hunt and instead prosecute those involved in

the assassinations and threats.

The CCP statement also referred to the Feb. 6 murder of Maria Lucero Henao and her son at the hands of the Centauros Bloc paramilitaries. The region of Meta where they were killed is under strict control by government forces.

On Feb. 7, Army and General Prosecutor's Office officials detained 20 CCP members in Tolima, west of Meta. Several other members have been detained and/or arrested, including a former council member, peasant and Indigenous leaders, and the secretary-general of the Communist Youth. The weekly CCP magazine Voz has received threats.

The attacks are reminiscent of the bloody campaign against the Patriotic Union in the 1980s, when thousands of political activists and labor unionists were murdered by death squads.

"The good will expressed by the national Government to offer protection and guarantees to the Communist Party and the Patriotic Union has not happened, as shown by the daily conditions of murders, threats and detentions," the news release stated.

Evil Axis: Uribe, Plan Colombia, FTAA

Repression and human-rights violations in Colombia are reaching catastrophic proportions. It is the result of measures put in force by the Uribe administration at the behest of the U.S. government, in accordance with Plan Colombia.

Plan Colombia is the military counterpart to the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which U.S. imperialism is trying to impose in the Southern Hemisphere.

But this attack has awakened a vigorous peoples' movement throughout Latin America.

Washington hopes Colombia will serve as a cat's paw against the rest of Latin America. For that, it needs to silence the Colombian people—social, labor and human-rights organizations and especially the people in arms. Colombia's revolutionary insurgency, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), is the oldest guerrilla movement on the continent.

From January 1998 to June 2003 there were 11,388 victims of paramilitaries in Colombia, according to the Bank of Facts on Human Rights and Political Violence. These include 7,096 extrajudicial assassinations, 1,180 forced disappearances and 753 tortures.

In the first six months of 2003 there were 671 assassinations. Seventy-two labor leaders were assassinated in 2003.

On Feb. 18, several Colombian non-governmental organizations held a news conference in Bogotá. The groups included the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Association, the Committee in Solidarity with Political Prisoners, the Permanent Human Rights Committee, the National Solidarity Aid Association, and the Permanent Assembly of Society for Peace and Justice. The NGO representatives explained that more than 125,778 Colombians have been arrested since Uribe became president.

That comes out to 334 per day, or 14.3 for every hour he's been in office. □

U.S. tries to stop funds for Cuba 5 ad

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The Bush administration has intensified its attack on revolutionary Cuba by attempting to freeze funds going to the bank account of the International Peace for Cuba Appeal (IPCA). IPCA has been working in conjunction with the National Committee to Free the Five (NCF) to receive donations for a planned full-page New York Times ad in support of five Cuba patriots held as political prisoners in the U.S. The Cuba Five were convicted in U.S. courts in 2001 for their efforts to counter terrorist violence by unmasking the activities of the vicious right-wing movement based in Miami.

At a Feb. 25 press conference, Ian Thompson from the National Lawyers Guild, representing the two organizations, reported that Wachovia Bank stopped wire transfers of money for the ad from pro-Cuba organizations in Spain and France on Feb. 5 and 12, at the behest of the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). Bank officials' explanation was that the word "Cuba" appeared in the name of the bank account. Thompson pointed out that the right-wing Cuban American National

Association has had no funds stopped, to his knowledge.

The Bush administration has stepped up prosecution of individuals defying the travel ban and the U.S.-imposed blockade of Cuba. Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, of the Partnership for Civil Justice Legal Defense and Education Fund, commented that the attack on the Free the Five campaign shows the U.S. government has increased hand-in-glove work with big business to carry out illegal acts against groups and people opposing U.S. foreign policy. The Partnership for Civil Justice currently represents Voices in the Wilderness, under attack by OFAC for carrying medical supplies to Iraqi people dying under U.S. sanctions.

Both Thompson and Verheyden-Hilliard praised the fight-back resistance of the Free the Five campaign, which forced the bank to retreat and release the frozen funds.

The \$50,000 New York Times ad is now paid for, thanks to donations from 42 U.S. states and 210 countries. Miami's progres-

sive Cuban community raised more than \$10,000. According to Andreas Gomez, editor of Areito magazine, that community wholeheartedly supports justice for the Cuban Five. The offices of Areito have been targeted with three bombings by the Cuban rightwing.

Gloria La Riva, of the Committee to

Free the Five, expressed hope that the Times advertisement will "shine the light of media attention on the Cuban political prisoners," and encourage a groundswell of support ranging from students and working people to politicians.

For more information see www.fivethefive.org. □



MUNDO OBRERO

Mientras los EE.UU. ocultan su papel, los haitianos resisten intento de golpe

Continúa de página 12

demandas de los globalizadores o ser derrocado.

La posición diplomática declarada estadounidense ha sido la de reconocer al gobierno de Aristide mientras presta ayuda y socorro—además de grandes cantidades de dinero—a grupos que Washington califica como oposición "democrática" Hay otra historia sin embargo, más siniestra, de la intervención de los EE.UU. en Haití.

El pueblo haitiano, muy conciente de lo que pasa tras bastidores en relación a su país, sabe que Washington por mucho tiempo ha mantenido acuerdos secretos con sus atormentadores, comenzando con la sangrienta dinastía de Duvalier que rigió Haití por 29 años.

También saben de los archivos secretos que fueron sacados ilegal y secretamente de Haití en 1994 por tropas de los EE.UU. cuando restituyeron a Aristide a la presidencia después de haber sido derrocado por un golpe militar. Se cree que esos archivos contienen información sobre las relaciones encubiertas entre la CIA y el Frente por el Avance y el Progreso de Haití (FRAPH), un nombre bien sonante para lo que era la organización de escuadrones de la muerte que operaron durante el régimen militar de los años 1991-94.

Pueblos 'liberados' por escuadrones de la muerte

Ahora miembros del FRAPH han vuelto a Haití y están controlando la situación en las áreas que ellos dicen que han "liberado" Las fuerzas militares de los EE.UU. que llegaron a Haití en 1994 y depusieron a la dictadura militar permitieron que ellos salieran sin interferencia alguna de Haití, a pesar de los muchos crímenes cometidos contra el pueblo. Muchos disfrutaron de un exilio cómodo en los EE.UU. o en la República Dominicana. Su líder, Emmanuel "Toto" Constant, pasó los 10 años siguientes viviendo en una

comunidad adinerada de Laurelton, Queens, en la ciudad de Nueva York. Su casa fue el lugar de frecuentes manifestaciones por la comunidad haitiana residente en Brooklyn.

Para regresar al país, comandos armados haitianos cruzaron la frontera con la República Dominicana, disparando y matando a dos guardias fronterizos. (Prensa Asociada, 14 de febrero) Uno de ellos fue Guy Philippe, el ex jefe de la policía de la ciudad norteña de Cap Haitien quien también fuera oficial del ejército, y Louis Joyel Chamblain, jefe de los escuadrones de la muerte de Duvalier durante los años 1980.

Según un artículo fidedigno escrito por Tom Reeves publicado en el Internet por ZNet, el 17 de febrero, Chamblain también era líder del FRAPH:

"Chamblain, asociado íntimo de Emmanuel 'Toto' Constant, ha confesado que fue auspiciado y dirigido por la CIA. Según documentos revisados por el Centro de Derechos Constitucionales en Nueva York, fue revelado que Chamblain fue una de las personas presentes cuando fue planeado, con un agente estadounidense, el asesinato del ministro de justicia, partidario de Aristide, Guy Malary, en 1993.

"Los EE.UU. rehúsan hacer público los documentos que tomaron del FRAPH durante la invasión de 1994, posiblemente para ocultar los lazos entre la CIA y el FRAPH. Philippe y Chamblain fueron de la oposición haitiana, reconocida por los Estados Unidos—la Convergencia—que organizó conferencias en la República Dominicana, auspiciadas y asistidas por operativos estadounidenses del Instituto Internacional Republicano".

Complicidad del FRAPH, la Convergencia y los EE.UU.

Aunque el Secretario de Estado Powell finge que la Convergencia y los escuadrones de la muerte no tienen nada en

común, la alianza entre ellos se ha vuelto evidente con esta invasión. Un líder de la oposición política, el dueño de una pequeña fábrica explotadora Andre Apaid, dice que no quiere asociarse con las pandillas armadas, pero ¿qué jefe pandillero "respetado" alguna vez ha dicho que quiere reconocer a sus subordinados de manos ensangrentadas?

Un observador británico, reportó en El Independiente del 17 de febrero, que "Los rebeldes están siendo manipulados y aparentemente controlados por ex oficiales descontentos del ejército, quienes, si pudieran, seguramente les gustaría volver Haití a la dictadura y al terror militar de la época de Duvalier. Aunque tal posibilidad está siendo deplorada públicamente, fuentes diplomáticas en Port-au-Prince dicen que algunos gobiernos occidentales se están cuestionando si Haití estaría más estable—por lo menos desde su punto de vista—bajo una dictadura en vez de la democracia defectuosa de Aristide".

La Convergencia, que incluye a varios líderes empresariales haitianos, ha estado promoviendo la dimisión de Aristide y organizó varias protestas callejeras que recibieron amplia cobertura en los órganos mediáticos corporativos de los EE.UU. Manifestaciones mucho más grandes en apoyo al gobierno, como la del 7 de febrero en la cual participaron cientos de miles de personas en Port-au-Prince, han sido ignoradas por esos mismos medios de comunicación.

Después que fue devuelto a la presidencia en 1994, Aristide disolvió el ejército haitiano. Este acto, que satisfacía su posición pacifista, tuvo la intención de disminuir la amenaza de un golpe de estado militar. Pero no estableció ningún sistema de defensa alternativa, como una milicia popular, y por eso el gobierno carece de una fuerza poderosa para defenderse contra los ex militares, quienes se han presen-

tado de nuevo con una sorprendente coordinación y cantidad de armas.

Estos matones entrenados se han apoderado de varias ciudades al norte de la capital, donde inmediatamente atacaron recintos policiales y alcaldías, matando a policías leales de Aristide y confiscando armas y municiones. Se reporta que han arrastrado cadáveres por las calles para aterrorizar así a la población.

Según el Miami Herald del 16 de febrero, "Gonaïves y St. Marc fueron arrebatados del gobierno al los rebeldes ir disparando, incendiando y saqueando ciudades y pueblos".

La fuerza policial total de Haití—que ahora tiene que hacer el trabajo de un ejército—cuenta solamente con 5.000 efectivos. En contraste, la ciudad de Nueva York, que tiene una población de un millón de personas menos que Haití, tiene 32.000 policías, incluyendo equipos fuertemente equipados de comandos especializados, quienes en cualquier momento pueden ser reforzados por la Guardia Nacional.

En esta situación de crisis, sin embargo, se está pidiendo por fin la intervención de las masas. Según el número del periódico Haití Progres del 11 de febrero, "parece que la población ha respondido con entusiasmo a la llamada del Primer Ministro Yvon Neptune del 8 de febrero a que el pueblo de Haití ayude a la policía a contraatacar al 'ala armada de la oposición'. El 8 de febrero, militantes de organizaciones populares, algunos armados, erigieron barricadas en los vecindarios capitalinos de Canapé Vert y Carrefour...".

Esta respuesta, mayormente por los trabajadores y los pobres, hasta ahora ha ayudado a prevenir que las batallas entren a la capital, Port-au-Prince. Es la respuesta organizada y, cuando sea posible, armada, del pueblo contra el terrorismo de los patrones y sus partidarios imperialistas que es la mejor esperanza de Haití. □

Mientras los EE.UU. ocultan su papel, los haitianos resisten intento de golpe

Por Deirdre Griswold

Mientras que pandillas fuertemente armadas encabezadas por líderes de escuadrones de la muerte de anteriores dictaduras se apoderan de una amplia zona de Haití, prometiendo derrocar al gobierno del Presidente Jean Bertrand Aristide ejecutando extrajudicialmente veintenas de sus partidarios, la pregunta en los movimientos populares de la región es, ¿qué papel está jugando el gobierno imperialista de los Estados Unidos en todo esto?

Washington está siendo cauteloso no aceptando responsabilidad por el intento de golpe de estado, que fue lanzado el 5 de febrero en la ciudad porteña del norte, Gonaive. El Secretario de Estado Colin Powell dijo el 17 de febrero que no había ningún "entusiasmo" en la administración de Bush por una intervención.

Sin embargo, no todos en el Departamento de Estado han recibido el mensaje. Un periódico de Australia, The Age, reportó el 17 de febrero que "el embajador de los EE.UU., James Foley dijo hoy que Washington quiere un 'cambio radical' al mismo tiempo que Powell decía que los EE.UU. no apoyan el derrocamiento de Aristide."

En este momento, cualquier intervención abierta de parte de los EE.UU. tendría que ser, por lo menos en nombre, en apoyo al gobierno elegido en contra de aquellos que hasta Powell reconoce como gángsteres y matones. Washington probablemente le gustaría dejar a los escuadrones de la muerte hacer su trabajo de debilitar al gobierno y la resistencia popular, y entonces llegar a la escena como salvadores—mientras que de hecho estarían forzando a Aristide a aceptar el control de personajes como Marc Bazin, ex oficial del

Banco Mundial que Washington había escogido en 1990 para ganar la elección. Bazin fue derrotado por Aristide en un voto abrumador ante la consternación de los imperialistas.

Washington aparentemente cree que puede forzar un "cambio de régimen" sin enviar sus propias tropas en este momento. Esto puede cambiar, por supuesto, especialmente si un poder imperialista rival como Francia, que tiene tropas en islas caribeñas cercanas, dá un paso.

No hay fin a las intervenciones de los EE.UU.

La verdad es que ya han sido bastantes intervenciones de parte de los EE.UU., abiertas y encubiertas, con la meta de reemplazar al gobierno de Aristide con uno considerado más simpatizante a los intereses corporativos que dirigen la

política extranjera de los EE.UU.

Los EE.UU. han encabezado una conspiración internacional para privar a Haití, el país más pobre del Hemisferio Occidental, de cualquier ayuda financiera. Haití ha estado en la mira de los mayores poderes capitalistas desde su guerra victoriosa revolucionaria de 1804, la cual simultáneamente liberó al país de la dominación colonial de Francia y liberó su población de la esclavitud. Su profunda pobreza es producto de dos siglos de bloqueo económico.

Esto fue reforzado después de las elecciones del 2000 cuando las instituciones prestamistas controladas por los EE.UU. detuvieron un préstamo de \$500 millones que Haití necesitaba desesperadamente. La intención fue muy clara: presionar al gobierno de Aristide a capitular a las

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Trabajadoras huelguistas luchando por cuidado médico y sueldo justo

Por Adrian Garcia
Los Angeles

En este quinto mes de la monumental batalla contra los ataques a los derechos de cuidado médico y salario justo de 70.000 trabajadores que se encuentran en huelga contra los tres grandes supermercados del sur de California, Vons, Ralph's, y Albertson's, tres trabajadoras inmigrantes de Latino América hablan sobre sus serias condiciones económicas y sus esperanzas que su lucha tenga éxito para todos los trabajadores del país y el mundo. Al tiempo de estas entrevistas el sindicato UFCW y los tres grandes supermercados estaban en el décimo día de negociaciones.

La primera entrevista fue con Ely Orozco, inmigrante de Guatemala y capitana de su equipo de huelguistas.

Mundo Obrero: ¿Cuántos años tienes trabajando para Ralph's?

Ely: Tengo cinco años trabajando para Ralph's.

Noté que algunos trabajadores llegan y te piden su cheque. ¿Cuáles son tus responsabilidades?

Ely: Yo soy la capitana del equipo. Los huelguistas se reportan a mí cuando les toca su turno de estar en la línea de huelga. También les entrego sus cheques semanales que les brinda el sindicato que no es mucho pero ayuda un poco.

¿Cómo te sientes después de cuatro meses de estar en huelga?

Ely: Me siento con mucha presión económica porque también soy estudiante en Santa Monica College pero tengo la esperanza que las actuales negociaciones lleguen a resolver ésta huelga a favor de los trabajadores.

¿Cómo te mantienes económicamente, considerando que el dinero que les brinda el sindicato no es suficiente?

Ely: El dinero que me brinda el sindi-

cato ayuda y de vez en cuando trabajo con mi hermana. Claro, esto no es lo mismo que tener un salario estable como el que tenía antes del comienzo de la huelga.

Psicológicamente ¿cómo te sientes después de tan larga lucha contra los patrones de los tres supermercados?

Ely: Psicológicamente no siento ninguna presión porque sé que ésta lucha es justa para los trabajadores. Ésta experiencia me ha enseñado mucho del sistema en el cual vivimos.

Soy más consciente de la situación política que nos afecta a todos. Ésta huelga ha sido una experiencia maravillosa porque me ha enseñado la solidaridad de los trabajadores y el apoyo de la gente. He aprendido cosas que jamás hubiera aprendido en el colegio sobre mi papel como trabajadora en éste país.

En éste momento pasó un trabajador que cruzó la línea de huelga y juntaba los carritos del supermercado Vons.

¿Qué opinas sobre éstos trabajadores que al parecer no les importa la lucha para los derechos de cuidado médico y salario justo?

Ely: Muchos de ellos son jóvenes que no tienen entendimiento de los sacrificios que se hicieron el siglo pasado para obtener lo que tenemos hoy. La falta de conciencia y el egoísmo de nuestra sociedad permiten que algunas personas no entiendan la situación de los trabajadores en relación a las grandes corporaciones.

¿Cómo ves la situación de inmigrantes en éste país en relación a ésta huelga?

Ely: Bueno, la mayoría de los trabajadores que se encuentran en huelga son inmigrantes o Afro-Americanos y no es difícil comprender que ésto es un factor que consideran los patrones cuando hacen decisiones que nos afectan. Podría ser que piensan que a nosotros se nos puede dar lo que sea y nosotros no

protestaremos. Es otra forma de explotación contra los trabajadores de origen inmigrante. Y también es importante tomar en cuenta que muchos de los trabajadores son personas que dejaron la escuela antes de graduarse.

¿Qué va a ocurrir contigo si no se soluciona ésta huelga durante las actuales negociaciones? ¿Te vas a dar por vencida y regresarás a trabajar?

Ely: No importa cuánto tiempo dure ésta huelga, yo seguiré luchando por mis derechos como trabajadora.

Mientras hablaba con Ely Orozco se acercó una mujer huelguista llamada Elsa Guevara con dos niños pequeños que se despedía y recogía su cheque brindado por el sindicato. Nos concedió una entrevista.

Veo que tiene a sus dos niños pequeños con usted. ¿Acostumbra a traer a sus niños a la línea de huelga?

Elsa: Sí, no tengo otra opción. No tengo suficiente dinero para pagarle a una babysitter mientras estoy aquí en la línea. Me preocupa tenerlos aquí porque toman el riesgo de ser atropellados por los carros que entran y salen del estacionamiento.

¿Estos son sus únicos hijos?

Elsa: No, tengo seis hijos en total. Estos dos son los más pequeños. Uno va al kinder y el otro todavía no empieza la escuela. Los otros cuatro son mayores y acaban de salir de la escuela y por eso me voy a casa en este momento para que no estén solos en casa.

¿De qué país emigró y cuánto tiempo tiene en los Estados Unidos?

Elsa: Vengo de El Salvador y tengo 15 años viviendo y trabajando en éste país. Mis hijos son nacidos aquí y merecen el cuidado médico que nos quieren arrebatar.

¿Cómo ha mantenido económicamente a su familia durante éstos

largos meses de huelga?

Elsa: He trabajado medio-tiempo en algunos negocios, pero no es lo mismo que tener mi trabajo estable en Vons.

¿Cómo ve la situación para usted y su familia en el futuro?

Elsa: Yo veo que ésta lucha es justa y que con el apoyo de la comunidad vamos a salir victoriosos por el bien de nuestros hijos.

Finalmente se entrevistó a una trabajadora llamada Socorro García, originaria de Oaxaca, México que tiene dos hijos en la universidad.

¿Cuánto tiempo tiene en éste país?

Socorro: Tengo quince años viviendo en los Estados Unidos.

¿Por qué decidió emigrar a éste país?

Socorro: Yo decidí venir a los Estados Unidos porque esperaba tener una vida mejor con un trabajo seguro y para poder brindarles a mis hijos lo mejor.

¿Cómo se ha sostenido teniendo dos hijos en la universidad?

Socorro: Mis hijos obtienen asistencia financiera para sus estudios y el poco dinero que les sobra lo usan para los gastos de la casa. Lo que sí me preocupa es que estoy agotando los ahorros que con mucho sacrificio obtuve durante los años.

¿Y sus hijos la apoyan en su lucha para mantener lo poco que tienen los trabajadores de los supermercados?

Socorro: Mis hijos me han apoyado desde el principio y me apoyaran hasta el final de esta lucha.

¿Qué ocurrirá si los patrones de los tres supermercados llegan a triunfar en esta lucha?

Socorro: Si los patrones ganan se dará entender que nosotros, los trabajadores, nos damos por vencidos y nos afectara, a la unión y a los trabajadores. Espero que seamos victoriosos en ésta lucha. □