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## Rosa Parks Day means resistance

# Gov't takes from poor to feed war

By LeiLani Dowell

As the winter holiday "season of giving" approaches, many in the United States are reacting strongly to the U.S. government's continued thievery against poor people across the world and at home.

The bloody occupation of Iraq continues, and has unleashed a bitter battle in Congress.

The Bush administration is enmeshed in a growing dispute regarding the war's legitimacy. The cost of the war in Iraq is \$221,341,504,817 as of 2 p.m. on Nov. 21, according to the National Priorities Project; this cost exacts a toll on social services for the most needy in the United States.

Hurricane Katrina showed how racism is openly fomented and perpetuated by the U.S. government. Police brutality, unemployment and discrimination ravage communities of color. The war has brought to light U.S. atrocities from white phosphorus use on civilians to torture of prisoners.

What is clear to many is that 50 years after the opening of the civil rights movement, 50 years after the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott, the struggle must continue.

The question remaining is whether the workers and the poor here will take part in this ongoing battle and raise their own demands.

Part of the answer will be given Dec. 1.

Across the whole country, anti-war and civil rights coalitions have scheduled events to honor the life of Rosa Parks on Dec. 1, the day she refused to yield her seat to a white man on a bus 50 years ago and sparked the civil rights movement.

City councils or subcommittees in Boston, New York, Oakland, Baltimore, Detroit and Cleveland have passed resolutions honoring Rosa Parks and calling for a day of struggle. Ohio and Michigan have declared Dec. 1 as Rosa Parks Day statewide.

Organizers of these national events have said that the best way to honor Rosa Parks is to continue on in her legacy of struggle. These Dec. 1 events will also mark, for many, a further attempt to link the struggles against the war at home and the wars abroad, following on the heels of the Millions More March held Oct. 15 in Washington D.C.

A prime example of this linkage will be the rally on Dec. 1 in New York City, of protesters who will march to Wall Street – the heart of U.S. finance capital. The rally will feature speakers from both the civil rights and anti-war movements.

These Dec. 1 events will demand for Katrina survivors the right of return to the Gulf Coast, as well as just punishment for all the officials of government who are continuing to commit crimes against the evacuees. □

Activities commemorating Rosa Parks Day listed on Troops Out Now website:

- DEC. 1** Los Angeles Willets, Calif. Denver Waterbury, Conn. Spelman College, Ga. Baltimore (*daytime rally, evening dinner*) Springfield, Mass. Boston (*march to City Hall*) Detroit (*teach-in*) Buffalo, N.Y. New York (*Wall St. rally*) Charlotte, N.C. Raleigh, N.C. Columbus, Ohio Cleveland Philadelphia Washington D.C. Bremerton, Wa. Mt. Vernon, Wa.

**DEC. 2** Penobscot, Me.

**DEC. 3** San Francisco San Diego Atlanta

**DEC. 6** Lake Worth, Fla.

See [TroopsOutNow.org](http://TroopsOutNow.org) site for details or call (212) 633-6646 for local contact information.



PHOTOS: PVN

Clarence Thomas, top. Larry Holmes, Rev. Herbert Daughtry

PHOTOS: PVN

Nana Soul, top. Charles Barron. See page 7

City Councils name  
**DECEMBER 1**  
**Rosa Parks Day**

# FedEx to deliver flu virus?

By Hillel Cohen

*Third in a series.*

Along with the holiday packages and overnight shipments, your local FedEx truck may be also carrying the most deadly flu virus the world has seen in 100 years.

That flu virus first appeared in 1918-1919 and spread around the world as an influenza pandemic in the midst of World War I. No one really knows how many died, but estimates range from 20 million to 100 million people, with about a half million in the United States alone.

It was labeled the "Spanish Flu" because it was first observed in Spain. But historians now believe the outbreak started in a U.S. army barracks and then spread quickly among troops stationed overseas. Before the pandemic ended, the virus had reached even the most remote villages.

A little more than a year after the epidemic began, the virus disappeared. Many other types of influenza viruses have come and gone since. There have been two other worldwide pandemics, in 1957 and 1968. But the Spanish Flu virus, the most deadly of all, was never seen alive again—until this year.

Several years ago researchers with the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases retrieved samples of the dead virus from the remains of an Inuit woman in Alaska. Tissue with the virus fragments had been preserved by the permafrost in which she had been buried.

Other virus fragments had earlier been recovered from tissue samples of U.S. soldiers who had died in the flu pandemic. Those samples had been preserved by the Army. Over time the research team deciphered the complete genetic code, the genome, which they recently published in the scientific journal Nature and which can be found on the Internet.

Soon after, another group of researchers with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced that they had used the genetic code to reconstruct a living copy of the virus. Tests confirmed the reconstituted virus is able to kill laboratory animals.

Supporters of this research work claim that the genetic code and even the live virus will help scientists understand how a flu virus can be so deadly, and perhaps yield clues on measures to protect people from a similar virus if one comes again.

Critics say the risk that the virus might escape by accident is too great. In the last few years a number of accidents have occurred—even in high-security laboratories—in which lab workers became infected with the diseases being studied, or in which infected animals have escaped or have been lost.

There is also the possibility that someone with access to the virus might purposely set it loose. It is believed that the anthrax spores found in the mail in 2001 were released by an unknown scientist who worked in a U.S. military lab.

The scientific benefit of having the actual live virus is also in doubt since any new virus that appears is likely to be different in at least some respects.

The Spanish Flu virus has some similarities to the H5N1 avian (bird) flu virus that has been the cause of worldwide concern. But there are sufficient differences that no one can predict whether vaccines or medications designed for either of these will be effective against whatever virus does mutate into a form that can be transmitted from human to human, if in fact such a mutation ever happens at all.

The Bush administration intends to pursue this

research. The White House has announced that the CDC will make the live Spanish Flu virus available to purportedly secure laboratories.

And how will they get the virus from one "secure" lab to another?

## Think FedEx

According to virologist Clarence Peters at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, as reported by the journal Nature, it is customary to send Ebola and similar agents by commercial carriers that allow packages to be tracked. These include FedEx, UPS, DHL and Airborne Express.

The virus is frozen and shipped in a plastic vial that is wrapped with absorbent material to catch leaks, and then sealed in an outer plastic container that is kept in a polystyrene box along with dry ice and then in a heavy cardboard box. It is "very, very safe" according to Dr. Peters.

How safe is safe? What if the package is lost or delivered to the wrong address? What if it is stolen? What if mistakes are made during the "safe" wrapping process?

On Oct. 21, WESH Channel 2 News in Palm Bay, Fla., reported that leaking anthrax vials had been delivered to the Midwest Research Institute. According to the police, three of the 10 package layers had broken in transit, but the remaining layers kept the anthrax contained.

The Spanish Flu virus poses much more danger than anthrax. Anthrax can only harm those who come in contact with it. But if someone is infected with flu virus, he or she can pass it to others and it could spread rapidly before anyone knew it had happened. The Spanish Flu virus killed millions in 1918. Will this killer get loose to kill again?

Had a copy of Nature magazine with the Spanish Flu genome published inside been found in Baghdad, the Bush administration might have used that as "evidence" that Iraq was contemplating the use of the virus as a weapon of mass destruction. Nothing of the sort was found in Iraq.

Perhaps the now-unemployed weapons inspectors should start searching FedEx trucks leaving CDC headquarters.

*Next: What can be done?*

The truth on military recruiters & the draft

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As the bloody colonial occupation of Iraq drags on into its third year, the Army continues to miss its recruiting quotas—falling short by a staggering 42% in April of 2005. This book is aimed at increasing recruiting problems by helping young people and their parents counter the lies of the recruiters. You will find practical tools for challenging recruiters, exposing their falsehoods, and getting them out of our schools.

This Guide to Resistance is \$12 at [Leftbooks.com](http://Leftbooks.com)



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#### Thu., Dec. 1

Rosa Parks Anniversary National Strike Against Poverty, Racism, and War. How do we remember Rosa Parks? By making The 50th anniversary of Rosa Parks' arrest, Dec. 1, a nationwide day of absence and protest against poverty, racism & war. March on Wall Street in NYC to demand: Bring the troops home now; Cut

the war budget; not healthcare, housing and education; Justice for Hurricane Katrina survivors; Military recruiters out of our schools; Jobs, a living wage, the right to organize. For info [www.rosaparksday.org](http://www.rosaparksday.org).

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## With Iraqi resistance winning

# War hawks bitterly debate what to do

By Fred Goldstein

In March 2003 the Bush administration gave the U.S. military a mission impossible—to colonize Iraq. Almost three years later, under the sustained campaign of Iraqi resistance and the growing opposition at home, that mission has gone from quagmire to crisis.

The steady stream of setbacks is forcing the high command to demand changes of policy. But the commanders in charge of the war are unable to get a hearing from the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld cabal. And they have been forced to take their battles to the halls of Congress.

In the latest episode of this battle, renowned war hawk and friend of the military Jack Murtha, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, caused a storm in Congress when he introduced a resolution in the House for the U.S. to leave Iraq “as soon as practicable,” estimating six months. He called for a “redeployment” of Marine forces to a place “over the horizon” where they would be ready to intervene, and basically demanded that the Iraqi puppet forces take over.

During a Nov. 17 media conference and in the floor debate surrounding his resolution the same day, Murtha made some blunt points explaining his position. “It’s time to bring them home,” he asserted. “Our troops have become the primary target of the insurgency. They are united against U.S. forces and we have become the catalyst for violence.

“The future of our military is at risk,” Murtha told the media conference. “Our military and their families are stretched thin. Many say that the Army is broken. Some of our troops are on their third deployment.”

During the floor debate he explained that the commander in Iraq had told him that “every convoy is attacked.” Murtha added, “They say they don’t have enough troops.”

Murtha said that they cannot get more troops. “The military isn’t meeting its quotas, even though they have lowered the quotas.” The only solution would be a draft. But this “is impossible.”

Murtha holds the key position of ranking Democrat on the defense appropriations subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. He has been a leader of that committee for decades. He worked with Dick Cheney when Cheney was secretary of defense during the 1991 Gulf War.

### Murtha: conduit for the military

“Known as a friend and champion of officers at the Pentagon and in the war zone,” said a Nov. 17 Associated Press report, “it is widely believed in Congress that Murtha often speaks for those in uniform and could be echoing what the U.S. commanders in the field and in the Pentagon are saying privately about the conflict.

“Several times a year, Murtha travels to Iraq to assess the war on the ground and he often visits wounded troops in hospitals at home. And he sometimes just calls up generals to get firsthand accounts.”

While Murtha was quite emotional about U.S. casualties, he never shed a tear or even made mention of the 100,000 Iraqis killed and thousands upon thousands wounded or otherwise victimized by the U.S. occupation forces. His overwhelming concern was the condition of the U.S. military.

As a friend of the Pentagon he also reflects the world-dominating strategic

thinking of the militarists. He said that Iraq threatened to drain resources from “procurement programs that ensure our military dominance.” (Time Magazine, Nov. 28)

On the PBS NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Murtha was concerned that “down the road” the U.S. would have to deal with China and that “we have only bought four or five ships this year.”

Three days before Murtha’s resolution, the Senate passed John Warner’s resolution telling the Bush administration to report quarterly on progress in the war and to push to see that Iraqis take over much of the military action in the year 2006. This was substantively a toothless resolution. But it signifies the growing defeatism in the ruling class and the frustration of the military.

### Military breaking into factions

There are those among the brass who want to threaten to pull back significant numbers of troops in order to pressure their puppets to stop infighting, form a cohesive regime to oppose the anti-occupation resistance and frighten the puppet troops into fighting harder. Warner, a senior militarist, former secretary of the Navy and head of the Armed Services Committee, is speaking for this grouping.

Some want more troops, as Time Magazine revealed in its issue dated Nov. 28. “If the Republican chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee wants to get a second opinion on how the war is going, where does he turn? To the Pentagon, but not to the top brass this time.” In what the magazine called “an unusual closed-door meeting on Capitol Hill last week,” Warner, Carl Levin of Michigan and Mark Dayton of Minnesota “sat across the table from 10 military officers chosen for their experience on the battlefield rather than in the political arena.” They were battalion commanders.

The commanders “said that they not only needed more manpower but that they had asked for it” as recently as August 2005 “but got turned down flat.”

This grouping is represented by Sen. John McCain, who recently called for 10,000 more troops. McCain voted against Warner’s resolution to make 2006 a year of significant turnover to the puppet troops.

Joining Murtha in the rapid withdrawal faction is Lt. Gen. William Odom (ret.), former head of the National Security Agency under Ronald Reagan. Odom wants to leave immediately in order to repair U.S. imperialism’s alliances with European and Japanese imperialism. He wants to establish joint domination of the entire Middle East—that is, to share some of it with Washington’s rivals.

It is important to note that the key players driving the debates over the Iraq strategy are tied to the military. The fact is that militarists like McCain, Warner and Murtha have to move before Congress discovers its backbone and passes even the most mealy-mouthed resolution on the war. Permission to do so from some section of the military is required.

Under the pressure of the Iraqi resistance, the military command is breaking up into various factions over what to do about their crisis in Iraq. Most important about the present debate is that it is all about how to get out of a crisis with the least damage. No one has put forward any proposal about how to win. All but Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld have abandoned what Murtha called “an illusion.”

In the present debate among the differ-

ent factions, one side asserts that if the U.S. military stays, it is only inflaming the resistance, acting like an occupier and uniting the country against the U.S. forces. Leaving would extricate the military from this impossible, self-perpetuating situation.

The other side says that if the U.S. leaves, it would be a victory for the resistance, a humiliation for the U.S.—meaning U.S. imperialism—and an encouragement to resistance around the world.

The insoluble contradiction that has been created for the U.S. ruling class and its military is that both sides of the debate are right!

### “Vietnamization” model for Iraq won’t work

That is what happens when an imperialist power is irreversibly losing a colonial war. That is what comes of trying to recolonize a people who suffered from British colonialism but rose up and threw out their oppressors. When the Iraqi people threw out the British colonialists in 1958, they proceeded to take their oil and their country back. They embarked on a course of scientific, educational, economic and social development as a country independent of imperialism.

They don’t want the U.S. oil companies to take their oil. They don’t want the Pentagon to set up military bases to threaten the region. They don’t want to privatize their country and hand it over to transnational corporations. And they don’t want a puppet government. They have lived under imperialist oppression. They don’t want to go back.

All factions in the U.S. military and the ruling class are banking on the so-called “Iraqization” of the war. It is a page taken from the Vietnam War. Nixon eventually had to end the draft and “Vietnamize” the war—which meant to fund, supply and advise puppet troops in a hopeless attempt to stop the Vietnamese, who had already defeated both French and Japanese colonialists, from taking control of their country.

It is noteworthy that before John

Warner introduced his resolution about making 2006 the year of “Iraqization” of the war—although he did not call it that—he had several meetings with 83-year-old Melvin Laird, Nixon’s secretary of defense, who had devised the so-called “Vietnamization” strategy in 1973. Laird has recently written lengthy articles attempting to persuade the Pentagon to adopt a strategy similar to his.

But even though the Vietnamization was accompanied by merciless U.S. bombing and thousands of U.S. commanders remained in the country, it still failed.

It will fail in Iraq.

What is really at issue is a fundamental development in the struggle for national liberation, which began in the oppressed regions of the world, and especially in Asia, right after World War II.

The historical fact is that U.S. imperialism has fought wars to try to conquer territory in Asia. In northern Asia it tried to conquer all of Korea and was defeated by socialist, anti-colonial forces. It fought in southeastern Asia to conquer Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and was defeated again by socialist, anti-colonial forces. It is fighting in Central Asia to conquer Afghanistan, and is losing. It is fighting in Western Asia—the Middle East—to conquer Iraq. And it has already been defeated.

U.S. imperialism, the center of world capitalism, world production and world exploitation, has always regarded its fate as linked to its domination of the populous, resource-rich Asian land mass. It has seen this vast territory as the historical terrain for the expansion of exploitation and plunder necessary to its existence.

No military strategy in Iraq, or any other part of the world, is going to change the fact that formerly oppressed peoples of the world will resist being forced back into the shackles of imperialism. The workers and the oppressed in the United States are already becoming disillusioned and increasingly unwilling to kill and be killed in this futile and reactionary attempt at world domination by those who oppress and exploit them, too. □

## Stay grounded—every day

The racist, anti-worker, imperialist policies of the Bush administration are yielding their poison fruit: wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the collapse of the infrastructure in the Gulf area, growing disasters linked to global warming, and a looming capitalist economic crisis.

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## Nat'l Conference to Reclaim Our Cities

# Total break with Bush's war policies

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Detroit

Activists from around the United States gathered at Wayne State University in Detroit Nov. 11-13 to work on a program for reversing the growing crisis of urban areas.

Under the theme: "Feed the cities, starve the Pentagon," the event took a strong position against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and called for support for the mass actions on the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in December.

"The National Conference to Reclaim Our Cities" (NCRC) attracted delegates concerned about the \$500 billion annual defense budget, which is draining resources from the vast need for housing, healthcare, quality education, employment, infrastructural development, food, access to water and utilities, environmental safety and community control of police.

Andrea Hackett of the student chapter of the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice (MECAWI), the host organization, welcomed the participants.

David Sole, president of UAW Local 2334 in Detroit and a key organizer of the conference, recalled that "the city of Detroit announced that it had a \$300 million budget deficit and in facing that deficit, the city administration called in union presidents from all the various unions representing 15,000 city workers and told us that we had to take a 10 percent wage cut and take \$47 million in medical care cuts.

"Some of us raised the fact [in a planning meeting] that there is one place where

there is plenty of money going and that no one talks about and that is the Pentagon budget and specifically the Iraq war."

Donald Boggs, president of the Metro-Detroit AFL-CIO, noted that over \$210 billion has already been spent on the Iraq war. Boggs pointed out that the Iraq war has cost the state of Michigan over \$5 billion and the city of Detroit some \$369 million, which could have wiped out the budget deficit.

"With 6.5 billion people living in the world today, over half are living on less than two dollars a day," said Boggs. "America is the biggest exporter of worker oppression in the world and we need to stop it, starting at home. I can only promise you that as long as I am president of the Metropolitan-Detroit AFL-CIO, yes I will push my leaders, but in the final analysis it is going to take the rank and file telling us it is time that we do something about the war."

JoAnn Watson, who was recently re-elected to the Detroit City Council, addressed the plenary, saying that "I am blessed to be here representing the left wing of the Detroit City Council. All organizations need to have a left wing—uncompromising soldiers willing to take a stand for peace and justice, calling for freedom now and the taking of no prisoners."

Watson then paid tribute to Rosa Parks, who provided the spark for the modern civil rights movement on Dec. 1, 1955. In a recently passed Detroit City Council resolution submitted by Watson, the legislative body of the municipal government has recognized Dec. 1 as a day of



Karina Solidarity Committee in New York.

### Final Resolution

The conference delegates at the closing session Nov. 13 agreed to support and work towards building the Dec. 1 Day

of Absence activities that will take place around the country.

In addition, the conference endorsed a national mobilization in New Orleans scheduled for Dec. 9-10 calling for justice for the communities that have been severely affected and dispersed as a result of the aftermath of Katrina. Also the delegates agreed to work to build demonstrations against the occupation of Iraq on its third anniversary during March 18-20 next year.

Clarence Thomas of the Million Worker March Movement spoke about the upcoming commemoration of the Haymarket Massacre of 1886 in Chicago which represents the symbolic origin of May Day. The conference agreed to support this event in an effort to reclaim May Day as the holiday of working people in United States.

Moreover, the final resolution called upon the elected officials of major American cities to politically break with the Bush administration on the continuing occupation of Iraq and to set a deadline of Dec. 16 to demand the return of tax dollars slated to go to the Pentagon in order to continue the war.

For more information log on to: <http://www.reclaimourcities.org>  
Azikiwe is editor of the Pan-African News Wire.

action honoring the late civil rights pioneer, who died Oct. 24.

The resolution reads in part that "the tragic Katrina hurricane exposed to the world the continuing urgent need even 50 years later to battle racial inequality, poverty and war, the three things that Dr. [Martin Luther] King came to see as the main enemies of all human progress, and that the Detroit City Council declares Dec. 1, 2005 Rosa Parks Action Day for Equality, Peace and Economic Prosperity for All, and be it resolved that the Council encourages all businesses in the city, both public and private, to conduct demonstrations on Dec. 1, or allow the many workers and students in the city who will want to attend Rosa Parks commemorative events taking place during normal business hours, to take time off to demonstrate for social justice in the manner of Mother Rosa Parks."

Another plenary session, chaired by Ann Rall of MECAWI, featured Maureen Taylor of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, Clarence Thomas of the Million Worker March Movement from Oakland, California, Larry Holmes of the Troops Out Now Coalition, Violetta Donawa of the Wayne State University student chapter of MECAWI, Jerry Goldberg of the A Job is a Right Campaign and Brenda Stokely of the

## Affirmative action under attack

By Lou Paulsen  
Chicago

In an attack planned by right-wing enemies of affirmative action, the federal government has threatened to sue Southern Illinois University [SIU], a state university with campuses in Carbondale and Edwardsville, unless, by Nov. 18, it scraps three programs that provide fellowships for national minorities and women.

This action also threatens a vast network of comparable programs across the country which benefit tens of thousands of young women and men of oppressed nationalities.

Two programs under attack—the Bridge to the Doctorate Fellowship and the PROMPT program, provide study opportunities to graduate students from "underrepresented minorities." The third, the Graduate Dean's Fellowship, is also available to women. According to the Justice Department, 132 graduate students have benefited from these programs in the last five years.

Federal attorneys say these programs constitute employment discrimination because they are not open to white men, although they constitute only 1.5 percent of SIU's total aid package for graduate students. Thousands of white men have received financial aid to attend SIU.

The significance of this attack goes far beyond SIU.

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of scholarships, internships, and fellowships in the U.S. available to women and "underrepresented minorities" on

identical terms, sponsored by colleges, universities, associations, corporations, foundations, and even federal agencies. If the SIU programs are found illegal "employment discrimination," all these plans are threatened.

Under the government's reasoning, other "illegal" programs would include, for example, the Bell Labs Graduate Research Fellowship Program, Minority Fellowship Programs at the National Institute for Mental Health, the Porter Fellowships of the American Physiological Society, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowships at 72 colleges and universities, the Johnson and Johnson Leadership Award for Minority Students, NCAA Minority and Women's Enhancement Programs, fellowships and grants from the American Association of University Women, Project 1000 Fellowships for Hispanic Students, Ford Foundation fellowships, fellowships from the National Science Foundation, the summer internship at the American College of Healthcare Executives, and the Center for Democracy and Technology Minority Fellowship—to name the first few hits in a very extensive Web search.

These programs are legacies of the civil rights movement and the rebellions of the 1960's, which forced the ruling class to slightly open the doors to professional education for women and people of color. They have not brought equality or created a "color-blind" or "gender-neutral" society—not nearly. But tens of thousands have benefited from them. Now the Bush

administration threatens to slam the door shut again and lock it.

This attack follows the legal strategy mapped out by a right-wing institute called, in Orwellian style, the "Center for Equal Opportunity" [CEO], whose purpose is to destroy any program that might equalize opportunity for people of color and women. Based in Virginia and bankrolled by the right-wing Olin, Bradley and Scaife foundations, it is staffed by Reagan-era government lawyers and headed by right-wing commentator Linda Chavez. The CEO has filed complaints against similar programs at many universities, and boasts that most have given in without a fight.

For example, a spokesperson for the American Council on Education told the Clarkson Integrator that a summer program at Northwestern University, and programs for minority engineering students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, were modified and opened to white male students.

"If these programs were brought into existence to close the gap between Blacks and whites, we are nowhere near that, and it is totally insulting to say that white men are being discriminated against in the universities," said Dr. Conrad Worrill, National Chairman of the National Black United Front and Coordinator of the Northeastern Illinois University's Center for Inner-City Studies.

"This is a political move [by the Bush administration] to set precedents for challenging these fellowships," said Dr. Lance Williams, also of the Center's

faculty. "They are sending out feelers—how will people respond, and who is coming to their defense? They're telling conservative folks, 'We're supporting your concerns.'"

When attacking affirmative action programs, conservatives pose as the defenders of poor white students. But in fact, the Bush administration has slashed the amount of Pell grants and tightened eligibility standards, making it harder for working-class students of all nationalities to get aid for college.

"[Conservatives] claim that minority fellowships aren't reaching the most needy students, but they aren't talking about the cultural ramifications," Williams said. "If you look at the retention rates, you see that Black people and people of color, often first-generation college students, have a difficult time without the cultural resources and connections. The low percentage of faculty of color means there are fewer mentors for them in the Academy. So the inequality is perpetuated from one generation to the next."

It is not clear how SIU will react to the threat. On the one hand, Chancellor William Wendler has defended the programs and said they are not discriminatory. But he sounded less firm in other reports, telling the Herald & Review newspaper, for example, "We're going to work to address the concerns they have." In any case, SIU is ultimately governed by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, a state agency. A mass movement to stiffen their resistance would be more than timely. □

# Denver cop beats Black man into coma

By Larry Hales  
Denver

Denver cop Daniel Swanson beat Thomas Charles Armstrong into a coma in the early morning on Nov. 11. The victim's brother, Earl A. Armstrong, is an outspoken critic of the Denver Police Department and has feared reprisal for his outspokenness. Earl A. Armstrong has been critical of cops since his father, Earl F. Armstrong, was shot to death in 1980 by police in a city just outside the Denver Metropolitan Area.

The case of Thomas Charles Armstrong, 37, who is on life support, will be heard by the Denver Independent Monitor, Richard Rosenthal. The city of Denver created the monitor position after Paul Childs, a mentally disabled, 15-year-old Black youth, was killed by Denver cop James Tourney on July 5, 2003. Hundreds of activists and Denver residents demanded justice and community control at the time.

Monitor Rosenthal can only investigate 20 percent of cases of excessive force by a cop, and can suggest procedural changes, but cannot mete out punishment or make recommendations to punish or prosecute cops. Many Black and Latino residents doubt that the monitor, a position which will cost the city \$500,000 a year, will solve the problems caused by police brutality.

According to police, T.C. Armstrong was walking on East 11th Ave. and Xenia streets when he was stopped by Officer

Daniel Swanson, who was reportedly responding to a silent alarm. Swanson said he stopped T.C. because the Black male was "behaving suspiciously."

Swanson has never elaborated on T.C.'s alleged suspicious behavior. During the course of the stop, T.C. was brutally beaten, with lacerations across his face, arms, torso, groin area and his legs. T.C.'s groin area and testicles are swollen where he was repeatedly kicked and stomped, and he has bite marks on his body.

The spokesperson for the Denver Police Department has criticized Armstrong and his family, calling their claims of brutality "ludicrous," and claiming that Swanson was protecting himself. The spokesperson criminalized T.C. by dredging up his past, all in an attempt to justify the beating.

It is important to point out that officer Daniel Swanson has no injuries. His claim that T.C. was resisting arrest is flimsy at best, and according to witnesses other than police witness Jarrod Foust, the claim that T.C. resisted arrest is suspect.

The Denver Police's first published statements were that someone called 911 in response to T.C. rolling around in the streets, screaming and yelling for help, that Swanson arrived on the scene shortly after 1 a.m., approached T.C. and defended himself when T.C. attacked him. Denver Police also claimed to not know how T.C. got lacerations across his

T.C. Armstrong,  
on life support.

face, and claimed that he may have had those before Swanson arrived.

**Cops had victim in cuffs**

Other witnesses have come forward to say that T.C. began screaming for help while being attacked, and someone called 911. Witness Janea Monroe came forward on Nov. 16 for a news conference in front of Denver Police District 2 headquarters. Monroe said that she and two friends had driven by the site of the incident at 12:40 a.m. and saw T.C. handcuffed, with a laceration on one eye, and that a cop was kneeling on his neck with a weapon, either a firearm or a Taser electric shock gun against T.C.'s head.

The Denver Police Department has made numerous statements contradicting the original statement and has only recently released the names of the officers involved.

There have been two rallies of dozens of activists calling for justice for T.C., who is still on life support.

Antiracist, anti-imperialist activist Shareef Aleem told Workers World:



PHOTO: REBECA ROMERO

"Human rights groups point to the brutality of the United States military in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, but Black people face this same brutality everyday, in every ghetto, and until we address this, we are never gonna stop the other. I thank Workers World for supporting communities of color and being active and

reporting on what's happening."

The father of T.C.'s brother, Earl A. Armstrong, was unjustly killed by cops in 1980, his family says. Earl F. Armstrong, who was mentally disabled, was shot by cops in the back of the head following a traffic stop. This event motivated Earl A. Armstrong to organize against police brutality, and had deeply scarred T.C.

The Armstrong family has reported constant surveillance by Denver cops. Earl A. Armstrong has been stopped and cited at least once, and is followed every time he leaves his house. But, he told Workers World, he and his family will continue fighting for justice, as T.C. fights for his life.

Both Earl A. Armstrong and Shareef Aleem said that the wider antiwar community must take up the war being waged daily against people of color. □

# Historic prison activist David Ruiz dies

By Gloria Rubac, Texas Death Penalty  
Abolition Movement

David Ruiz, the jailhouse lawyer whose historic 1972 lawsuit forced the Texas prison system into the 20th century, died on Nov. 12. He was 63 years old and had just been visited by his wife and three children at the prison hospital in Galveston, Texas. They were allowed to see him for only one hour. After they were forced to leave, Ruiz died.

News of Ruiz' death was reported in almost 100 newspapers around the country, all saying he had died of natural causes. That is a lie. He died of medical neglect.

David Ruiz is known and revered by all those in prison in Texas and all who have done time. His name still gives courage to those fighting the injustices of the system some 25 years after Federal Judge William Wayne Justice declared the Texas prison system unconstitutional.

David wrote his civil rights complaint on toilet paper in 1972. Years later it was combined with six other lawsuits into what became a class action on behalf of all Texas prisoners—Ruiz vs. Estelle.

During the 1970s the system offered David his freedom if he would just drop his lawsuit. He refused.

The trial began in October 1978. One hundred and ten prisoners were called to testify about the lack of medical care, overcrowding, lack of legal access and the guards' brutality. Thousands of prisoners held a work stoppage in solidarity with those testifying and the strike spread to almost all of the prison units.

The trial ended one year later in 1979. In 1980 the judge ruled in favor of Ruiz and the prisoners. After what was then the longest civil trial in U.S. jurisprudence history, Texas was ordered to make sweeping changes in its prisons.

Change was not made willingly and the federal government had to take over the prison system to force compliance. In 2002, the federal court finally released the system back to state control.



David Ruiz in 1978.

PHOTO: ALAN POGUE

**Killed by medical neglect**

The prison system discovered he had cancer in 2002 but did not tell him until 2005 and never treated the illness, he said. He had hepatitis C that he said he got from unsanitary prison conditions at the Coffield Unit. After filing writs, grievances and writing many letters, he received minimal and irregular treatment for six months only. He also was never treated for his gallstones, cataracts on both eyes, a hiatal hernia and injuries to both knees, both ankles and his back.

Dr. Kathryn Kendall, a writing professor and friend who corresponded with David, told Workers World that a doctor had told David in 2004 that he had, at most, five years to live. David told Kendall, "I only hope that I'll be able to accomplish certain things I desire on behalf of all prisoners who have experienced oppression, sadness, loneliness and pain while being confined."

David was one of 13 children born to migrant farmworkers. He grew up in the Chicano neighborhood of East Austin. David and his wife, Marie, have three children that David dearly loved: Eva, David and Everett. All his children and grandchildren are proud of their father/grandfather and his contributions to bettering the lives of prisoners.

Eva said, "To me, because of his lawsuit, he has made history. He felt that everyone should be treated humanely, even though they made a mistake. To me, my dad gave his life for the prisoners."

David was also a poet and an artist. Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata was a favorite subject in his art, as well as Native people and symbols. He was very proud of his Chicano and Native heritage.

While David was out of prison during the early 1980s, he continued his activism, traveling to Detroit for the founding conference of the All Peoples Congress and attending meetings and rallies around Texas.

After he was returned to prison in 1984, he spent the last 21 years isolated in administrative segregation. He was as hated by the prison system as he was loved by its captives. But the system could never break David, no matter what the torture, no matter the consequences.

Dr. Kendall said that Ruiz had three missions that kept him going the last year of his life: 1) his campaign for adequate health care for Texas prisoners; 2) his campaign for programs for young people just getting into trouble with the law; and 3) his desire to alert the public to the abuse, torture and illegal detention of

immigrants in Texas prisons.

No one in Texas prisons does easy time, but David's was particularly cruel. The medical neglect killed him and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is responsible for his slow and painful death.

David was a special person who will live forever in the hearts and in the history of so many: the Chicano community he loved, the prisoners he fought for, the activists he inspired, the organizers he worked with, and the legal writ writers he educated. David always had a quick smile for his friends and a sharp pen for his enemies. David will be sorely missed but never forgotten.

The hundreds who attended his rosary, his funeral and his burial know that David made history for his people and they love him for that. Maria Elena Rodriguez, a former member of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and a friend of David, told mourners at the rosary to contact government officials about the deliberate death of Ruiz.

Not many prisoners have a federal judge who presided over one of their lawsuits against the prison system attend their funeral. Judge William Wayne Justice, who presided over David's landmark lawsuit, is now 86 years old. He sat quietly in Cristo Rey church for the funeral and afterward told ex-prisoner Chuck Hurt that he has a tremendous respect for David.

David's rosary and funeral both ended with an old country song sung in Spanish, "One Day at a Time," which is how David did his time, kept his sanity and his perseverance.

David and his extraordinary courage will always be with us in spirit—on the picket line, in the law libraries, at the rallies, in the jail cell and wherever oppressed people are fighting for change, for revolution, to bring this racist system down.

As a leader of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, Rubac had organized support for the prisoners during the 1978-79 trial. The Ruiz family invited her to give a eulogy for David. □

# FEMA sets deadline for housing evacuees

By LeiLani Dowell

In the latest attack on survivors of Hurricane Katrina, the Federal Emergency Management Agency announced Nov. 15 that just 15 days later—on Dec. 1—the agency would suspend its payments for hotel rooms in which some 50,000 survivors now live.

Due to enormous outrage and pressure from survivors and their supporters, FEMA on Nov. 22 announced that it has extended that deadline to Jan. 7 for the 10 states that have received the most evacuees. All other states now have a deadline of Dec. 15.

Searching for an apartment can be a process that takes weeks, sometimes sev-

eral months—and that's if you have an income. Yet without offering either short- or long-term plans for these survivors, FEMA spokesperson Nicol Andrews told the New York Times, "We are just trying to help people move on."

FEMA officials say the agency plans to offer the survivors temporary-housing rental assistance at an average \$786 a month. This amount that will not even cover basic rent for some families that have been scattered to high-rent areas of the country.

FEMA also notified state and local governments that it will end financing of a program that rented apartments on behalf of hurricane survivors. About two dozen

cities had taken advantage of this program, according to the New York Times.

As of Nov. 21, new leases signed under this program can be no longer than three months. As of Dec. 1, no new leases will be allowed. On March 1, 2006, FEMA will no longer pay for any leases. As of this writing, FEMA has not extended this deadline.

Some politicians and elected officials openly criticized FEMA's announcement. They include Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts; Mayor Bill White of Houston, where over 19,000 survivors are still in hotel and motel rooms; and Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, ranking member of the House Committee on Homeland Security.

Thompson also denounced FEMA's

failure to use 1,500 housing units donated Sept. 15 by Fannie Mae to evacuees in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. He wrote in a letter to the acting director of FEMA: "Two months after Fannie Mae extended the offer to FEMA, the agency has yet to place a single family in the donated housing units. Indeed, the 18 families that were placed by Fannie Mae all worked through local organizations to secure housing, as FEMA failed them."

FEMA's Dec. 1 callous deadline to stop payment on hotel rooms and stop signing leases coincides with the 50th anniversary of the day Rosa Parks refused to yield her bus seat to a white man, an act that sparked the modern civil-rights movement. Organizers of Dec. 1 commemoration events around the country plan to demand justice for Katrina survivors, while they also raise demands to end poverty, war and racism.

Meanwhile, a group of unions has filed a lawsuit against New Orleans landlords who have unfairly evicted tenants. According to the lawsuit, landlords have in some instances served eviction notices at New Orleans premises knowing that the tenants are currently living elsewhere. In other instances, tenants have received eviction notices for failure to pay rent on uninhabitable property. □

## From New Orleans to Harlem Tenants fight gentrification

By Imani Henry

KeShawn Harris, a 20-year-old African-American woman, fled the Louisburg Square Apartments in New Orleans with her 2-year-old son days before Hurricane Katrina hit. In a Nov. 15 radio interview with New Orleans Indymedia, she told of returning in October to her apartment in the parish of Terrytown and finding her apartment still intact but being told she was not allowed to live there.

LES Realty Trust, the owner of Louisburg Square Apartments, claimed that it was re-modeling the entire apartment complex, and that KeShawn had to move out. Even when she tried to pay rent for both September and October her landlord refused to take it. A certified nursing assistant with two jobs, working 16-hour days and with a car totaled by the hurricane, Harris was forced to leave her child with relatives so he would not have endure being homeless.

Other Louisburg Square Apartments tenants were told not to worry about paying the rent due to the devastation of the hurricane. But for those who attempted to pay, again the landlord refused to take it. On Oct. 27, LES Realty Trust sent out evictions notices with court appearances for Nov. 2, stating non-payment of rent. This came two days after Gov. Kathleen Blanco lifted the moratorium on evictions.

Under Louisiana law, when a landlord begins eviction proceedings the tenant must appear at a hearing five days later to contest it. If the judge rules in favor of the landlord, the landlord can remove the tenant's belongings 24 hours later.

Adding insult to injury, the lifting of the ban on evictions on Oct 25 has unleashed an unprecedented number of evictions. In a Nov. 2 Associated Press article, Bill Quigley, director of the Loyola University Law Clinic and the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center, put the estimate of evictions that are going through the Louisiana courts at as many as a 1,000 per day. Landlords have claimed tenants have not contacted them or had abandoned their apartments.

Quigley reported that the evictions in New Orleans are breaking down into roughly three categories: those that are unopposed because tenants are not even aware of them, those for which tenants are justifiably disputing whether they should pay September rent while the city was under a mandatory evacuation order and several feet of water, and those where ten-

ants are willing to pay but landlords still won't accept rent because they want tenants out.

Bertha Dugas of the Louisburg Square Tenants Association told Workers World that LES Realty Trust is doing everything it can to force the tenants out. "You couldn't come here to interview me. The management would call the police. I had four cops come to my house because of my being a leader of the tenants association."

Tenants have experienced harassment such as having their lights cut off, their cars towed and police officers showing up to their doors at night.

On Nov. 2, a court ruled in favor of the tenants forcing the landlord to take tenants' rent. But on both Nov. 12 and 19, tenants began receiving "Notice to Vacate" letters from LES Realty Trust. Under Louisiana law there is no due process and tenants must leave within 10 days of this notice.

Bertha Dugas, a white working-class woman born and raised in Louisiana, says tenants are planning to fight to stay. "We pay \$395 a month here. It would be hard to find another apartment we could afford. If I had the money, I would go buy a place, but I just don't have the money."

In other communities in the New Orleans area, tenants are organizing as well. On Oct. 15, tenants held a protest at Forest Park Apartments, a public housing development in Algiers. Holding letters from the management company that they had received only three days prior, tenants were outraged to learn about the shutting down of the property to make repairs in the wake of Katrina. The letter also stated that starting Oct. 16 no one will be allowed to live in the 284-unit complex because of health and safety reasons until the repairs were completed. "All utilities will be turned off, and all gates will be locked on that date," the letter went on to state.

According to New Orleans Indymedia, Forest Park is not the only publicly funded housing complex whose tenants are facing eviction. Other complexes include Jackson Landing, Fisher Projects and the Iberville Housing Projects in New Orleans. Many residents of these housing projects were previously displaced when their former homes in the St. Thomas housing development in New Orleans were destroyed in 2001 to make way for high-priced condos and a Wal-Mart store.

"It's gentrification, plain and simple. They want to push the Black and poor populations out," concluded Nellie Bailey of

the Harlem Tenants Council, which is fighting the gentrification of Harlem, N.Y. "In Harlem and in cities around the country the gentrification has been a gradual process, over several years or decades. In New Orleans since the hurricanes it has been wholesale displacement, in one foul swoop."

*Next: Gentrification in Harlem.*

### Guest commentary

## Kanye West & the ent

By Usavior



Usavior

I believe that a higher power, whether you call it chance or God, gives us the tools each and every day for us to build our liberation. I believe that it must come first with liberation of the mind, where we throw off all of the programmed thinking that has been force-fed us for so long, which means that we have to begin to reanalyze the meanings of things that we encounter in our everyday lives.

For example, the entertainment industry is a very powerful tool for those who care to use it. Either it can be a very potent drug of escape for those of us without hope of ever affecting any significant change in our real lives, or it can be an instrument of brainwashing. If we've noticed, much like larger corporations are swallowing up all of the smaller ones and merging into one giant oppressive force globally, so too has the entertainment industry merged in such a way where you can't tell where the music industry begins and the movie industry ends. Nor can they figure out where the sports celebrities fit.

All of these industries are dominated by Black people. Our talent is unfathomable. But we don't control the resources that determine success in these arenas. Now most of us feel this is an old song and dance: yeah, we don't control distribution blah blah. But in a real way we don't even control how it is that we are reflected. Meaning if we don't play along, then we're voiceless.

The golden age of cinema, at least for Black folks, took place in the seventies. We are all familiar with the Black exploitation films, which many believed to be parodies

of real efforts for Black liberation. But we were kicking whitey's ass on film and we were bad, Black and beautiful.

What happened?

Well for the naysayer who felt that these films diminished us in many ways, there were some who realized that as techniques became more advanced, as actors took their roles more seriously and messages to the Black man and woman became more complex and hard-hitting (we can cite a number of examples: "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" and "The Final Comedown") where mass revolution was the main theme and not simply implied on the level on one individual's fight against "The Man," some began to quake in their proverbial boots. They realized that they'd better put a stop to this trend before somebody began to put two and two together off-screen and start a real revolution.

When Kanye West emerged on the scene, he was lauded as a producer and while his songs weren't considered gangster, nor were his lyrics dripping with Black power. There was a healthy smattering of clothes, how fly the raps are, girls, etc. In fact, every now and then he would mention something that sounded half-way conscious and then throw something else in that confused the hell out of people. He was what George Bush would have called a hip-hop flip-flopper. So the Black intellectuals began arguing the inconsistencies that he exhibited and likening them to the entire Black race. White people continued to dance.

But Kanye West portended doom for the entertainment industry. What happened was that so many of us, Black and white included, were so used to underestimating Black men, especially rappers, that they just took him for another artist trying to contort himself to please as many listeners as possible. Very few were paying

# NY City Council committee backs Rosa Parks Day

By Monica Moorehead  
New York

A number of activists testified at a Nov. 18 public hearing at City Hall sponsored by the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations of the New York City Council in support of Resolution No. 1240—which calls for the city to officially recognize Dec. 1 as Rosa Parks Day.

Dec. 1 is the 50th anniversary of the day in 1955 when Rosa Parks, a Black seamstress, refused to relinquish her seat on a racially segregated bus in Montgomery, Ala. This single act of defiance proved to be a catalyst for the historic Montgomery bus boycott of 40,000 predominantly Black people, which began on Dec. 5. The successful boycott, which defeated the segregationist laws on the transit buses in 1956, propelled the modern-day civil-rights movement throughout the South.

Parks died on Oct. 24 at age 92.

The Million Worker March Movement, Troops Out Now Coalition, Fight Imperialism—Stand Together and others initiated organizing for a Dec. 1 National Day of Absence against War, Poverty and Racism, to shore up the social-justice movement throughout the United States. Day of Absence organizers are urging no work, no school and no shopping on Dec.



Left, Larry Holmes, Charles Barron, Barron's Legislative Director, N. Joy Simmons and Domenic Recchia.

1 to protest against endless U.S. wars and occupation abroad, especially in Iraq, and the war at home in the form of cutbacks, loss of jobs, low wages and all forms of repression.

These protests will pay special attention to the plight of Hurricane Katrina survivors who are demanding the right to return to New Orleans and other parts of the Gulf Coast. FEMA is threatening to evict tens of thousands of survivors from their temporary housing, including those in New York.

Nationally coordinated actions will take place on the East Coast, West Coast, in the

North and South. In New York, a march and rally will take place on Wall Street from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m.

The Dec. 1 resolution was introduced by Councilmember Charles Barron and a dozen more councilmembers at an Oct. 27 news conference. It reads in part, "December 1st shall annually be observed as Rosa Parks Commemoration Day in New York City, and encouraging all businesses in the City, both public and private, to either close on December 1st or allow the many workers and students in the City who will want to attend Rosa Parks Commemoration events taking place during normal business hours, to take the day off, or leave work and school early with impunity."

Speaker after speaker took the floor to express support for Rosa Parks Day. They included Nellie Bailey of the Harlem Tenants Council, the Rev. Herbert Daughtry of House of the Lord Church, Denise Outram representing Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, Michael Hardy of the National Action Network, Nana Soul of Artists and Activists United for Peace, Mia Cruz and LeiLani Dowell of FIST, Larry Holmes of the Troops Out Now Coalition, New York City

Comptroller William Thompson Jr., Erik-Anders Nilsson of the Jersey City Peace Movement, and Navy veteran and counter-recruiter Dustin Langley. Jazz artist Consuela Lee, a participant in the bus boycott, sent a message to the hearing.

One of the highlights of the hearing was when Clarence Thomas, a leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in San Francisco and MWMM co-coordinator, presented MWMM T-shirts to Barron and Councilmember Domenic Recchia Jr., who chaired the proceedings. Thomas also brought a copy of a Rosa Parks Day resolution that was recently passed by the Oakland, Calif., city council. Similar resolutions have been passed in Boston, Cleveland, Detroit and Baltimore.

After hearing a number of the testifiers, the council committee unanimously passed the Parks resolution. The resolution will go before the entire City Council for a vote on Nov. 30.

Upon hearing the FIST organizers speak about the impact of Parks' action on young people and also about a FIST march and rally at Union Square on Dec. 1, Recchia announced that he will send a letter to the schools chancellor to urge all schools to recognize Rosa Parks Day. □



Above, Rosa Parks with Martin Luther King.

## entertainment industry

attention to what constituted artistic metamorphosis that was at once very symbolic and very on purpose.

Fast forward to his song, "Diamonds Are Forever" {most notably, the remixed version—WW}, which is one of the most courageous positions to take because it deals with a serious issue in our community where we pump up this image of rocking ice and not really understanding what it means to children who look like us dying while mining these rocks over thousands of miles away where we can't see them.

Of course "Jesus Walks" which is not simply a song that says gangsters need Jesus too, but a real indictment of the armed forces and the ways in which they brainwash our young people. "Late Registration" pokes serious fun at how rabidly people pursue degrees which ultimately wind up as liner for kitchen drawers or shoe stuffers for homeless men. Very unpopular views, very subtly melded into rhymes, hypnotic beats and light-hearted comedy—brainwashing at its best.

The grand finale, which I won't go into in any detail because I'm sure you've all seen it, is the "Bush Doesn't Care About Black People" Telethon. Nobody saw it coming because they think that Black folk are not only stupid, but not able to think past fat gold ropes and iced-out jump suits.

Now come the dangerous times. Because America will not take the shenanigans of one outspoken n—r lightly. Look at what they did in Iraq. Bombs, tanks, thousands of troops against a handful of valiant rebels with dusty weapons. State of the art technology against a rock throwing mob. What will they send against the Kanyes of the world?

Katrina was a wakeup call, but so is this ensuing drama. Follow it closely. It's more than just a distraction from the war in Iraq. It is an on-going battle in the



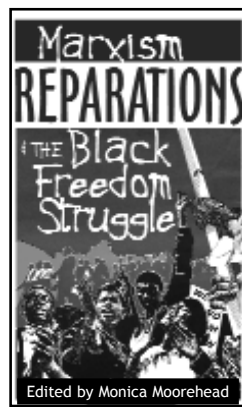
Kanye West

ongoing war for the hearts and minds of our people.

*Usavio is a producer with Black Waxx Recordings and Filmworks. He is also a member of the New York based Artists and Activists United for Peace*

## Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

- ◆ Racism, national oppression & the right to self-determination *Larry Holmes*
- ◆ Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery *Sam Marcy*
- ◆ Reparations & Black Liberation *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Harriet Tubman: woman warrior *Mumia Abu-Jamal* (Guest Commentary)
- ◆ Black labor & the fight for reparations *Bill Cecil*
- ◆ Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of slavery, sharecropping & segregation *Consuela Lee* (Guest commentary)
- ◆ Black farmers demand justice *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Greetings from Mumia Abu-Jamal to the 3rd UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia & Related Intolerance
- ◆ Nigerian women take over Chevron Texaco *Monica Moorehead*
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## First woman GI resister

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

At the gates of Ft. Benning, Ga., 22-year-old SPC Katherine Jashinski publicly announced on Nov. 17 her intention to refuse orders to complete weapons training in preparation for being sent to war.

Jashinski was accompanied by members of Iraq Veterans against the War

Katherine  
Jashinski



(IVAW), including Camilo Meijia, who was imprisoned for a year for his refusal to return to Iraq, and Michael Hoffman, one of the founding members of IVAW.

Father Roy Bourgeois, also a veteran but more widely known for his role in the annual mass protests at Ft. Benning demanding the closing of the School of the Americas, joined the news conference in urging support for Jashinski.

The Texas Army National Guard member signed on at age 19 to be a cook. She made an application for Conscientious Objector (CO) status eighteen months ago. With her request denied and receiving orders to go to Ft. Benning for weapons training, Jashinski decided to take her case to the public.

She appeared the next evening at a program, "Iraq Vets say No to War," at Georgia Tech in Atlanta and vowed to the crowd that whatever the consequences, "I will not go!"

The next move is up to the military. She has not yet been charged with any infraction. □

# 14 arrested exposing CIA torture flights

By Dante Strobino, FIST member  
Johnston County, N.C.

Two other Raleigh FIST members and I drove with an independent documentarian to Johnston County, N.C., at 6 a.m. on Nov. 18 to join a group of 50 to 60 people for a direct action against Aero Contractors Ltd, a CIA torture air-taxi service.

Aero uses the Johnston County Airport to store their planes that are often summoned by the CIA to transport captives for “extraordinary rendition,” a code word for transport to countries other than the U.S. for torture, or as some call it, “outsourced torture.”

We all met in 29-degree weather at St. Anne’s Catholic Church at 7 a.m. in Johnston County and drove together to the airport. Upon arrival a group of fourteen of us walked around the fence surrounding the airport and onto Aero Contractor’s land. There we gathered in a circle and read political statements and an indict-

ment, detailing how Aero’s torture program with the CIA violates international law.

As we openly lamented for the victims of CIA torture, security approached us and asked us to leave. We read our statements into a microphone as we were being handcuffed. One participant, Josh McIntyre, a member of Raleigh’s Amnesty International, approached the door of Aero and knocked. The person opening the door pointed an electric-shock Taser gun at McIntyre, who backed away and left a copy of our indictment at the door. McIntyre was soon arrested.

Of the 14 arrested, several were members of Catholic Worker Houses either here in North Carolina or in St. Louis, Missouri. Others arrested included Kathy Kelly, the founder of Voices in the Wilderness from Chicago; a North Carolina State University professor and member of the North Carolina Green Party; a worker for the American Friends Service Committee,

a member of the International Solidarity Movement and a Code Pink member. I was there from the Raleigh chapter of Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST), a youth activist group.

Some of those arrested had come to North Carolina on their way to Georgia to protest against the School of Americas (SOA), a U.S. torture and assassin-training institute that sends graduates to Latin America to terrorize the population.

Immediately following our arrests, other anti-war activists delivered an indictment to officers and directors of Aero Contractors charging these officers with violations of federal criminal law and international law. Deputies then escorted the activists to deliver copies to the director of the Johnston County Airport, members of the Johnston County Airport Authority and the Johnston County Board of Commissioners.

The letters asked the airport and the county to investigate the charges raised in

the indictment and to take appropriate measures to cease Aero Contractors’ operations in furtherance of “extraordinary rendition.”

Other members of the group held signs and performed street theater along Route 70 during rush-hour traffic to alert commuters to Aero’s torture-related activities.

We prisoners were the talk of the jailhouse, with others incarcerated walking past our holding cell to congratulate us. Co-arrestee Patrick O’Neill entertained us all day with his stories of civil disobedience arrests, specifically with his experience in this same jail with Philip Berrigan, one of the Plowshares Eight.

The magistrate did all she could to give us a hard time, sitting on our paperwork for the bulk of the day. Our attorney, working pro bono through the ACLU, finally got our bond lowered. We left the jail at 5 p.m. feeling empowered and were welcomed with great media coverage. Stop Torture Now! □

## HAITI

# Tribunal charges occupiers with crimes

By G. Dunkel  
Boston

Detailed work connecting officers of the U.S. Marines, Haitian National Police and United Nations forces in Haiti to a “systematic and widespread violation of human rights, massacres and killings, amounting to crimes against humanity” has taken a big step forward in Boston.

On Nov. 19, at the second session of the International Tribunal on Haiti, the Commission of Inquiry that went to Haiti in the first week of October presented some of the evidence it had gathered from over 50 witnesses. The meeting was held at Suffolk Law School.

The evidence was powerful and gripping. Most of the audience, which filled up the moot court room and a section of the overflow room, stayed for the session’s full five hours. Besides the Haitian community in Boston, delegations attended from the Latin@, Cape Verdean and other oppressed communities in Boston. The Haiti Support Network and Konbit Aysien-

Kakola organized a bus from Brooklyn. Haitians and other progressives came from throughout New England and from as far as Montreal and Quebec.

Organizers said some members of the Haitian community in Boston who feared for their families back in Haiti did not attend.

Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general and a member of the Commission that went to Haiti, offered a review of Haitian history. He concluded that “Haiti needs what it has long deserved but not had for many years—peace and security for all.”

Highlighting the crimes against humanity that have occurred in Haiti since the most recent “regime change” there on Feb. 29, 2004, Clark repeated what he had earlier said at a news conference in Port-au-Prince: “It is absolutely imperative for the future of Haiti and to peace on earth that there be accountability for these crimes. If international forces under the auspices of the United Nations can come to Haiti and engage in systematic summary executions of its people, what place

on earth will be safe from that power?”

Thomas Engler, another member of the commission, presented testimony to prove that the human-rights violations systematically carried out in Haiti were designed to stifle dissent and punish those who protest.

Dave Welsh, a delegate to the San Francisco Central Labor Council and organizer of a labor and human-rights delegation that went to Haiti in June and July, presented information on other legal challenges to the actions of U.S. and Brazilian forces in Haiti.

Tom Griffin, a lawyer from Philadelphia who has done extensive human-rights investigations throughout Latin America, was also a member of the Commission. He presented evidence of U.S. and UN complicity in the massacre carried out at an Aug. 20 soccer game.

The U.S. Agency for International Development paid some well-known Haitian soccer players to put on a “peace” match. Some 2,000 to 3,000 people gathered to watch. After intermission but

before play had restarted police burst onto the field and ordered the players to lie down. Some did but others said they preferred to die on their feet. The cops began shooting, both at the players and the spectators, who all started running. As they were escaping, they were attacked by civilian “attachés”—people employed by official cops to do dirty work, like chopping up people and breaking up homes.

Griffin said Mario Andersol, the head of the police, made no attempt before the massacre to stop it from happening nor did he do anything to bring the perpetrators to justice.

John Parker, who is the West Coast coordinator of the International Action Center and who also went to Haiti in early October, presented evidence on the connection between U.S. Marine Gen. Ronald Coleman and the crimes against humanity committed by the PNH before the MINUSTAH, the UN’s name for its troops, arrived.

The next tribunal most likely will be held in Miami, with Montreal or Brooklyn following. □

# 19,000 protest at U.S. torture school

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Ft. Benning, Ga.

By the bus and van, thousands of high school and college youth joined the annual protest at Ft. Benning, Ga., Nov. 19-20, sponsored by the School of the Americas Watch. They came from as far as Maine, Washington state and California and from Midwest states such as Minnesota and Iowa.

On Nov. 20, some 19,000 people participated in the solemn procession that intones the names of the many victims of SOA-trained killers. Responding with one voice, “Presente!” the demonstrators took their pictures, coffins, flowers, flags, toys and crosses marked with names to the eight-foot-tall, triple barbed-wire topped fence and covered it as a memorial to the dead and a message to the Pentagon.

Each year as the numbers grow, so does the diversity of the crowd.

There were dozens of members of the United Auto Workers union, which sent staff from Detroit as well as members from locals in Alabama, Georgia and other states to join the protest.

Banners identifying religious orders of

nuns and priests and lay organizations of numerous denominations could be seen throughout the crowd.

More than 100 members of Veterans for Peace and Iraq Veterans against the War marched together.

While the protest’s central demand was that the training school for Latin American military be closed, many other peace and justice issues—from bringing the troops home from Iraq and ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine to supporting farmworkers in Florida and providing for the victims of Hurricane Katrina—were included in the agenda of speakers, signs and banners and literature tables.

It was the murders of six Jesuit priests, their house-keeper and her teen-age daughter on Nov. 16, 1989 by Salvadorean soldiers trained at the School of the Americas that prompted the protest to be scheduled the third week-end in November.

SOA Watch has exposed the predominant role of soldiers trained at Ft. Benning in the scores of massacres of peasants and indigenous peoples; the assassinations of trade unionists, religious and civic leaders; and use of torture and other repressive measures employed by right-wing regimes



Protest against School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Ga.

throughout Central and South America over the course of more than five decades.

Now named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, the SOA, first established by the U.S. in Panama in 1946, is called the “School of the Assassins” by its opponents.

One of the most creative elements of the SOA protests is the puppet pageant. This year the story of Professor Carlos Mauricio, a torture victim of SOA-trained soldiers in El Salvador, was dramatized. Prof. Mauricio and two other Salvadorans who survived their imprisonment moved to the U.S., where they successfully sued their torturers.

That landmark case created a precedent and has since been followed by other convictions of SOA graduates, including those responsible for the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980.

Despite the intense security measures, some 40 people committed civil disobedience by managing to get onto the base grounds where they were charged with criminal trespass and other offenses. These committed opponents of U.S.-funded torture can expect to be sentenced to a minimum of three months in federal prison.

For more information, go to [www.SOAWatch.org](http://www.SOAWatch.org). □



# Powerful memorial honors slain Machetero leader

By Arturo J. Pérez Saad  
New York

It was standing-room-only Nov. 18 at the Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center here in Manhattan as hundreds of supporters of Puerto Rico's liberation from U.S. colonial rule gathered to pay tribute to the assassinated Filiberto Ojeda Ríos.

Comandante Ojeda Ríos was leader of the Popular Army of the People, commonly known as the Macheteros. He was killed on Sept. 23 in an FBI assault on his home in Puerto Rico.

The large attendance at this event was particularly noteworthy because the U.S. government has announced a witch hunt against pro-independence Puerto Ricans and their sympathizers. The threat of arrests has been openly publicized and widely distributed via Puerto Rican newspapers since the cold-blooded killing of 72-year-old Ojeda Ríos.

The U.S. government chose to carry out this assassination on Sept. 23—the date known in Puerto Rico as “el Grito de Lares” for the day in 1868 when Puerto Ricans began their struggle against Spanish colonial rule.

The New York event was sponsored by the September 23rd Pro-Independence Network, which includes ProLibertad, Socialist Front of New York, the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party of New York (PNPR-JNY) and its youth section,

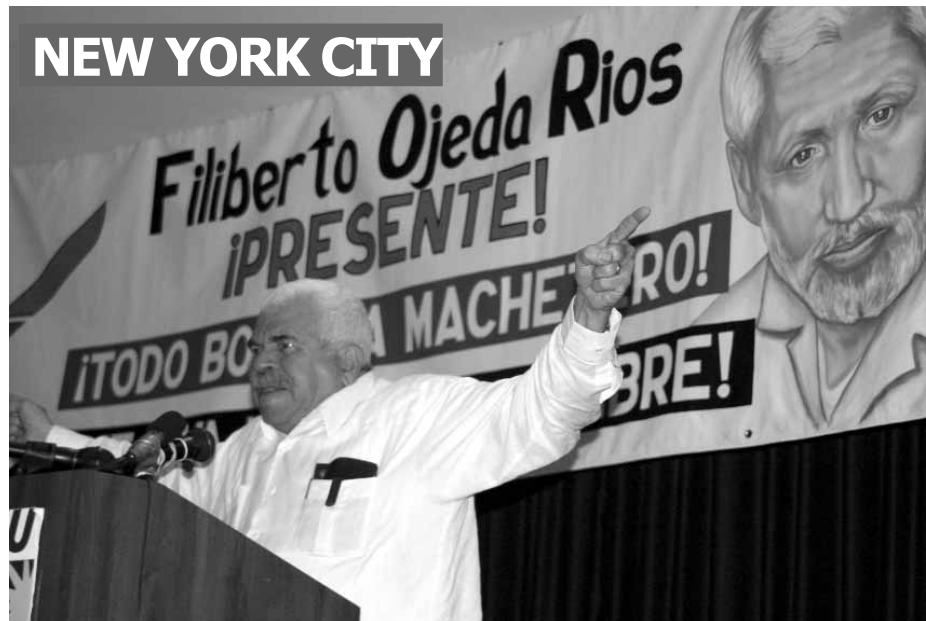
October 27th Committee, Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), National Pro-Independence Movement Hostosiano (MINH), ANSWER, Socialist Workers Party, Party for Socialism and Liberation, International Action Center and Workers World Party.

Most of the talks were in Spanish, showing the militant nature of the struggle of Puerto Ricans to resist colonial occupation. Speakers included former political prisoners Rafael Cancel Miranda, Antonio Camacho Negrón and Pam Africa. Messages were heard from Ojeda Ríos's widow, Elma Beatriz Rosada Barbosa, as well as imprisoned Black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal.

In a short videotape of an interview made in the 1990s, Ojeda Ríos thoughtfully explained the political basis for the clandestine movement to free Puerto Rico.

Attorney Roger Wareham of the D-12 Movement spoke, as did representatives from the PIP, the PNPR-JNY and its youth.

Rafael CANCEL Miranda, who had been in Cuba when the state-sponsored murder took place, began his remarks by stating to the crowded room that “being here makes me feel like fighting.” He continued that the FBI had “made a grave mistake because there isn't a bullet that can silence and kill a people who struggle and resist being conquered. The real terrorists are the North American [government] and the



Rafael Cancel Miranda

WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

class that supports it.”

Even though the U.S. ruling class wishes to silence those who support independence, said Roxana Badillo from the PIP, the pro-independence movement is “alive and well and not dying as the press wishes to portray it.” She compared the tactics the U.S. government uses today to terrorize the Puerto Rican people to “that old and illegal COINTELPRO”—the “counter-intelligence program” used in the 1960s and 1970s to break up liberation movements in the U.S.

“Empires can seem omnipotent and all-powerful, but they are transitory, as history has shown us,” said Antonio Camacho Negrón. “What is not transitory is love and dignity. To be a revolutionary is to practice and function through the preservation of life.” The U.S. government “does not understand the depth and breadth of the assassination of Filiberto,” said Camacho.

The event included cultural performances by Don Divino, Yerbabuena and Prisonera and concluded with the singing of La Borinqueña. □

# March to FBI offices pays tribute to hero

By Tom Soto  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hundreds of workers and young people began gathering early on the morning of Nov. 19 at Barceló Plaza in Barrio Obrero, a working-class Puerto Rican and Dominican neighborhood in the San Juan district of Santurce. They then marched to the Federal Building to denounce the FBI assassination of Filiberto Ojeda Ríos on Sept. 23.

Ojeda was leader of the Ejército Popular Boricua-Macheteros, or Popular Army of the People-Cane Cutters. He was slain Sept. 23 by FBI agents who had stormed his home by the hundreds.

The protest, called by the Organizing Committee of the First Campaign Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, demanded an independent investigation of the killing and an end to FBI repression. The committee encompasses community, student, environmental, anti-war, legal, religious, pro-independence and socialist organizations.

By 11 a.m. a crowd of over 700 people—both young and old, with many women and students—had gathered to hear the speakers. Neighborhood residents also stopped to listen.

Julio Muriente of the Hostos National Independence Movement told the crowd: “Colonialism has failed. Even after 512 years of Spanish and U.S. colonialism, the struggle of our nation for liberation continues.”

Aleida Centeno, representing environmental organizations, said, “U.S. authorities are carrying out biologically contaminating experiments in El Yunque [Puerto

Rico's rain forest] and are appropriating to themselves water resources that belong to the Puerto Rican people.” She pointed out that Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, in his last public address, had stressed the importance of the people “taking back the control of our natural resources.”

Rafael Bernabe of the Political Development Workshop stressed the importance of organizing workers. He explained that “the only way a society based on inequality and exploitation can be maintained is through repression, as was used against Filiberto Ojeda Ríos.”

Sonia Santiago of Mothers Against the War spoke of the importance of “linking the struggle against the war in Iraq with the struggle to get the U.S. out of Puerto Rico,” while Michael González of Breaking the Barriers announced a Jan. 16 protest against FBI offices in the city of Ponce.

Ricardo Santos Ortiz addressed the crowd on behalf of the Socialist Front: “Immigrant workers of Barrio Obrero are often the victims of police repression because they are Dominican and Black. ... The real enemy is the banks and corporations, who have their headquarters in



PHOTOS: IMC-PUERTO RICO



Hato Rey. ... The people will not be intimidated by the FBI assassination of Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, and our struggle against capitalism and imperialism will continue.”

A broad variety of organizations addressed the crowd, including the Committee in Support of Vieques, the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Pax Christi, the Pro Independence University Federation, the Masons, the Association of American Jurists, Latin American Fraternalization and Consciousness United Collective.

At noon a march got under way, led by a banner portraying Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and reading “Puerto Rico forward, FBI get out!” Though the police attempted to route the march through isolated areas, protesters literally took control of the streets as they zigzagged through the humble working-class neighborhood, shouting lively chants to bomba and plena rhythms.

Some residents joined the march while

others waved Puerto Rican or Dominican flags. The protesters chanted: “A solidarity hug for our Dominican brothers,” “Valiant Filiberto—final victory is certain,” and “Dominican and Puerto Rican women are sisters.” One chant—“They stirred up the ant colony, every Puerto Rican is a Machetero combatant”—was a play on the word hormiguero, which means ant colony. Hormigueros is the name of the small town where Ojeda Ríos was assassinated.

The march proceeded to La Milla de Oro—the Mile of Gold—San Juan's banking and corporate center. It caused a humongous traffic jam on Ponce de León Avenue, the main thoroughfare of Puerto Rico's Wall Street. On reaching the Federal Building, where the FBI offices are housed, demonstrators were greeted by Elma Beatriz Rosado, Filiberto's widow. His last public speech was defiantly played there as the march ended. □



## GM and workers' rights

General Motors, the largest auto manufacturer in the world and the pillar of U.S. industrial capitalism, has announced that it will increase its layoffs planned for this year by 5,000, making a total of 30,000 jobs to be eliminated and 12 plants to be closed.

Over 98,000 jobs have been eliminated in the auto and auto supplier parts industry this year—and more are expected. The general rule is that every job lost in auto results in at least three additional jobs lost. By this estimate, the auto barons will have been responsible for the destruction of nearly 400,000 jobs just this year alone.

And GM has plans for further cutbacks. It is planning a reduction of its North American capacity by 2008, from 5.2 million to 4.2 million vehicles yearly.

Some blame GM's problems on its management's staking the company's fortunes on gas-guzzling SUVs and pickup trucks. This explanation is true only when viewing the problem strictly from the point of view of GM and Ford and of U.S. workers.

But looking at the struggle of the international capitalist monopolies as a whole, and the international working class as a whole, the problem is capitalist production

for profit and capitalist overproduction.

While GM is cutting back its capacity by 1 million autos in North America, Toyota sold 2 million cars here and is seeking to expand its capacity. The two giants, GM and Toyota, as well as the other auto monopolies, are fighting each other for markets and profits across the globe—in Latin America, China, Southeast Asia and Africa.

It is the unpaid labor of the auto workers that is the source of auto profits. Yet, under capitalism, the workers are the casualties of this economic warfare. Workers are treated as mere objects when the auto giants, spurred on by Wall Street and investors, either over-expand or shut down plants in order to stop losses and expand profits.

If GM wins the competition, workers around the world employed by Toyota lose their jobs. If Toyota wins, GM workers lose their jobs. The bosses keep their fortunes no matter what.

It is time to stop this unjust process and assert the rights of the workers, the primary creators of trillions of dollars in wealth in the auto industry. They built the industry. The workers' right to a job, health care, retirement and a decent life should come before the rights of the profiteers who exploit their labor. □

## More labor anti-war resolutions

By Sue Davis

The Oregon AFL-CIO passed an anti-war resolution at its annual convention on Oct. 16. It called "for an end to the U.S. military and economic occupation of Iraq," support for Iraqi workers, freedom for their unions and "increased solidarity between our two labor movements." It also called for the immediate return of the Oregon National Guard and a continuation of Guard members' health benefits until they are able to find comparable care.

At its national convention in July, 9,000 delegates of the National Education Association voted for ending the U.S. occupation of Iraq. This represents a sea change since last year's convention, when a similar anti-war resolution never made it to the floor. The NEA, the biggest union in the United States, called on President George W. Bush and

Congress to create "an exit strategy to end the military occupation of Iraq and bring our troops home" and to provide benefits for veterans that met their needs for adequate jobs, education and health care.

At its annual meeting in June, the American Library Association passed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from Iraq and a return of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people. The resolution called for material assistance for the reconstruction of Iraq, including its museums, libraries, schools and other cultural institutions. It also urged the U.S. government to switch its budget priorities from the occupation of Iraq to the improvement of vital domestic programs in the United States. The resolution was sent to all members of Congress, the secretary of defense, the secretary of state, the president and the media. □

## Belgrade meeting defends Milosevic

By Sara Flounders

A team of three medical specialists from France, Russia and Serbia has released a grave warning: There is serious danger to former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's life if the U.S.-orchestrated show trial at The Hague continues without regard to his deteriorating health.

The team urged an immediate six-week break in the proceedings to allow time for medical treatment.

Despite the official medical report and the publicized warnings, the judges insisted on bringing President Milosevic to court. On Nov. 16 they were forced to suspend the proceedings for five days because Milosevic was too sick to continue. But the medical advice calling for an emergency six-week break was still ignored.

For over three years the case—originally described as the trial of the century—has ground on in media silence. By insisting on his inalienable and internationally recognized right to represent and defend himself, Milosevic has been able to successfully rebut the U.S. justifications for the bombing of Yugoslavia and the occupation of Bosnia and Kosovo. His continuing refusal to recognize the authority of a court established at the demand of the United States and in violation of the United Nations Charter is a challenge to the entire process.

But after four years, the enormous pressure and the near-total isolation forced by the court's arbitrary rules are taking a toll on the imprisoned president's health.

The staged proceeding called the International Criminal Tribunal on Yugoslavia was set up 12 years ago by U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright. There is no provision anywhere in the UN Charter for such a court. Yet its very creation, its arbitrary rulings and its power to charge, arrest and imprison any political and military figure in the Balkans immediately gave U.S. officials enormous authority in the region.

In the midst of the 78-day Pentagon bombing of Yugoslavia, President Milosevic was charged with war crimes in order to justify the U.S. war. In 2000, a U.S.-orchestrated coup overthrew Milosevic's elected government. He was kidnapped and turned over to Hague on June 28, 2001.

### International support

The medical report's warnings of serious health consequences was a focus of an international gathering held in Belgrade on Nov. 12. The conference brought together representatives of the International Committee to Defend Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbian organization Sloboda (Freedom) Association.

At the gathering, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, vice-chair of the Russian Duma Sergei Baburin and former member of Bulgarian Parliament Velka Vilknava issued a statement supporting the doctors' recommendations for an immediate six-week postponement of the proceedings to allow medical treatment. They also warned against any attempt to use his deteriorating health as an excuse to try President Milosevic "in absentia."

The conference, which drew delegates from 12 countries, also released a statement characterizing The Hague proceedings: "The ICTY has thus shown to the whole world that its main role is to legitimize and legalize the most flagrant violations of international law, as well as the most serious crimes committed during the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the NATO aggression against the FR [former republic] of Yugoslavia. ...

"During the 78-day long criminal bombing of the FR of Yugoslavia, the aggressors killed and wounded thousands of civilians, destroyed the economic and transport infrastructure, tried to kill President Milosevic by bombing his residence, used cluster bombs and depleted uranium, and caused destruction amounting to more than \$100 billion. ...

"However, the ICTY has not indicted any leader of the NATO member countries."

The statement urged an immediate end to the proceedings and the protection of the health of President Milosevic, along with more immediate demands on the court procedures. A full statement is available at [www.icdsm.org](http://www.icdsm.org).

Those at the meeting also discussed how to mobilize increased support for President Milosevic now that the proceedings are in the final stage. The urgent need for funds to continue the defense is part of the pressure on every defense committee. Given the scale and length of the trial and the great difficulty of this effort, it is a relentless problem.

The wider publication of President Milosevic's opening defense statement rebutting two years of the prosecution charges was also discussed.

The English translation of President Milosevic's defense statement—a 112-page book entitled "The Defense Speaks—for History and the Future," published by the International Action Center—was just released, and it was presented to the gathering. The IAC publication includes an introduction by Ramsey Clark. President Milosevic's opening defense statement has already been published as a book in Serbian, French and Russian. A German translation will be published within the month. Translations in Italian and Portuguese are complete.

The growing interest in translating and disseminating this statement by President Milosevic in several major languages is best summed up by Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter on the back cover of the IAC's book: "The U.S./NATO court trying Slobodan Milosevic was always totally illegitimate. It could never be taken seriously as a court of justice. Milosevic's defense is powerful, convincing, persuasive and impossible to dismiss."

Sara Flounders is part of the International Committee to Defend Slobodan Milosevic and was a U.S. delegate to the Belgrade Conference. She coordinated the publication of "The Defense Speaks—for History and the Future."

## MUNDO OBRERO

### EEUU usó Napalm en Faluya

Continúa de página 12

internacional de reformular la política mundial a favor del ala derechista extrema de la clase dominante estadounidense. El desmantelamiento de la Unión Soviética animó al sector más conservador del imperialismo estadounidense y sus aliados, de tratar de asumir para ellos mismos el control absoluto del mundo.

Recientes reportes noticiosos han pro-

visto innumerables ejemplos de criminalidad, corrupción y conspiración. Solo desde el 2004, las tropas dirigidas por la administración de Bush han sido expuestas cometiendo tortura en la prisión de Abu Ghraib en Irak, profanando el Corán en el campamento de concentración en Guantánamo en la Cuba ocupada, y ahora en Faluya, usando armas químicas prohibidas internacionalmente.

El gobierno estadounidense primero mintió en el 2002-2003 al sostener que había la existencia de cantidades masivas de armas químicas en Irak para justificar la invasión de Irak. El mismo gobierno estadounidense volcó entonces su propio arsenal de armas químicas contra civiles inocentes en Faluya y ahora ha sido sorprendido mintiendo en un intento por encubrir sus acciones criminales. □

# Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange touring U.S.

By Paddy Colligan

In mid-November a delegation from the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin arrived in the United States, beginning a 10-city tour with meetings and press events in New York City.

Theirs is a powerful story of continued suffering by the people of Vietnam, including two members of the delegation, caused by exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin.

The Paris Peace Accords signed in 1973 by the Nixon Administration contained a provision for the United States to contribute \$3 billion toward healing the wounds of war and to the post-war reconstruction of Vietnam. Although this provision gave the Vietnamese the legal right to restitution, the U.S. government has never taken any legal or moral responsibility to aid the peoples of Vietnam and neighboring countries in restoring their lands that were poisoned by chemical weapons.

VAVA is appealing for support from people in the United States for its lawsuit to achieve justice and compensation directly from the U.S. corporations that manufactured the deadly herbicides. The delegation's visit is organized by Veterans for Peace and the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign (See [www.vn-agentorange.org](http://www.vn-agentorange.org) for details.)

Dr. Nguyen Trong Nhan, a former president of the Vietnam Red Cross and now a director of the VAVA, heads the delegation. The other members are military veterans Dang Thi Hong Nhut and Ho Sy Hai.

The U.S. government denied a visa to a fourth member, Nguyen Muoi, the 22-year-old son of a veteran from the South Vietnam army (ARVN) who had been exposed to dioxin. Born after the war, Muoi suffers from spina bifida, a neural disorder common among children of dioxin-exposed males.

Hong Nhut was a member of the "long-haired army"—women who fought to liberate Vietnam. She was captured, tortured and imprisoned for seven years, one of which was spent in the notorious underground "tiger cages." She lived in areas subjected to defoliation and had several miscarriages after this exposure. Hong's contribution to the program was to perform a beautiful Vietnamese song about the victims of Agent Orange.

At a Nov. 16 meeting at the Community Church in New York, Dave Kline, national president of Veterans for Peace, welcomed the delegation. Kline described Vietnam veterans' gradual realization that they had been poisoned by something terribly toxic in Vietnam. He described the years of struggle to force the U.S. government to admit what had been done and to get some restitution for the affected veterans.

Kline recognized the human cost to Vietnam, calling on all people of conscience to demand that the United States stop using weapons of mass destruction. He linked the people of Vietnam with the U.S. veterans, demanding, "Justice for all Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange," and, "Justice for all Agent Orange victims."

## Ravages of dioxin

A videotape, "Agent Orange/Dioxin and the Right to Life," presented evidence of the ravages of dioxin poisoning. Even audience members familiar with the chemical's effects were shocked and angered at these images. Most victims shown were children born decades after the end of the war. The video, showing clearly the horror of this legacy of war, will be made available for distribution in the



United States.

Dr. Nhan, who works with Agent Orange victims in his country, reported on their hardship and suffering. He pointed to Washington's dual standard. The U.S. government recognizes 13 medical conditions stemming from exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin affecting U.S. veterans. But Washington denies any connection or culpability with regard to the millions of Vietnamese who were "the direct targets of the spraying, and who are living in areas that were sprayed and are eating the food from the sprayed land."

Even though the war ended 30 years ago in a Vietnamese victory, "the war hasn't ended in the bodies of the victims in Vietnam," he said. The Vietnamese aspired for peace and a cooperative resolution to the problem of Agent Orange, he explained, but the goodwill of the Vietnamese people was not met.

"Tens of thousands of victims have died. Tens of thousands of others are dying. There was no choice but to file a lawsuit against the U.S. chemical companies."

Dr. Nhan said that he believes the American people love justice. "I will never forget images of anti-war demonstrations, of veterans throwing back medals and ribbons," he said. He recognized that "Americans have feelings for justice and fairness in the U.S. and other countries."

He spoke of his hope that "you will give support to us" and that the Court of Appeals will give justice to Vietnamese victims when the lawsuit appeal is heard in the spring of 2006.

## AUSTRALIA

# 550,000 protest new work rules

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

On Nov. 15, some 550,000 workers and their allies in Australia took part in the biggest workers' protest in the country's history, according to the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

In Melbourne some 210,000 workers flooded the streets in a huge protest. In Sydney truckers blocked a major motorway.

Nationwide more than 200 gatherings took place in the streets of dozens of cities, at hundreds of work places and elsewhere.

The workers and their allies came out to protest new industrial relations legislation being pushed through parliament with a minimum of debate by Prime Minister John Howard. The legislation would end protection from unfair dismissal, undermine minimum-wage setting, and make a wide range of legitimate trade-union



From 1966 to 1969, Ho Sy Hai lived and drove along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. He told how the Trail was a favorite target of the U.S. Air Force because soldiers and supplies moved on the Trail to the southern part of the country.

## On the Ho Chi Minh Trail

"Airplanes sprayed some substance to destroy the leaves of the forest and to destroy villages," he said. "I had to live in those conditions, eating vegetables, fish, and animals that were sprayed."

After the war Hai returned to his village, married, and tried to start a family. His wife had several miscarriages. Of the babies she bore, one died at age 5 from cancer, two are deaf and unable to speak, and one has a mental disorder. Hai also spoke for the many victims with similar problems, including diabetes, skin rashes, prostate cancer, and disorders of the digestive system, including the liver and intestines. He called for support for the lawsuit against the chemical manufacturers.

Jonathan Moore, one of the lawyers in the lawsuit against the chemical companies including Dow, Monsanto, Union Carbide and Diamond Shamrock, spoke of "a scandal of incredible proportions — that this country has forgotten what happened in Vietnam. This campaign has to bring to the attention of all Americans the unfinished business in Vietnam, the millions harmed by dioxin, exposed by companies who, knowing it was lethal and a carcinogen, sold it" for use in defoliating populated areas.



WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL

From left, Dang Thi Hong Nhut, Ho Sy Hai and Dr. Nguyen Trong Nhan.

According to Moore, over a period of 10 years the U.S. military sprayed 47 million liters of Agent Orange and other defoliants. The spraying contaminated 12 percent of the surface of Vietnam, an area the size of New Jersey in a country about the size of Texas plus Oklahoma.

There are still "hot spots" with such high levels of dioxin that people cannot live there.

Jose Vasquez of Iraq Veterans Against the War spoke as an active-duty military resister. His father is a Vietnam veteran suffering from Agent-Orange-related health problems. Vasquez refuses assignment to Iraq because of the human-rights violations there, specifically the U.S. use of white phosphorous and depleted uranium.

## Bring the tour to your city or campus

The Campaign has some flexibility in its scheduling. Cities it will travel to after Nov. 25 include Raleigh/Durham, N.C., Chicago, Milwaukee, Santa Fe, N.M., Portland, Ore., Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The delegation will leave for Vietnam on Dec. 13. Those able to arrange public meetings or media interviews to spread this important information are invited to contact the organizers at [info@vn-agentorange.org](mailto:info@vn-agentorange.org). □



Melbourne, Nov. 15.

activities illegal. Union workers would face severe fines for asking bosses to agree to protect workers from unfair dismissal, or to include provisions such as trade-union training leave in contract agreements.

Other provisions in the legislation would end the right to public holidays for many workers and weaken provisions for annual leave; reduce protections for workers who refuse unsafe or unhealthy work; end protection from unfair dismissal for all work places employing fewer than 100 workers; force workers onto individual employment contracts; reduce union members' right to talk with workers in the work place; and give the government the right to stop strikes if it decides the actions are "detrimental to the economy."

In a live broadcast to rallies across Australia, ACTU President Sharan Burrow said the Nov. 15 actions are just the begin-

ning of a campaign to defeat this legislation. "Every union leader in Australia is ready to fight like we have never fought before."

The AFL-CIO held a solidarity protest at the Australian Embassy in Washington, D.C. AFL-CIO President John Sweeny said the Australian legislation would "dramatically reduce the rights of workers, and provide employers with virtually total power to decide terms and conditions of employment." A letter of support for Australian workers from the AFL-CIO was delivered to Australian Ambassador Dennis Richardson. Similar actions by national and international union federations took place in many countries. □

## Mitin en Town Hall escuchado en Washington y Caracas

Especial para Mundo Obrero  
Nueva York

En el evento más grande para Venezuela celebrado en los EEUU hasta hoy, activistas de solidaridad llenaron el histórico auditorio de Town Hall en el centro de Manhattan el pasado 8 de noviembre. El mitin fue iniciado por el Centro de Acción Internacional (IAC por las siglas en inglés) y el Círculo Bolivariano Alberto Lovera. Muchos grupos de solidaridad con Cuba y Latinoamérica colaboraron para la organización del evento, al igual que otr@s activistas solidari@s.

El evento unió una variedad impresionante de líderes y organizaciones. Una delegación considerable incluyendo artistas culturales vino desde Venezuela y de consulados de Venezuela en varios estados de los EEUU y Puerto Rico.

“Eventos como este demuestran al pueblo venezolano que no está solo”, dijo el cónsul venezolano de Chicago, Martín Sánchez. El presidente [Hugo] Chávez dijo en Argentina que sin el pueblo de los EEUU no sería posible construir el mundo mejor que todo nosotros anhelamos”.

Teresa Gutiérrez co-directora del IAC y coordinadora del evento junto a William Camacaro de los Círculos Bolivarianos, dijo después que “el evento en Town Hall fue un éxito contundente. Cumplimos con nuestro objetivo, el cual fue organizar un evento de mayor importancia para Venezuela que sería escuchado en Washington y en Caracas.

“Los avances de la Revolución Bolivariana encabezada por el Presidente Hugo Chávez son claros. A fines de octubre, el gobierno anunció que había eliminado el analfabetismo. Servicios de salud están siendo proporcionados a l@s venezolan@s que nunca antes los habían recibido. Lo más importante que podemos hacer por Venezuela es organizar aquí en contra del peligro de una intervención de los EEUU en Venezuela. Y el 8 de noviem-

bre demostramos que existe un vibrante movimiento de apoyo a Venezuela”.

Muchos mensajes de solidaridad de una amplia gama de grupos e individuos fueron impresos en una revista conmemorativa del evento que fue repartida a los asistentes.

Fermín Toro Jiménez, el embajador de Venezuela ante la Organización de las Naciones Unidas, dijo a la muchedumbre que el proceso revolucionario bolivariano está ocurriendo en el marco de “la crisis del ambiente, de la biosfera, del hambre, de los virus mortales y de las armas nucleares. Y estas crisis que producen guerras de depredación y agresión están despertando rebeliones en muchos países. ...Estamos en rebelión contra la injusticia, contra el hambre, contra la exclusión y el racismo, y esta vez, parece que estamos acompañados por los pueblos del primer mundo”.

Jorge Guerrero Veloz del Comité Presidencial de Venezuela en Contra del Racismo explicó que “Como en cualquier proceso de cambio, un líder es necesario, y el nuestro es el Presidente Hugo Chávez, que incorpora las voces del sector más excluido y representa la esperanza para la mayoría del pueblo venezolano”.

La cónsul de Venezuela en Nueva York habló de las Misiones o programas sociales, que están siendo iniciados en Venezuela. “Están enfocados a resaltar todos los derechos que tienen los venezolanos a la salud, educación, vivienda y al trabajo”, explicó Leonor Osorio. “En los dos últimos años, más de 1,4 millones de personas han sido alfabetizadas gracias al método que nos trajo el pueblo de Cuba”. Ella también agradeció a Cuba el ayudar a Venezuela a desarrollar la medicina preventiva.

Los venezolanos Miguel Hernández y Gonzalo Gómez también hicieron presentaciones. Gómez, de la Asociación Nacional de los Medios Alternativos, dijo que el evento era “también un acto de solidaridad con los oprimidos del pueblo norteamericano y los latinoamericanos que se

encuentran en los EEUU y los afrodescendientes víctimas de la discriminación”.

Eleguá, un grupo de mujeres afro-venezolanas, emocionó al público con sus canciones, bailes y tambores. El colectivo cultural de Nueva York, Welfare Poets (Poetas de Asistencia Pública) también contribuyó al evento con su energía e inspiración. Se escuchó también un mensaje audiograbado de Mumia Abu-Jamal.

### Televisado a través de Venezuela

William Camacaro reportó que el evento fue televisado a través de Venezuela en los días después del evento en Town Hall. “Fue un acontecimiento bienvenido en Venezuela. El próximo paso es que los Círculos Bolivarianos han llamado a una conferencia nacional organizativa en la Ciudad de Nueva York en febrero donde los venezolanos residentes en los EEUU pueden invitar a todo el mundo a ayudar a forjar un movimiento nacional en los EEUU”.

L@s oradores también incluyeron a Ramsey Clark, ex procurador general de la nación y fundador del IAC; Leonard Weinglass, abogado defensor de los Cinco Cubanos y defensor popular desde hace muchos años; el Rev. Lucius Walter de los Pastores por la Paz; el Rev. Luis Barrios del Colegio John Jay y de la Iglesia San Romero; Larry Holmes de la Coalición Tropas Fuera Ya; Nellie Bailey del Consejo de Inquilinos de Harlem; Ben Dupuy del Partido Nacional del Pueblo de Haití; la abogada de derechos civiles Lynne Stewart; Marguerite Laurent de Fanmi Lavalas; la destacada actriz Vinie Burrows, quien también representa la Federación Internacional Democrática de Mujeres; Gloria La Riva de la coalición ANSWER y el Comité para Liberar los Cinco Cubanos; el organizador comunitario de Nueva Orleans, Curtis Mohammad; Wellington Echevarría de Solidaridad con Cuba de Nueva York; y Chris Silvera, presidente del Caucus Nacional Negro del Sindicato de Camioneros (Teamsters).

Guillermo de la Paz, del Frente Socialista de Puerto Rico dijo que “en Puerto Rico sentimos a la Revolución Bolivariana como algo nuestro”. Hablando del asesinato reciente de Filiberto Ojeda Ríos por agentes del FBI, añadió, “En Naguabo sembramos a Filiberto y su semilla germinará para que cada boricua sea un Machetero”, luchador por la autodeterminación de Puerto Rico.

Gerardo Cajamarca, sindicalista colombiano en exilio en los EEUU por las amenazas de paramilitares en su país, dijo, “En Colombia hemos seguido luchando por ese derecho bolivariano y de integración de Latinoamérica del Presidente Chávez”.

Berta Joubert-Ceci, quien fue coordinadora internacional del evento dijo que “De igual importancia a las personas que hablaron fueron los mensajes de solidaridad con la Revolución Bolivariana que recibimos. Nos escribieron agradeciendo a l@s organizador@s por la iniciativa, desde los EEUU y Venezuela, incluyendo a los famosos grupos culturales Lloviznando Cantos y Madera. Mensajes también llegaron desde Ecuador, España, Portugal, Francia, México y Canadá, entre otros países.

“La representante de la juventud en la Asamblea Nacional de Cuba envió un caluroso mensaje al comienzo del esfuerzo organizativo. Nora Castañeda, presidenta del Banco de Desarrollo de la Mujer en Venezuela y miembros de la junta directiva de la Unión Nacional de Trabajadores de Venezuela quienes estaban programados para hacer intervenciones pero por problemas con las visas no pudieron asistir, también enviaron mensajes”.

Reporteros de varios noticieros de los EEUU asistieron al evento pero los redactores no publicaron sus artículos. El día después del evento, un periodista del Miami Herald llamó a los organizadores. Sus preguntas indicaron que el establecimiento en los EEUU sí de verdad tomó nota del evento. □

### DOCUMENTAL ITALIANO CORROBORA:

## EEUU usó napalm en Faluya

Por David Hoskins

Nueva evidencia ha sido revelada este mes corroborando reportes en el periódico Workers World/Mundo Obrero y en otros medios, que el ejército estadounidense había usado armas químicas prohibidas internacionalmente que incluían el fósforo blanco y el napalm durante su ataque contra Faluya en noviembre del 2004.

El gobierno estadounidense negó vehementemente esos reportes en aquel entonces. Reportes de los supuestos crímenes de guerra estadounidenses estuvieron llamativamente ausentes en las páginas de la mayoría de los periódicos occidentales y no había nada de discusión sobre esta cuestión en las estaciones de noticias de cable o en los programas de radio en vivo. Las facilidades de Al Jazeera en Irak fueron cerradas a la fuerza en un intento por extinguir las investigaciones

periodísticas de estos reportes.

Ahora, casi un año más tarde, la estación de televisión estatal italiana RAI ha producido un documental corroborando que las fuerzas estadounidenses de hecho usaron fósforo blanco y MK77 Mod5 (un derivado del napalm) en Faluya. Y el periódico The Guardian de Londres ha llamado al desastre en Faluya, una atrocidad en la escala de My Lai y Guernica, estimando que se produjeron 7.000 civiles muertos.

Aunque el MK77 Mod5 usa una fórmula que consiste en una concentración más pequeña de benceno, los efectos son exactamente iguales al napalm. El uso de estas armas incendiarias es una violación de la Convención de la ONU de 1980 sobre Ciertas Armas Convencionales.

El periódico Workers World había publicado un artículo en su edición del 2 de diciembre del 2004, basado en una charla

dada por Sara Flounders, miembro de la Secretaría del Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero, en la cuál ella describió cómo el uso de armas químicas prohibidas, el gas venenoso y destructores de literas, tácitamente había destruido a la ciudad de Faluya.

Jeff Englehart, un ex-soldado en la Primera División de Infantería estadounidense, dice en el documental italiano que vio “cuerpos quemados, niños quemados y mujeres quemadas.” Titledo “Faluya: la masacre escondida”, el film contiene pietaje que muestra los cuerpos de mujeres y niños después de un bombardeo aéreo y de rondas de artillería estadounidense.

Las víctimas inocentes parecen haber quedado quemadas hasta el hueso. Otras muestran la carne parcialmente derretida colgando de sus cuerpos. Estas armas químicas principalmente afectan los teji-

dos blandos de sus víctimas. La evidencia no deja lugar a dudas de que las víctimas estaban desarmadas y llevaban ropa de civiles a la hora de su muerte.

### Órdenes de disparar a l@s niñ@s

Al describir la intención de los Estados Unidos de apuntar a civiles en Faluya, Englehart dice que sus superiores militares le dijeron al entrar en Faluya que “cada persona que estaba caminando, hablando o respirando era combatiente enemigo. Como tal, cada persona que estaba andando en la calle o estaba en una casa, era un objetivo militar.” Englehart afirma que los soldados tenían órdenes de disparar a niños tan pequeños como de 10 años.

El uso del fósforo blanco y el napalm en Faluya es solo otro ejemplo de la acción criminal y la conspiración para ocultar la verdad. Se ajusta a la agenda doméstica e

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