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Anti-war protests in U.S., Canada

'Troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan'

By John Catalinotto
New York

A total of more than 100,000 people demonstrated Oct. 27 in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Detroit, Philadelphia, New York, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Orlando, Fla., Jonesborough, Tenn., and dozens of other locations against the U.S. war on Iraq, according to the web site of United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), a major organizer.

Protests called for bringing the troops home now from Iraq; many also called for ending the occupation of Afghanistan—the major issue in Quebec and Canada, which have troops fighting and dying there and where there were also demonstrations. Most rallies connected the costs of the war with the cuts to social services, especially to health care, and many raised the danger of a new U.S. war against Iran.

The actions in the eastern part of the United States took place despite heavy rains. Students and young workers had strong contingents on many of the demonstrations, with labor unions having a presence in the big cities.

Mainly UFPJ groups coordinated the actions in the eastern cities, working also with ANSWER on the West Coast. Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW), the Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC), the World

Can't Wait, Code Pink, Military Families Speak Out and many local organizations were present; among the youth Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Campus Anti-war Network (CAN), Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST), and other youth and school groups took part in many of the cities, along with some immigrant-rights and anti-racist organizations.

Workers World correspondents covered a large sample of the protests.

From **Detroit**, Kris Hamel reports that Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice (MECAWI) organizers several weeks ago decided to call a demonstration to coincide with the Oct. 27 protests and to focus also on denouncing the very real war at home on workers and people of color.

The Detroit March Against Racism and War stepped off from Zussman Park on Davison Avenue, in the heart of the city's economically devastated Black community, taking a two-mile route through block after block of what used to be a thriving section of Detroit. Among occupied homes and buildings were dozens of burned-out and abandoned structures, dozens of businesses shuttered, vacant lots and homes with foreclosure notices posted out front.

Marchers with banners and signs, as well as a car caravan, chanted loudly against the war and for jobs and health care here

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Texas march says

'Stop the executions now!'



WW PHOTOS: GLORIA RUBAC

Houston march, Oct. 27. At right, family members of death row inmates speak at rally.

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

On Oct. 27, activists from Texas were joined by allies who came from as far away as Uganda, Alaska and France for the 8th Annual Texas March to Stop Executions held in Houston.

African Americans, Latin@s and whites rallied to celebrate the victories that saved the lives of Kenneth Foster, Clarence Brandley and Ricardo Aldape Guerra and to remember the losses

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WWP Conference Nov. 17-18

This week ...



Answering the hard questions

By Greg Butterfield

When members, friends and allies gather for the Workers World Party Conference in New York Nov. 17-18, it won't be for a set of morale-boosting speeches—as important as those may sometimes be for revolutionary activists fighting in the belly of the beast.

Instead, they will be asking the hard questions that people have about the prospects for class struggle and socialism in the United States and worldwide. They will be looking for ways to shed light on answers that will help illuminate the road ahead.

Many people would agree that capitalism stinks and the world is in big trouble while it runs amuck. But they wonder: Can the working class fulfill its historic mission as Marx and Engels defined it in the Communist Manifesto, to bring about a revolutionary transformation of the social and political order toward the ultimate obliteration of inequality?

Can capitalism be overthrown, or are we doomed to live in ever-diminishing conditions? Or to see the world destroyed through escalating war and environmental ruin?

Many reformers and academics embrace Marx's analysis of capitalism, but say he got it wrong on the working class. Why does WWP think the working class is still the crucial force of change?

Do the setbacks to workers' rights and the fundamental changes in its composition bode ill or well for the future of the struggle? What is the likely outcome of the global leveling of wages of workers in imperialist and oppressed countries brought about by the new phase of

imperialism popularly known as globalization?

Because the working class and oppressed have been pushed back for the last three decades, does this mean they are incapable of fighting back anymore?

History offers us some clues. The Paris Commune and the international struggle for the eight-hour workday erupted after years of quietude following the European uprisings of 1848. In the mid-1910s, while working on his analysis of imperialism, Lenin told an audience of students that he thought it might be many decades until the revolution began. Just a couple of years later—exactly 90 years ago—the great Russian Revolution commenced.

If the working class is capable of rising to the challenge—then is a revolutionary party necessary? Can socialism really work? Is any revolutionary society doomed to repeat the problems and mistakes of the Soviet Union in the 20th century, or do different material conditions and class relationships point the way toward a different outcome?

An important contribution to this discussion is the document "Challenges in Organizing the U.S. Working Class in the Post-Soviet Period," originally presented by WWP at the International Communist Seminar in Brussels last May. It is available for download at www.workersworld.net, along with conference information and registration. For more information, email conference2007@workers.org or call (212) 627-2994.

The WWP conference, "Fighting Racism and War—For a Socialist Future," will be held in the school auditorium at 127 E. 22 Street in Manhattan. Registration begins at 9 a.m. on Nov. 17 and the first panel will kick off at 10 a.m. On-site childcare is available. □

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If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

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'All prisons will fall'

March supports women prisoners

By Judy Greenspan
Chowchilla, Calif.

Led by a large and enthusiastic contingent of formerly incarcerated young people from all over California, nearly 200 people demonstrated Oct. 20 outside this country's largest women's prisons to demand "Bring Our Families Home!" People traveled in caravans from all over California to protest human rights violations in California's prisons.

At the beginning of the day, protesters gathered in front of the Central California Women's Facility (CCWF), perhaps the largest women's prison and the one housing both a death row for women and women prisoners with HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases. Then the demonstration marched about a half mile down the road to Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW). Combined, the prisons hold nearly 7,000 women.

A rally chaired by Shawna D., an African-American lesbian activist and member

of the California Coalition of Women Prisoners, was held in front of VSPW. Crystal of the Youth Justice Coalition of Los Angeles set the tone when she said, "I thank you for everything you are doing to fight back. We can set our youth free. Together, brick by brick, wall by wall, all the prisons will fall."

A large number of formerly incarcerated women were vocal at the protest. Dee Mariano, who has hepatitis C and nearly died due to poor medical care in the prison infirmaries at both women's prisons, said, "I am a mother, a grandmother, a daughter and a sister to everyone inside. Women inside have the right to medical care and to life."

One of the most inspirational groups present at the protest was the large number of formerly incarcerated young women. Angela, a member of the Sisters Rising Project of the Center for Young Women's Development, said, "We support bringing our families home."

The Coalition for Accountable Health-



Chowchilla Oct. 20 march.

WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN



PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO

Victims of police brutality

Activists support lawyers at hearing

Some 60 activists attended an Oct. 23 hearing for Michael Tariff Warren and his spouse, Evelyn Warren (pictured above), in a Brooklyn courtroom. The Warrens, who are both progressive African-American lawyers, have been charged with obstruction, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. These bogus charges came about last June 21 when the Warrens witnessed a young Latino being brutalized by cops in a McDonald's parking lot in Brooklyn.

When the Warrens confronted the cops with the question of why this young man was being beaten while he was handcuffed, white police sergeant James Talvy and other cops verbally and then physically attacked the lawyers. Both were then arrested and taken to the 77th Precinct, where they were incarcerated for many hours without receiving any medical care for injuries sustained while being punched and kicked. Activists from around the city quickly came to the pre-

cinct, where they held an impromptu rally inside and outside denouncing the racist police until the Warrens were released.

City Councilperson Charles Barron and other community activists are demanding that Talvy be fired and that Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hines "drop the charges against the Warrens and charge the police."

Barron stated, "Police who murder and assault us must be charged with crimes and put in jail. That is the only deterrent."

Evelyn Warren added, "We are professionals. If they do this to us in broad daylight on a crowded street, what do they do in the dark when no one is around? That's what I'm concerned about. Officer Talvy must go and Police Commissioner Kelly must go, because his policy allows this behavior to continue."

The next court hearing for the Warrens is Dec. 12.

—Monica Moorehead

care, the umbrella group that organized the protest, is demanding that the 15 billion dollar state prison construction budget be used instead to provide jobs and social services, not more prison beds in this state's communities. The flyer for the protest called for an end to prison overcrowding by releasing parolees, changing sentencing laws and stopping prison expansion.

California and Texas house the largest number of prisoners in the U.S. California's prison health care has been taken over by a court appointed doctor who is overseeing what may prove to be dramatic change and improvement. Unfortunately, on a day-to-day level, women prisoners and their families say very little has changed

inside.

After the rally, the formerly incarcerated women and their supporters marched back to their cars parked outside CCWF. Demonstration organizers vowed to continue to work in solidarity with people in prison and to defend everyone's constitutional and human rights.

Today's demonstration was organized by the Coalition for Accountable Healthcare, which includes the California Coalition for Women Prisoners; All of Us or None; Critical Resistance Oakland; Prison Activist Resource Center; Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project; Youth Justice Coalition; and many other prisoners' rights and human rights groups around the state. □

Forum reveals a 'broken system'

By Sharon Danaan
Toledo, Ohio

On Oct. 21, a crowd filled an auditorium at the University of Toledo to hear the voices of those who have been wronged by the criminal justice system, directly by spending many years in prison for crimes they did not commit, or indirectly by having their loved ones locked away from them under the same false pretenses.

Several of the speakers are on a national speaking tour for the Campaign to End the Death Penalty: Yusef Salaam, who spent seven years in prison for the widely publicized Central Park jogger case before being exonerated; Saadiqah Amatullah Hasan, director of the campaign to free her spouse, Siddique Abdullah Hasan, one of the Lucasville 5 on Ohio's death row; and Harold Wilson, who spent 16 years on Pennsylvania's death row before his exoneration.

In opening remarks, Washington Muhammad from the Nation of Islam pointed out that "Blacks in this country have always been under the death penalty. Private prisons reap millions off of the Black men who are in them. Violence has



WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

Saadiqah Amatullah Hasan speaking at Toledo rally Oct. 21.

been made into a commodity."

In April 1989, a then 15-year-old Yusef Salaam was arrested in New York's Central Park for other activities, but the pressure was on to find a suspect in the "Central Park jogger" case. Salaam was convicted of rape and assault and served five years in prison. In the years since his release, he has faced continuing harassment. For instance, last January he received an eviction notice.

The real perpetrator was the "Eastside rapist" who came forth with the information about the Central Park case. There was a virtual media whiteout because to publicize the real perpetrator

Continued on page 4

Class peace ruptured as

Divisive Chrysler contract nearly fails

By Martha Grevatt

The roller coaster ride is over.

For ten days United Auto Workers members at Chrysler were on pins and needles as their votes threatened to derail a contract that surrendered decades of hard-won gains. Of the first large locals to vote, most gave it thumbs down.

Then the top UAW brass began visiting the plants that hadn't voted. They argued that this agreement was the best that could be obtained. Charging dissidents with spreading misinformation, the leaders insisted that workers' jobs would be protected—although their own “informational” flyer only promised work through the current model cycle.

Still, after some big locals were swayed to vote yes, Oct. 23 contract opponents got a boost with the solid no vote at two plants in Kokomo, Indiana. Then things shifted again. After intense lobbying of Michigan plants, the fear factor—fear of a long strike, retaliation for voting no, or just fear of an uncertain future—took over. UAW President Ron Gettelfinger and his lieutenants seemed almost certain to have a majority behind the contract.

Thus by Oct. 24, with only one plant left to vote Oct. 26 and 27, it was clear that the workers at Belvidere, Ill., would have to vote almost unanimously against the contract for it to fail. Thomas Littlejohn, president of Belvidere local 1268, opposed the contract on the basis that the long-term temporary workers at his plant would not be made permanent. Though fearful of the consequences and lacking any confidence that their vote would make a difference, 55 percent of the workers at Belvidere Assembly voted no.

In the end approximately 55 per cent of production and 51 per cent of skilled trades workers voted for ratification.

Almost immediately after the results

were announced the UAW issued a news release. “Now we're going to come together as a union,” proclaimed UAW President Ron Gettelfinger, “—and now it's on the company to move ahead, increase their market share and continue to build great cars and trucks here in the U.S.”

Tom LaSorda, Chrysler's vice chairman and president, joined the chorus. “We are pleased that our UAW employees recognize that the new agreement meets the needs of the company and its employees by providing a framework to improve our long-term manufacturing competitiveness,” he stated.

One would think an overwhelming majority voted enthusiastically for these concessions—concessions that include a wage for new hires equal to 1.5 times the poverty rate for a family of four, a fund for retiree health care that is dependent on the stability of Wall Street, and the eventual demise of the traditional pension.

In fact the total vote represents a combination of defiant no votes and reluctant yes votes, with at most a few thousand votes separating the two. The vote among skilled trades workers, whose jobs are threatened by the combining of classifications under a new “Workplace Competitiveness Model,” was at best 200 votes short of defeating the provisions specific to them.

Bosses to workers: Let the cuts begin!

Three weeks ago WW asked several questions concerning the just-ratified UAW contract with General Motors. “Rather than guaranteed jobs, could the end result of these givebacks be the opposite? Could these concessions in fact deliver the automakers the funds needed to finance their expansion into the lucrative global marketplace? Could the devalued labor power of autoworkers here be the catalyst for the construction of new factories abroad, factories

that use the most advanced technology and the fewest number of workers possible?”

The answers came swiftly. Days after ratification, GM boasted on the financial pages that, by the end of the four-year contract, its labor costs would be halved. Next came the news that GM—in order to facilitate its quest to conquer global market share—would likely build new plants overseas. Then GM announced the elimination of 2,000 jobs in Lansing, Mich. The signatures on the agreement were barely dry, and the promises of job security morphed into their opposite!

Chrysler is following that same pattern. While the workers in Belvidere were still in a question and answer session, International union officials informed them that Chrysler would be cutting the third shift at their assembly plant. The 600 temporary workers would get the axe. To be reinstated they would probably have to accept a “non-core” job and take a drastic cut in pay.

Any illusions that the union might eventually get back what they gave up on the basis of Chrysler's improved profitability were dispelled by CEO Bob Nardelli. “The auto industry has an insatiable appetite for cash,” he stated bluntly the day after the ratification was made public.

Chrysler management and their labor ambassadors managed, through strong-arm tactics, to get their way. On the shop floor, however, the class peace is ruptured and the divide can only widen—not only between labor and management but between class collaboration and militant rank-and-file resistance.

The powerful NO vote shows the potential for a grass roots, rank and file challenge to this divisive, brutal, cost cutting corporate strategy.

Martha Grevatt has worked in the Chrysler Twinsburg stamping plant for 20 years.

E-mail: mgrevatt@workers.org

ON THE PICKET LINE
BY SUSAN DAVIS

28,000 NYC home child care workers vote union!

In the largest successful union campaign in New York City since 1960, 28,000 home child care providers voted to join the United Federation of Teachers. These workers, overwhelmingly women of color, earn on average \$19,000 a year with no vacations or health insurance.

“Unionizing is the only hope we have as child care providers to make our voices heard and to get the respect we deserve,” Tammie Miller told the New York Times. (Oct. 24) “We were totally isolated. We were being ignored by city and state agencies.”

The UFT will now negotiate with the state over wages and benefits. During the Pataki administration these workers, who care for the children of low-income workers whose day care is subsidized by the federal and state governments, were considered “independent contractors,” and therefore ineligible for union representation. But Gov. Eliot Spitzer issued an executive order in May giving 60,000 home-based providers in New York State the right to unionize. The Civil Service Employees Association is in the process of unionizing providers in the rest of the state.

The right of home child care workers to organize has increasingly been recognized by state governments. In August 10,000 providers and home health care aides in Maryland won bargaining rights, as did 10,000 child care providers earlier this year in Pennsylvania and Kansas. Child care workers are already organized in California, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon and Wisconsin. In the New York City child care centers the staff is organized by AFSCME DC 1707 Local 205.

NYC cab drivers strike again

Following its successful two-day strike on Sept. 5 and 6, the New York Taxi Workers Alliance called a one-day strike Oct. 21. The issues are the same: the workers oppose the installation of global positioning systems and credit card machines.

Four thousand cabs, out of more than 13,000, have already been outfitted with the technology which frequently malfunctions. “If a person goes to the supermarket and the credit card machine isn't working, he has to pay cash or leave his groceries behind,” Hamado Bissiri told the New York Times. (Oct. 22) “But if my credit card machine freezes at the end of a fare, I could lose money because people can just leave without paying.”

After the first strike, the Alliance took its case to federal court. But on Sept. 28 a judge refused to block the Taxi and Limousine Commission's rule, saying the use of technology to improve service outweighs drivers' rights. The NYTWA has vowed to take its lawsuit to trial.

Broadway stagehands vote to strike

On Oct. 21, members of Local One, representing New York City stagehands, voted unanimously to call a strike. This does not mean they will automatically shut down Broadway, but it's a necessary first step if they can't work out a new contract with the League of American Theaters and Producers. The league has announced it will impose portions of its final offer, which the union has already rejected, on the stagehands. That sets the stage for a strike.

Continued on the next page

Forum reveals a ‘broken system’

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would be to show prosecutorial misconduct.

Jackie Thomas spoke on behalf of Rasheem Matthew, who was falsely convicted of murdering a fellow prisoner during the Lucasville rebellion by “jailhouse snitches” who walked away after the trial because their sentences were cut as a reward for their testimony. Matthew did not receive a death sentence but is in the most restrictive solitary confinement in Ohio's “supermax” prison, as are the rest of the prisoners connected to the Lucasville rebellion.

Kandy Cannon told the story of another Lucasville prisoner, one who did not participate in the rebellion. He was just a few weeks from parole and he had been moved to a different part of the prison. However, he was a “known associate” of Keith LaMar (Bomani Shakur), one of the Lucasville 5, and the prosecutors wanted him to testify against LaMar.

He heroically refused to testify falsely against his friend. True to their threats, he was charged with aggravated murder. Cannon ended her account with, “This man is innocent. This man is

Black, and this man is my husband of 22 years.” She had just given a moving rendition of the story of Derek Cannon, another one of the Lucasville prisoners now housed in the “supermax.”

Conditions like Abu Ghraib

Harold Wilson spent 16 years on Pennsylvania's death row. He was charged with three counts of first degree murder because “he was the only one large enough to do it.” Wilson pointed out the inherent race discrimination in “death-qualified” jury selection due to the fact that more Black people are likely to admit that they could not vote to sentence someone to the death penalty. At his trial, witnesses lied and the judge would not allow his attorney to object.

Once on death row, he worked with Mumia Abu-Jamal and the 220 other prisoners for change. They forged unity as the Capital Case Defendants Association. They filed lawsuits for fresh air and better conditions, and they were persecuted for it. They went on hunger strikes together. The Greene State Correctional Institution was a training ground for Abu Ghraib in Iraq

with vicious racist guards.

In Wilson's case, he was able to get a tape of the prosecutor training other prosecutors in jury selection using race. With that evidence, he was able to get a new trial which ended in a mistrial. Then by fighting to get the state to turn over the results of DNA analysis, he was acquitted in 2005. However, Wilson still can't get housing, medical benefits or compensation. He concentrates his efforts on helping to build awareness of how the system works against people of color and the poor.

Saadiqah Amatullah Hasan reviewed the lack of concrete, reliable evidence in the trial of her spouse, Siddique Abdullah Hasan, especially considering the fact that he was charged with a capital crime, the killing of a prison guard related to the Lucasville rebellion. There were no murder weapons, no confession, only testimony from “jailhouse snitches” not substantiated by any other testimony.

Hasan told the crowd, “You are obligated to be a part of this revolutionary movement. You are obligated to be a part of fighting the oppressor.” □

Reminiscent of Katrina

Border patrol targets immigrants during fire fight

By Heather Cottin

As the Santa Ana winds whipped wild-fires through Southern California, George Bush claimed the U.S. government's response to this catastrophe would be different from its response to Katrina. While Washington's response to Katrina resulted in the ethnic cleansing of a large portion of the long-time, African-American residents of the Gulf, in California the victims were mostly Latin@ immigrants.

When victims of the fires evacuated to Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, authorities invited a Border Patrol information unit to set up a tent inside the stadium. The presence of a BP van and uniformed BP officers intimidated immigrant families seeking safety.

One night, around midnight, police walked around the stadium asking for identification and proof of residency in an evacuated zone. People without identification were thrown out of the stadium.

Police detained approximately 12 evacuees (at least four were children) who they alleged were "looting" donated blankets, food and toys. The "looting" was later disproved, but the story was carried in the press and the damage was done. The fires gave more fuel to anti-immigrant forces, which used it to demean and deny immigrants basic human necessities.

Many immigrant rights activists noted the similarities to the "looting" stories the corporate press rolled out during Katrina.

"For immigrant families, this is in no way an 'anti-Katrina,'" said Indymedia reporter José I. Fusté. "Immigrants in San Diego County are being neglected by emergency evacuator, put in danger by their employers, treated rudely by authorities and volunteers, refused aid at evacu-

ation sites, and racially profiled by police and deported by the Border Patrol." (indybay.org, Oct. 26)

At the stadium, Joana Miss, a Mexican woman whose baby had diarrhea, was given three diapers. However, she reports, "When I was leaving, they gave an American woman a whole box." (San Diego Union-Tribune, Oct. 25). Andrea Guerrero, chair of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Coalition, reported: "There was a mountain (possibly 1,000 bags) of diapers. There was also a mountain of donated items that could have served 10 times the number of people left in the stadium. The whole afternoon, we watched White evacuees take cases of water and other large loads to their cars without being questioned." (theunapologeticmexican.org, Oct. 27)

Guerrero said that Latin@s were not the only people of color subject to abuse. "An African American woman was harassed for making two trips with a baby stroller filled with items. ... She attempted to register a

complaint with the police officer in charge who treated her poorly and refused to process a complaint. ... She was so upset by the end of the day and afraid to leave with anything else. ... A Filipino volunteer who had been helping people day and night was thrown out for making two trips out to cars, both times to assist people to their cars. The officer threatened to tazer him and charge him with trespassing."

California authorities prevented a solidarity group from transporting critical supplies to immigrants. Greg Morales of Border Angels and the Mexican American Poets Association said that volunteers were turned around near the Tecate crossing of the U.S./Mexico border, and prevented from transporting food and water donations to the immigrant communities that needed them.

Morales told of one volunteer who attempted to take these supplies to Potrero, a rural community in the fire zone near Tecate. Authorities asked him, "Why do you want to go into Potrero? There's

nothing but drug dealers there." A volunteer able to reach Potrero found many immigrant families in need of supplies and evacuation. (indybay.org, Oct. 26)

According to Enrique Morones, founder and director of Border Angels, employers threatened to fire laborers who refused to work on farms near the smoldering hills.

In a remote, once heavily wooded canyon along the Mexican border, Border Patrol agents found the remains of four immigrants, a woman and three men, who had perished in the fire. Joe Mason, a Border Patrol supervisor, said because the devastation made it difficult to hide in the barren, fire-scorched hills, "It should make our job a little easier." (Associated Press, Oct. 26).

Immigrant rights activists are still burning with rage at the U.S. government response to immigrants trapped by the conflagrations. The lessons of Katrina, and now the California fires, point to an official apartheid policy denying equal protection and safety to people of color. □

Family planning appointment is anti-reproductive rights

By Kathy Durkin

The Bush administration has once again struck a blow against women's rights and the health and well-being of millions of poor people.

In a move roundly denounced by national women's and reproductive health organizations, Bush supporter and birth control foe Dr. Susan Orr was appointed to be the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs. No congressional confirmation is required.

An anti-family planning hardliner is now in charge of the national family planning program. The appointment reflects the intent of the Bush administration, in its last year in office, to roll back even further women's fundamental rights and health care, especially targeting poor women.

The health of millions of women is at stake.

Cecile Richards, Planned Parenthood president, warned, "The appointment of Susan Orr is a nightmare for anyone who believes in birth control and sex ed. ... Although President Bush may be in the waning months of his presidency, he continues to do damage to women's reproductive health care every step of his presidency." (plannedparenthood.org)

This is a powerful position with oversight over Title X funding under the Public Health Services Act, which provides contraceptive education and supplies, sex education, counseling and preventive health screenings. It has authority over information disseminated, program priorities, funding decisions and making new rules for more than 4,000 clinics.

Orr will oversee the Department of Health and Human Services' nearly \$300 million in annual grants—the only federal funding for free or low-cost reproductive health services for five million low-income and uninsured women. A disproportionately high number of these women are people of color.

Orr has a large portfolio of right-wing



Reproductive rights protest, April 2004, Washington. WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

credentials. She has publicly deplored government support for birth control in education, policy and health insurance, and opposed the emergency contraceptive mifepristone (RU-486). As a board member of Teen Choice, she supports abstinence-only sex education programs for youth.

In supporting Bush's plan to end federal employees' contraceptive coverage, Orr remarked, "We're quite pleased because fertility is not a disease. It's not a medical necessity that you have [contraception]." (Washington Post, Apr. 12, 2001)

Critical of mandatory contraceptive coverage in health insurance plans, she wrote in the Weekly Standard in 2000: "It's not about choice. It's not about health care. It's about making everyone collaborators with the culture of death." Further, she opposed a bill giving women equal insurance benefits for birth control prescriptions in Washington, D.C.

Orr favored the Bush administration's Global Gag Rule, which barred non-governmental organizations from receiving federal monies if their programs even mentioned the word "abortion."

Her résumé includes being senior director for Marriage and Family Care at the far-right Family Research Council, an anti-choice, homophobic organization that opposes government support for all family planning and sex education, while

promoting abstinence-only sex education for youth.

This so-called "pro-family values" outfit even opposed the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Their position, in part, alleges that it lets states provide family planning services to poor women. Bush recently vetoed the expansion of SCHIP to cover ten million children

As the Bush administration pushes its reactionary political agenda at the sacrifice of women's and poor people's health, the drive to dismantle social programs and cut federal funding for them—while fueling the war budget—rolls on.

The horrific "Deficit Reduction Act" of 2005, which cut \$39 billion in federal programs including \$11 billion for Medicare and Medicaid, had a hidden attack on students and youth, poor and uninsured women. It ended government rebates in 2007 to profit-driven drug makers for discounting prescription birth control at college health centers and free clinics. Monthly costs have gone from \$7 to from \$30 to \$50.

Meanwhile, rightwing anti-contraceptive rhetoric is growing louder, espoused by not only anti-choice groups but many conservative politicians on the campaign trail, who are using this issue to whip up support.

The right-wing program has had an impact. A National Women's Law Center study finds women's health care is deteriorating nationally with "an overall decline in ... reproductive health, [due to] factors such as insufficient access to health clinics and emergency contraceptives." (nwl.org)

What is needed today is a national, militant mass struggle to push back Susan Orr, George Bush and their ilk and fight for women's intrinsic rights.

Online petitions and letter-writing campaigns protesting Orr's appointment are at plannedparenthood.org and prochoice.org. Web site of the National Abortion Federation.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Hospital must pay union \$4.5 million

An arbitrator ruled Oct. 24 that Yale-New Haven Hospital must pay \$4.5 million to District 1199 of the Service Employees union and hundreds of workers for sabotaging an election for union representation. The hospital was found guilty of intimidating union supporters and spreading misinformation. The hospital must pay the union \$2.3 million to cover organizing expenses and \$2.2 million to the 1,700 employees who were eligible to vote.

CLF passes another anti-war resolution

On Oct. 25, the California Labor Federation passed another anti-war resolution, this time supporting the Oct. 27 national demonstrations and the Iraq Moratorium on the third Friday of each month. Deploring the deaths of more than 3,700 GIs and hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, as well as the wounding of countless others, the resolution contrasted the projected \$1 trillion cost of the war to pressing human needs being neglected and underfunded at home. The resolution also expressed "solidarity with the Iraqi people who struggle for freedom, economic justice, peace, and the basic necessities of life." □

FRANCE

Charged with torture, Rumsfeld flees

By Greg Butterfield

Donald Rumsfeld reportedly fled France Oct. 26 after four human rights groups filed a criminal complaint against the former U.S. secretary of defense for "ordering and authorizing torture" of prisoners at Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib.

Rumsfeld was a key player in the illegal U.S.-led invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. According to the latest report from the Congressional Budget Office, these imperialist adventures could wind up costing more than \$2.4 trillion, on top of hundreds of thousands of lives. (The Pakistan Newspaper, Oct. 27)

Rumsfeld was spirited away from the U.S. Embassy in Paris following a talk sponsored by Foreign Policy magazine. Hundreds of anti-war activists were outside waiting to confront the former Bush

administration top gun. Rumsfeld can no longer claim immunity from prosecution as a government official since resigning his post last year.

The International Federation of Human Rights, the Center for Constitutional Rights, the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights and the French League for Human Rights filed the complaint with the Paris prosecutor before the Tribunal de Grande Instance.

The criminal complaint was brought under the 1984 Convention Against Torture, ratified by both the U.S. and France. It states that France is obliged to take action "because of the failure of authorities in the United States and Iraq to launch any independent investigation into the responsibility of Rumsfeld and other high-level U.S. officials for torture despite a document paper trail and government memos implicating them in

direct as well as command responsibility for torture," according to a joint press release from the four groups.

It includes 11 pages of written testimony from Janis Karpinski, formerly a high-ranking officer at the U.S.-run Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Karpinski said that abuses at the prison started with the arrival of Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, who was personally sent by Rumsfeld to "assist military intelligence interrogators." (New York Times, Oct. 27)

The complaint also cites three memoranda signed by Rumsfeld in 2002 and 2003 "legitimizing the use of torture" such as hooding of detainees, use of dogs and sleep deprivation.

Publicly, Rumsfeld repeatedly denied Washington's use of torture while he was secretary of defense.

Activists point out that French officials are legally obligated to pursue Rumsfeld

wherever he goes in the European Union.

He has faced similar charges in Argentina, Sweden and Germany. German courts dismissed two cases based on the immunity issue, but that was before Rumsfeld's resignation.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger similarly fled France in 2001 after charges were filed for his role in the bloody 1973 coup against the government of Salvador Allende in Chile.

"We will not rest until those U.S. officials involved in the torture program are brought to justice," said Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights. "Rumsfeld must understand that he has no place to hide." CCR, based in New York City, represents many of the detainees held at Guantánamo.

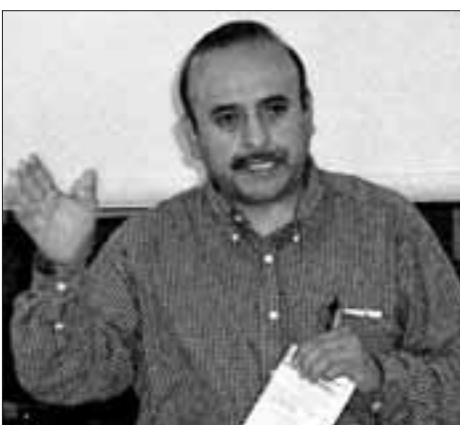
For more information on the case, visit www.ccrjustice.org. □



SAN FRANCISCO



NEW YORK



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

Rosendo Delgado speaks at Detroit rally Oct. 27.



ORLANDO, FLA.

WW PHOTO: LARRY HALES



LOS ANGELES



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

Anti-war protests in the U.S., Canada 'Troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan'

Continued from page 1

at home. People came outside to see the march pass by, eagerly took literature, and many drivers honked their car horns in support.

At a rally at the historic New Bethel Baptist Church, speakers included Minister Malik Shabazz of New Black Panther Party and New Marcus Garvey Movement; Melissa from SDS at Wayne State University; Debbie Johnson of the Detroit Action Network For Reproductive Rights (DANFORR); Rosendo Delgado of Latinos Unidos of Michigan; and Jerry Goldberg, progressive attorney and MECAWI activist. The rally was chaired by MECAWI leader Abayomi Azikwe.

UFPJ estimates that 30,000 marched in **Chicago**, the largest protest there since the invasion. Dante Strobino of FIST reports that youth and students made up the largest contingent, coming from dozens of Midwest campuses and including CAN, SDS, FIST and others. United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the Teamsters and others

made up a labor contingent.

From **Jonesborough** in the northeast corner of Tennessee, Dianne Mathiowetz reports that several hundred people, including many youths—with a big contingent from the University of Tennessee, and another block of older people in their 60s and 70s—made up the protesters. An International Action Center (IAC) contingent carried a banner reading "Troops out of Iraq now, no war on Iran."

State police insisted on searching everyone entering the downtown park, using a metal detector and going through bags. Counter-protesters from "Rolling Thunder" drove around town on their motorcycles and trucks; 20 or so stood across from the park on the street and hollered at the protesters to "leave Jonesborough," although many Jonesborough residents also participated in the anti-war action.

FIST organizer Larry Hales reports that 1,500 people in **Orlando, Fla.**, demonstrated and most finished the march despite a tropical downpour. A Green Party member spoke about the Cuban Five political prisoners and an IVAW speaker

raised Afghanistan. The rest of the talks focused on ending the war in Iraq.

ANSWER and UFPJ organizers estimate 15,000 marched in **Los Angeles**. John Parker reports that many participants carried TONC placards that read, "From Iraq to New Orleans to Jena, from Palestine to the Mexican border—Stop the war at home and abroad." Marching with the TONC contingent were FIST and the FMLN as well as SEIU Local 721 representatives from the Latino and African American Caucus and members of the March 25 Coalition and IAC, all sharing chants with an Asian community contingent that included BAYAN-USA.

From **San Francisco**, Judy Greenspan reports that thousands of youth, students, workers and other anti-war activists took to the downtown streets of this city to demand "No More War in Iraq." The rally and march from Civic Center to Dolores Park included a dramatic "die-in" on Market Street.

Several spirited feeder marches, including a large labor contingent, filled the Civic Center plaza. Speakers included Malik Rahim of Common Ground, who trav-

Myanmar-Burma

U.S. strategy toward 1988, 2007 uprisings

By Sara Flounders

Myanmar is the most ethnically diverse state in mainland Southeast Asia. The Burmese nationality comprises around 68 percent of the population. A third of the population are historically oppressed nationalities. The government recognizes eight major nationalities and 135 distinct ethnic groups.

Myanmar's multiethnic character and the ethnic minorities' struggle against Burmese domination is a recurring theme in Myanmar's history. So also was the deep anti-colonial sentiment and opposition to decades of British colonial rule.

In 1989 after brutally suppressing a popular national uprising, the military dictatorship renamed the country "The Union of Myanmar" in an effort to gain some popular support and reflect the many nationalities instead of just the Burmese. Government officials said the change in the country's name would better reflect the country's ethnic diversity and provide a release from the British colonial past.

Myanmar and its capital city Yangon were the original names before the British Colonial Administration renamed them Burma and Rangoon.

The United Nations and many individual states have accepted Myanmar as the country's name, as they have many other countries that renamed themselves. Only Britain, the former colonial power, and the U.S. insist on using the name Burma, as do some opponents of the military junta who are more closely tied to the West. In referring to the country's history before 1989, Burma is the appropriate name.

Anti-colonial history

There is a long history of resistance

to the British conquest and occupation of Burma in the 19th and 20th centuries that still resonates in Myanmar today. From 1822 until 1947 the British Empire fought five wars of conquest in Burma. Throughout this struggle the British used differences among the many different national and ethnic-linguistic groupings to benefit British rule.

As in many other national liberation struggles, the opposition to racist colonial rule drew in a broad spectrum of the population. Along with millions of workers and small peasants, all of the liberation struggles drew in the religious leaders, poets, artists, intellectuals and the local business and merchant classes. Buddhist monks were the leading symbol of many protests against British rule. The current monk-led protests are part of a tradition of Burmese/Myanmar popular action to unpopular and repressive regimes.

The movement for national liberation in Burma included a broad communist opposition to imperialism and a bourgeois national opposition of local business interests opposed to colonial rule. Where, at the end of World War II, the British, French and U.S. could no longer maintain the old colonial domination, they instead tried to guarantee that bourgeois forces tied to imperialism, forces that would continue the established economic relations, would be recognized as the new emerging governments.

Revolutionary communists led the political awakening that swept Asia, especially the Chinese Revolution and the National Liberation struggles in Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In Indonesia and Malaysia, communist movements were brutally repressed. All of these political currents were reflected in

Burma. A Burmese military regime without a popular base nevertheless yielded to mass pressure and nationalized most of the industries and resources. The regime suffered a series of military coups.

After independence there were many different uprisings and rebellions against the new Burmese government. The Karen, Kachin, Shan, Mon, Arakan, Chin and other national and ethnic groups fought armed struggles to assert their rights. Peace agreements and ceasefires have been signed from time to time without resolving issues of autonomy and federalism.

The Burmese Communist Party was active against the British and Japanese occupations, and after independence in 1948 they launched a rebellion against the government that lasted for 40 years in the rural areas of the north along the Chinese border. There were powerful urban movements, workers' movements with socialist leadership, peasant uprisings, pro-democracy protests and popular rebellions.

The '8888' Uprising

The most significant revolutionary uprising against the regime took place in 1988. U.S. imperialism took a much different attitude toward the 1988 uprising from its support of the demonstrations last month. It showed that imperialism evaluates these struggles based on whether they threaten or support imperialist interests.

Similar to this year's struggle, the 1988 demonstrations began with opposition to sharp price increases for food and fuel and with student actions against political repression and religious processions. This was known as the "8888 Uprising" because after several months of escalating actions, the active forces set Aug. 8, 1988 as the beginning of a national general strike against the regime.

At eight minutes past eight on Aug. 8, dock workers in the port of Rangoon walked out and began a march into the city. They were joined by processions that brought the whole city into the streets. Tens of thousands of peasants came in from the countryside. Simultaneous demonstrations and strike actions broke out throughout the country—in Mandalay, Sagaing, Shwebo, Moulmein, Taunggyi and many other towns. The military fired into the demonstrations and hundreds were killed.

A revolutionary upheaval followed. People established Popular Councils in cities and towns across the country. The state apparatus disintegrated. There were mutinies of military units and police forces crumbled. People stormed prisons and released thousands of political prisoners, seized warehouses and distributed rice. Mass organizations and revolutionary committees sprang up that took over essential tasks of urban life—from running hospitals to directing traffic.

The National Democratic Front—representing 10 armed guerilla organizations of various oppressed nationalities—issued a proclamation calling for a coordinated military offensive and raising their own demands of autonomy and equality and solidarity with the revolutionary upheaval.

Unlike their favorable coverage of the monks' demonstrations this past September, the corporate media in the U.S. warned in 1988 of rising anarchy and said that Burma was spiraling into chaos. Imperialist governments ordered their embassy staffs to evacuate. No one arrived from the U.N. to support this democratic

movement. No one called for sanctions against the generals.

The generals responded by seeking to divide the movement and regain the allegiance of the property owning and middle-class elements. They promised to lift business restrictions, open the economy to foreign investments, negotiate new loans and restructure the economy. U.S. and Japanese banks quickly granted \$3.8 billion in loans.

U.S. corporations such as Unocal, today Chevron, quickly moved in to take advantage of the military's brutal repression by getting big concessions from the military dictatorship for the gas and oil fields. Myanmar has copper, tin, tungsten, iron, along with petroleum and natural gas. It has large forests of hardwood trees and—once the world's largest exporter of rice—it has rich agricultural land. All of these resources are of great interest to multinational corporations.

The generals promised new elections. The dictator U Ne Win resigned. There was a new shuffle of faces among the generals. Then on Sept. 18, 1988, the regime declared a State of Emergency. The martial law crackdown was so severe that 3,000 to 10,000 leaders and grassroots activists were killed within days and tens of thousands rounded up and imprisoned for years. Repression and military rule have continued for 19 years.

The 1988 uprising did pave the way for the 1990 People's Assembly elections, the first held in 30 years. The National League for Democracy, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won over 60 percent of the vote and over 80 percent of parliamentary seats in the election. Senior General Saw Maung's government subsequently annulled the election results.

After 1988's brutal repression and with the more revolutionary leadership of the 1988 movement dead, in jail or on the run, the U.S. began funding an opposition to the generals that was deemed friendlier to U.S. corporate interests.

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the George Soros Open Society Institute, Freedom House, the Albert Einstein Institute and the U.S. State Department have helped in funding, training and providing material support and communication for a new generation of opposition to the general's rule.

NED funds of \$2.5 million annually since 2003 have focused on regime change. The NED admits to funding the key opposition media such as New Era Journal, Irrawaddy and the Democratic Voice of Burma radio. The U.S. Consulate General office in neighboring Thailand, now under a dictatorship that is friendly to U.S. interests, has provided key logistical support and training. Whether these subversive organizations can control Myanmar's mass movement remains to be seen.

U.S. covert support for the opposition in Myanmar is based on a rapidly expanding U.S. involvement back into South Asia. Growing U.S. corporate concern with China's growth and the Pentagon's drive to implant a new generation of U.S. bases to control the Straits of Malacca is leading to a renewed U.S. involvement in the region. Some 80 percent of the oil bound for China passes through these straits.

The real attitude of U.S. imperialism toward the movement in Myanmar will not be guided by Washington's concern for democratic change. It will depend on U.S. economic interests and strategic military plans in the region. □

PART 2



NEW YORK

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

eled to the demonstration with a group of Katrina survivors; Dennis Banks of the American Indian Movement; and Richard Brown of the San Francisco 8, a group of Black activists and leaders who were just recently framed up on conspiracy charges of killing a local cop back in 1971.

Rahim announced plans to travel to San Diego after the demonstration to deliver thousands of hygiene packets to people made homeless by the wildfires that have raged through southern California.

Tens of thousands braved heavy rains in **New York** to march from the area north of Union Square Park south on Broadway to Foley Square. Many labor contingents, including a large group from the Professional Staff Congress at the CUNY schools, filled the first part of the march. Students and youth made up another large section.

From **Boston**, Gerry Scoppettuolo reports that 10,000 people marched through the downtown streets. City Councillor Felix Arroyo and author Howard Zinn were among those deliv-

ering speeches at Boston Common. The Boston School Bus Drivers, District 1199/SEIU and UE unions had major contingents at the march.

Pan-Canadian protest focuses on Afghanistan

G. Dunkel writes that Canadians in over 32 cities—from **St. John's** in Newfoundland to **Montreal** in Quebec and **Toronto** in Ontario to **Vancouver** in British Columbia—protested Oct. 27 against Canada's involvement in Afghanistan. There was even a protest in Calgary, Alberta, the hometown of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a Conservative, who has announced that Canada will maintain its troops in Afghanistan until 2011.

Two opposition parties, the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois, support a 2009 pullout, while the New Democratic Party is demanding an immediate departure. Public opinion polls show that a strong majority of Canadians in every province want Canadian troops out of Afghanistan. □

Anti-Israel boycott sparks trade union debate

Special to Workers World

On Aug. 28, New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson Jr. attacked British unions for supporting a boycott of Israel. The Chief, an influential weekly newspaper that covers civil service unions and is widely read by New York City civil service union members and New York City politicians, published an article in the Sept. 7th edition about Comptroller Thompson's action. The article included a statement of praise for Thompson's action that was issued by Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) President Stuart Appelbaum.

The statements of Thompson and Appelbaum, as printed in The Chief, have unwittingly initiated a long-sought dia-

logue in the union movement over the question of Israel. The AFL-CIO support for Israel has been in lock step with U.S. foreign policy for more than a half century. Historically, union members could only expect a full frontal political attack upon even raising the issue at a union meeting. Union leaders who have dared to speak out against Zionism have been hounded out of office. For all these years the "P- word" (P for Palestine) has been a forbidden subject on the union floor.

What happened next must have really shocked Comptroller Thompson and JLC President Appelbaum and all the supporters of Israel in the New York City labor movement. The Chief received and published a letter in the Oct.19 issue from

four New York City trade unionists—Mike Letwin, Brenda Stokely, Larry Adams and Marty Goodman—defending the international union boycott of Israel.

Their letter states, "This boycott—many of whose supporters are Jewish—DOES NOT target Israel for its ethnicity, but for theft and colonization of Arab lands, denial of equality to Arab-Palestinians in Israel, and violation of Palestinian Refugees' right to return home. ... Moreover, apartheid Israel is sponsored by the U.S. ... U.S. trade-union officialdom is a shameful accomplice, and tries to silence union members who oppose this apartheid regime. ... Ending this support would strike a critical blow against war and racism—abroad and at home."

In response to the letter from these unionists supporting the Israel boycott, two more letters in The Chief were printed in the Oct. 26 edition. One of the two letters came from Stuart Leibowitz, president of the District Council 37, AFSCME Retirees Association. As expected, the letter from Retirees Association President Leibowitz contained all the usual Zionist rhetoric about "besieged and surrounded" Israel and was titled "Ganging up on Israel."

The other letter printed by The Chief was written by Mike Gimbel, a delegate to the New York City Central Labor Council from Local 375, one of the largest unions in District Council 37. Gimbel stated that he is "a Jewish trade unionist who supports the just struggle of the Palestinian people and the boycott of Israel." The heading for the letter was "A Call for Dialogue." Gimbel's letter went on to state: "The issue of the boycott of Israel can't be allowed to be pushed under the rug. The issue of Zionism is central to almost every political conflict in the Middle-East. U.S. foreign policy for over a half-century is wedded to the ideology and strategy of Zionism. ... Let's have a dialogue on the rise of anti-Semitism but most importantly, engage the labor movement in a dialogue about Palestinian human rights and the right of return. Let's not cover up the U.S. sponsored crimes of Zionism." Gimbel's letter concludes with the following statement: "Isn't it about time that our unions set up forums where both sides can be heard? That's what I actually did in my union chapter many years ago. Unity cannot be achieved by silencing our Palestinian and Middle-Eastern members. Let's follow the old and true union motto: 'In unity there is strength.'"

Go to www.workers.org to read Mike Gimbel's letter in its entirety.

Free all political prisoners forum

On Nov. 6, the International Action Center and New York Committee to Free the Cuban Five will hold a special forum in New York City highlighting the struggle of political prisoners, especially the international political prisoners held by the U.S. government and its allies.

Featured speakers include Charlotte Kates, organizer for New Jersey Solidarity Activists for the Liberation of Palestine and co-chair of the Middle East

Subcommittee of the National Lawyers Guild. Kates recently participated in a delegation to occupied Palestine and met with former political prisoners. She was one of the three U.S.-based attorneys able to attend a session of the Israeli military trial of Ahmad Sa'adat, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Also speaking at the forum will be Heidi Boghosian, executive director of

the National Lawyers Guild, who recently called on the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture to launch a formal investigation of the U.S. government's violations of the human rights of the Cuban Five.

They will be joined by Teresa Gutierrez, an IAC leader and founder of the NY Committee to Free the Cuban Five, who will report on plans for the Nov. 9 "Breaking the Silence on the Cuban Five" conference in Toronto.

There will also be updates on the cases of Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu-Jamal, the San Francisco 8 and the Puerto Rican political prisoners.

The forum begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Solidarity Center, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, between 5th and 6th Avenues in Manhattan. For more information, call 212-633-6646. □

U.S. targets Iran with sanctions

Stop another war in the Middle East



October 27 march, NYC.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Following are excerpts from an Oct. 26 "Sanctions: Another step towards war?" statement in response to the latest attack by the Bush administration on Iran's sovereignty. Go to www.StopWaronIran.org to read the entire statement and to sign a petition against U.S. aggression targeting Iran.

We have seen this before! The Bush Administration, with no visible opposition from the Democratically-controlled Congress, has taken another major step toward war—this time against the people of Iran.

Today, the Bush Administration announced a harsh new program of sanctions leveled against the people of Iran. Executive Orders 13382 and 13224 target the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces, and three of Iran's largest state-owned banks, freezing any of their assets held in U.S. banks and prohibiting any U.S. citizen or company from engaging in financial transactions with these organizations. Sanctions themselves are an act of war! This is understood internationally. The Bush Administration's latest announcement is clearly a precursor to military action against the people of Iran—as such actions and language were in 2003.

The sanctions package, combined with

the sending of a second U.S. carrier group to the Gulf earlier this year, comes at the same time when the media are reporting that Bush is determined to strike Iran before the end of his term. More than half the U.S. Navy is now off the coast of Iran. ABC News reports that the Bush administration has requested \$88 million to modify B-2 bombers to carry a newly developed 30,000-pound bomb super "bunker-buster" designed to destroy hardened targets deep underground.

Just as in the lead-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Bush Administration is using claims about "weapons of mass destruction" to build support for military action. The Democrats in Congress have done nothing to oppose the growing threat of war. In fact, many of them, including leading presidential candidates, are actively supporting the administration's drive to war against Iran.

Bush's war in Iraq has already caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and almost 4,000 U.S. deaths. The cost will be over 2 trillion dollars with no end in sight—while infrastructure in the U.S. is collapsing. It is clear that we cannot rely on politicians to stop a new war against Iran. The only force that will stop an attack is a massive international grassroots movement of opposition. □

Gov't violates Indigenous rights

At a meeting and film screening held Oct. 23 at the International Action Center in New York, Debra and Alex White Plume described their several-years struggle on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation—one of the poorest places in North America—to help develop a sustainable crop: industrial hemp. They were exercising their treaty rights as a sovereign nation and building a grassroots effort to provide a viable economy and employment for the Lakota Nation. The federal government swooped down on the reservation with armored assault vehicles, helicopters and armed DEA agents to burn and destroy the crop. The White Plumes now face substantial prison time from federal criminal indictments. The film "Standing Silent Nation" is a powerful 50-minute documentary that records this on-going struggle.

See www.pbs.org for more info on the film.

The event was co-sponsored by First Voices Indigenous Radio, Owe Aku—Bring Back the Way, Flying Eagle Woman Fund, Medora Woods and NorthEast Two Spirit Society. Other speakers of the evening included Tiokasin Ghost Horse of First Voices Indigenous Radio, Kent Lebstock of Owe Aku, Jesse Lokahi Heiwa and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center.

—Report and photo by Sara Flounders



Left to right: Debra White Plume, Tiokasin Ghost Horse and Kent Lebstock

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

**BE THERE!
FREE LEONARD PELTIER**

Thursday, Nov. 22 12:00 noon

Cole's Hill, Plymouth, Mass.

For more information, go to the United American Indians of New England Web site www.uaine.org. For NYC transportation information, call the International Action Center, 1 p.m.-8 p.m. weekdays, at 212-633-6646.



Bloodshed rises in Pakistan as

U.S. pushes regime to attack Islamists

By Deirdre Griswold

More and more, the Pakistani people are being drawn into U.S. imperialism's bloody wars and occupations against their will.

The last week in October, the Islamabad government of President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, the military dictator who is frequently described in the press as "a key ally in the U.S. war on terror," sent 2,500 troops into the Swat Valley near Pakistan's northwest frontier with Afghanistan. The area is said to be a stronghold of Pakistani religious leaders who sympathize with the fight of the Taliban in Afghanistan against occupation by the U.S. and its allies.

Dozens of soldiers, civilians and religious fighters called "militants" in the Western media were killed in several violent clashes. One news account said Pakistani forces, backed by helicopters, had traded fire with militants who were "using rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and other weapons." (AP, Oct. 27)

A later account told of thousands of civilians fleeing from the area, where, on Oct. 28, "Security forces backed by helicopter gunships pounded militant hideouts in the mountains." (AP, Oct. 29)

Just one week earlier, the Pentagon had handed over 30 helicopters to the Musharraf regime, the latest installment in more than \$6 billion worth of "security-related assistance" given to the Pakistan military by the U.S. government since 2001.

Bush had sent his national intelligence director, the notorious John Negroponte, to Pakistan in January to pressure

Musharraf to go on the offensive against the militant Islamic opposition. In July, government forces stormed the Lal Masjid mosque right in central Islamabad, killing hundreds of Islamic teachers and students opposed to Musharraf and his alliance with Washington.

Yet far from being intimidated, the influence of the Islamic militants has been growing, especially in the northwest, where the population is very aware of the brutal war being carried out against their neighbors in Afghanistan and can sometimes hear the roar of U.S. jet planes as they unload their deadly bombs.

Can cynical deal survive a massacre?

At the same time, Washington has been trying to popularize the image of the Musharraf regime without losing the services of Musharraf, who heads the large and nuclear-armed Pakistani army and first took power in 1999 in a coup. It has been brokering a power-sharing deal whereby Musharraf would accept a coalition with Benazir Bhutto, the multi-millionaire head of the Pakistan People's Party, who recently returned from exile.

"The administration concluded over the summer that a power-sharing deal with Ms. Bhutto might be the only way that General Musharraf could keep from being toppled," wrote the New York Times bluntly on Oct. 20.

As part of the deal, Musharraf promised Bhutto, a former prime minister, that corruption charges against her and her family would be dropped on her return. However, as the newly arrived politician moved in a

car caravan through the streets of Karachi on Oct. 18, where some 150,000 people had assembled to greet her, powerful bomb blasts ripped through the crowd. Bhutto barely escaped; more than 150 people, including 50 from her security detail, were killed and more than 500 others severely wounded in a scene of utter carnage.

Almost all Western news accounts blame the bombings on Al Qaeda, but that does not seem to be the view of most Pakistanis. While "few had a clear picture of what caused the explosions," wrote a reporter who interviewed survivors, "overwhelmingly, they believed that the government was to blame for the attacks, and few blamed Al Qaeda or other Islamist militant groups." (New York Times, Oct. 20)

Bhutto herself, while she did not directly blame the regime, said that "very powerful figures" were behind the assassination attempt and that the government had not given her proper security. (BBC News, Oct. 23)

Thus, Washington's efforts to bolster a pro-U.S. regime in Pakistan by bringing Bhutto back—a scheme in which Negroponte, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Zalmay Khalilzad all personally participated—may already have boomeranged.

While the corruption of Bhutto and her husband is legendary, and they are accused of salting away hundreds of million of dollars in Swiss banks, her return unleashed a wave of popular anger at the regime, which was only heightened by the

assassination attempt that killed so many people.

Facing quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Bush administration is desperate to stabilize Musharraf politically while forcing him to use his military more vigorously against the rising anti-U.S. movement. But many in the imperialist foreign policy establishment think it won't work. "This backroom deal I think is going to explode in our face," said Bruce Riedel, who advised three presidents on South Asian issues and is now at the Brookings Institution. "Ms. Bhutto and Mr. Musharraf detest each other, and the concept that they can somehow work collaboratively is a real stretch." (New York Times, Oct. 20)

With the country seething, the army attacking its own people in the northwest territories, and many of Bhutto's followers demanding an end to the Musharraf dictatorship, the Pakistan Supreme Court has yet to validate the general's "re-election" as president, which happened on Oct. 6. The election was able to proceed after Bhutto agreed she would not join in a boycott called by other parties in the bourgeois democratic opposition. On Oct. 29 the government's top lawyer, Attorney General Malik Qayyum, told the Supreme Court that Musharraf would be president, no matter how the court ruled, raising speculation that the general "might impose martial law if the judgment goes against him." (The Hindu, Oct. 29)

It is yet another sign of the instability and unpopularity of a regime central to imperialism's goal of domination over the oil-rich Middle East and Central Asia. □

Call for anti-Islamic hatred on campuses falls flat

By Caleb T. Maupin

When the right wing announced it would attempt to hold an "Islamofascism Awareness Week" from Oct. 22 to 26 on college campuses throughout the United States, the left responded.

The founder of this "awareness week" was none other than David Horowitz. He has founded his own "freedom center" devoted to the removal of leftists from college campuses. He has published a book called "The Professors," which reads like a document of the House Un-American Activities Committee, listing 101 college professors he sees as "traitors" and as "un-American."

Horowitz has in the past claimed that Black people should be grateful for being enslaved, a blatantly racist statement if ever there was one.

It has now been proven that Horowitz inflated the number of schools participating in his hate week. He listed Harvard and Yale as participating, but both schools reported no events in accordance with his campaign.

On the campuses where they did occur, the students responded to Horowitz with a great amount of disapproval. At Emory University, when Horowitz spoke, the audience was full of students who turned their backs on him as he spoke.

Horowitz' vicious anti-Islamic statement, which contained great falsehoods, was met with laughter from the audience. The student audience frequently challenged him, engaging in a shouting match with a pundit who sought to remove their leftist professors from classrooms.

Soon the repressive state stepped in to silence them. A security guard declared

that all students who were standing up with their backs turned on Horowitz should sit down or be "escorted out." At this point, dozens of students then stood up in defiance. The event was declared over; Horowitz was escorted off the stage as chants of "Racist, Sexist, Anti-Gay, David Horowitz Go Away!" were heard from students who had shut down a bigot from spewing his hatred.

At Columbia University, Horowitz was called out strongly by the Black Student Organization, which was appalled by his comparisons of the treatment of Republicans to that of African Americans. "We find it particularly reprehensible," Tiffany Dockery told the New York Post.

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Horowitz responded to a student's question by accusing her of being anti-American. The student, a young woman, responded very proudly "Please don't insult me. I'm not an idiot!" This drew massive applause from the audience, who clearly disapproved of Horowitz's style of childish insults toward dissident students, a style he was frequently reduced to throughout the week.

When Ann Coulter spoke at the University of Southern California, as part of the "awareness" week's efforts, 150 people protested, while only three hundred attended the event.

In short, this hateful well-known right-wing columnist got half as many protesters opposing her as she did people wanting to hear her views, according to the L.A. Times.

At Penn State University popular student outrage forced the college to demand that the name of the week be changed to "Terrorism Awareness Week." When Rick

Santorum, the recently defeated bigoted senator from Pennsylvania spoke, he was met with protests including the displaying of anti-war placards during his speech.

Horowitz called on his conservative student followers to hold sit-ins in Women's Studies Departments in an attempt to force them to take more anti-Islamic and pro-imperialist stances. As of yet, not a single report of such a sit-in occurring has been released.

Students have proudly sat in to protest the war in Iraq. The Sept. 15 and 29

protests in Washington, DC, were full of radical youth. The right wing was totally unable to rally youth to its cause on U.S. college campuses Oct. 22-26. Horowitz and his right-wing ilk were able to organize just a few speakers who were challenged at every turn since support for their cause of war and repression on college campuses is very hard to find in this modern age.

The writer is an organizer of FIST, Fight Imperialism-Stand Together youth group. Contact FIST@workers.org



PHOTO: AJAC

Workers protest military marchers

Workers gathered in downtown Sasebo in Japan's Nagasaki Prefecture on Oct. 20 to protest an appearance by the Japanese armed forces—called the Self-Defense Force of Japan—who were marching down the streets carrying machine guns.

This was the second time the SDFJ marched in downtown Sasebo, the first occurring two years ago. It was a sign of the increasingly aggressive posture of the SDFJ, signaled by the Japanese govern-

ment's decision to revise the Japanese Constitution and formally hold armed forces marches. The SDFJ is currently taking part in the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq, making it a party to an aggressive war.

Workers in Sasebo expressed their anger at the SDFJ's new openly aggressive stance by staging a sit-in and chanting, "Stop your armed march! End the occupation of Iraq!"

—Secretary Kikuchi Takao of the Anti-war Joint Action Committee



Women and subprime loans

Another facet of the war on women in the United States was exposed in an Oct. 22 Boston Globe column by Anita Hill, who noted that the subprime housing loan crisis is disproportionately affecting women. The crisis has affected millions of working class people whose homes have been foreclosed, and exacerbated a general economic crisis that has now spread across the globe.

It's not just that more women are purchasing homes, which they are. The column cites studies by the Consumer Federation of America and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition that show women receive less favorable loan terms for home purchase, refinance and home improvement than men with similar economic status. The Okalahoma Journal Record reported in 2006 that, nationally, women were 32 percent more likely to receive subprime mortgage loans than men. (Dec. 8)

If this wasn't enough to show the discrimination of these predatory lenders, Hill points out, "The studies also show that the gap between women and men receiving subprime loans actually increases as women's income increases."

Women of color face the same double oppression in the housing market that they face throughout U.S. society. WW has previously noted that a disproportionate number of those relegated to subprime loans are Black and Latin@. But Hill says evidence suggests that across all loan types, African-American and Latin@ women are charged higher fees and rates than same-race men and white men, regardless of income.

The war on women—which manifests itself in the continued offensive against reproductive rights; war abroad; lack of pay equity; sexual harassment in the military; poverty and the denial of social services; raids and detentions of immigrants; attacks on people of color and lesbian, gay, bi and trans people; and so much more—must be seen as an integral component of capitalism and U.S. imperialism, which attempts to sow divisions amongst workers along race and gender lines in order to further exploit them.

Just as women can be seen at the lead of many anti-imperialist struggles, the war against women must be put at the forefront of the anti-imperialist movement. Its defeat will come with the end of the system that oppresses us all. □



Leslie Feinberg and Rev. Dorsey Blake

PHOTO: COURTNEY BROWN

Feinberg receives Thurman Award

'We can find common ground for struggle'

On Oct. 21, Leslie Feinberg, a managing editor of Workers World newspaper, was keynote speaker at the Annual Convocation of The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco, where she was given the Howard Thurman Award "for her activism and advocacy in defense of oppressed nationalities, women, disabled, the working class movement and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community." Proclamations congratulating Feinberg were issued by the California State Legislature and the City and County of San Francisco. The mayor's office named Oct. 21 "Leslie Feinberg Day." Her talk, on finding common ground where communists and religious activists can be in solidarity in the struggle for social transformation and liberation, can be found in full at www.workers.org. Below is the first of a two-part abridged version.

I thank you, with deep sincerity, for honoring me with this award—which is a tribute to the work of the great liberation theologian Dr. Howard Thurman, who tirelessly worked to find common ground.

I thank the Rev. Dorsey Blake and the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples—the first consciously planned interracial congregation in the United States—for creating common ground here today on which to hold a strategic discussion. You show great courage in presenting this award to a revolutionary political activist: I am a secular Jewish communist, a working-class, lesbian transgender Marxist.

"When I gave food to the poor they called me a saint," commented Brazilian liberation theologian Dom Helder Camara. "When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist."

Helder Camara articulates that the threat is leveled when people stop working within a brutally unjust economic and social status quo, and when they challenge the right of such a system to continue.

Red baiting is a potent threat—it's the demand for a loyalty oath to the emperor, to the slave-owner, to the bankers and industrialists.

When red baiting is unsheathed as a weapon to try to force us to back off from social and economic transformation, we must find common ground. If we discuss this together, with great respect, we may find that we agree on more than we might think. Our task is not to build a bridge between ideologies but, together, to pave the road to liberation.

This task is particularly timely since the Vatican condemned last week what it called a Marxist influence in Latin America, which it said threatened the church.

The Rev. Thurman wrote, "A fresh sense of history must be developed. All the events of our world must be placed in a context of incident that reveals their profound inter-relatedness. History on this planet must be regarded not as individual happenings unrelated to social processes, but, instead, as overlapping patterns of group behavior brought into play by a wide variety of creative personal and impersonal forces at work in the world. History is not irrational," he concluded, "it has a deep logic and consistency."

Marxists, too, climb to the mountain-top to study the vista of hundreds of thousands of years of human history: pre-class communal societies, chattel slavery, feudalism, capitalism. Like you, we do not assign evil to "original sin" or "hard-wired" human characteristics.

We see that for the major portion of that long, long history, human beings worked

Continued on page 11

Texas march says

'Stop the executions now!'

Continued from page 1

of Shaka Sankofa (aka Gary Graham), Frances Newton, Joseph Nichols and 402 other executed men and women in Texas.

The wide range of endorsers included actor Susan Sarandon; death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal; the Central Labor Council in Derry, Ireland; the Houston NAACP; and Dr. Evelyn Bethune, granddaughter of the late Black educator and civil rights activist, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune.

The march and two rallies were broadcast live by KDOL Radio in Livingston, where the 380 men on Texas death row are housed. They listened live for two and a half hours and were energized by it. "It was really uplifting to know that so many people were out there fighting for us. To hear the drums, the chanting and the speakers," Howard Guidry, a leader of Panthers United for Revolutionary Education (PURE) on death row, told his family during a visit later the evening.

PURE's message to the rally read in part: "Thank you for saying 'No!' to executions. Because of people like you we will win this battle against capital punishment."

Gabriel Gonzales of DRIVE (Death Row Inner-communal Vanguard Engagement Movement) wrote: "It feels good to see that people out there believe in us and what we do in here. We are certainly in the belly of the beast, dealing with life and death on a daily basis. ... You all out there who stand with us are our heroes. ... But you are not just people, but comrades, because we all share the same struggle, whether as socialists, as the people or as revolutionaries who would rather 'die on our feet than live on our knees.'"

Before the march began from Emancipation Park, near the site of the old Houston Black Panther Party headquarters, there was an opening rally there. A tribute was given by Peoples Party III leader Kenyha Shabazz to Houston Panther Chairman Carl Hampton, shot to death



PHOTO: HOUSTON INDYMEDIA

on July 26, 1970, by Houston police near the rally place. Other speakers included the Journey of Hope, the National Black United Front and a Ugandan who had spent 18 years on death row there until the person he was convicted of killing turned up alive.

Mary Delaney, 74, and Velma Johnson, 72, members of the SHAPE (Self Help for African People through Education) Community Center's "Elders Institute of Wisdom" then led the march, which ended up at the center headquarters for a closing rally. Death row families carried the lead banners.

Members of the Salvadoran organization CRECEN carried their large banner in the march. The Free Radicals Protest Samba School Drum Corps provided rhythm for the chants as almost 500 people marched, yelling: "Texas Says Death Row! We Say 'Hell No!'" and "No Justice, No Peace! Kenneth Foster Must Be Released!"

SHAPE Community Center director, Deloyd Parker, co-chaired the closing rally, which heard from the family of freed death row prisoner Clarence Brandley. His brother Ozell spoke and two of his sisters were introduced. Clarence, unable to attend due to serious health problems, sent a message saying: "I will never forget the men I left behind on death row. Keep up the fight and never give up until we win abolition!"

Rally speakers included immigrant

rights activist María Jiménez on the freeing of Ricardo Aldape Guerra from death row in 1997. Bryan McCann from the Campaign to End the Death Penalty-Austin chapter spoke on the saving of Kenneth Foster from execution on August 30. Lee Greenwood, whose son Joseph Nichols was executed last March 7, said he asked her to continue the fight for all those he would leave behind on the row.

Howard Guidry's mother, Joyce, said she would always stand tall and fight for him. Delia Pérez Meyers spoke for her brother Louis; as did Robert Garza's family. A large delegation of SEIU activists with the Justice for Janitors Campaign attended and spoke.

Scott Cobb of the Texas Moratorium Network in Austin garnered loud cheers as he told of the campaign to remove Sharon Keller, the presiding judge of Texas' highest court, from office for refusing to stay open for an extra 20 minutes to hear an appeal from Michael Richard, who was executed on Sept. 25.

Richard's execution came a few hours after the U.S. Supreme Court announced they would hear a Kentucky challenge to the lethal injection procedure. Keller's response that "We close at 5 p.m." has outraged many. There was a protest at her house. To sign the judicial complaint, go to www.sharonkiller.com.

Deloyd Parker concluded: "What solidarity! What a victory! We drew people from infants to great grandmothers and the Black, Latin@, and immigrant communities joined in. As people in our community saw us in the park and in the street they joined in. We were strong. We were powerful. We renewed their belief in the struggle. They could feel our strength and knew that we really are going to abolish the death penalty." Go to www.march-to-end-execution.org.

The writer, an organizer of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement, was a co-chair of the Oct. 27 rally.

As Bush escalates threats

Cuba refuses to be bullied

By Julie Fry

in group cooperation on every continent, from hunting and gathering societies to rudimentary agriculture.

The great discovery of Marx was that the motive force of human social development was the way human beings were organized to produce food, clothing and shelter.

Science and belief had not yet split in early human communal societies. They were all one effort to observe and understand the world. Our early ancestors took part in group ritual and collective prayer for a bountiful crop, for example, but they did not wait for deities to harvest for them.

In that way our early ancestors were materialists—by which I mean they were trying to glean rudimentary scientific understanding of the relationships of humans and nature—not the common usage of the word materialistic to mean greedy acquisitiveness.

Human nature is not fixed and immutable, but really quite changeable when material conditions are changing.

To our early ancestors, who would have starved without cooperation and sharing, the decree “Thou shalt not steal” would have been inexplicable.

But with changing economic organization and exploitation, the Lord’s Prayer changed too. Only under feudal privatizing—the enclosure of common land—could trespass be a crime that required absolution. Only under a money-based capitalism system could debt require mercy.

Early revolutionary Christianity kindled the hope of emancipation for those who were enslaved. But when the Christian hierarchy deified the kings of feudalism—a form of enslavement of serfs to the land in Europe in the Middle Ages—Thomas Münzer, a German peasant pastor, led an army of serfs in a popular uprising.

Ernest Block called Thomas Münzer the first theologian of revolution. Münzer based his liberation theology on the ancient Christian communal organization that is documented in early Christian texts.

All human thought, including theology, is rooted in a specific historical relationship of forces. Denmark Vesey, the great leader of rebellion of enslaved peoples, was an African Methodist, while Leonidas Polk, an Episcopal bishop, was a Confederate general in the Civil War. The struggle to abolish slavery split the denominations on this continent, based on who suffered from slavery and who profited from it.

Of course, it was not moral suasion that ended slavery, but armed uprisings and civil war.

Henry David Thoreau eloquently defended the armed raid led by a white religious man—John Brown—and his group of Black and white guerrilla fighters. Thoreau, known for his writings on pacifism, spoke to the public in Concord, Mass., on a Sunday evening, Oct. 30, 1859.

He said in part that Brown’s doctrine was that a person “has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slaveholder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him. ... I do not wish to kill nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both these things would be by me unavoidable.

Thoreau stressed, “I think that for once the Sharps rifles and the revolvers were employed in a righteous cause. The tools were in the hands of one who could use them.”

He added, “The same indignation that is said to have cleared the temple once will clear it again. The question is not about the weapon, but the spirit in which you use it.”

Next: *Deacons for Defense; Cuban Revolution*

On Oct. 24, President George W. Bush gave an unprecedented speech on Cuba at the State Department. He outlined a new, much more aggressive U.S. policy that is clearly aimed at trying to destabilize Cuba. Surrounded by families of right-wing Cuban mercenaries, Bush came close to openly threatening a military assault against the socialist island. The Cuban people and the rest of the world took note.

Bush outlined his new strategy as follows: The creation of a multi-billion-dollar “Freedom Fund for Cuba” that he promises will help Cubans “rebuild their economy and make the transition to democracy”—but only if the Cuban people agree to forfeit their sovereignty and follow the political and economic conditions demanded of them by the U.S. government.

Bush will also give Cuba some computers and more Internet access, as well as some scholarships to U.S. schools, if Cuba agrees to his demands.

But the most important part of Bush’s speech was not the offer of this pitiful amount of so-called aid, which even Bush can’t possibly believe will entice Cubans to abandon their revolution. The real news in the speech was the fact that Bush came closer than he ever has before to threatening to overthrow the Cuban Revolution through force.

Throughout his speech, Bush repeatedly referred to Cuba’s so-called “transition.” He said that the U.S. would not seek to “accommodate” Cuba’s acting president, Raul Castro. Ominously, Bush declared, “The operative word in our future dealings with Cuba is not ‘stability.’ The operative word is ‘freedom.’”

Bush is apparently willing to destabilize Cuba in order to try to win this so-called “freedom” and Cubans immediately recognized this statement to be an absolute threat.

Cubans stand up to Bush

Throughout Cuban society, people responded immediately to Bush’s threat. Cuba’s foreign minister, Felipe Perez Roque, issued a statement calling Bush “raving.”

Roque said Bush was completely out of touch with the reality of life in Cuba and the people who live there. In response to Bush’s new initiatives, Roque issued a 12-point platform of demands on the U.S. government.

Among these demands was an end to the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba, the release of the Cuban Five, and, importantly, respect for Cuba’s independence and sovereignty. Cuba demands that the U.S. cease its policy of aggression and stop its “intervention in Cuba’s internal affairs and attempts to manufacture an internal opposition.”

The Union of Communist Youth of Cuba (UJC) also responded to Bush’s

speech. Many of Bush’s new policies, such as the computers and scholarships, were directed at youth in Cuba in the hope that they would be less loyal to the revolution than the older generation.

The UJC began their response with the following statement to Bush: “Your ridiculous words are embarrassing and disgusting to the Cuban youth.” The UJC talked about the reality of life for youth in their society and how distant it was from Bush’s portrayal. “The Cuban youth,” they wrote,

“raised on values completely different from the model you represent, are not a bunch of uncommitted and fanatic people that will run after your cynical offerings. We know our history and have learned very well the lessons of sovereignty that so many generations have left us throughout many years.”

U.S. isolated in policy toward Cuba

Although Bush invited diplomats from all over Latin America to attend his Oct. 24 speech, the only people who applauded when he announced his policy were the right-wing mercenaries and U.S. politicians he invited to be there.

Although Cuba is a small country with much less military and economic power than the U.S., it has managed to rally international support for its position. The presidents of Nicaragua and Venezuela, Daniel Ortega and Hugo Chávez, respectively, both immediately condemned Bush’s policy. On Oct. 30, the United Nations General Assembly members voted overwhelmingly to oppose the U.S. blockade against Cuba, for the 16th consecutive year.

Here in the U.S., there is no mass support for an attack on Cuba. Bush’s current war against Iraq has lost the support of the vast majority of people in the United States. His more recent threats against countries such as Iran, which Bush and the U.S. media have demonized thoroughly, have only caused further opposition to his administration, given the disaster it has caused in Iraq. There is no support for such an aggressive policy against Cuba except among the most extreme right-wing forces.

Given the seemingly arrogant detachment of Bush’s latest speech, many U.S. media sources have commented that Bush

was only pandering to the Cuban right-wing in Miami, who are frustrated that the Cuban Revolution did not collapse after Fidel Castro’s illness over a year ago.

There may be some truth to this view. After pursuing an unsuccessful policy of aggression against Cuba for the last 50 years that included assassination attempts, terrorism and many forms of subversion, all the U.S. government had left to rely on was its own propaganda: the belief that the Cuban Revolution was totally dependent on Fidel Castro. And now, over a year later, it is clear to everyone that it was wrong. Surely, the anti-Cuba forces must be a bit panicked.

But Bush, of course, isn’t dependent on the Cuban right wing. They work for him, and not the other way around. The U.S. government provides them with every ounce of power and influence they have. Bush and his predecessors have provided the Cuban right wing with all the training, arms and money they have used to attack Cuba over the years.

Bush is really speaking for the part of the U.S. ruling class that sees Cuba as a threat and wants to overturn the revolution by force. As different hostile and isolationist policies toward Cuba have failed over the years, a split has developed among U.S. capitalists.

Some would like to continue along the same track of open hostility. Others, fed up with past failures and eager to try to exploit Cuba’s natural resources and highly educated workforce, favor more normal relations. Bush falls decidedly in the former camp with regard to U.S.-Cuba relations. And as the president and his foreign policy have become increasingly unpopular, those who he represents are desperate to see some gains. That is why Cuba does not regard Bush’s statement as an empty threat.

Neither does the Cuba solidarity movement in the U.S. The International Action Center and the New York Committee to Free the Cuban Five issued a statement this week condemning Bush’s speech and calling on the movement in the U.S. to organize in defense of Cuba. Attached to the statement was an online petition calling on Bush to cease his aggression toward Cuba. If Bush decides to carry out his threats, the movement in the U.S. will be poised to respond, and so, of course, will the Cuban people. Go to www.iacenter.org to read the statement. □

CAFTA’s referendum did not resolve social tensions in Costa Rica

Workers World covered the news of the Oct. 7 referendum in Costa Rica where voters narrowly approved the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) in its Oct. 18 issue. Since that time, we received an in-depth article on this subject from our associate Carlos Morales-Mateluna, who has been living in Costa

Rica. The article points out the enormous efforts the Costa Rican ruling class and U.S. imperialism made to manipulate the results of the election, as well as the popular mobilization to oppose CAFTA. We will publish the entire article on the WW website www.workers.org and, when the opportunity arises, in our print edition.

—Editors

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Crítica de cine de WW/MO

El porqué los iraquíes luchan para liberar su país

“Meeting Resistance” (Conociendo la resistencia), un documental hecho por Steve Connors y Sally Bingham se estrenó en los cines estadounidenses el 20 de octubre. Está en árabe con subtítulos en inglés. Vea www.meetingresistance.com

Por John Catalinotto

Durante los últimos cuatro años y medio, el ejército más poderoso del mundo se ha encontrado en un atolladero en Irak. De algún modo, sin base en el exterior ni financiamiento de otro país, sin selvas ni cordilleras donde esconderse, una resistencia local ha forzado al Pentágono a arrodillarse. ¿Cómo podría pasar esto?

Vea “Meeting Resistance” (Conociendo la resistencia) y sabrá cómo contestar esa pregunta.

Steve Connors y Sally Bingham comenzaron a trabajar en su filme en agosto de

2003, justo cuando la resistencia iraquí estaba comenzando a cobrar fuerzas y a ser reconocida en reportajes de los medios y del gobierno estadounidense.

Su técnica, y el punto fuerte de la película, fue dejar relatar la historia a los iraquíes que participan en la resistencia. Claro que cualquier director/a escoge el material y lo presenta en la forma que considere más efectiva. Pero en este documental uno apenas está consciente de ese proceso.

L@s nueve iraquíes y el joven combatiente sirio voluntario que cuentan sus historias durante un período de 10 meses no son interrumpid@s por l@s directores. Representan varios sectores de la sociedad iraquí — maestros, soldados, religiosos, amas de casa. Una sola fuerza dinámica les une: el deseo de expulsar a los estadounidenses ocupadores.

Algunos de estos luchadores eran opositores vehementes de Saddam Hussein,

pero aún los que lo odiaban, odian aún más el ver a las fuerzas ocupadoras extranjeras satanizar al ex-líder iraquí. Su sentido de nacionalismo iraquí—el nacionalismo de un país oprimido ahora por las fuerzas ocupadoras estadounidenses—y de ser musulmán, motivaron su lucha. Todos no eran religiosos cuando comenzaron su trabajo en la resistencia, pero fue obvio que el Islam les proveyó una ideología que no sólo aprueba la resistencia sino que la hizo una condición para llevar una vida virtuosa.

Una mujer, la esposa de un soldado, habla de la mezcla de miedo y orgullo que siente al entregar mensajes y armas a los combatientes de la resistencia.

Ningún miembro de la resistencia es mostrado con claridad suficiente para poder ser identificado. L@s director@s también evitaron filmar batallas, evitando comprometer su papel básico, el de dejar a l@s iraquíes contar sus historias. Todos

los luchadores son muy humanos y están muy firmes en su deseo de expulsar a los estadounidenses de su país.

Si este documental no es distribuido ampliamente en los cines comerciales, el movimiento en contra de la guerra aquí en los Estados Unidos, debe asegurarse de que sea visto. L@s activistas contra la guerra deberían verlo para llevar la lucha a otro nivel. L@s soldad@s y l@s miembr@s de la Guardia Nacional que se están cuestionando la guerra deberían verlo precisamente para saber a qué se van a enfrentar; much@s decidirán sin duda que si fueran iraquíes, también se unirían a la resistencia.

Solo aquell@s cuya capacidad de pensar está deformada por la arrogancia de la ideología imperialista estadounidense podrían salir de ver a “Meeting Resistance” y pensar que Washington puede imponer su voluntad sobre el pueblo iraquí. □

L@s trabajador@s y campesin@s colombian@s necesitan solidaridad internacional

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

¿Por qué debe estar Colombia en la lista de prioridades del movimiento progresista en los Estados Unidos?

Colombia está enfrentando la crisis política más seria de su historia reciente. La solidaridad internacional puede tener un impacto enorme ayudando a los movimientos progresistas y sociales de Colombia para que avancen en su jornada hacia un país justo y de paz. Esta solidaridad no solo beneficiaría a Colombia sino a toda la región latinoamericana.

No es accidental que el “Plan Colombia” se haya tornado en la “Iniciativa Regional Andina,” un plan creado por los Estados Unidos para aplastar la creciente resistencia de los pueblos latinoamericanos al neoliberalismo que Washington ha impuesto bajo el velo de “llevar la democracia”.

¿Cuál es la naturaleza de la crisis en Colombia?

Un escándalo conocido como parapolítica se está revelando, lo cual está estremeciendo los cimientos mismos del estado. La parapolítica es la asociación íntima y asesina entre los paramilitares y los oficiales del gobierno, miembros del congreso, alcaldes, gobernadores y otros políticos de los partidos y grupos cercanos al presidente colombiano Álvaro Uribe Vélez.

Los mismos paramilitares dicen estar afiliados con el 35% del congreso colombiano. La policía y el ejército colombiano, respaldados por Estados Unidos, como también las corporaciones transnacionales de propiedad estadounidense como la Occidental Petroleum, Coca-Cola, Chiquita y Drummond, están envueltos con los paramilitares.

En el 2006 fue encontrada una información comprometedor que reveló muchos de estos lazos en una computadora que fue confiscada al líder paramili-

tar Rodrigo Tovar Pupo, alias Jorge 40. Como resultado, más de una docena de miembros del congreso y otros oficiales del gobierno están en la cárcel y más de cien están siendo investigad@s, cifras que van creciendo según pasa el tiempo.

Colaboradores cercanos a Uribe están siendo acusados y procesados—entre ellos, el hermano y el padre de su protegida, la (ex) Ministra de Relaciones Exteriores, María Consuelo Araujo. Como resultado de las protestas públicas, Araujo fue forzada a renunciar a pesar de la renuencia de Uribe a despedirla.

Pero lo más dañino para Uribe, fue el arresto de su más cercano aliado, Jorge Noguera, quien había sido director del Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (DAS), o policía secreta. Noguera fue acusado de haber dado una “lista negra” de sindicalistas y otros líderes sociales a los paramilitares. Varias personas que fueron nombradas en la lista han sido asesinadas.

El círculo se cierra cada día más para Uribe. Recientemente la Corte Suprema, la entidad judicial encargada de los casos parapolíticos, ordenó la investigación del primo de Uribe, el Senador Mario Uribe. El vicepresidente Francisco Santos está también bajo sospecha de tener asociaciones con los paramilitares, en particular con Carlos Castaño, fundador del grupo paramilitar AUC.

La presentadora de televisión Virginia Vallejo, quien fue amante del ahora fallecido cabecilla del cartel de Medellín, Pablo Escobar, declaró públicamente el mes pasado que había conocido a Uribe por medio de Escobar. Vallejo, que publicó hace poco el libro “Amando a Pablo, Odiando a Escobar”, dijo en una entrevista al periódico español El País, que Escobar “idolatraba” a Uribe, quien como jefe de la Aeronáutica Civil en 1980-1982, había concedido “docenas de licencias para pistas de aterrizaje y centenares para los aviones y

helicópteros sobre los que se construyó toda la infraestructura del narcotráfico”.

Esta crisis ha imposibilitado a los partidarios de Uribe en el exterior pretender ignorancia. Hasta el New York Times, que ha reportado muy poco de la espantosa violencia en contra de trabajador@s y campesin@s de Colombia, en un editorial del 8 de octubre recomendó que el Tratado de Libre Comercio pendiente con Colombia sea postergado porque el “Presidente Álvaro Uribe y su gobierno no han hecho lo suficiente para llevar a la justicia a los pandilleros paramilitares —y sus partidarios políticos—responsables de extensas violaciones a los derechos humanos”.

La naturaleza de estas relaciones entre las instituciones paramilitares y el gobierno no es simplemente la “infiltración” por parte de paramilitares narcotraficantes en el gobierno. Es la paramilitarización generalizada en las instituciones del país.

Los paramilitares no son solamente “escuadrones de la muerte”. Controlan un sector significativo de la economía de Colombia. Son dueños de clínicas de salud beneficiándose del frenesí privatizador impulsado por el FMI y el Banco Mundial e implementado por Uribe, que ha afectado los servicios básicos más importantes para la población. Poseen vastos terrenos, robados de pequeños agricultores que tuvieron que huir de sus casas aterrizados por las masacres perpetradas por los mismos paramilitares. Controlan el multimillonario negocio del narcotráfico. Colaboran con las corporaciones transnacionales despejando terrenos para el beneficio del capital extranjero.

Movimiento Popular

Pero este gobierno paramilitar está siendo desafiado por el movimiento popular. Un movimiento popular creciente que representa a sectores amplios de la sociedad —el sindical, l@s afro-colombian@s,

l@s indígenas, l@s campesin@s, las personas desplazadas, las mujeres y la juventud— ha estado movilizándose para revelar y oponerse a la complicidad asesina entre el gobierno, los paramilitares y las corporaciones transnacionales.

Recientemente, desde el 10 hasta el 12 de octubre, la Movilización Nacional Agraria y Popular llevó a cabo acciones en distintas partes del país. Una de las organizaciones en el liderato, la Asociación Campesina del Valle del Río Cimitarra (ACVC), había sido amenazada y reprimida por el gobierno de Colombia incluso antes de que comenzara la movilización. Tres de los líderes de la ACVC fueron detenidos el 29 de septiembre por el DAS y aún permanecen en prisión.

Sin embargo, el resto de la organización valientemente procedió con la acción; miles de campesin@s se manifestaron en distintas regiones, enfrentando la violenta represión del estado que mató a varios activistas.

Se necesita la solidaridad internacional

El papel de l@s progresistas alrededor del mundo ha sido crucial muchas veces en prevenir más asesinatos y resguardar las vidas de activistas sociales y sindicales en Colombia. Ellas y ellos son las hermanas y los hermanos del pueblo trabajador por doquier. Como dice el lema sindical: “Un golpe contra un@ es un golpe contra tod@s”.

La solidaridad individual y de las organizaciones en los Estados Unidos es muy importante. Cartas de protesta a los gobiernos de Colombia y de los Estados Unidos, mensajes de solidaridad a las organizaciones de masas, comunicados de prensa y viajes de delegaciones a Colombia son algunas formas en que la necesitada solidaridad puede ser manifestada.

Para más información, contacte a Colombia@action-mail.org. □