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## After Gestapo-like raids

# Immigrants resist state repression

By Heather Cottin

As the government ramps up racism and state repression against immigrants across the country, immigrant rights forces are organizing resistance.

Two weeks ago Homeland Security sent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents throughout Long Island and arrested almost 200 immigrants. In an editorial entitled "Stop the raids," the New York Times describes: "Armed squads bursting into homes in the dead of night with shotguns and automatic weapons, terrorizing families and taking away anyone who lacks identity papers, even if they have raided the wrong house. It may sound like Baghdad, but it is the suburbs of New York City, the latest among hundreds of communities around the country where federal agents have been invading homes and workplaces in search of immigrants to deport." (Oct. 3)

### Resistance to the raids

On Oct. 12, El Día de la Raza, the New York May 1 Coalition held a press conference to denounce the raids. More than 25 immigrant rights activists spoke in favor of Víctor Toro, a Chilean revolutionary arrested in an ICE raid on an Amtrak train early last summer. Speakers included Nieves Ayres, founder of La Peña del Bronx, who was herself tortured by secret police in Chile; and Walter Sinche of Ecuador, who supported New York Governor Elliot Spitzer's decision to issue drivers licenses to immigrants. Participants noted that the raids in New York were a federal response to Spitzer's plan.

BAYAN leader Bernadette Ellorin condemned the raids and spoke of Filipinos targeted in their homes and businesses, fearing the knock at the door, much as they do under the brutal Arroyo dictatorship in the Philippines.

Carlos Canales of Long Island's Workplace Project, which responded quickly to the raids in Nassau and Suffolk, noted that Nassau County police accused the ICE agents of acting like cowboys, who turned their guns on the police officers as well as innocent immigrants. The Workplace Project organized support and a press conference for the victims, most of whom were sent out of state, leaving children and families abandoned.

The same week Homeland Security raided homes and worksites on Long Island, ICE agents swept across Southern California, arresting 1,300 immigrants, five of whom were

Filipino. (Balita News Service). In Los Angeles, the "We Are All Elvira" Coalition responded with a protest on Oct. 12 in front of ICE headquarters.

Meanwhile in the Dallas suburb of Irving City, Mayor Herbert Gears has turned over about 1,600 people to ICE in the past year. He said his office is delivering to ICE more than 300 people a month, "more than in any other city in the nation." Following the last raid two weeks ago, 1,000 people poured into Irving City's streets in a spirited protest to this tyranny. (monstersandcritics.com)

After ICE arrested scores of immigrants working at several McDonalds restaurants in Reno, Nev., a protest march in support of the workers brought more than 400 people together in solidarity with the deportees. (Associated Press, Oct. 3)

Last June New Haven officials complained that ICE raids against Latin@ workers in Connecticut appeared to be in "retaliation for the city's new identification card program" for undocumented immigrants. (AP, Oct. 3)

The raids in New Haven and on Long Island followed legislation that favored immigrant rights. In the other areas, law enforcement and state officials enthusiastically support the federal authorities.

This type of legalistic repression has been tried in many states and municipalities, from Suffolk County, Long Island, to Pennsylvania to Tennessee.

In Prince William County, Virginia, Ku Klux Klan and Minutemen vigilantes support a proposed law that would require local police to enforce national immigration law, allowing local officials to deny county services to undocumented residents. Mexicanos Sin Fronteras in Northern Virginia has held marches, rallies, boycotts, car caravans and even work stoppages in opposition to the plan. On Sept. 2, more than 8,000 people turned out in a mass protest of the KKK and the law.

In a recent case, a lawyer with the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund stated: "The real issue here is whether ICE has a right to do what they're doing. ... This is a constitutional and legal issue." (Newsday, Oct 6)

### Constitutionally exempt repression?

Yet the state has engineered a legalistic justification for the raids that have resulted, according to the New York Times, in

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WW PHOTOS: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO

About 60 activists marched to ICE headquarters at the Downtown Federal Building in Los Angeles to protest the recent raids of more than 1,300 people in California. A delegation of organizers went in to meet Los Angeles ICE director James Hales, including Victor Narro of UCLA Labor Center; Angelica Salas, executive director of Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles; and John Parker of March 25th Coalition and International Action Center (pictured, left).

—John Parker



# Subprime mess hurts renters

This week ...



By G. Dunkel

As the subprime crisis goes on, renters—especially those in small, multifamily buildings—are starting to lose their homes after the lender forecloses on the building's owner.

In most states, banks can evict tenants, even those with a lease, three days to two weeks after a foreclosure, since the lease was drawn up with someone who no longer owns the building. In places like Oakland, Calif., or Washington, D.C., where local laws give tenants some protection, the banks either ignore them or stop paying utility bills or making repairs.

During the real estate bubble that just burst, many speculators bought small multifamily buildings on speculation with easy money, thinking they would flip these properties before their interest rates reset.

Judith Liben, a housing attorney at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, a Boston legal-services center, testified before the House Committee on Financial Services Sept. 20. She pointed out that most of these tenants are low-paid workers or on welfare, and that the plight of these tenants has been "largely ignored by the media and government officials."

Ms. Liben surveyed other housing activists before she testified and gathered anecdotal accounts of tenant problems due to foreclosures in Minnesota, Nevada, California and New York. She gathered reports of many and varied attacks on renters coming out of the subprime crisis, and how whole neighborhoods in a number of cities are filled with abandoned and decaying apartments.

But there has been no systematic attempt by bank-

ing authorities like the Federal Reserve or the Treasury Department to systematically gather data on how the wave of subprime foreclosures affects tenants.

In Massachusetts, the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston is doing some research on the problem. It found that while multifamily units are 10 percent of the housing stock in Middlesex County, in the Boston suburbs, they account for 27 percent of foreclosures.

"This highlights a potentially serious problem for tenants, who may not have known that the owner might be in a precarious financial position," Eric Rosengren, president of the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston, said in a speech Oct. 10.

The Center for Housing Policy released a report Oct. 10 claiming one in four renters are paying more than half their income on rent. That's up from one in five renters in 1997.

And the squeeze on renters will probably get worse. The Wall St. Journal examined more than 130 million mortgages and found that as much as \$600 billion of adjustable rate subprime mortgages were scheduled to reset to probably much higher interests rates by the end of 2008. (WSJ, Oct. 11).

Outside of areas under rent control, mainly New York City and some neighboring communities, rents are going up by 4 to 5 percent a year. As homeowners become tenants after foreclosures on their houses, the pressure on rents will increase.

Even in the midst of a major financial crisis, the banks and some landlords are finding new ways to force the poor and workers to pay more for shelter, one of the essentials of living. □

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# Bloomberg administration forces families out of shelters

By Jaimeson Champion  
New York

On Oct. 12, the Bloomberg administration instituted a change in the emergency shelter regulations in New York City that will prevent hundreds of homeless families from obtaining shelter each night. Prior to that date, families who could not obtain a set space in the city's shelters could apply for one night emergency shelter if they came to an intake center after 5 p.m. The change in the regulations ends the 5 p.m. policy and means that these families will no longer be given the emergency shelter they so desperately need, even as the cold winter months are fast approaching.

Despite widespread condemnation and outrage from advocates for the homeless, the Bloomberg administration has callously pushed forward with this change to the regulations. The Bloomberg administration asserts that these families are "ineligible" for emergency shelter because the city has already determined that they have other housing options. In most cases the city says these families have relatives they could conceivably stay with.

The Bloomberg administration has turned to a familiar tactic, used in many of the wars waged against the poor in U.S. cities, by attempting to paint the emergency shelter policy as a "loophole" that people were "taking advantage of." The headlines in the major New York newspapers even used the word "loophole" to describe the policy.

This characterization is completely inaccurate, rife

with racist undertones, and highlights the extreme disconnect between the billionaire mayor and the thousands of homeless families in New York City for whom every day is a struggle for survival.

In recent years the number of homeless families in the city has skyrocketed to a record high of more than 9,500. Currently, there are more than 14,000 children staying in city shelters on any given night. Affordable housing in New York is disappearing by the day as gentrification and stagnant wages destroy working class neighborhoods, pushing an ever-increasing number of families into the city shelter system.

Applications for shelter by homeless families have risen in tandem with the growing affordable housing crisis. As the crisis grows, and faced with a limited amount of shelter space, the city has been denying shelter to an increasing number of families. This has caused more and more families to seek one-night emergency shelter.

In August, there were more than 800 applications for one-night emergency shelter. Applying for and staying in the emergency shelters is an extremely strenuous and grueling process. Usually families, many with small children and infants, are forced to wait in long processing lines at the intake centers and are not let into the emergency shelter until 10 or 11 p.m. Then they are woken up each morning before 7 a.m. and are put back on the streets, where they are forced to begin a new daylong search for a place to stay that night.

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## JENA SIX

# Slap in the face as Bell sent back to jail

By Larry Hales

Mychal Bell, one of the six young heroic Black men that resisted racism in the small town of Jena, La.—located in a parish where arch-racist David Duke received the highest percentage of votes when running for president—has been remanded back to jail.

The young men are now collectively known around the world as the Jena Six.

Bell, who spent ten months in jail after a fight with a white student and had been convicted of attempted murder although the white student received only a few lacerations, had his probation revoked for an old drug charge. The drug charge had

never been tried.

His father said: "He's locked up again. No bail has been set or nothing. He's a young man who's been thrown in jail again and again, and he just has to take it."

This is obviously an attempt to demonize the young man, who went to the juvenile court thinking that he would have a hearing, but instead had his probation revoked. This latest occurrence is a slap in the face. After more than 60,000 people marched on Jena and tens of thousands marched around the country, awakening the anger and frustration and a spirit of resistance in the Black masses, this can be seen as little else than an attempt to quell

oppressed people.

The mass marches beat back the conviction on attempted murder charges and the court had to throw it out and admit that Bell should not have been tried as an adult. The case, however, is far from over. Bell still faces a conviction for battery and the five other young men still face trumped up charges; two of them still must fight charges of attempted murder.

All the charges must be dropped. Though the House Judiciary Committee is slated to hear testimony from Rev. Al Sharpton on October 16, the fight must be kept up. The case of the Jena Six is a symptom of national oppression and the plight of Black people across the country.



Mychal Bell, one of the six young heroic Black men that resisted racism in the small town of Jena, La.

# Filipino community demands apology over racist slur

By Caleb T. Maupin

On Sept. 30, the television program "Desperate Housewives" had one of its main characters make a scripted racist slur against Filipino medical professionals. The character insulted the medical education system of the Philippines.

There are 20,000 doctors and countless nurses and other medical professionals in this country who have received their training in the Philippines. But the attack goes further, because in this country there are countless doctors from nations other than the United States.

A solidarity letter signed and circulated by immigrant rights activists reads in part: "This is an issue that deeply touches the

lives of not only Filipinos in the U.S. but all immigrants and people of color. Trained in their homelands, wanting to work and live in the Philippines, they are instead forced to migrate to the U.S. exactly because of U.S.-backed economic policies.

"There is hardly a week that goes by that on some television show or the other the exact same sentiment about the health education system in some country outside of the U.S. is not reiterated. Medical professionals from Guatemala, Mexico, and India have all been targeted exactly the same way."

The Filipino community, along with its allies, has responded to this attack. The National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON) has called for a boycott. Two

picket lines have been staged in front of ABC Studios in New York.

ABC, the TV network that airs "Desperate Housewives," issued a three-sentence apology, which many in the Filipino community see as meaningless. Among other things, NAFCON is demanding a more sincere apology that recognizes the contributions of Filipino medical professionals for the past four decades in the U.S., to be aired before the show's next three episodes. In addition, NAFCON demands that the scene be deleted from all future publications and viewing of the series.

In light of the fact that immigrant workers are being raided in their homes and workplaces in astonishing numbers; that many of the Republican presidential candidates are whipping up anti-immigrant bigotry as part of their campaigns; and that a large fence is being built along the U.S./Mexico border, supported by both the Republican and Democratic parties,

this attack on immigrant medical professionals is not at all random.

ABC is owned by the Disney Corporation—the same company that brought us horrifically racist films such as "Song of the South"—which recently showed a documentary claiming that 9/11 was the fault of President Bill Clinton being "soft" on terrorism.

The program "Desperate Housewives" has been offensive before. The lesbian, gay, bi and trans communities have also voiced concern about the fact that the only principal LGBT character in the program is portrayed as a sociopath.

The Filipino community is determined to get a meaningful apology out of ABC. As the petition started by the Filipino community and signed by more than 100,000 people reads, "We will not allow hateful messages against our community or any other oppressed community to continue." □



# Katrina & Rita survivors vow to return

By Stephen Millies  
Harlem, N.Y.

Survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita rallied at Harlem's Thurgood Marshall Academy along with their supporters on Oct. 13. Close to a hundred people attended the conference organized by the New York Solidarity Coalition with Katrina and Rita Survivors (NYSCKRS).

Longtime activists, including trade unionists, joined together with students from Sarah Lawrence College, Beacon High School and members of the Nu Phi Beta Sorority at Briarcliffe College. Many of these youths had already gone down to New Orleans to help clean up people's homes.

At the top of the agenda was the right of survivors to return to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Shelley Innis of the Thurgood Marshall Academy and New Orleans survivor Ivey Parker welcomed people.

Featured were film clips and reports from the International Tribunal in New Orleans, which began its deliberations on Aug. 29, the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. A panel of judges from around the world found George Bush guilty of letting Black and poor people drown and starve. Detailed reports from the Tribunal were given by Parker, Christine Gavin-Lathan and Kali Akuno.

A group of Thurgood Marshall students belonging to BOND (Brothers On a New Direction) told of their trip to New Orleans and the horrible conditions they witnessed.

NYSCKRS organizer Johnnie Stevens brought greetings from the Leonard

Peltier Defense Committee. A leader of the American Indian Movement, Peltier has spent nearly 30 years in jail serving a life term on frame-up charges. Stevens announced that the political prisoner, an acclaimed artist, was working in his cell on a collage about the hurricane survivors.

Stevens described how people from the Gulf Coast were being deliberately dispersed across the country and often put in racist neighborhoods, as he witnessed on the outskirts of Buffalo. He stressed the importance of organizing regional assemblies of survivors. Just like in a football game, Bush is running out the clock to keep the survivors from coming back to the Gulf Coast.

Activists added their own accounts about African Americans being stopped from returning to the political and cultural capital that gave jazz to the world. Nacala Jendayi of the Caribbean Cultural Center moderated.

Tiffany Gardner of the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative compared the hurricanes with the tsunami that hit several Asian countries. Survivors have had to fight to get justice after both disasters. Tsunami survivors have protested the treatment of the hundreds of thousands driven out of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Immigrants on the Gulf Coast working in dangerous jobs at low wages were described by AFSCME DC 37 activist Brenda Walker as "the new slaves." She defended their right to a job and demanded jobs for survivors, too.

Rev. Malika Whitney told how the pub-

*Continued on page 9*

# Struggle against racism discussed at book signing



WW PHOTOS: ELLIE DORRITIE  
Monica Moorehead, editor and contributor to "Marxism & Reparations the Struggle for Black Freedom," above, at book signing party in Buffalo, N.Y.



Julius Dykes at Che Guevara memorial, Santa Clara, Cuba.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Workers World Managing Editor Monica Moorehead read a selection from the book "Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle," talked about the struggle against racism today, and led a lively discussion in Buffalo, N.Y., at the community's new Merriweather Library. Afterwards, Moorehead signed copies of the book she edited, as nearly everyone who came took away a copy, including the library!

Later, at a meeting hosted by the Buffalo International Action Center, Moorehead showed the documentary "Welcome to New Orleans" and spoke on the fight for justice and the right of return for Hurricane Katrina survivors. Julius Dykes, a leader of the Buffalo Workers World branch and longtime auto worker, described his impressions and reactions after his first visit to Cuba this summer with the FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—youth group.

—Ellie Dorritie



# Worker deaths expose corporate safety negligence

By Larry Hales

Five workers died on Oct. 2 when vapor from a solvent they mixed with an epoxy to coat a pipe at a pumped storage plant near Georgetown, Colo., was ignited and caught on fire due to malfunctioning equipment.

The plant is owned by Xcel Energy, though the men were contracted to Xcel through RPI Coating (Robison-Prezioso Inc.), based in California, where all the men were from.

RPI began the job in early September after cracks were found in the concrete; the work was slated to end in November. The 4,050-foot-long pipe is used to pump water from an upper reservoir to a lower reservoir, which turns turbines that create electricity, and later the water is transferred back to the upper reservoir.

On the day of the tragedy nine men were inside the pipe and two outside. Their difficult job entailed sandblasting the concrete and then spraying the epoxy on the twelve-foot-wide pipe.

The epoxy is held in a hopper that keeps it warm so that it can pass easily through a sprayer. The solvent methyl ethyl ketone (MEK) was added to thin the epoxy when it began to thicken.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, MEK is toxic; acute exposure can lead to irritation of the eyes, nose and throat and can produce nausea and headaches. MEK is flammable, heavy and its vapors can travel far in enclosed areas.

According to four of the nine-man team that was 1,400 feet from the lower end of the tunnel, the fire started at around 2 p.m. Survivor Eric Thomas, interviewed by the Denver Post, said: "When it flashed, it was just lucky if you were on the right side of the fire. ... It's like nothing I've ever been through in my life."

The five men that died were on the other side of the white hot fire and had to flee toward the upper end of the pipe, as the other four ran towards and out of the only accessible entrance/exit.

The Denver Post describes the scene,

as reported by survivors to Carolyn Dejainnes, wife of one of the victims. "Flames from the spraying machine were leaping onto Donnie Dejainnes' sleeves as he tried to shut off a valve on the sprayer, Carolyn Dejainnes said. ... Dejainnes was yelling for the other men to get fire extinguishers, she said. Although they found a few, the extinguishers were useless because they did not have the type of foam that puts chemical fires out."

Dejainnes "patted a fire out that was burning his clothes and retreated with the four other victims up the tunnel, his wife said. They were trapped where the tunnel takes a steep rise."

The men were not given oxygen for two and a half hours after the fire started, until it was too late and the men had probably already died. The last communication with the men was around 3:30 p.m. The breathing apparatuses were lowered at 4:30 p.m. and fans were not reversed to draw out the smoke until 5:30 p.m.

Though RPI Coating, Inc. and Xcel both have expressed sympathy for the deaths of the workers, the phony gestures ring hollow as the conditions under which the workers toiled are revealed.

Democratic Governor Bill Ritter's exclamations of a "thorough" investigation mean very little as well, as early in his first term he vetoed a bill that would have eliminated one of two votes needed to win union recognition.

Family members question the conditions of the tunnel. Some told the Denver Post that the men's supervisor told them not to enter the tunnel the day before the accident because it was unsafe.

There was only one feasible way out of the tunnel and no escape ladders on the upper end. The accessible exit was at the lower end of the tunnel. The men that died were above the fire and their attempts to escape were thwarted by a slippery incline.

The Oct. 2 deaths are not the first for RPI. According to the Occupational and Safety Health Administration (OSHA), a worker was crushed to death on the San

Francisco Bay Bridge in 2002 when scaffolding collapsed. And in 2001, a paint containment panel that was inadequately secured on the same bridge fell on a passing motorist, killing the person.

In fact, OSHA has noted six violations by RPI within the past seven years. From 1990 to 2000 there were 33 violations, though the company only paid \$12,000 in fines. Within the last five years, RPI has been made to pay \$64,000 in fines.

In 2001 a worker fell more than 80 feet from a platform. It was found that employees were not properly trained to use harnesses. Nine employees in 2000, and one in 1998, were found to have highly toxic levels of lead in their blood. California OSHA found that the company had not provided proper filters in their respirators. (Denver Post, Oct. 3)

The deaths at the Xcel plant could have been avoided had simple precautions, such as an escape route out of the tunnel, been provided. And while RPI, with its numerous violations, is to blame, so is Xcel—which operates some of the dirtiest power plants in Colorado, Texas and Minnesota and has engaged in market manipulation to increase revenue.

A fact sheet on [eronwatchdog.org](http://eronwatchdog.org) states: "Investigators have targeted Xcel Energy as part of the federal probe into California's failed wholesale electricity market and possible price manipulation. Investigators found that traders at Xcel Energy and Mirant discussed 'games' to profit from California's electricity crisis in 2000, including schemes to schedule non-existent power use and to take advantage of 'congestion' payments on California's overburdened electric grid."

Ultimately, though, it is the capitalist system and the two parties that do its bidding that are to blame, for it is the system that cares nothing for workers' safety. Its lackey politicians that refuse to take any necessary measures to prevent tragedies like the one at Xcel are to blame. □

## ON THE

### Drop the charges, say Longshore workers

"You ready to fight? Damn right!" was the chant outside the Yolo County Superior Court in Woodland, Calif., on Oct. 4. More than 150 members of Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union as well as community activists set up a picket line there to support unionists Aaron Harrison and Jason Ruffin, who were being arraigned on charges of obstruction of justice.

The two were arrested on Aug. 23 after port security demanded to search their car when they returned to work after lunch. The two, who usually work at the port in Oakland, asked to see the security guards' identification and called their union rep. After the West Sacramento police arrived, they dragged the two from their car, sprayed them with mace, and arrested them for trespassing and resisting arrest. The trespassing charge was subsequently dropped.

"[The police] think they have the right to [rough up our members and mace them]," Trent Willis, former ILWU Local 10 president, told the Woodland Daily Democrat. (Oct. 4) "You have a clear case of police brutality and racial profiling," Community activists like Rev. Ashiya Odeye, director of the Justice Reform Coalition, concurred. "But now [the police] have made the mistake of doing this to members of a union."

Lawyers for the workers requested a continuation of the arraignment until Oct. 22 to give them time to review the police report and other evidence.

Jack Heyman, Local 10 executive board member, warned that more protestors will be there if the charges aren't dropped. "We're going to get our people from San Francisco, Stockton and Oakland at the courthouse—and if they're here, they can't be at the docks working."



New York protest at Federal Plaza.

PHOTO: WALTER SINICHE



A march with a sound truck through Detroit's Latin@ community ended with a speak out in Clark Park.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

## Immigrants resist state repression

Continued from page 1

the deportation of 195,000 people in the past year.

Peter J. Smith, the special agent in charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in New York, has said, "We don't need warrants to make the arrests [of immigrants]." According to the New

York Times: "The agents also have broad authority to question people about their immigration status and to search them and their homes. There are no Miranda rights that agents must read when making arrests. Detained immigrants have the right to a lawyer, but only one they can pay for." (Oct. 14)

Now, Washington is claiming that the climate of fear and repression is exempt from constitutional scrutiny. Jan C. Ting, law professor at Temple University and former assistant commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said that because immigration laws are civil codes, not criminal, "A lot of consti-

tutional protections that one would normally expect in a criminal case" do not apply in immigration cases. (New York Times, Oct. 14)

With the economy faltering, respect for the government nearly nonexistent, and the war in Iraq a disaster for the imperial-

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## PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

### NLRB guts voluntary union recognition

The National Labor Relations Board was never set up to be a friend of labor, though from time to time it has taken pro-worker stands. It's been particularly hostile to collective bargaining rights during the last seven years of the Bush administration. A Sept. 29 ruling proves it.

The board ruled that if employers voluntarily recognize a union based on union authorization cards (also known as card-check), anti-union employees have a 45-day window to petition for an NLRB decertification election. The ruling stipulates that 30 percent of employees can force an election even though more than 50 percent of the workers want the union and even if a bargaining agreement has been reached during the 45-day period. (AFL-CIO blog, Oct. 3)

In a dissenting statement, two NLRB members noted the ruling "cuts voluntary recognition off at the knees" and "subjects the will of the majority to that of a 30 percent minority."

### No to 'no-match' rules

On Oct. 10 a federal judge in San Francisco ordered an "indefinite delay" to implementation of draconian "no-match" rules. The New York Times called the Department of Homeland Security rules "a central measure of the Bush administration's new strategy to curb" undocumented workers. (Oct. 11)

Even though the initial lawsuit was brought by labor and civil rights groups to defend workers' rights, the bosses, headed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, opposed the rules for very different reasons.

"Judge Breyer chastised the Department of Homeland Security for making a policy change with 'massive ramifications' for employers, without giving any legal explanation or conducting a required survey of the costs and impact for small businesses," wrote the Times. It also reported "the rule could lead to the firing of many thousands of legally authorized workers, resulting in 'irreparable harm to innocent workers and employers.'"

Stopping implementation of this rule, which could have led to the firing of up to 8.7 million workers due to inaccurate Social Security records, is a win for all workers. But it's only a temporary victory. Brutal workplace raids, jailing of undocumented and documented workers alike, and deportations that split up families continue. So the struggle to defend workers' rights, especially those of immigrant workers, must continue. □

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ists, Republicans and Democrats alike are encouraging racism and anti-immigrant hysteria. They would like to deflect the attention of nonimmigrant workers from the real threats to their lives: the crisis of health care, the housing catastrophe, and underemployment, not to mention inflation and indebtedness.

Homeland Security could never pursue the policies of raids and deportation if workers were united, and racism was seen for what it is and has always been: a tool to distract workers from their real enemies, the profiteers and the government that protects those profiteers. □

## Chrysler strike, GM contract

# Rank & file solidarity can reverse historic retreat

By Martha Grevatt  
Twinsburg, Ohio

On Oct. 10 at 11 a.m. sharp, Chrysler workers across the country were informed by their stewards: "We're walking."

By 11:30 workers at the Twinsburg, Ohio, stamping plant had all seven gates covered. In an incident captured on video, a woman striker immediately blocked the way of a semi truck driver attempting to cross the picket line. Three others joined her, and then a group of about 30 was heard chanting "Back it up, back it up." The driver put the truck in reverse.

Throughout the afternoon the energy of the rank and file could be observed. Production and skilled trades workers joined in sending their hated supervisors home, while young workers, using chisels and sledgehammers, pounded holes in steel drums so the fires warming them could get air. Veteran union activists delivered coffee and fielded questions from workers for whom this was their first strike.

Community solidarity was immediately visible, from the unbroken stream of horns honking to the donations early on of food from nearby restaurants. Workers from the Ford plant stopped by to show support. Twinsburg was not the exception but reflected a national pattern. Before the strike even started, for example, the Teamsters union pledged that its members would not cross the picket lines.

Rank and file spontaneity was most obvious outside the Chrysler World Headquarters near Detroit, where a militant picket line of hundreds completely blocked ingress and egress to the complex.

The workers were prepared to stay out longer, but at 5:30 p.m. the locals got word that a tentative agreement had been reached. The six and a half hour strike was over. By the midnight shift, production was back to normal. It was the shortest strike in the history of the United Auto Workers union.

The Chrysler contract generally follows the General Motors pattern, but its purported guarantees of job security and future work are actually weaker. The GM agreement binds the promised years of employment to an uncertain market, but the Chrysler agreement goes even further and leaves a number of plants without any future work beyond current models. On Oct. 15 local union leaders ratified it by a voice vote, but there was audible opposition.

Following the GM pattern, a two-tier wage structure is set up for jobs considered "non-core." In the case of Chrysler some 11,000 workers would, upon retiring, be replaced with "entry level" workers starting in at half the pay of "traditional" employees. Moreover, all future hires, even if they move into the traditional pay structure, will be unable to retire with a traditional pension, having to rely instead on a stock market-dependent 401K. For them, "30 and out" is out—no retiring after 30 years on the job.

The third core component of this historic retreat is the much talked about Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association, through which the companies are unloading their obligation to fund health care for retirees by way of a one-time large contribution. UAW President Ron Gettelfinger has claimed that the VEBA fund will be solvent for 80 years. Yet, like a 401K, this

fund is only as stable as its stock market investments. How can anyone foresee a future of stability when the subprime mortgage crisis has morphed into a generalized crisis of the lending industry?

Furthermore, this disastrous surrender of hard-won gains comes at the worst possible time, with the overall living standards of the working class in decline. When wages and benefits are pushed downward in the auto industry—historically the standard-bearer for labor—it exerts a downward pressure on the price of labor power as a whole. This drags the entire working class ever closer to pauperization.

It also coincides with the greatest concentration of wealth in the fewest hands. The auto industry is no exception. Wall Street private equity firm Cerberus now owns not only Chrysler but 51 percent of GM's financial arm and a number of auto parts suppliers. Gettelfinger, in dealing with one auto maker at a time, is using an ineffective and outmoded strategy that divides not the companies but the workers they collectively employ.

### Wall Street glee

On the same day as the short-lived Chrysler strike, the final votes were tallied in the GM contract. It passed with 64 percent of workers voting in favor. The news sent GM stocks soaring to record highs. Meanwhile, Ford CEO Alan Mulally, hoping for similar concessions, called the agreement at Chrysler "transformational." All of Wall Street is heaving a grateful sigh of relief after Gettelfinger's gracious removal of their tremendous burdens—tens of billions of dollars of retiree health care debt.

Gettelfinger—who Mulally quite accurately refers to as a "business partner"—called the Chrysler contract a "milestone."

For workers, nothing could be further from the truth! The gains of strikes past—which lasted weeks and sometimes months—are being dismantled. What worker's pension is safe if the oncemighty UAW surrenders the security of a negotiated monthly benefit for the next generation of auto workers? The cost of labor, which the UAW estimates is a mere 8.4 percent of the average cost of a vehicle, could easily be half that by the end of these four-year agreements. Who pockets the difference?

The agreements at GM, Chrysler and potentially Ford represent a huge transfer of wealth out of the pockets of union workers and into the deep pockets of Detroit and Wall Street capitalists. The auto maker are lying when they cry poverty, when they say they can't compete. Cerberus, which bought Chrysler in August, is awash in wealth. GM has stashed away billions from the sale of 51 percent of its financial arm to Cerberus and the sale of Allison Transmission to the Carlyle group.

Rather than guaranteed jobs, could the end result of these givebacks be the opposite? Could these concessions in fact deliver the auto makers the funds needed to finance their expansion into the lucrative global marketplace? Could the devalued labor power of auto workers 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?

Future auto workers will be even more productive than those today, who have themselves cut the time it takes to build a car from 45 to 30 hours in the past four years. It is unconscionable that a labor leader—and from a union with such a proud history of struggle—would facilitate this reduction in the price of labor power, even as productivity rises. How could Gettelfinger send such a negative message to the young workers coming into the plants, that their labor power is worth only half the value of that of their parents?

The failure of leadership is not going unchallenged. Nearly 36 percent of GM workers rejected the contract, the highest percentage in 25 years. Already the talk on the shop floor at Chrysler is "We can't support two-tier." Even the news media report that workers are "wary." A number of Chrysler local union leaders—by one estimate as many as one third of those voting—opposed the deal despite intense pressure from the International.

The rank and file should join the growing opposition and vote NO!

The Chrysler vote may lead to ratification, but that doesn't have to mean four years of quiet on the part of the workers.

What is the contract but the outcome of the collective bargaining process, which is but one part of the bigger class struggle? On the surface, two sides have reached an agreement acceptable to both; in reality, a temporary truce has been hammered out between representatives of antagonistic class forces. Proof is in the arguments that follow over the interpretation of the language, each reading it their way, that continue at the plant level on a daily basis.

The workers' resistance will face an uphill battle. They will be up against bosses who are emboldened by their latest advances in these negotiations. Moreover, no concessions are ever enough, but only serve to whet the voracious appetites of the rulers.

Still, it is certain that a new, militant leadership can and will emerge from the rank and file opposition—as it did when the Delphi bankruptcy led to the formation of Soldiers of Solidarity—able to find new forms of struggle that go outside the framework of collective bargaining. The mere signing of contracts will not stop the incredible solidarity forged during brief but powerful shutdowns of two major corporations.

How can workers ever forget the day they told their bosses, "You can't go to work. We're in charge today."

Martha Grevatt has worked for Chrysler in Ohio for 20 years and is active in her UAW local.

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## NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ

# Students hear Palestinian author

Palestinian journalist Ramzy Baroud discussed his new book, "The Second Palestinian Intifada," at a gathering of 50 students and community members at the New Brunswick Public Library in New Jersey on Oct. 15. The multinational crowd—including Palestinians and other Arabs, African Americans, Latin@s and whites—was largely drawn from the local campus of Rutgers University.

Baroud spoke frankly about the critical conditions for Palestinians, especially those living in Hamas-governed Gaza, which the Israeli occupation has now declared an "enemy entity." He condemned the divide-and-conquer tactics being used by Israel and

its U.S. sponsors to try to break down Palestinian national unity. Having failed to crush the Palestinian people's resistance with collective punishment, the U.S. and Israel are now moving to increase military pressure as well.

Asked about the role of solidarity activists in the U.S., Baroud said it was most important to fight the image of Palestinians as a "charity case" and show that it is part and parcel of the world struggle against imperialism.

The event was sponsored by New Jersey Solidarity—Activists for the Liberation of Palestine.

—Report and photo by Greg Butterfield

# Lawsuit targets Blackwater mercenaries

By Greg Butterfield

In the first lawsuit brought by Iraqi civilians against U.S. mercenary forces, on Oct. 11 an Iraqi survivor and the families of three Iraqi men slain by Blackwater personnel in a Sept. 16 attack sued in a U.S. federal court, charging the private military contractor with "assault and battery, wrongful death, intentional and negligent infliction of emotional distress, and negligent hiring, training and supervision."

Talib Mutlaq Deewan and the estates of Himoud Saed Atban, Usama Fadhil Abbass and Oday Ismail Ibraheem are being represented by the Center for Constitutional Rights and the firms of Burke O'Neil LLC and Akeel & Valentine, P.C.

Also Oct. 11, the United Nations called on the U.S. to prosecute private security contractors for serious crimes. One of the first laws foisted on Iraq by the U.S. occupation exempted Washington's mercenaries from prosecution in that country.

The attack took place in Baghdad's Nisoor Square. Some 19 people were killed and dozens more were injured. The Iraqi government and the first U.S. military personnel on the scene said the mas-

sacre appeared unprovoked. Blackwater denies the charges, saying its agents were responding in "self defense."

But an investigation of security photos and other materials by the Washington Post, published Oct. 12, showed that civilian automobiles were fired upon through their back windows as they were fleeing the area. The only evidence of weapons fire was from Blackwater agents.

Attorney Susan Burke, at a news conference in Washington, D.C., announcing the lawsuit, said: "This senseless slaughter was only the latest incident in a lengthy pattern of egregious misconduct by Blackwater in Iraq. At the moment of this incident, the Blackwater personnel responsible for the shooting were not protecting State Department officials. We allege that Blackwater personnel were not provoked, and that they had no legitimate reason to fire on civilians."

"We look forward to forcing Blackwater and [founder Erik Prince] to tell the world under oath why this attack happened, particularly since a Blackwater guard tried to stop his colleagues from indiscriminately firing."

The Bush administration quickly strong-

armed its puppet regime in Baghdad to drop the initial demand for Blackwater to leave the country. According to the Washington Post, the official U.S. investigation into the Sept. 16 massacre "has already proven to be severely compromised," with a Blackwater contractor writing the State Department's initial report on the incident and many witnesses not being interviewed.

Col. Steve Lyons, a retired military analyst, told CBS News, "A lot of that evidence has been destroyed."

Burke emphasized that she wants to expose that a pattern of "excessive and unnecessary use of deadly force by [Blackwater] employees is not investigated or punished in any way."

Attorneys also plan to expose, as further evidence of this pattern, the brutal role of Blackwater agents in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, where they served as judge, jury and sometimes executioners in facilities housing refugees.

The increasing scrutiny of Blackwater, a darling of the Bush administration, is just one symptom of the growing crisis for the illegal, U.S.-led occupation of Iraq that began with the invasion and overthrow of

the sovereign Iraqi government in 2003.

There are at least 1,000 armed Blackwater mercenaries in Iraq. The company was hired in 2003 to guard L. Paul Bremer, the U.S.-appointed colonial governor of the so-called Coalition Provisional Authority, for \$25 million. Later, as the Iraqi resistance grew and Baghdad became ungovernable, Blackwater became the official hired gun for State Department personnel.

These hired killers are an especially despised arm of the hated U.S. occupation. On March 31, 2004, after resistance fighters killed four Blackwater mercenaries in Falluja, a crowd of people publicly burned and hung their bodies.

An increasing number of military personnel and officials have now begun to criticize Blackwater, attempting to draw a line of differentiation between the "private" and "official" occupation forces.

Yet on the same day that Blackwater victims filed their lawsuit in Washington, U.S. military air strikes northwest of Baghdad killed nine Iraqi children and six women civilians while supposedly targeting "al Qaeda leaders."

To read the lawsuit, visit [www.ccr-ny.org](http://www.ccr-ny.org). □

# Struggles for sexual, gender liberation rooted in national liberation movements

By Leslie Feinberg

Resistance rose wherever European colonial and imperial powers enforced the restructuring of indigenous sexualities, gender expressions, organization of the sexes, and family and kinship structures. This "New World Order" facilitated the economic exploitation of the labor, land and resources.

The struggles against colonial and imperialist outlawing of same-sex love and gender/sex variance among oppressed peoples, therefore, are also rooted in defense of sovereignty and the right of self-determination. This resistance has taken many forms—as diverse as the indigenous forms of social organization that existed prior to colonial domination.

In innumerable instances, leadership in these struggles came from those who did not conform to the colonial and imperial gender, sex and sexual dictates.

The self-identification or social organization of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transsexuals and transgender people in the U.S. or Britain today is not identical to the Brazilian travesti, Zulu skesanas, South Asian hijra, Crow badé, Cocopa warhameh, Chumash joya, Maricopa kwiraxame, Turkish köçek, Moroccan hassas, Chinese tongzhi, Filipino bakla or Lakota

lavender  
&  
red #113

koskalaka. Self-identification and group identities are specific to material social and economic histories.

Every form of indigenous resistance by oppressed peoples against the sexual and gender mandates of the colonial and imperial powers is part of the fight against cultural imperialism. These battles on many fronts expose racist ideological dogma, which tries to erase world history by claiming that the way social and sexual organization is in the oppressor nations is the way it's always been.

## Many battles

Conquistador Nuño de Guzmán recorded in 1530 that the last person his military took prisoner after a battle, who had



Female-bodied Carmen Robles enlisted as male and fought for independence from Spain.

"fought most courageously, was a man in the habit of a woman."

Historian Daniel Wilson recorded that in Edinburgh in 1736, "The Porteous Riots, which were sparked by a hated English officer and oppressive custom laws and expressed resistance to the union of Scotland with England, were carried out by men disguised as women and with a leader known as Madge Wildfire."

In 1839, peasants in Wales rose up against the British demand for tolls on the roads to market. Male-bodied guerrilla fighters in diverse parts of Wales cross-dressed, calling themselves "Rebecca and her daughters."

On the North American continent in the late 1890s, the Crow nation defended a Crow badé named Osh-Tisch, which translates into English as "Finds them and kills them." In a 1982 oral history, Joe Medicine Crow related that one government agent "tried to interfere with Osh-Tisch, who was the most respected badé. The agent incarcerated the badés, cut off their hair, made them wear men's clothing. He forced them to do manual labor, planting these trees that you see here on the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] grounds. The

people were so upset with this that Chief Pretty Eagle came into Crow Agency, and told [the agent] to leave the reservation. It was a tragedy, trying to change them."

A Lakota medicine man recounted to historian Walter Williams the pressures on the winktes in the 1920s and 1930s. "The missionaries and the government agents said winktes were no good, and tried to get them to change their ways. Some did, and put on men's clothing. But others, rather than change, went out and hanged themselves."

Female-bodied Mexican revolutionaries enlisted as males and fought for national independence from Spain. A number of

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FROM THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, 1843  
'Rebecca and her daughters' lay siege to British toll gates in South Wales.



# Iraqi resistance demands U.S. withdrawal and recognition

Workers World managing editor John Catalinotto participated in interviews in Madrid on Oct. 10 with Abu Muhammed, a spokesperson for both the post-invasion Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party in Iraq and for the Supreme Command of the Front for Struggle [Jihad] and Liberation in Iraq (FSL), whose formation was announced Oct. 2. This front is one of the major coalitions or fronts of organizations that participate in the Iraqi National Resistance (INR) to the U.S. occupation.

This was the first set of interviews by an official representative of a major coalition of the Iraqi resistance outside the Middle East. He came to Spain at the invitation of the group CEOSI ([iraqsolidaridad.org](http://iraqsolidaridad.org)) and held media, political and institutional meetings.

There are other coalitions that also group thousands of Iraqi resistance fighters. While sharing many of the same goals as that of the Front for Struggle and Liberation—especially that of driving out the U.S.—these other fronts may have a different assessment of their relative strength, of the exact role of Iran, of the exact role of the Ba'ath Party, etc. There is a possibility of continued and growing cooperation among these fronts.

These fronts, however, don't consider Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army part of the resistance, although the U.S. treats the 100,000-strong Mahdi Army as a hostile force.

Abu Muhammed, who did his graduate studies as a medical doctor in the United States, was a university professor in Baghdad during the Saddam Hussein government. Since some of his remarks have been translated twice, from Arabic to Spanish to English, it is

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them rose to the rank of colonel, including Carmen Robles, Carmen Amelia Flores and Limbania Fernández. ([suppressedhistories.net](http://suppressedhistories.net))

Cross-dressing Puerto Rican labor organizer Luisa Capetillo was arrested for wearing men's clothing in Havana while organizing tobacco workers in July 1915. Capetillo fought the charge in court and won.

Cuban lesbians reportedly played an important role in the pre-revolutionary urban struggle that helped to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959.

Max Mejía, a founding member of the Grupo Lambda de Liberación Homosexual in Mexico City in 1978, explained, "In the 1950s, gay and lesbian life in Mexico was largely confined to big cities, in particular Mexico City."

He described the massive student uprising in Mexico City during the 1968 Olympics, which resulted in the military slaughter of hundreds of activists. "The demands of the '68 student movement included those of an entire generation of Mexican youth. Outstanding among the demands were political freedom and also sexual and personal freedom. Gays and lesbians were among the movement's activists and main leaders." Activists carried hand-made "Gay rights!" signs.

In 1971, La Frente Liberación Homosexual formed in Mexico City to protest the firing of gay workers by Sears store bosses in the capital city.

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more appropriate to paraphrase them here for readers' information rather than treat them as exact quotes.

## Statements by Abu Muhammed

We in the Supreme Command of the Jihad and Liberty in Iraq are resistance fighters against the U.S. occupation. We want to make it clear that there were no terrorists in Iraq before the start of the occupation. There was no al-Qaeda in Iraq before the U.S. occupation. We condemn the attacks of al-Qaeda against civilians.

Izat Ibrahim al-Duri, who was a general in the Iraqi army and a vice president in the last Iraqi government before the invasion, and who is secretary general of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party in Iraq, is chief of the Supreme Command of the 22 nationalist and Islamist groups and parties that have joined together in a front.

Regarding the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party in Iraq, it was not and is not a dictatorial party. We believe in nationalism. The situation existing in Iraq in the last decades, the challenges the party faced, led to a centralized party under Saddam Hussein. Since the occupation the party has evolved from being a party in power to being a party in the resistance. We believe in pluralism and in a new democratic vision.

Our party made errors in the past. There was good and bad done during Saddam Hussein's regime. The party is not locked in old ways. We are no longer a centralized party or a dictatorship. After liberation we will continue to be pluralist. We will participate with other parties in elections.

Regarding the attempt to divide Iraq, the truth is that Iraq is now living under an occupation and under those who support the occupation. The occupation and its supporters are parties that have militias made up respectively of Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds. These parties have death squads. Some of them cooperate with Iran. We in the resistance represent more than 80 percent of Iraqis from all parts of Iraq. In a recent survey made by USA Today, the majority of Iraqis are for the resistance and against the occupation, and are for a democratic and pluralist Iraq. The system of the one-party regime is over.

We in the armed and unarmed resistance are the only road to independence and stability for Iraq. We will continue to resist until the defeat of the U.S. or until the U.S. accepts a withdrawal. We will only accept negotiations if the U.S. recognizes the rights of Iraqis. Otherwise, we will continue the resistance.

There were more than 1.5 million Iraqis killed during the sanctions period [1990 to 2003] and more than 1 million more Iraqis killed since the invasion. On the U.S. side, the 3,700 deaths reported are only the Marines. It doesn't include the mercenaries, and as many mercenaries function in Iraq as do U.S. troops. The mercenaries are in action more than the Marines, in Falluja, Samarra, and other cities.

The Pentagon has estimated that there have been a total of 54,000 actions against U.S. troops by the resistance. If you estimate at least one death for every two of these actions, that means 27,000 deaths. This number includes U.S. troops and mercenaries. Now the resistance makes 177 operations every day.

The majority of Iraqis in the country are fighting or are supporting those who



PHOTO: CEOSI

Abu-Muhammed-speaking to the Spanish Campaign Against Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI).

are fighting. There are no mountains, no forests in Iraq, and we have no help from neighboring countries. The Iraqis have surprised the world with their determination to go on fighting despite all the difficulties and destruction.

## Message to U.S. population from Iraqi resistance

I would like to send a message from the resistance to the people of the United States.

Bush has humiliated the U.S. people with his invasion and occupation of Iraq. He has humiliated the U.S. Army as well. It is a shameful blot on U.S. history for the U.S. to occupy a country which was living in peace and was stable and one of the developing countries.

Bush and his administration lied to the U.S. people, telling lie after lie regarding the causes of the occupation of Iraq and the events that were taking place inside Iraq. He also lies about the number of U.S. Army troops killed.

Regarding the alleged causes of the war, first the U.S. raised that Saddam Hussein had a dictatorship and that he possessed nuclear and chemical weapons, the so-called weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), and also that Saddam Hussein had relations with al-Qaeda. By now the U.S. leaders themselves have pulled back from this claim. They have recognized that these reasons were false and that no one can show that there was a relation between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. No one found WMDs in Iraq.

Indeed, if the Bush administration had really believed that Iraq possessed WMDs, then it would not have invaded Iraq.

Since the invasion was based on these lies and the U.S. leaders knew they were lying, it means that the U.S. government is responsible for all the consequences of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. This includes the existence of al-Qaeda in Iraq, since there was no such organization in Iraq before the invasion and no one in Iraq had heard of al-Qaeda.

There are many negative results of the U.S. invasion: the interference of Iran in Iraq; the sectarian fighting in keeping with the political agenda; the militias and the death squads that belong to the parties that cooperate with the occupation or which belong to the government. All these results lead to a seriously bad condition in Iraq, as well as the lack of services such as social services, health and water. The mass killing of the people and their imprisonment without cause, the stolen wealth of Iraq, were all caused by the occupation of Iraq and the U.S. is responsible.

The resistance began its development starting in the early days of the occupa-

tion, growing at first gradually day by day until it enlarged quantitatively and qualitatively, and is now all Iraqis from all different national groups, religious groups, sects, Kurds and Arabs, Sunnis and Shiites, Christians, Turkmen, etc.; all Iraqis. According to USA Today and CNN, 80 percent of all Iraqis support the resistance.

The resistance is fighting the U.S. army and killing U.S. soldiers in Iraq, not because they are people from the U.S., but because they are occupiers of Iraq.

## Program of the resistance

The policy of the resistance is to liberate Iraq. After that it will form a temporary council from the different groups and political parties that have rejected the occupation. This includes all those that have left the political process organized by the occupation and are now resisting. This temporary council will select a transitional government that will rule for two years. It will also establish a national constitution. At that time it will initiate a law for parties to run candidates. This is a new vision of the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party and of the resistance.

The project and strategy of the resistance is that the U.S. and its allies should recognize the rights of Iraq and the Iraqi people. These include:

- Recognition of the Iraq National Resistance as the military and political representative of the Iraqi people.
- Complete and unconditional withdrawal from Iraq.
- Cancel all laws and structures that were passed under the occupation.
- Set all the prisoners of the U.S. and the government free.
- Compensate the state and the people of Iraq.
- Stop invading homes and harassing people.

If the rights of Iraqis are recognized and the U.S. is ready to implement them now, representatives of the Iraqi National Resistance will be ready to sit with the U.S. directly to put lines in place for withdrawal of the U.S. Army and hold a discussion of the placing of bases on the borders with Iran to prevent an invasion, and to make an agreement to have good relations with all countries whether they be neighbors or scattered around the world.

Otherwise the resistance will continue throughout generations, whatever the losses. There would be no stability in Iraq then, until there is a big defeat of the U.S. Army. The U.S. administration knows very well what such a defeat would mean, and what the serious results would be.

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# U.S. imperialism intensifies hostilities against socialist Cuba

By Teresa Gutierrez

Stop a minute and consider this: socialist Cuba has survived against all odds. It inspires people around the world, and for millions revolutionary Cuba represents a David vs. Goliath victory against the greatest enemy of humankind, U.S. imperialism.

It can therefore be easy to forget sometimes how difficult life can be for the Cuban people. It can be easy to forget the tremendous amount of effort it must take the revolution's leaders to not only defend Cuba's sovereignty but to struggle to construct a socialist society amidst an ocean of capitalism.

It can be easy to forget the difficulties because the tenacity of the Cuban people themselves is known so well. As acting head of state Raul Castro stated on July 26, "Those who are amazed at our people's capacity to rise to the level of every challenge, no matter how great, do not know them very well."

One who does not live in Cuba can only imagine the challenge.

Friends of Cuba must therefore keep abreast of all the maneuvers, schemes, machinations and intrigues the U.S. government carries out in its historical and nonstop attempts to sabotage and overturn the revolution.

Current and new information on the effects of the U.S. blockade against Cuba show the damage imperialism is attempting now against revolutionary Cuba. The Bush administration's plots require that the movement in solidarity with Cuba intensify its solidarity work against the U.S. blockade as well as to free the Cuban Five.

## Effects of blockade since 1960

When the revolution triumphed in 1959, U.S. imperialism learned a valuable lesson very early on.

Imperialist attempts to militarily overthrow the revolution were defeated by the Cuban people at the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. The imperialists learned that the Cuban Revolution would not be easily defeated.

Internally, the revolution was strong despite its youth. The people were united; the leadership was ideologically sound and confident. Fidel, Che, Raul, Camilo and the many other figures of that era were leaders, thoughtful and revolutionary—never were they mere icons—and they quickly consolidated the revolution.

Immediately they set out on the road to genuine sovereignty, constructing a society built on the needs of its people, not on the dictates of the transnational corporations.

No longer a playground for U.S. capitalists, Cuba began to be an island of hope, health and dignity. It inspired oppressed and progressive people worldwide and it earned the eternal wrath of the imperialists. History was in the making.

This is when the strategy to strangle Cuba through hardship began to be implemented by the U.S.

This July the Cuban government issued an important report to the United Nations General Assembly that is particularly revealing. It is not new information but it is important to remember.

The report states: "In a document that was declassified in 1991, it was revealed that on April 6, 1960, a year before the U.S.-organized invasion of Cuba, the then

Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Lester DeWitt Mallory, submitted a memorandum for discussion at a meeting chaired by the U.S. president, stating that there was no effective political opposition in Cuba and that consequently the only means open to Washington of undermining internal support for the revolution was through disenchantment and discouragement, based on dissatisfaction and economic difficulties. It advocated taking prompt action of every conceivable kind to weaken the Cuban economy, and deny funds and other supplies so as to reduce real and monetary wages, thereby causing hunger, desperation and the overthrow of the government."

Take note: there was no effective political opposition in Cuba.

The U.S. effort to create one failed then and it is failing now. But the economic effects of the U.S. blockade continue, bringing unnecessary and untold hardship to its people.

Furthermore, the Bush administration continues its war of aggression and military threats. Its Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (CAFC) contains ominous plans to, among other things, attempt to politically and economically isolate the island.

## Hardship rooted in Washington, not Havana

For the past 15 years, the U.N. General Assembly has voted almost unanimously against the U.S. blockade.

Salim Lamrani of Global Research writes that since then the blockade has "cost the Cuban economy more than \$89,000 million [\$89 billion]. In 2006, Cuba lost nearly \$4,000 million as a direct consequence. Not only can Cuba not export any product to the U.S., nor import anything, but it does not even have the authorization to establish commercial dealings with U.S. companies located in other countries, which is in flagrant violation of international law."

Lamrani reminds us that the blockade has been increasingly tightened over the years: the Torricelli Act in 1992, Helms-Burton in 1996, the first report of the CAFC—Bush's plan to overthrow the revolution—in 2004 and a second edition in 2006.

The Bush plan would be laughable, an Orwellian scenario almost with comic relief; but it is much too dangerous to dismiss.

The Cuban Mission to the U.N. reports that the "sectors most vulnerable to the negative impact of the blockade have been food and health care, having a direct impact on the quality of life of all Cubans."

The damage to health service is estimated at over \$30 million. "Medical institutions that provide treatment free of charge have been affected in several departments: emergency services, care of critically ill, surgical units and other specialized adult and pediatric services," the Mission press release continues.

Because of the blockade, for example, Cuba cannot acquire Sevorane, the standard drug for administering general anesthesia to children.

U.S. pressure has forced other firms to suspend sales to Cuba as well as cancel licenses. This happened with the company Medtronic, which was forced to stop selling external pacemakers to Cuba. This

affected many children with congenital or acquired arrhythmia who needed the device.

The extraterritorial nature of the blockade is exemplified with the Finnish firm Datex-Ohmeda, a manufacturer of anesthesia and monitoring equipment. When General Electric acquired the company, the firm announced that it was banned from supplying equipment or spare parts to Cuba under the threat of prosecution by the U.S. Justice Department.

On the issue of food, the Cuban government reports: "Between May 2006 and April 2007, the sanctions caused losses in the food sector exceeding \$258 million. ... With [this] sum, Cuba would have been able to buy, for domestic consumption, about 180,000 metric tons of soybeans, 72,000 metric tons of soy oil, 300,000 metric tons of maize and 275,000 metric tons of wheat.

"Meanwhile, Washington blocked communications between the Cuban firm Alimport and its U.S. suppliers of food and other agricultural products, preventing the proper functioning of the earthlink@abuse.earthlink.net server and throughout 2006 creating extra difficulties for transactions between the two countries." Internet users in Cuba cannot access Google Earth's free services nor access the most current anti-virus programs.

If Cuba had access to the U.S. market, it could sell about 1.1 million cases of Cuba's delightful and much-loved rum, representing potential revenue to the economy of some \$47 million.

Rising prices on the international capitalist market have serious consequences for Cuba. When Cuba has to buy oil in the market it must pay \$80 a barrel. Four years ago it was \$28 a barrel. Powdered milk was \$2,100 a ton in 2004; it now sells for \$2,450 a ton.

In every aspect of life—economic, cultural, political, social, educational—the U.S. blockade of Cuba has had heavy ramifications.

Cuba has weathered it all, even the collapse of the socialist camp in the 1990s. The loss of trade with the Soviet Union resulted in an 85 percent drop in imports and a decline of 35 percent in the overall economy between 1988 and 1993. Any capitalist society experiencing such a loss of oil, food and other necessities would have seen mass rebellions in the streets. But the Cuban people pulled together and weathered the Special Period.

This July, however, Raul Castro pointed out that Cuba still faces hard times, since it has "not yet come out of the Special Period."

All this takes place while the Bush administration plots to find means on and off the island to undermine the revolution at this critical time. Bush's CAFC includes a secret section on undercover operations for Cuba.

The Cubans detail that "no other administration has gone to the maniacal extremes of aggression" adopted by the Bush administration.

Caleb McCarry is a name solidarity activists should memorize. McCarry is the person in charge of re-colonizing Cuba. He has been, among other things, intensively lobbying in various countries for support for the further internationalization of the blockade. Wikipedia describes McCarry:

"Caleb McCarry is the Bush administration's 'Cuba Transition Coordinator,'

tasked with assisting in the removal of the Communist government of Cuba. The position developed out of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. McCarry described the Commission's purpose as to put forth 'an intelligent, generous and above all respectful offer of support to the Cuban people' in efforts to end 'the dictatorship [that] has willfully and cruelly divided the Cuban family.'

"McCarry was previously staff director for Rep. Henry Hyde, chairman of the House International Relations Committee. He is the son of former CIA agent Charles McCarry. McCarry worked in the office of Sen. Jesse Helms, co-sponsor of the Helms-Burton Act of 1996. This act was financed by several leading Cuban emigre figures and companies, including the Bacardi company, whose lawyer was Otto Reich.

"While a congressional staffer, McCarry was known for his opposition to Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. An anonymous State Department source told a Salon.com journalist that McCarry was involved in funneling money to Aristide's opposition via the International Republican Institute, which is funded by the United States government."

This is the kind of odious Bush administrator that oversees U.S./Cuban policies.

## U.S. will never reconcile to revolutionary Cuba

Comrade Raul Castro on July 26 said: "In the forging of effort and sacrifice, the morale and consciousness of this people has reached new heights; sons with the stature of Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González [the Cuban Five] have been born, able to assume with valor and dignity the duress of an unjust imprisonment, scattered in different prisons of the United States."

"They are examples," he continued, "but they are not exceptions."

This is why the U.S. will never give up trying to overturn the Cuban Revolution. The imperialists will never reconcile to Cuba, but the Cubans will never give up either. The enemies of humanity might have succeeded in killing Che Guevara 40 years ago, but the ideas and values of Che live on every day in Cuba. They live every day in the Cuban Five, who refuse to sell out the revolution or give up.

Today, one could say that Cuba is at a crossroads. The blockade continues to bring untold hardship. Cuba's beloved leader, comrade Fidel Castro, is recuperating from a long illness unable to play the same role he had for so long, although he continues to write and lead the revolution ideologically and politically.

It is a new period in Cuban history. In fact, every day is a page in history when a revolutionary socialist society is being built against all odds.

The Cuban leadership along with its heroic and class-conscious people continue to not only weather a special economic period; they are right now evaluating every aspect of Cuban society in order to defend its socialist gains. Could this evaluation and rectification take socialism further?

That is exactly what imperialism fears and what the oppressed masses from Venezuela to the Philippines to Somalia to the Bronx desire. The workers and oppressed of the world are confident of revolutionary Cuba. □

# FREE THE CUBAN FIVE



# 116,000 Okinawans protest revision of Japanese textbooks

By Sharon Danann

More than 110,000 Okinawans joined in a rally on Sept. 30 in the city of Ginowan, near Futenma Marine Corps Air Station, and there were two smaller demonstrations elsewhere on the island to protest new pro-military proposals from Tokyo.

The protests are a response to the proposals by Japan's Education Ministry to delete all references to Japanese soldiers in connection with mass suicides in Okinawa during World War II. The Okinawans contend that it was the soldiers' role that compelled thousands of Okinawans to kill themselves or in some cases take the lives of their loved ones before taking their own.

Okinawa, which lies about 400 miles south of the main Japanese islands, has its own national identity. Its relationship to Japan has similarities to Puerto Rico's relationship to the United States.

The Okinawan people have a proud history of protest and struggle against U.S. imperialism and against Tokyo. They will not allow the truth to be rewritten by militaristic politicians such as the former prime minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe. The elders of the Okinawan community have begun to tell their stories of horror and shame.

During the war between Japanese imperialism and U.S. imperialism, the Japanese Imperial Army pushed Okinawans out of caves and other shelters and used them as human shields during the 1945 Battle of Okinawa. In addition, many people from the island have testified that Japanese soldiers used various means to pressure Okinawans to commit suicide just prior to the arrival of the U.S. forces. This history is so highly accepted that it has been in high school textbooks for at least 25 years. The combined loss of life, about 120,000

Okinawans, was about one-quarter of the population.

Japanese soldiers supplied many Okinawans with hand grenades with which they were to kill themselves. Japanese troops ordered the residents to die rather than surrender to the U.S. troops and told them that to be captured would be shameful.

The Japanese military did not trust the Okinawans and feared they would act as spies for the U.S.

Japanese imperialism's attempts to cover up its military past by deleting passages about wartime sex slaves and massacres have met with outcries from other Asian communities. The protest in Okinawa is the first massive protest from within the areas controlled by the Japanese state. After being ruled by the U.S. since World War II, Okinawa became a prefecture of Japan in 1972, a move that Okinawans hoped would reduce the number of military bases.

This has not been the case. Okinawa, with less than 1 percent of Japan's land mass, hosts 75 percent of the U.S. bases.

Okinawa was an independent kingdom until it was conquered by Japan in the late 19th century. Karate (kara, meaning empty; te, meaning hand) was developed in Okinawa after the Japanese had divested the local population of their swords, knives and other weapons. Okinawa continues to have its own language and its own culture. Whereas in the traditional forms of theater in Japan men play all the roles, in Okinawa there is a theater tradition in which women play all the roles.

## Okinawans fought U.S. domination

Following the capture of Okinawa by the U.S. in 1945, the Okinawans have struggled continuously for national independence

and the removal of the bases from their islands. In the 1950s a communist mayor was elected in one of the towns and the U.S. authorities quickly replaced him.

In August 1965, some 150,000 people rallied to protest using Okinawa as a launching pad for the U.S. war against Vietnam. The rally's leaders demanded that U.S. nuclear warheads be removed from the island. Demonstrators fought with the police.

In 1969 a series of protests and general strikes culminated in a mass uprising when an Okinawan woman was killed in a car accident by a U.S. serviceman. Eighty-two American cars were burned and buildings on the bases were torched as well.

In 1995, some 85,000 demonstrators protested the rape and beating of a 12-year-

old girl by two U.S. Marines and a sailor. The governor of Okinawa also threatened to have 2,900 Okinawans refuse to renew their contract with 13 U.S. facilities. The strength of the protest forced the military authorities to turn the GIs over to the Okinawan legal authorities. The U.S. Marines also agreed to suspend training for one full day and use the day to reflect on "the alleged rape incident and reflect on and renew their awareness of their obligations to the local community."

From Okinawa to Vieques to the Philippines to Korea, the people will not be satisfied until the U.S. military bases are gone. U.S. out of everywhere!

*Sharon Danann was a civilian organizer in the GI movement in Okinawa during the Vietnam War.*

## Lavender & Red continued

# Struggles for sexual, gender liberation rooted in national liberation

Continued from page 7

James N. Green, a co-founder of the Brazilian gay and lesbian movement in São Paulo in 1978, wrote: "In 1968 student mobilizations swept through Latin America from Mexico to Rio de Janeiro, confronting authoritarian regimes and demanding more political freedom." A year later, he wrote, "a group of fourteen Argentine men met in a working-class suburb of Buenos Aires to form Nuestro Mundo (Our World), the country's first gay rights organization.

"By 1971 six divergent Argentine groups had come together to form the Frente de Liberación Homosexual de Argentina (Homosexual Liberation Front of Argentina)."

"In 1974," he added, "Puerto Rican lesbians and gays organized the Comunidad de Orgullo Gay (Gay Pride Community) and began publishing the newspaper Pa'Fuera on the island."

In Puerto Rico, activists struggled for years to overturn the 1902 U.S. colonial "anti-sodomy" edict which was a copy-word for word—of the California Penal Code. After a long legal battle by Puerto Rican activists, the island's Senate abolished the "sodomy" law in June 2003, days before the U.S. Supreme Court officially decriminalized same-sex love.

In Hawaii in 1991, two gay men and two lesbian couples filed a court suit for their right to marry. They argued that the Hawaiian Constitution guaranteed their right to equal protection. But the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled against them in 1999, arguing that a U.S. state constitutional amendment gave the "state" legislature of Hawaii the right to bar same-sex marriage.

## Many fronts

Black lesbians in Johannesburg and Cape Town townships helped build a lesbian/gay movement and link it to the anti-apartheid struggle.

Gay African National Congress anti-apartheid warrior Simon Nkoli "came out" during the notorious Delmas treason trial of the mid-1980s. "Upon his release from prison in 1989," wrote South African political journalist Mark Gevisser, "Nkoli founded GLOW, radically different from the gay organizations that preceded it in that it was a [B]lack organization."

Historian Peter Drucker noted that the 1992 Lesbian/Gay Pride March in



Lakshmi Tripathi (left) from Dai Welfare Society and Gauri Sawant of Charchowgi at 2006 media conference protesting Lucknow arrests.

Johannesburg was led not by white lesbians or gays, nor by Zulu transgender 'skesanas' from the Black townships, "but by the skesanas' butch 'injonga' boyfriends—who were not considered gay."

Nairobi writer John Mburu noted that Simon Nkoli organized an AIDS conference in Kampala, Uganda in 1996—three years before he died as a result of AIDS—that gathered lesbians and gays from about 20 African countries.

Drucker wrote, "Indonesian waria were also organized in the 1960s, before there was any attempt to organize a gay movement as such, in fact before there was much gay organizing in Europe or North America." In 1965, the CIA led a counter-revolution there that drowned in blood the anti-colonial struggle, which had communist leadership.

Drucker noted that Pakistani hijra "organized successfully in the early 1960s against a ban on their activities by the Pakistani government." Pakistan, like India, is still burdened with Article 377—the British colonial-era law against "unnatural" sexuality.

In India, the Naz Foundation took its challenge to Article 377 all the way to the Delhi High Court in 2001. In 2006, the arrests of four male-bodied people in Lucknow based on the colonial law ignited renewed struggle to repeal the repressive statute. Namita Bhandare reported in The Hindustan Times on Sept. 15, 2006, "Indian citizens from all walks of life have come forward to sign a letter written by author Vikram Seth asking for the overturning of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code."

In 2005, Hong Kong removed the British colonial edict against same-sex love from its lawbooks.

*Next: Beware imperialist pretexts for war.*

*E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org*

# Katrina & Rita survivors vow to return

Continued from page 3

lic school system in New Orleans was being destroyed. The plan to tear down public housing there was exposed by Derek Norvell. He vividly described how residents were driven out at gunpoint and now can't even retrieve their family pictures.

International solidarity was talked about and exemplified by Marcio Peeter, who came from Bahia, Brazil, and volunteered to help people in New Orleans. Peeter led the crowd in rhythmic clapping and astonished everybody with his African drumming.

A hat was passed around to raise gas money for a couple returning to Mobile, Ala., the first city flooded by Hurricane Katrina.

NYSCKRS organizer Brenda Stokely

worked tirelessly to build this conference and helped keep it running smoothly. Ideas and plans were brought up at its six different workshops.

People from many unions and organizations attended this Harlem event, including AFSCME DC 37, Local 1199, People's Organization for Progress, May 1st Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Million Worker March, Millions More Movement, International Action Center, Troops Out Now Coalition and Workers World Party.

Everyone was determined to confront Bush and the capitalist establishment across the country that keeps people from returning to their homes.

*Donations to the New York Solidarity Coalition with Katrina and Rita Survivors can be made at www.NYKatrinaRita.org.*

# NYC mayor forces families out of shelters

Continued from page 2

Far from being a "loophole" that families "were taking advantage of," the emergency shelters offered a last-ditch effort by families to put a roof over their child's head for the night. And the fact is that many families that the city rules ineligible for shelter are later found to have had their cases wrongly assessed, and are in fact eligible. Furthermore, the city's contention that some of these families should stay with relatives is completely ludicrous. While it may be possible for the billionaire mayor to put some of his family members

up in his Upper East Side apartment/mansion, in apartments in working class and oppressed neighborhoods throughout the city, this is usually impossible.

The Bloomberg administration has shown a callous disregard for the growing magnitude of the affordable housing crisis and the alarming spike in family homelessness in New York City. Bloomberg's 2004 declaration to "reduce homelessness by two-thirds" rings as hollow as ever. Bloomberg's anti-homeless policies must be met with a more militant grassroots struggle in the streets. □





# Another slap in the face

Yet another display of the attack on Black youth by the U.S. criminal injustice system occurred on Oct. 12, when eight former boot camp guards were acquitted in the death of a 14-year-old.

Videotape footage showed Martin Lee Anderson being punched and kicked by guards at the Florida juvenile detention center. According to the Associated Press, "Aside from hitting Anderson, the guards dragged him around the military-style camp's exercise yard and forced him to inhale ammonia capsules in what they said was an attempt to revive him. The nurse stood by watching." (Oct. 12)

The defense argued that the guards thought that Anderson was faking illness to avoid exercise. It turns out he had undiagnosed sickle cell trait, which can prevent blood cells from carrying oxygen during physical duress.

Former guard and defendant Henry Dickens claimed that the youth "wasn't beaten. Those techniques were taught to us and used for a purpose." (AP, Oct. 12)

Those "techniques" are taught along with a mentality that Black youth are always criminals; that what most would automatically perceive as a medical emergency—a person collapsing while running laps—is an instance of "faking."

After an initial autopsy alleged that Anderson died of natural causes, a sec-

ond one was ordered which found that Anderson had been suffocated by the use of the ammonia tablets and the guards' covering his mouth.

An all-white jury took just 90 minutes to decide that the guards were "not guilty." The doctor who conducted the first autopsy, Charles Steibert, told AP he was going to celebrate with some of the guards that night. (Oct. 12)

The defendants had faced at most 30 years in prison for aggravated child manslaughter. Compare this to the 15 years that the African-American Jena Six still face for a fight in which no bones were broken, where their white opponent went out and partied after the fight.

Outside the courthouse, the lawyer of Anderson's mother, Benjamin Crump, summed it up: "You kill a dog, you go to jail. You kill a little Black boy and nothing happens." (AP, Oct. 12)

The criminal injustice system, which is packed with bigoted district attorneys and judges, seems to think it can keep getting away with instances like these, throwing them in the face of those who are coming out in increasing numbers to protest. And, indeed, 150 students from Florida A&M protested after the verdict. The establishment would do well to remember the many rebellions that have occurred throughout the U.S. in the face of police brutality and repression. □

# The crises deepen— What is to be done?

## Issues to be discussed:

- Washington's threat to expand imperialist war to Iran
- Jena 6 case: potential for a new movement
- Immigrant workers intensify fight for rights
- Capitalist globalization creates new conditions for workers here & worldwide
- Workers hit with mortgage foreclosures as capitalist economy sinks
- The overall erosion of conditions for the working class and labor's right to organize
- Racist repression and gentrification are on the rise
- First U.S. Social Forum
- Katrina/Rita survivors still seek right to return
- The '08 Presidential Election—How can the movement best intervene?
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## MUNDO OBRERO

# ¿Quién va a parar las atrocidades en Irak?

Continua de pagina 12

libras en el cuarto.

Estamos hablando de aquellos que tienen la razón más grande para defender el modo capitalista de vida — los capitalistas mismos. No solamente los barones del petróleo, aunque están muy concentrados, son poderosos políticamente y tienen un interés inmediato en controlar el petróleo y los hidrocarburos del mundo.

Esta es una guerra capitalista por ganancias. Tan claro como eso. Es una clase pequeña pero una que domina la sociedad con la enorme riqueza que les ha

robado a l@s trabajador@s del mundo.

Sin embargo tiene miedo. A lo que le teme es a la lucha de clases — no la guerra unilateral que los patronos han librado contra l@s trabajador@s desde hace años, sino una en la cual esta clase multinacional de mujeres y hombres, homosexuales y heterosexuales, inmigrantes y l@s nacid@s aquí, brutalizad@s por la policía racista, cargad@s de deudas, perdiendo sus pensiones y su cuidado de salud, digan "¡Basta ya!" y se nieguen a ser carne del cañón de los patronos — y de su máquina de ganancias. Ese día va a llegar. □



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## Gore and the Nobel prize

# 'Green' polluters get a boost

By Deirdre Griswold

Will it really help save the planet from environmental ruin that former Vice President Al Gore has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, along with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change?

That might seem like a strange question. So let's ask another: Has it helped stop illegal and predatory imperialist wars that Jimmy Carter got the prize in 2002; that Yasser Arafat had to share it in 1994 with Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; that Nelson Mandela was awarded it jointly with F.W. de Klerk of apartheid South Africa in 1993; or that Le Duc Tho had to share it with Henry Kissinger in 1973?

If the Nobel Peace Prize has stood for anything, it is rehabilitating war makers who have finally decided to pull back from their bloody adventures after being forced to do so by the incredible heroism of mass struggle. The imperialist military is then free to rebuild itself in order to strike out again when political conditions are more favorable.

The awarding of peace prizes to both sides in these conflicts was meant to hide the truth: that a national liberation struggle for sovereignty and independence has nothing in common with an imperialist bloodbath for neocolonies, resources and cheap labor. It is the de Klerks, Kissingers and Carters who are rehabilitated by being associated in the popular mind with real heroes of the peoples' resistance.

However, this time the recipients are not associated with any particular war—certainly not the all-out attack on Yugoslavia by the U.S. Air Force during the Clinton-Gore presidency and the dismembering of that socialist country.

Gore and the IPCC have been given the peace prize for their work in raising awareness about global warming.

It is certainly true that Gore's book and popular film "An Inconvenient Truth" shook up a lot of people about the dangers of melting polar ice caps and glaciers, rising sea temperatures leading to more powerful hurricanes and typhoons, and the widespread and unpredictable effects on climate—including droughts as well as floods—that can result from the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Yet while Gore's film painted the picture of a looming catastrophe for the planet and all its inhabitants, it had very little to say about how to stop it. Buy low-wattage light bulbs. Ride a bike to work or school. Invest in green industries.

Nevertheless, the extreme right wing in the U.S. is frothing at the mouth about him receiving the Nobel, as can be seen in the many on-line comments on this subject.

Gore, of course, is not a scientist. He is a politician who has taken up the issue of global warming since losing the presidential election to George W. Bush in 2000—even though he got a clear majority of the popular vote and there was undeniable exclusion of African-American voters that cost him the key state of Florida. But he didn't put up a fight when a rightwing-dominated Supreme Court gave Bush the election.

So Gore, who happens to be an heir to a family fortune built on oil—his father was very close to Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum—found himself without a job.

### From denial to cooptation

Two decades ago, the early reaction of the huge transnational corporations to the news of global warming, especially

the ones related to energy, was to mount a well-financed campaign of denial. They feared being forced to cut back production—and lose profits.

In 1988, 300 scientists and policy makers from 48 countries met and issued the first call to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The next year, 50 oil, gas, coal, automobile and chemical manufacturing companies and their trade associations formed the Global Change Coalition. For a decade, the GCC lobbied politicians—a legal form of bribery—and placed "experts" in the media who pooh-poohed global warming.

The GCC disbanded in 2000, although its members would lobby the new Bush administration against signing the Kyoto Accords. State Department briefing papers obtained by Greenpeace showed the administration thanking executives of Exxon-Mobil, the world's largest oil company valued at close to \$400 billion, for the firm's "active involvement" in helping determine the U.S. government's climate change policy. (The Guardian, June 8, 2005)

But by the time Gore was looking for something to do, the evidence of climate change was undeniable. Big money had to change its tactic. It made the adjustment to "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em."

So-called green development is now a huge international industry. There are several ways capitalists can make money while supposedly putting a dent in global warming.

One is through the market for carbon credits. The Kyoto Accords put a "cap" on greenhouse gas emissions that is intended to modestly reduce them by 2012. The United States did not sign the accords but some state and local authorities have decided to regulate emissions. Wherever these "caps" exist in the world, polluting companies can legally exceed them if they buy carbon credits—the right to emit x amount of carbon dioxide. The credits are bought from other companies or even from countries which don't exceed the imposed limits or which take an action—like planting trees—that sops up carbon dioxide from the air.

Generally, it is poor, developing countries that are being pressured to sell their credits—and forgo development—to polluting, richer countries.

Selling carbon credits now is a very, very big business.

The newly created Environmental Markets Network advocates for "market-based economic solutions to global environmental and climate issues." In January it was announced that Jon Anda, a vice chairperson in charge of global capital markets at the investment banking firm of Morgan Stanley, was leaving his job there to become president of EMN.

A release from the new firm said that EMN would "focus on climate change legislation, where a cap on greenhouse gas emissions and a sound trading system offer a roadmap for economic growth and sound environmental policy."

EMN is a spinoff of Environmental Defense, which in 2000 joined with a group of companies that had left the global-warming-denying GCC: Dupont, British Petroleum, Shell, Suncor, Alcan and Ontario Power Generation, as well as the French aluminum manufacturer Pechiney.

The board of directors of Environmental Defense has included executives from Morgan Stanley as well as the Pew Center for Global Climate Change—funded by the Pew family of Sun Oil fame, the Bush-connected Carlyle Group, Berkshire

Partners and Carbon Investments. ("The Corporate Climate Coup," ZNet, May 8)

This rush of the biggest and most polluting transnationals into setting up organizations that will supposedly save the world should give anyone with a progressive bone in their body pause.

### 'Green finance'

The business publication Euromoney focused its September issue on "green finance," interviewing "the thought-leaders at the world's largest banks about their strategies to assist in—and benefit from—the challenge of climate change."

Featured was an interview with Gore, who told the magazine, "Markets are the key to climate change."

Gore had teamed up with Goldman Sachs executives David Blood, Peter Harris and Mark Ferguson to establish the London-based environment investment firm Generation Investment Management, with Gore and Blood (honestly!) at its helm. In May 2005, Gore, representing GIM, addressed the Institutional Investor Summit on Climate Risk and emphasized the need for investors to think in the long term and to integrate environmental issues into their equity analyses.

"I believe that integrating the issues relating to climate change into your analysis of what stocks are worth investing in, how much, and for how long, is simply good business," Gore explained to the assembled investors. Applauding a decision to move in this direction, announced the day before by General Electric CEO Jeff Immelt, Gore declared that, "We are here at an extraordinarily hopeful moment ... when the leaders in the business sector begin to make their moves." (ZNet)

What Gore's Nobel prize underscores is that the biggest banks and corporations have moved, and are now up to their eyeballs in schemes to make "green" money.

Many people, especially those saturated by the U.S. monoculture that touts capitalism as the best of all possible worlds, will say, "What's wrong with that? If they make money while solving global warming, why should I worry?"

Let's look at the track record of these corporations once again.

They said technological change would eliminate hard, dangerous jobs and make everyone middle class. Instead, it has enriched the wealthiest one-tenth of one percent of the population beyond their wildest dreams, while leaving poverty intact and festering and more workers in minimum-wage jobs.

They said we didn't need socialized medicine, where everyone gets free health care like in Cuba, or even a single-payer plan like the ones in capitalist Europe. The market would take care of it. Now U.S. medical care is the most expensive in the world, 47 million people here have no coverage, and the owners of the pharmaceuticals, HMOs and medical supply companies are among that richest one-tenth of one percent. The United States ranks 41st in the world in women surviving their pregnancies while babies born in the U.S. are three times more likely to die in their first month than babies born in Japan. (Save the Children report, May 10)

They convinced millions of workers to buy homes with ballooning mortgage rates, saying they could always refinance as the market went up. The market went down and 2 million families face the loss of their homes this year.

They said nuclear power was going to provide cheap, limitless energy for everyone. It proved so dangerous and costly

that the big money went back to coal and oil and left the radioactive mess behind for the government to clean up.

In all these cases, the rich get richer while the problems continue.

Now they're saying that investing green will save the world from the pollution they have caused.

### 'Climate change? Social change!'

While many of the well-funded, mainstream environmental groups have bought into the view that nothing can be done without cooperating with the profiteers, not everyone concerned about climate change takes that view.

Take, for instance, the Durban Group for Climate Justice, formed in South Africa. It describes itself as "an international network of independent organizations, individuals and people's movements who reject the free market approach to climate change. We are committed to help build a global grassroots movement for climate justice, mobilize communities around the world and pledge our solidarity with people opposing carbon trading on the ground."

An associated group, Global Justice Ecology Project, says that large-scale production of biofuels, carbon trading and carbon offset forestry are "false solutions to climate change." On the production of biofuels, which divert food crops into fuel production and are one of the hottest items on the corporate agenda these days, it says: "The stage is now set for direct competition for grain between the 800 million people who own automobiles and the world's 2 billion poorest people."

And it quotes the Brazilian Landless Workers' Movement: "The only goal [of biofuels] is to maintain current patterns of consumption in the First World and high rates of profit for multinational corporations."

It is the poorest and most oppressed who are already suffering the most from climate change—be they in New Orleans and Mississippi or in African countries hit, paradoxically, by both record droughts and floods.

The slogan of the Durban group is "Climate change? Social change!"

That is the right track. To bring the planet back into balance again, the means of production must be liberated from the class whose personal profit has been the driving motive of technological change for several centuries now.

Science and technology are not to blame. It is the social system under which they have developed that has perverted technology from its original purpose: to solve humanity's problems in the struggle to survive and flourish. Capitalism has been one headlong rush to produce more and more, create markets where none existed before, and even destroy other countries' industries in order to profit from rebuilding them.

Gore can never oppose this system—he is an advocate for it and a son of the ruling class.

Grassroots groups that work with the landless, the hurricane survivors, the villagers fighting Occidental Petroleum in Colombia, and the hungry deprived of food by biofuel production may never get the money and publicity now flowing to Gore's projects, but they are the true environmentalists. They will be an integral part of the growing class struggle for a socialist system that totally reorganizes modern life, building mass transit, not Hummers; schools, not bombs; and energy-saving housing, not estates for the rich.

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¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

## Costarricenses votan por el TLCCA bajo amenazas

Por Heather Cottin

Aunque cientos de miles de costarricenses votaron anteriormente con sus pies en una masiva marcha en contra del Tratado de Libre Comercio Centroamericano, (TLCCA), la nación en sí votó escasamente por aceptar el acuerdo el 7 de octubre, después de haber sido amenazada e intimidada por los Estados Unidos.

El llamado libre comercio—que es en realidad la imposición de reglas por los imperialistas para socavar las industrias criollas—ha significado la destitución de miles de campesin@s y de pequeños comercios en América Central. La Coordinadora Nacional Indígena y Campesina de Guatemala advirtió a l@s costarricenses sobre los acuerdos del TLCCA.

“A un año ya de la implementación del TLCCA en Guatemala, la experiencia ha sido desastrosa... las importaciones han incrementado el precio del maíz, [nuestro] alimento básico más sagrado.” Los líderes del CONIC afirmaron que en México, después del voto por el TLCNA, miles de campesin@s tuvieron que irse a las ciudades por no poder competir con los bajos precios del maíz de las compañías estadounidenses. (Prensa Latina, 5 de octubre) Una vez que l@s campesin@s han sido desposeídos, el precio sube.

Un campesino de El Salvador en la ciudad Cacaopera de la provincia de Morazán dijo recientemente a Workers World/Mundo Obrero: “Desde el TLCCA,

la tasa de desempleo aquí es del 60%. La privatización de las cosas básicas como el agua y la electricidad y la salud ha empeorado la vida del pobre. Nuestros jóvenes están abandonando el campo para nunca regresar.”

La despoblación de las áreas rurales en México, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua y Honduras ha incrementado la emigración hacia los Estados Unidos. Esto no está aprobado por la ley, como es la migración del capital desde los países imperialistas hacia la región. Pero es necesario para la supervivencia de las poblaciones rurales y urbanas. El envío de dinero que l@s emigrantes mandan a sus familias mantiene al pueblo vivo frente a la incesante pobreza y privatización aceleradas por las reglas del “libre comercio”.

Al disminuir las fincas y plantaciones familiares en toda la región, l@s campesin@s se han ido a las ciudades en busca de trabajo. Encuentran empleos en las fábricas transnacionales llamadas maquilas, que sólo pagan hasta \$6 dólares por semana y las regulaciones del TLCCA y del TLCNA no protegen el derecho de organizarse en sindicatos, así que los guardias privados y la policía hacen cumplir las prácticas anti-laborales por medio de mucha brutalidad.

Quienes componen la clase dominante en Costa Rica apoyan el libre comercio. En México y en el resto de Centroamérica, la clase alta y media—un pequeño pero poderoso grupo, son quienes se benefi-

cian del TLCCA. Como estos controlan los medios de propaganda, promovieron el TLCCA, afirmando que las compañías estadounidenses han producido empleos y grandes cantidades de dinero para Centroamérica desde la firma de los acuerdos.

L@s centroamerican@s y mexican@s que enfrentan desempleo y la depresión agrícola, han sido forzad@s a emigrar para poder mantener a sus familias. Pero una vez llegan a los Estados Unidos, se enfrentan a las redadas, a las deportaciones y al racismo perpetrado por Washington y los medios de propaganda anti inmigrante. Así que el mismo gobierno estadounidense que presionó para que se aceptaran los acuerdos del TLCCA y el TLCNA, amenaza a l@s inmigrantes mexican@s y centroamerican@s, tratándoles como criminales y culpándoles por el declive de la economía de los Estados Unidos.

Las compañías estadounidenses han forzado los acuerdos de libre comercio que les permite cerrar las fábricas en los Estados Unidos y despedir a sus trabajador@s. Pagándoles bajísimos salarios a l@s trabajador@s de los países del Tercer Mundo, les provee grandes ganancias. L@s pobres pagan el precio tanto en América Latina como en los Estados Unidos.

Pero los gobiernos de Washington y de Costa Rica no se preocupan por los pobres, sino para utilizarlos. Las Casa

Blanca le dijo a l@s costarricenses que si no votaban por el TLCCA, no continuarían los privilegios comerciales actuales para los productos de Costa Rica. (Prensa Asociada, 7 de octubre) El periódico principal de Costa Rica publicó en su primera plana una carta de la representante comercial estadounidense Susan Schwab en la que advertía que EEUU rehusaría renegociar las condiciones del acuerdo actual de libre comercio con Costa Rica si el TLCCA era derrotado.

En otras palabras, la administración de Bush amenazó con estrangulación comercial a la economía de Costa Rica. Según Eugenio Trejos, director de la Escuela Tecnológica de Costa Rica, la competencia entre las empresas transnacionales pone en peligro la propiedad pública de la luz, del servicio telefónico y del agua.

Cuando llegó el momento de votar, salió con un margen estrecho, con nada más que un 51 por ciento a favor del TLCCA. Ahora l@s costarricenses se enfrentarán a un frenesí de privatizaciones y a la comercialización de su economía.

Costa Rica se jacta de ser el país más próspero de Centroamérica. Lo que le espera es lo que le ha ocurrido a México y a los demás países de Centroamérica: más desigualdad entre ricos y pobres, más dependencia agrícola, precios más altos por los productos básicos, y entre poco, más gente en las calles demandando un fin a los acuerdos imperialistas de libre comercio. □

## ¿Quién va a parar las atrocidades en Irak?

Por Deirdre Griswold

La historia más reciente sobre las atrocidades en Irak que llegó a los medios de comunicación de los EEUU es que los guardias enmascarados de seguridad que escoltaban a varios SUV (vehículos utilitarios), abrieron fuego sobre un carro acribillándolo a balazos, matando a dos mujeres e hiriendo a dos más el 9 de octubre en la parte céntrica de Bagdad.

Según la cuñada de Marou Awanis, una de las mujeres asesinadas, ella estaba usando su carro como taxi para llevar empleados del gobierno y así ganar un ingreso para sus tres hijas.

Fue otro caso en el cual la práctica racista del prototipo condujo a una matanza sangrienta por el único crimen que es el de ser iraquí. Según Prensa Asociada, la empresa que emplea a los pistoleros ha sido identificada como una compañía con el inocente nombre de Unity Resources Group (Grupo de Recursos Unitarios), una firma australiana que emplea a veteranos de las Fuerzas Especiales y ex policías de ese país, de los EEUU, de Nueva Zelanda, y de Bretaña.

Los pistoleros no han sido identificados públicamente, ni tampoco han sido reveladas sus historias previas o sus

nacionalidades.

Este espantoso incidente ocurre poco después de las demandas por indemnización del “gobierno” iraquí instalado por Washington, por otra masacre aún más grande. Hasta este régimen dependiente está demandando que la empresa estadounidense Blackwater (Aguas Negras) pague \$8 millones a cada una de las familias de los 17 civiles iraquíes masacrados por sus empleados en septiembre mientras escoltaban a diplomáticos de los EEUU por la asediada y casi destruida capital de Irak.

Una comisión iraquí que investiga a Blackwater, dice que sus pistoleros han matado a otras 21 personas, además de las 17 masacradas el mes pasado, desde que comenzó a escoltar a diplomáticos de los EEUU en Irak.

Estos diplomáticos son tan odiados ya que el Departamento de Estado paga millones de dólares en contratos lucrativos a Blackwater para proporcionarles pistoleros privados cuando salen de sus refugios para viajar a cualquier parte.

Noticias diarias como estas burlan las afirmaciones de la administración de Bush de que se están ganando el apoyo y los corazones del pueblo iraquí y que está preparando a ese país para la “democracia”.

También desenmascara al Partido Demócrata que se presentó como oposición a la política de Bush cuando estaba haciendo campaña para los puestos congresistas el año pasado, pero que ahora está listo para apoyar esta guerra por años venideros. Y cuando le preguntaron directamente en uno de los debates de candidatos si se opondría a un ataque israelí contra las facilidades nucleares de Irán, Hillary Clinton, considerada la favorita para la nominación demócrata porque ha recaudado la mayor cantidad de fondos, dijo que no. Ese ataque es un escenario muy probable para el comienzo de una agresión estadounidense en contra de Irán.

La Agencia Internacional de Energía Atómica ha confirmado que Irán está desarrollando capacidad nuclear, lo cual todos los estados miembros de la AIEA tienen el derecho de hacer, y que Irán no tiene facilidades para producir armas nucleares. Un ataque contra Irán sería un flagrante acto de agresión y extendería la guerra horrenda que Washington empezó por el control del área más rico en petróleo del mundo, el Medio Oriente.

El pueblo de los Estados Unidos no quiere esa guerra. Sus votos y las encuestas así lo han mostrado desde hace mucho

tiempo. El reclutamiento militar ha disminuido al nivel más bajo a pesar de los grandes pagos en efectivo por inscripción. Además, el pueblo siente una profunda repulsión y está preocupado por la defensa abierta del gobierno de la tortura, los interrogatorios secretos, y el espionaje que han sido consecuencias de la guerra.

### Busque al gorila

Entonces, ¿quién quiere esta guerra? ¿Quién es que derrama fondos inmensos en los cofres de l@s candidat@s políticos que apoyan la guerra, asegurándose de que quien sea que gane las elecciones en el 2008, la guerra continúe? ¿Quién tiene la voluntad de gastar trillones de dólares del dinero de l@s contribuyentes para usarlos para la agresión y poder controlar la ya disminuida energía fósil del planeta, responsable por la catástrofe del calentamiento global pero que no gasta casi nada para una estrategia hacia reorganizar esta economía caótica y derrochadora y revertir el cambio climático?

Como nos dicen las novelas detectivescas, hay que buscar el motivo. Y en esta sociedad capitalista el motivo detrás de la agresión capitalista es tan evidente y tan ignorado como el gorila de 800

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