

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

workers.org

JUNE 12, 2008 VOL. 50, NO. 23 50¢

New U.S. fleet to threaten Latin American sovereignty

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

The U.S. Navy on April 24 announced the return of the Fourth Fleet to the Caribbean, Central America and South America, covering 30 countries in the region. The fleet had operated in those waters beginning in 1943, monitoring German submarines during World War II, and was dismantled in 1950.

In a press release entitled "Navy Re-Establishes U.S. Fourth Fleet" (defenseink.mil), the Pentagon tried to soften the appearance of this aggressive move, saying that "these assets will conduct varying missions including a range of contingency operations, counter narcoterrorism, and theater security cooperation (TSC) activities. TSC includes military-to-military interaction and bilateral training opportunities as well as humanitarian assistance and in-country partnerships."

The fleet will be the Navy component of the Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and will be based in Florida. The new operations are scheduled to begin on July 1.

Venezuela a key factor

It is interesting to note, at least briefly, the origins of the Fourth Fleet. In a detailed article in the May 27 issue of CounterPunch, entitled "U.S. Fourth Fleet in Venezuelan Waters," Nikolas Kozloff describes how in the early part of WWII, Venezuela was the main oil exporter in the world. "During the conflict the oil-rich Maracaibo fields, located in the westernmost Venezuelan state of Zulia, were considered a crucial resource for both the Axis and Allied powers."

The article describes the eventual cessation of Venezuela's oil trade with the Germans and its alignment with the United States. The Germans responded by sinking over two dozen oil

tankers in the Caribbean north of Venezuela and attacking an oil refinery on the island of Aruba. These incidents led to the formation of the Fourth Fleet—basically, to defend U.S. oil interests in Venezuela.

A virtual declaration of war

Were it not such a serious matter, one could laugh at the stated mission of "humanitarian assistance." Like the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq? A look at some of the components of this fleet makes the blood run cold.

It is a floating city. This armada is larger than the total military forces of many of the Latin American and Caribbean countries it will surround. It includes the biggest and most powerful nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, the USS George Washington, which can host 90 ultra-rapid, state-of-the-art military aircraft, like the infamous F-16 and F-18 jet fighters. It also contains stealth bombers, helicopters, additional warships and submarines. There can be no illusions. Reconstituting this fleet is preparation for threatening the peoples of the region with war.

Increasingly, the United States is being isolated in Latin America. Except for its closest collaborators in the region—Colombia and Peru—most countries do not want any more U.S. bases or big military deployments in their territories, even if they maintain trade and diplomatic relations with the U.S. One example is the U.S. airbase in Ecuador called Manta. It will be closed by order of President Rafael Correa when the contract expires in 2009. It is not surprising, then, that the Pentagon seeks to adopt a more "flexible" scenario at sea.

This isolation reflects an overall development in Latin America. *Continued on page 9*

OBAMA, WAR, KATRINA

Focus of Black Left meeting 5, 10



MORATORIUM NOW!

Stop foreclosures, evictions 3

CAN IT HAPPEN HERE?

Food rebellions, strikes 4



PUERTO RICAN TEACHERS

Fight repression, win supporters 8

NATIVE RESISTANCE

WOUNDED KNEE ELLEN MOVES CAMP



New York, June 22, 2007.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

TRANS DAY OF ACTION

For social and economic justice 7

Subscribe to Workers World

Four weeks trial: \$1 One year: \$25

NAME _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

WORKERS WORLD
55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011 212-627-2994 www.workers.org

New laws aim to limit reproductive rights

By Kris Hamel
Detroit

Every year thousands of anti-choice laws aimed at eliminating or restricting abortion rights are introduced into state legislatures around the U.S. The result is that a majority of states now have one or more onerous laws which impede women's right to make and carry out crucial health care decisions about their reproductive capacity. These include "waiting periods" before a doctor can perform an abortion, being forced to read or hear a scientifically unsound propaganda script about the "dangers" of abortion [sic], and parental notification and/or consent laws aimed at young women.

This year has been no exception. Even with the U.S. Supreme Court's reactionary ruling in April 2007 banning certain types of post-first trimester abortion procedures, at least 18 states have passed their own version of the law.

In Michigan on May 27, the Democratically-controlled State House passed 74 to 32 a Senate bill that mirrors the federal abortion ban. The House rejected amendments to include exceptions to safeguard women's health and in cases of pregnancy resulting from rape and incest. Twenty-four Democrats—including Detroit's Shanelle Jackson—joined 50 Republicans to pass the measure, which Gov. Jennifer Granholm is expected to veto. The law includes felony penalties of two years in prison and \$50,000 in fines for physicians.

Because 2008 is an election year, so-called National Right to Life and other anti-choice organizations are also focusing on state ballot initiatives to whittle away or wipe out completely women's right to choose.

The Colorado Secretary of State's office announced on May 29 that a random sampling of petitions indicated enough valid signatures to put "the Colorado Equal Rights Amendment" on the state's November ballot. This law, with the outrageously misleading title, would change the state constitution to confer "personhood" and equal rights to fertilized eggs.

The law would criminalize all abortions immediately, including those to save a woman from death or permanent injury. Birth control methods such as emergency contraception, like the "morning-after pill," intrauterine devices and some oral contraceptives, would become illegal.

Surgical or medical removal of ectopic pregnancies could also not be performed under this law. In ectopic pregnancies, an embryo imbeds in an organ other than the uterus, usually the fallopian tubes. According to a Mayo Clinic study, one in every 40 to 100 pregnancies is ectopic, and no ectopic pregnancies can result in a birth. If the embryo continues to grow, the tubes will eventually rupture and may cause massive hemorrhage, creating a life-threatening situation for the pregnant woman.

In South Dakota, voters will once again decide on a state abortion ban. In 2006, voters there by 56 to 44 percent defeated a law that would have outlawed all abortions except to save a woman's life.

Now the anti-choice zealots have put exceptions for women's health and cases of pregnancy caused by rape or incest into the law. But the rules regarding these exceptions will be difficult for women to comply with as they require contact with police and state officials, intrusive physical examinations, DNA samplings and other measures that inhibit use.

Along with local groups like South Dakota Campaign for Healthy Families, national reproductive rights and women's organizations such as Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice America and NOW all played large roles organizationally and financially in helping to defeat the South Dakota abortion ban in 2006. What happens in South Dakota has national repercussions. That's why, though many women may be focused on the presidential election, a thorough-going national mobilization is needed again in 2008.

Workers World asked Debbie Johnson, a leader of the Detroit Action Network For Reproductive Rights (DANFORR), to comment on the current anti-choice attacks. "These situations like South Dakota and Colorado are going to keep playing out all over the country. They are very difficult to fight on a state by state basis, especially when leaders for reproductive rights are entangled in the electoral process, believing that somehow Democrats are going to protect women's rights," stated Johnson.

"It is vital that all pro-choice people continue to support and show solidarity with the struggles unfolding in the various states. But more than that, we need to revitalize a militant national movement all around the country. We need to mobilize independently of the politicians because no matter who is in the White House or the state houses, things will not fundamentally change unless and until we step up to take the steam out of these rightwing, anti-women initiatives. We need to link up with everyone who is ready to fight back in this period—whether it's to roll back high food and gas prices, stop foreclosures or put an end to police brutality. Women have had enough. There is no alternative but to struggle." □

Socialist youth launch study groups

The youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism Stand Together—has initiated summer study groups on important political issues. The first was held on May 22, discussing the topic "The Elections and Revolution."

The young comrades of FIST, along with other young people and activists from other organizations and earlier generations, read articles from Workers World newspaper on the racism of the Rodham-Clinton campaign against Obama and the high prices of food and gas, in conjunction with shrinking wages and the destruction of the environment due to the capitalist mode of production.

Altogether, more than 20 people engaged in the hearty discussion, and the great majority returned the following week to discuss the disasters in Myanmar and China and the reaction of U.S. imperialism towards these and Hurricanes Katrina/Rita.

The discussions will be held weekly, every Thursday from 6 to 8:30 pm at the Solidarity Center in Manhattan, 55 W. 17th Street, 5th floor, but occasionally held in a park, weather permitting. All are invited, whether you identify as youth or not. For more information, contact FIST at 212-627-2994, e-mail FIST@workers.org or visit www.fistyouth.wordpress.com. □

JOIN US.

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latin@, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.,
Boston, MA 02130
617-983-3835
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

workersworld.net/boston
Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-566-1115
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202

313-831-0750
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 595
Houston, TX 77001-0595
713-861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
111N. La Brea Ave., #408
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-677-8647
la@workers.org

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, PA 19139
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Raleigh, N.C.
raleigh@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221
richmond@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92104
619-692-0355

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

New laws aim to limit reproductive rights	2
Socialist youth launch study groups	2
Campaign to stop foreclosures reaches out	3
Food, fuel and crisis in capitalist globalization	4
School's out for L.A. Teachers	4
Former prisoners protest job bias	4
National gathering discusses Black community's issues	5
Students wage hunger strike for education funds	5
Detroit residents reject trash incinerator	5
Ellen Moves Camp	6
WW in 1973: Wounded Knee	6
NYC Trans Day of Action for Social & Economic Justice	7
LGBTQ rights march spotlights solidarity	7
McClellan book	10

★ Around the world

New U.S. fleet to threaten Latin American sovereignty	1
Canada Parliament supports U.S. war resister	3
FMPR teachers fight repression, grow stronger	8
Confrontation outside convention	8
Puerto Rican independista defies grand jury	9
Cuban Five	9
FARC leader Manuel Marulanda	11
Egyptian workers' struggle	11

★ Editorials

The Black movement, the anti-war movement and Obama	10
---	----

★ Noticias En Español

Cynthia McKinney	12
Difundiendo la verdad	12

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 50, No. 23 • June 12, 2008
Closing date: June 4, 2008

Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas
Internet: Janet Mayes
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2008 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at www.workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.



Campaign to stop foreclosures reaches out

By Caleb T. Maupin
Detroit

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions has been undertaking a growing campaign over the past few weeks to win passage of SB1306. This bill, which would put a two-year moratorium on mortgage foreclosures, was introduced in the Michigan Legislature by state Sen. Hansen Clarke.

Activists have been doing phone banking, outreach and leaflet distributions from the coalition's office located at Central United Methodist Church in downtown Detroit. They are holding almost daily street meetings and distributions at the nearby 36th District Court, the scene of many eviction and foreclosure proceedings.

At these street meetings, two organizers hold a banner as another member of the team agitates and gets the attention of those going into the court. Meanwhile the remaining activists distribute leaflets and engage people in a dialogue about the campaign and its goals. So far, they have distributed thousands of leaflets and many people have signed up for more information. Police harassment of the street meetings has gradually increased as the courts and bankers see that the campaign to challenge the free reign of the predatory lenders is picking up steam.

A job fair in downtown Detroit this week was also the site of the Moratorium Now! Campaign's mass leafleting. As rows of unemployed workers dressed in their best clothes awaited a chance to get inside and try to get a job, moratorium activists distributed fliers and talked with some of the hundreds of people waiting in line.

The campaign is currently publiciz-



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Quick action stops eviction in Detroit.

ing and preparing for a march through the banking district of Detroit on June 6 from 4 to 6 p.m. to highlight the crimes of predatory lenders. A statewide organizers' meeting to discuss strategy for building a movement to pass SB1306 is scheduled on June 14 from 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the UAW Local 7 hall on Detroit's east side.

Sen. Clarke will then chair an official town hall meeting from 2 to 4 p.m. Clarke will take testimony from community members about foreclosures, evictions, neighborhood blight, lowered property values, increased homelessness and other problems facing the community because of the mortgage foreclosure crisis. During

the meeting, a simultaneous free legal clinic, hosted by the Coalition's legal committee, will provide practical advice to those facing foreclosures and evictions.

Coalition organizers hope to rally support in cities and towns throughout Michigan in order to build the necessary movement that will force the politicians to put a halt to the foreclosure epidemic. Community activists in Benton Harbor and Battle Creek have already expressed interest in holding meetings on the moratorium in western Michigan. The campaign has been contacted by people as far away as Traverse City and Cheboygan in northern Michigan.

Direct action stops eviction

On every front, Coalition activists are committed to stopping foreclosures and evictions. These organizers rapidly switched gears one morning last week when the office received a call that an illegal eviction was about to take place. A woman who had paid her rent and done everything expected of her, awoke that morning to find a sheriff knocking on her door informing her that she had two hours before bailiffs would rip her belongings to shreds and dispose of them in a large dumpster, already waiting outside of her home that morning.

Several Coalition activists, including members of Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice (MECAWI), Michigan Welfare Rights and the Green Party, made their way across town to the property. Alan Pollock of MECAWI photographed the bailiffs assertively, much to their chagrin. As a woman from Michigan Welfare Rights stalled the bailiffs, several activists arranged themselves on the porch so that they blocked the entrance to the woman's home.

Activists were able to stall the bailiffs long enough to contact a judge and get a stay placed on the eviction by the court. According to Coalition attorneys, landlords whose homes are foreclosed must still follow the law by giving tenants proper notice when preparing to evict them.

Readers wanting more information or to get involved can contact the Moratorium NOW! Coalition at 313-964-5813, e-mail moratorium@moratorium-mi.org, or visit the group's Web site at www.moratorium-mi.org. Donations can be sent to the Moratorium NOW! at 23 E. Adams, 4th Floor, Detroit, MI 48226. □

Canada Parliament supports U.S. war resisters

By Dianne Mathowitz
and Jaimeson Champion

The Canadian Parliament voted favorably June 3 on a motion to halt the deportations of U.S. conscientious objectors who are seeking a safe haven in Canada rather than fight in the illegal occupation of Iraq. The vote in the House of Commons was 137-110, with all the opposition parties—the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party, the Bloc Quebecois and the Green Party—voting for the motion, and the ruling Conservative Party voting against.

The motion is nonbinding and could be overruled by the Conservative ruling party. Nevertheless, it is an important escalation of the campaign against the deportation of GI resisters.

The motion to halt the deportations is a strong step against a series of recent reactionary rulings issued by the Canadian Supreme Court. The court's refusals to hear the appeals for refugee status filed by numerous GI resisters have paved the way for the possible deportation of dozens, if not hundreds, of conscientious objectors.

The vote in the Canadian Parliament comes on the heels of a deportation order given to GI resister Corey Glass. Glass, an Indiana resident, signed up for the National Guard in 2002. He was deployed to Iraq in 2005 and served five months as a military intelligence sergeant before going AWOL to protest what he deemed an "illegal and immoral" war. Glass moved to Toronto, Canada, in August 2006.

In a recent interview, Glass said of his decision to join the National Guard: "I signed up to defend people and do humanitarian work filling sandbags if



there was a hurricane. I should have been in New Orleans, not Iraq." (Toronto Star, May 22).

On May 21, Glass was ordered to leave Canada by June 12 and return to the U.S., where he will likely face imprisonment. In the wake of the Glass ruling, and the run-up to the Canadian Parliament vote, GI resisters and their supporters in Canada and the U.S. have been intensifying the grass-roots struggle in support of more progressive policies towards GI resisters seeking asylum in Canada.

Court martial at Ft. Gordon, Ga.

You can add another name to the growing list of U.S. military personnel who are taking a stand against participating in the U.S. occupation army.

Pfc. Ryan Jackson, now age 25, joined the Army in May 2005, hoping that time in the military would offer a path to a college education and a future career.

He went to South Korea as part of the 35th Signal Brigade. There he began to

question what purpose the U.S. military and foreign policy really served.

By the fall of 2007, Jackson determined that he would not participate in war and attempted to gain an administrative discharge. He went AWOL in December 2007, contacted Courage to Resist and other GI support groups, secured the services of a civilian lawyer, James M. Branum, and turned himself in at Ft. Sill, Okla., on April 4, 2008.

On the eve of Jackson's court-martial, a dozen or so supporters from Augusta and Atlanta, including members of the International Action Center, demonstrated outside the gates of Ft. Gordon. Another young soldier stopped by the vigil to express his solidarity and intent to start a chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War at the base.

The following morning, May 29, several anti-war activists attended Jackson's court-martial. He pled guilty to the charges but made an eloquent statement declaring his actions a form of "civil disobedience." He was sentenced to 100 days

in confinement, reduction of rank to E-1, forfeiture of pay and given a bad conduct discharge.

Since he is being credited with time served, Jackson will be out in 29 days. He plans on speaking at the Veterans for Peace conference and going on a Courage to Resist tour later this summer.

A recent, nearly month long, anti-war march through upstate New York, initiated by the Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), and attended by many GI resisters, was a marked success in helping to build support for GI resistance. The march through working-class towns of upstate New York—many of which are sparsely populated but have numerous community members in the armed services—was a crucial step in building broad-based solidarity with the brave men and women who have taken a principled stand against the unjust wars of U.S. imperialism.

GI resisters are courageously leading the struggle against unjust imperialist war. The movement in support of their brave actions must continually strive to match their sacrifice. For more information, see couragetoresist.org. □

The Truth on Military Recruiters & the Draft A Guide to Resistance

This book is aimed at increasing recruiting problems by helping young people and their parents counter the lies of the recruiters.

In this book, you will find practical tools for challenging recruiters, exposing their falsehoods, and getting them out of our schools.

Order online at Leftbooks.com



Food, fuel and the escalating crisis in capitalist globalization

By **ABAYOMI AZIKIWE**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Over the last several months the world has experienced rapid increases in the price of both fuel and food. In the United States motorists are paying more than \$4 per gallon for gasoline while they are spending larger percentages of their household incomes on food consumption as well as energy needs such as heating and electricity costs.

The response from the federal government has been to largely avoid any direct attention to these growing problems and to announce a so-called economic stimulus package which, through some form of wishful thinking, they have told working people that a check for several hundred declining U.S. dollars will have a noticeable positive impact on the nation's ailing economy.

The current spike in fuel and food prices in the U.S., however, is taking place amid other important political and economic developments, including the largest rate of home foreclosures since the Great Depression, and the ever increasing annual military budgets to finance the ongoing occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan as well as other adventures in Somalia and Colombia. Other policies implemented by the Bush administration and the Congress have led to huge transfers of wealth from working-class and poor families to the rich through tax cuts and massive trimming in public and social programs in the country.

At the same time, further pressure is being placed on workers throughout broad sectors of the economy. In the auto industry, the crisis in overproduction and the declining spending power of individual households have brought about significant declines in salaries for production workers, salaried employees and more importantly, the downsizing of tens of thousands of employees.

A recent strike at American Axle, where UAW members attempted to halt a 50-percent reduction in their pay scales and the elimination of major elements of their benefit packages, resulted in a settlement that will further reduce living standards, not only of those who work for the auto industry but across the board.

It has already been announced that 19,000 workers will soon leave General Motors through buyouts and retirement plans. Despite this reduction in the workforce at GM, the company wants to eliminate even more workers in order to cut costs and create space to hire new workers

at far lower salaries and benefits. Having workers perform the same tasks at lower wages benefits only the owners in their ever growing thirst for higher profit margins. These corporate policies, which have been in effect now for over two decades, further hamper the ability of working families to survive amid inflationary pressures and rising health care costs.

Mass worldwide responses to the crisis in fuel and food pricing

During the months of April and May, people in Africa, the Caribbean and Europe held mass demonstrations and

strikes to protest the rising costs of fuel and food. The most militant of these actions in Europe have occurred in France, Portugal and Spain, where fishers and truck drivers have struck in response to the rising cost of fuel and the price stagnation in the fishing industry.

In France, with its pro-U.S. administration of President Nicolas Sarkozy, workers have been engaged in actions now for several weeks. Fishers from France, Spain and Italy have been meeting in Paris to map out long-term strategies for responding to the current crisis. The fishers are calling for direct assistance and subsidies to ease the impact of rising fuel prices and stagnant prices for their products. The European Commission has issued a statement saying that it will exercise some flexibility but has ruled out granting subsidies to the fishers.

Thousands of fishers marched in Madrid, Spain, to the Agricultural Ministry demanding governmental intervention. They handed out 20 tons of fish to demonstrate the plight of their industry. Fishers set off firecrackers and blew whistles to attract attention from the general public and government officials.

One banner held by the demonstrators stated that, "Soaring diesel plus cheap fish equals ruin for fishers." Another chided Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero: "You are sending us to the cemetery."

Food rebellions, strikes illustrate potential long-term problems in both the developed and developing countries

School's out for L.A. Teachers

By **Julia La Riva**
Los Angeles

United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) members are scheduled to stay outside for the first hour of instruction June 6 to protest budget cuts proposed by the State of California. These cuts mean no raises for the foreseeable future, a move by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to cut health care benefits to teachers and other support staff and a dramatic increase in class size.

LAUSD is expected to declare a state of emergency, which allows them to lay off permanent teachers without notice, and thousands of jobs of probationary teachers will be in jeopardy.

Previous actions by UTLA members have included a caravan to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's neighborhood in Brentwood, e-mails and phone calls to state legislators, picketing on Day of the Teacher and leafleting in front of schools on May 27.

According to UTLA President A.J. Duffy, "If we don't do something dramatic, the governor and the legislature will not get the message."

Despite threats of a court injunction against the teachers' union, the June 6 action is fired up and ready. Pro-labor people are coming out to support teachers, students and parents in the fight to save public education. For more information, see UTLA.net. □

In Barcelona one union leader said the entire fishing industry was at a standstill. Union leaders said that they could follow the lead of French workers by blockading the ports, preventing all goods from coming into the country.

In France the government offered 100 million euros as an incentive for fishers to return to work. On May 29 French police broke through the workers' blockade and cleared the Mediterranean oil depots of Fos-sur-Mer and Lavera and a Total refinery in the south at La Mede.

According to the BBC: "On the same day police clashed with fishermen who burned tires in the Atlantic port of Lorient, while hundreds protested in Quimper, Brittany. On Friday [May 30], protesters blockaded the Channel port of Le Havre."

The BBC also reports: "Hundreds of farmers have also been blocking oil terminals near the cities of Dijon and Toulouse. In Italy, at least 5,000 fishermen are expected to strike, the main trade union Federcoopesca says. The government has already refused emergency aid to the industry."

In the so-called developing regions of Africa and the Caribbean the problems of rising fuel and food prices have created growing political tensions. In April Haitians responded with rebellions to rising food prices.

In Somalia, which is living under a U.S.-backed Ethiopian occupation, resistance efforts intensified at the beginning of May when women and youth took to the streets to express their outrage at the worsening humanitarian situation created by Washington's foreign policy

imperatives in the region.

The local currency in Somalia is virtually worthless, leaving people without the ability to purchase food and other essential goods for their households.

Demonstrations also took place in Burkina Faso and Senegal in West Africa. These two former French colonies have suffered under the impact of globalization and neoliberal policies. Their currencies are in decline and the rising debt-service ratios are hampering their ability to provide services to the population.

FAO report predicts prices to remain high

A recent report issued by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), two United Nations agencies, has predicted that between 2008 and 2017 food prices will stabilize after increases in the short term. Yet this purported stabilization in food prices will be at a higher level.

The "OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2008-2017" states: "World reference prices in nominal terms for almost all agricultural commodities covered in this report are at or above previous record levels. This will not last and prices will gradually come down because of the transitory nature of some of the factors that are behind the recent hikes.

"But there is strong reason to believe that there are now also permanent factors underpinning prices that will work to keep them both at higher average levels than in the past and reduce the long-term

Continued on page 8

Former prisoners protest job bias



WWW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

By **Frank Neisser**
Boston

Over 300 ex-prisoners and supporters, many African-American and Latino as well as Asian and immigrants of many nationalities, rallied and marched from Bunker Hill Community College to the Massachusetts State House here May 22 to protest the system of employment discrimination known as Criminal Offender Record Information Act.

The march was the final leg of a four-day march from Worcester, Mass., to Boston. Over 60 ex-prisoners and supporters completed the entire march. Under the draconian CORI system, employers can search and find the criminal records of ex-felons for 15 years. Only after 15 years can the

ex-prisoner file to have the record sealed. It's 10 years for misdemeanors.

As speaker after speaker made clear, the system hurts not only the ex-prisoners but their families too, preventing them from earning a living and surviving. The march was organized and coordinated by the Boston Workers Alliance and by EPOCA (Ex-prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement).

Many community organizations participated, including Neighbor to Neighbor, the Women's Fightback Network and the International Action Center. The march was led by a sound truck provided by USW Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers. Bishop Filipe Teixeira, OFSJC, led chants from the truck. □

National gathering discusses Black community's issues

By **MONICA MOOREHEAD**
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Black activists from around the country participated in a "Black Left Unity Conference" held at the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Culture and History Center May 30-June 1 on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The intergenerational gathering of activists came together to continue the discussion on how to build an effective Black United Front in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina/Rita.

Part of the call for this conference reads: "Back in June 2007 at the U.S. Social Forum, over 50 brothers and sisters gathered in Atlanta to discuss the state of the Black liberation movement and the role of the Black left. Most agreed that the Gulf Coast/Katrina disaster is a defining moment that requires that Black revolutionaries unite and work to build a National Black United Front, its initial focus being the development and support of a Gulf Coast Reconstruction Movement. This movement would be a part of a strategic flank of the wider National Black Liberation Movement.

"Since the Atlanta meeting, many of us have engaged in numerous gatherings and actions in our local and regional areas as we develop direct support for the Gulf Coast and its Reconstruction Movement.

"At the August International Tribunal on Katrina and Rita held in New Orleans, some of us again came together and initiated the 'We Charge Genocide Campaign.' This campaign was initiated to promote the findings of the International Tribunal

on Katrina and Rita, which indicted the U.S. government for committing Crimes Against Humanity for its role in causing the massive deaths, dispersing, suffering and repression against the majority Black and working-class people in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast and to expose the many conditions of national oppression of Black people throughout the U.S.

"We also initiated the Green Ribbon Campaign in direct response to HUD and the New Orleans City Council's plan to demolish public housing in New Orleans, another direct act that will continue to prevent poor and working class Blacks from coming home. Wearing of a Green Ribbon also represents a People's Vigil and symbolizes our human right to land and housing and protests the stealing of the land and homes by the big real estate, banks and moneyed interests."

A large focus of the panel presentations, question and answer periods and break out discussion groups at the conference was on the issues and challenges that the Barack Obama campaign poses for the



WW PHOTO: LARRY HALES

Saladin Muhammad speaks at Black Left Unity Conference, May 31.

Black left now and if Obama does become the first Black U.S. president.

Other issues raised during the conference were on how the Black movement and Black community are being impacted by "globalization," including the U.S. South; imperialist war abroad and the growing economic and political attacks at home; the Afro-Latin@ Diaspora; Cynthia McKinney's electoral campaign, the Reconstruction Party; immigrant rights; labor developments; culture; the demand

for reparations; sexism; and much more.

Those who attended the conference included Saladin Muhammad, Black Workers For Justice and the Black Workers League; ILWU Local 10 leader Clarence Thomas; activist and poet, Amiri Baraka; Million Worker March leader, Brenda Stokely; Ana Edwards, Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality; Ajamu Baraka, U.S. Human Rights Network; Patrisse Cullors, Labor Strategy Center; Efi Nwangaza; Theresa El-Amin; Kali Akuno from the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement; Jaribu Hill, Mississippi Workers for Human Rights; Vickie White, People's Organization for Progress; labor organizer, Angaza Laughinghouse; Larry Adams, New York City Labor Against the War (NYCLAW); cultural artist, Luci Murphy; educators Muntu Matsimela, T. Menelik VanDerMeer and Sam Anderson; Yvette Modestin, Afrocaribenas y de la Diaspora; Colia Clark; and activists representing Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST) and the Troops Out Now Coalition.

The conference delegates agreed to continue the various ways to consolidate the building of a Black United Front on a regional level in the coming months. For more information about this conference, go to www.WeChargeGenocide.org. □

Meeting won with Baltimore mayor

Students wage hunger strike for education funds

By **Steven Ceci**
Baltimore

Students with the Baltimore Algebra Project, along with community supporters, have been protesting the cutting of \$3 million from a youth fund called "Peer2Peer." Peer2Peer is a fund that provides funds to youth organizations for job training in knowledge-based jobs, instead of low-wage jobs at McDonalds, Wal-Mart and Target.

The Baltimore Algebra Project is a student group made of high school students across Baltimore who tutor and mentor fellow students. BAP uses the model of the original Algebra Project, which was created by Bob Moses of SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The concept behind the Algebra Project and now BAP is that at the same time as they are tutoring fellow students in math and sciences, students are encouraged to be politically active and advocates for social justice.

The students from BAP have been fighting for the last two years for full funding of education in Baltimore, which for decades has been shortchanged by hundreds of millions of dollars by the state of Maryland. Joseph H. H. Kaplan, chief judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore, even ruled in 2004 that Maryland owes the Baltimore Public Schools hundreds of millions of dollars.

It's no coincidence that this has been taking place at a time when the public schools of Baltimore are 85-percent African-American. Racism is a strong factor in the underfunding of the schools. The public schools of Baltimore are made up of 10-percent white working-class youth, showing that racism also hurts working-class white youth too as their schooling is also underfunded.

Baltimore City is typical of most U.S. cities where high unemployment, lack of basic services, underfunding of education and police brutality reign for most Black and Brown youth. Only 38 percent of students who enter high school from the ninth grade will ever reach the 12th grade and graduate.

When the mayor of Baltimore, Sheila Dixon, announced she was cutting \$3 million from Peer2Peer funds, the students from Baltimore Algebra—which is part of Peer2Peer—and community supporters decided enough is enough and decided to organize and mobilize to fight back. The students first organized to occupy the park in front of City Hall for three days to protest the cuts to Peer2Peer.

After three days of the encampment at City Hall, the students were threatened with arrest, and then decided to disband the encampment and regroup. A week later the students intensified the struggle by going on a hunger strike to expose the criminal lack of funding for education and job training for young people. Twelve students participated in the hunger strike, taking only water and juice for nourishment.

Mayor Sheila Dixon had scheduled a "gala" on June 2 to promote her youth programs for the city. Because of the hunger strike and the support of the community, over 200 students and supporters packed the gala, which they considered bogus. For the first time the mayor agreed to meet with the students.

Dixon called on all parties to compromise. The students agreed to call off their hunger strike and meet with her.

Chereaya Jones, a 17-year-old junior at Western High School and a BAP organizer, told Workers World: "We feel this is a victory that the mayor has agreed to meet with us; however, we know it is the mayor that needs to compromise and restore full funding to Peer2Peer. It is only because of our actions like marching, the encampment, and our hunger strike that she was forced to even agree to meet with us. We know we must keep the pressure on because the mayor claims the money isn't there but when big businesses need money, they find it. Now is the time to find the money for young people." □

Detroit residents reject trash incinerator

By **Caleb Maupin**
Detroit

The City of Detroit announced May 31 that it had taken the first step in shutting down the trash disposal system known as the "incinerator" by notifying the company that operates it that Detroit would not renew its contract. This device, which currently burns 2,800 tons of household waste a day, dispersing the smoke to Detroit's skyline, has been the subject of a community-based grassroots campaign, whose goal is ending its use.

Those involved in the campaign, including clergy, environmentalists and other community members, are quick to point out the following fact: The city of Detroit pays \$120 per ton to destroy its trash in the incinerator, whereas the national average cost for trash disposal is \$57 per ton, or less than half what Detroit spends.

The private companies that have owned the incinerator in the past, as this device was and still is a corporate, nongovernment-operated facility, include Phillip Morris, the tobacco giant. Currently the incinerator is the property of an "investment group."

It took a fight to win the battle against renewing the incinerator contract. For years, beginning even before the incinerator was constructed, community members have voiced their outrage at the notion of burning the city's trash for the profit of big business.

Environmental concerns are some of the major grievances against the incinerator. Community members in the area of the incinerator's location say that cancer and asthma rates in their areas are much higher than average. Almost all people living near the incinerator and poor and working people, most people of color. An elemen-

tary school is only two blocks away.

A May 13 meeting nearly boiled over as Detroiters, meeting at the Unitarian Universalist church, were furious that they were refused permission to publicly question a representative of the mayor about any corruption and environmental destruction associated with the incinerator.

Whether the incinerator is to continue its operations is still not fully decided. The city administration states that the city now has the option of buying the incinerator—a decision that reportedly must be made by July 1—and making it the property of the city of Detroit, or using other methods of disposal.

Among the crowds that demonstrated outside City Hall on May 30, the solution was clear. "Burning trash has got to go!" they chanted in unison, sending the city leaders an unmistakable message. □

ELLEN MOVES CAMP

Hero of Wounded Knee

By S. Hedgecote

Ellen Moves Camp, known along with Gladys Bissonnette as the "Grandmas of the American Indian Movement (AIM)," passed April 5 at the age of 77 on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Moves Camp and Bissonnette played key roles before, during and after the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee, which moved the Indigenous struggle into the view of the whole world.

The struggles of Indigenous people globally are illustrated in the story of Ellen Moves Camp and Wounded Knee.

The Lakota Nation's title to most of South Dakota and parts of Montana and Nebraska, including the Black Hills (Paha Sapa), was recognized in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. George Armstrong Custer took miners to the Black Hills to find gold and the U.S. broke the treaty and stole 34 million acres of land, leaving the Lakota divided among separate reservations. Over time that land base was further eroded as the Oglala Lakota were forced to lease their land to ranchers for pennies.

In the 1970s, the federal government moved Oglala families into cluster housing to reduce spending on utilities, freeing more land to be leased by cattle ranchers. Meanwhile over 100 Indians had been murdered in racist white towns surrounding Pine Ridge.

Unemployment was at 90 percent. Traditional families and activists were attacked by the Bureau of Indian Affairs-installed reservation government of Dick Wilson and his paramilitary GOONS (Guardians of the Oglala Nation), armed by the FBI. Wilson signed over some 200,000 acres of land to the U.S. for a bombing range.

Underlying these events, the U.S. had secret plans to turn the Paha Sapa into a "National Sacrifice Zone." The continent's richest deposits of weapons-grade uranium lie under the bombing range. Uranium and coal were to be mined, over 188,000 acres destroyed, and incredibly toxic smog and debris would have poisoned the region and destroyed countless square miles of waterways and ponds.

Energy companies signed up to create dozens of coal-fired plants to surround the Black Hills and build a "nuclear energy park" of 25 reactors. Test drilling began on a huge scale. Leaking uranium poisoned the aquifer, the only source of drinking water.

Resistance at Wounded Knee

On the basis of estimates of half a billion dollars in uranium revenue, the U.S. was determined to eliminate AIM and traditional opposition. But the strength of resistance at Wounded Knee forced the Interior Department to retreat from some of its plans.

In 1973 traditional elders with the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO) called AIM to Pine Ridge to protect the people from the GOONS. Denied access to the BIA building at Pine Ridge by federal marshals, AIM held a meeting at Calico with 600 supporters where 1,500 grievances against the BIA and Wilson were taken in a two-day meeting. Then traditional elders Ellen Moves Camp and Gladys Bissonnette stood and challenged the men to take action.

AIM warrior Dennis Banks said of that meeting: "The decision to take Wounded Knee came when Ellen Moves Camp pointed at us and said, 'What are you men going to do about it?' If the women hadn't

done that we'd still be meeting at Calico."

Clyde Bellecourt recalled Bissonnette asking AIM, "Haven't you heard enough? Go back to Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Los Angeles or Portland. We are going to stand here and be warriors." He said that he "was stunned by that confrontation with an elderly woman, wrinkles all over her face."

Wounded Knee was chosen for the takeover protest as it was still held by the Lakota community. The village is the site of the 1890 historic massacre of Big Foot's band of 300 Lakota Sioux women, men and children as they were peacefully moving to the Pine Ridge Reservation to avoid starvation. Instead, they were viciously murdered by the U.S. Army Seventh Cavalry in the snow. The world had heard of Wounded Knee through Dee Brown's book, "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

Some 200 Native people went to Wounded Knee on Feb. 27, 1973, to hold an early morning press conference. The government attacked. The press conference was never held. And the big business media did not report the total government deployment of 17 armored personnel carriers, 130,000 rounds of M-16 ammunition, 41,000 rounds of M-40 high explosives for grenade launchers, helicopters and other aircraft. An army assault unit in Colorado was put on 24-hour alert.

The standoff held the attention of the world. Support committees formed to help educate non-Native people about the conditions of the Indigenous on the reservations, and the significance of Native American Indian culture, language and



PHOTO: ANNE PEARSE HOCKER 1998

the land in the fight against genocide.

During the 71-day struggle against the U.S. military assault of the National Guard and armed FBI agents, Moves Camp served

as negotiator for the protesters with the Justice Department. As Banks recalls: "Once the strength was reawakened with the Oglalas, they became the principal negotiators—especially the women. Because it was their future. From there, AIM took a backseat. The further we stepped back, the further the Oglalas stepped forward."

Moves Camp was from Wanblee and had lost family members in the 1898 massacre. During the military assault in 1973, her nephew Buddy Lamont was one of two Indians killed. On the occasion of the 1998 commemoration of the struggle, Ellen Moves Camp said it's "just a matter of time before another Wounded Knee and ... a violent confrontation with the U.S. government."

On the loss of Ellen Moves Camp, Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier said: "Those of us who really knew her will dearly miss her as she was a big inspiration to all of us. She loved and fought for her People and the Nation without ever once that I know of complaining or asking for something for her personal use."

Ellen Moves Camp stands as an inspiration to Indigenous people in struggle everywhere.

Sources include articles by Ian Record, Lakota Student Alliance; Jon Lurie's article on the 25th anniversary of Wounded Knee for the Pulse of the Twin Cities; and the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Native Americans continue historic battle . . . Demand self-determination at Wounded Knee

Editor's note: Workers World is in its 50th year of publication. Throughout the year, we will share with our readers some of the paper's content over the past half century. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, organizing was going on in Indigenous communities across the United States, as is described in the article in this issue on the passing of Ellen Moves Camp, a Wounded Knee veteran. As Mahtowin wrote in Workers World in March 1998, "The elders asked AIM warriors to come in and help them. So on Feb. 27, 1973, a couple hundred Native people—men and women, youth and elders—went to Wounded Knee, site of the 1890 massacre. They had incredible courage, some guns for self-defense and an unshakable belief in the future. ... They had refused to disappear and instead were rising up to defend Native sovereignty." The following article was the lead on page 1 of WW in the March 16, 1973, issue.

By Cal Bonner

MARCH 14—Over two weeks ago, 200 members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) liberated the village of Wounded Knee. With this one act they created a historic symbol of the struggle for self-determination of Native Americans.

The eyes of the entire world are now focused on the tiny besieged village, encircled by U.S. federal agents who are armed



to the teeth with armored personnel carriers and machine guns. But the strength of the Native Americans themselves, combined with the sympathy and support their action has won from all oppressed and progressive people, has so far prevented the U.S. government from once again carrying out a massacre at Wounded Knee.

On March 11, after negotiations with the U.S. government broke down, the Oglala Sioux militants declared themselves to be a sovereign nation. They put the area under a state of war readiness and declared that if any U.S. government agent entered the boundaries of the newly declared nation, the action would be "treated as an act of war and dealt with accordingly."

The U.S. government responded to the declaration by resealing the area with roadblocks and some 300 armed federal troops and government agents. A 21-member

grand jury in Sioux Falls was convened on March 12 to investigate the occupation of Wounded Knee and to bring down indictments against the AIM leaders.

An ominous note was added to the resealing of the area when the chief of tactical operations for the 300 armed federal officers said on March 12, "We are going to be a lot more hard-nosed about this than we were before." So far, one FBI agent and several Native Americans have been wounded, none seriously, in sporadic gunfire.

The U.S. federal marshals and FBI agents are armed with M-16s and other high-powered rifles, have about 15 armored personnel carriers, and are loaded down with pistols, machine and submachine guns, flak jackets, and other Vietnam War era paraphernalia. They seem to be itching to force an entry into the Indians' territory.

The brothers and sisters at Wounded Knee began their action on February 27 as an attempt to draw world attention to the 500-year-old policy of genocide, of slow but sure physical, moral and cultural annihilation by the racist European colonizers who later set up the U.S. government. This foreign domination over Native Americans has resulted during less than 86 years in the loss of more than

90 million acres of their land, under the watchful eye and helping hand of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

On the 2,500-square mile Pine Ridge Reservation (11,000 Native Americans live here, making it the second largest in the country), per capita income is \$1,500, infant mortality is three times the U.S. average, and life expectancy is a little over 40 years.

In an interview with this reporter at the March 7 demonstration sponsored by the American Indian Movement and Youth Against War & Fascism, Mrs. Mary Ann Red Cloud, direct descendant of Chief Red Cloud, one of the Oglala Sioux's great leaders, spoke of the bleak life for her people at the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Having recently come from the scene of armed confrontation at Wounded Knee, Mrs. Red Cloud pointed out that "the industry at Pine Ridge is token and inadequate, consisting of a moccasin factory which employs few people. And although the average resident of Pine Ridge Reservation makes \$1,500 yearly, more than one-third of that \$1,500 comes from leasing Indian land to white ranchers."

The Native Americans at Wounded Knee are demanding their right to determine their lives free from the oppressive, racist, capitalist government. They are also demanding that the U.S. government honor the terms of the hundreds of treaties with the Native American people which it has broken. □



NYC Trans Day of Action for Social and Economic Justice

The 4th New York City TRANS DAY OF ACTION for Social & Economic Justice will begin at 3 p.m. at City Hall Park on June 27.

The following excerpted points of unity were initiated by TransJustice of the Audre Lorde Project, a lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, trans and gender non-conforming people of color center for community organizing.

We as TGNC [trans and gender non-conforming] people of color (POC) recognize the importance of working together alongside other movements to change the world we want to see. We live in a time when people of color, immigrants and poor people are disproportionately underserved, face higher levels of discrimination, heightened surveillance and experience increased violence at the hands of the state. It is critical that we unite and work together towards dismantling the transphobia, racism, classism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia and xenophobia that permeates throughout our movements for social justice. Let's come together to let the world know that TGNC rights will not be undermined and together we will not be silenced!

» **We demand that TGNC people have equal access to employment & education opportunities.** We are outraged by the high numbers of TGNC people who are unemployed. Many TGNC people continue to face blatant discrimination and harassment from employers due to systemic transphobia. Few TGNC people have access to opportunities for learning in a safe school environment. TGNC people demand that all employers and educational institutions implement non-discrimination policies that respect the rights of all workers and students and that they comply with the New York City Human Rights Law that prohibits discrimination against gender identity and expression!

» **We demand that all people receiving public assistance entitlements, including TGNC people of color, be treated with respect and dignity.** We stand in solidarity with all people living on public assistance. The NYC agency responsible for the administration of public welfare, the Human Resources Administration, continues to ignore our demands to address systemic problems that exist internally and perpetuate the transphobia and harassment faced by TGNC people of color when applying for benefits such as welfare, access to shelters, access to culturally competent and sensitive health care, drug treatment programs, adult protective services, eviction prevention, and other essential services. We demand that the HRA conduct an internal investigation; follow NYC "Guidelines Regarding Gender Identity Discrimination" and develop means of enforcement; implement mandatory cultural competency training on gender identity/expression; implement a fully accessible process for reporting incidents of discrimination; and commit to prioritize hiring of TGNC employees.

» **We demand the full legalization of all immigrants.** TGNC people deserve the right to access competent and respectful immigration services. We demand that the consulates of all countries respect and honor our identities and issue passports and other documentation that accurately reflect who we are. We oppose the guest worker program, the Real ID Act, enforce-

ment provisions to build more walls and give greater powers to the Department of Homeland Security, increased barriers for asylum seekers, the HIV ban and other anti-immigrant policies that continue to divide our communities.

» **We stand in solidarity with all prisoners, especially the many TGNC people behind the walls who are often invisible even within prisoners' rights movements.** We call attention to the under-reported accounts of severe violence and rape that our community faces at the hands of correction officers and other prisoners. We demand an end to the torture and high level of discrimination TGNC prisoners face. We demand that all TGNC prisoners receive competent and respectful health care. We oppose the continued growth of the prison industrial complex that continues to target our communities, yet we recognize that TGNC people need access to services and facilities that lessen our vulnerability to violence within the present jails and prisons. We are opposed to the closing of the "gay and trans housing" unit on Rikers. We call attention to the criminal injustice system that increasingly puts POC, immigrants, TGNC people and poor people behind bars—further criminalizing our communities and our lives.

» **We demand that TGNC people have access to respectful and safe living spaces.** Many TGNC people face severe discrimination from landlords and housing administrators, displacing us from our homes due to gender identity or expression. A disproportionate number of TGNC people have been or are currently homeless. However, many homeless TGNC people continue to face discrimination when trying to access shelters and other assisted living programs.

NYC law and the Department of Homeless Services state that people will be placed in shelters according to that person's gender identity and that discrimination based on gender identity will not be tolerated. We demand that all DHS shelter administrators continue to provide adequate trans sensitivity trainings for all personnel and enforce clear non-discrimination policies that respect the dignity of all homeless people.

LGBTQ rights march spotlights solidarity

The Latin American community held its annual lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer march on June 1 in the Jackson Heights area of Queens, marching down 37th Street. Pictured here is a delegation carrying a "Rainbow Solidarity" banner with the Cuban 5 prisoners, part of the May 1st Coalition contingent, which linked the struggle for LGBTQ rights with the struggle for immigrant rights.

—Report and photo by Steven Millies



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Transjustice march in New York, June 22, 2007.

» **We demand that all children and youth under the jurisdiction of the Administration of Children Services and private foster care agencies have the right to freedom of gender expression and identity.** In the 2002 landmark case *Jean Doe v. Bell*, it was established that children in NYC's foster care system cannot be discriminated against for being transgender and cannot be forced to only wear clothing associated with their birth gender. Government institutions like ACS and private foster care agencies must be accountable for the health of people under their care, and recognize that this includes TGNC people and trans related health care. We demand that ACS initiate a full investigation of misallocation of personal funds and violations of confidentiality issues that have negatively affected the lives of children and youth under their care.

» **We oppose the Bush Administration's "War on Terrorism"** as an excuse to legitimize the expansion of the U.S. as an imperial superpower and to justify a national security strategy that is really meant to militarize our borders and heighten surveillance and control over people living in the U.S., separating our communities by fostering feelings of hate, xenophobia, and violence. Every day we see more and more of our basic human rights like health care, jobs, education, housing, privacy, self-determination and the right of dissent slipping away from all of us. We must stand up now to demand the immediate removal of all U.S. troops from all countries under occupation and demand an end of use of U.S. dollars to cultivate and sponsor wars against people in the U.S. and abroad.

» **We demand justice for the many TGNC people who have been beaten, assaulted, raped, and murdered,** yet these incidents continue to be silenced, misclassified or blamed on the victim.

The police and the media continue to criminalize us even when we try to defend ourselves. An increase in hate crime laws will not solve the problem, but will give increased power to the state to put more people in jail. Instead we call for a unified effort for all of us to look deeper into the root causes of why these incidents happen. As a society that seeks social justice, we seek to find ways of holding people accountable and coming to a joint understanding of how we can make our communities safer for all of us.

Like many other oppressed communities, TGNC people are targeted, profiled and brutalized by the police. We demand an end to the profiling, harassment, arrest, brutality and murder that occur at the hands of the police! These incidents of violence do not occur in isolation, and are aggravated by racism, sexism, classism, xenophobia, misogyny, ageism and damaging, strict heterosexist values.

We stand in solidarity with the family of Sean Bell, which is still tirelessly working towards justice. We stand in solidarity with the Jersey 4, four lesbian women arrested in the West Village for defending themselves from a man that assaulted them. We stand in solidarity with Miriam, a transgender woman who was pushed out the window of her fourth-floor apartment and left for dead. We commemorate the memory of Amanda Milan, Sakia Gunn, Ruby Ordeñana, Gwen Araujo, Erika Keels, Victoria Arellano, Lawrence King, Saneesha Stewart and the many other brave souls we have lost, who struggled and lived their lives fearlessly day in and day out, being true to who they were. They keep the fire of struggle burning within all of us.

On June 27, TGNC people of color and allies will take on the streets of New York City once again and demand justice to let the world know that the Stonewall rebellion is not over and we will continue fighting for social and economic justice, raising our voices until we are heard. We call on all social justice activists from communities of color, the LGBT movement, immigrant rights movement, the anti-war movement, the reproductive rights movement, youth and student groups, trade unions and worker organizations, religious communities and HIV/AIDS and social service agencies, both local and around the country, to endorse this call and build contingents to march in solidarity together.

To endorse, email endorsetdoa@alp.org; for more information email info4tdoa@alp.org or contact Elizabeth Marie Rivera at 718-596-0342 x18. Join us on MySpace at www.myspace.com/transjusticenyc. □



FMPR teachers fight repression, grow stronger

Federación de Maestros, Puerto Rico (FMPR)

San Juan, Puerto Rico—The Service Employees International Union's (SEIU) convention began this Saturday, May 31, under a total state of siege. More than 100 police, private security agents and government anti-riot units blocked all entrances and established a perimeter of control in the immediate area surrounding Puerto Rico's Convention Center.

SEIU delegates were transported in buses and the convention organizers prevented them from coming and going freely. The phrase "Justice for all" in real-

ity was "Repression for all" as the strong police presence and the beating of demonstrators at the convention entrance reflected the moral deterioration of the premier leader of SEIU. It appears that SEIU President Andy Stern's continuing alliance with the bosses has led him to employ the same repressive tactics that they use against striking workers.

At midmorning, hundreds of members of the Federación de Maestros de Puerto Rico (FMPR) met in front of the Convention Center's principal entrance

with a banner that read: "Let's Support Federación de Maestros, Stop Union Raid!"

The FMPR is a union that represents 40,000 Puerto Rican teachers. The Federación is under attack because it has opposed the neoliberal policies implemented by the governor of Puerto Rico, Aníbal Acevedo Vilá, and because of a successful strike it carried out in February 2008 in which some 26,000 teachers participated with wide community support.

At 11:30 a.m., the FMPR demonstra-

tors forced their way to the Convention Center. In spite of police beatings, pushing and aggression, the teachers succeeded in breaking the blockade at the principal entrance. Once there, they set up a picket line, distributed leaflets and spoke with hundreds of SEIU delegates.

The Federación stated: "We fulfilled our objectives despite the police repression. First, we denounced the union raiding and SEIU bureaucrats' alliance with the bosses. Second, we spoke with delegates and succeeded in getting their support."

SEIU's internal opposition and dozens of SEIU delegates showed their support for the Federación, noting that many of their own SEIU locals in the States have had experiences with the International similar to the FMPR's.

Last year SEIU established an alliance with the government/employer and the ruling Popular Democratic Party (PPD)—Gov. Acevedo Vilá's party. The goal was to raid the existing teachers' union (FMPR) by using an organization of directors and supervisors, called La Asociación, which actually operates as a political arm of the PPD in the Department of Education.

Dennis Rivera, vice president of SEIU, is one of the principal fundraisers for Gov. Acevedo Vilá's re-election campaign and he was the person, along with Roberto Pagán, another SEIU vice president, who planned to destroy the FMPR through a decertification. In December 2007, La Asociación affiliated with SEIU and on Jan. 8, 2008, the FMPR was decertified, a full month before the teachers' strike in February.

The Federación de Maestros is a democratic, combative union with extensive community support. The president of the FMPR, Rafael Feliciano, elected by the direct vote of thousands of teachers, indicated that "La Federación de Maestros will prevail because it is a tool of struggle for the Puerto Rican teachers."

—Federación de Maestros, Puerto Rico (FMPR)

Confrontation outside convention

By Arturo J. Pérez Saad

As thousands of delegates and guests poured into the quadrennial convention of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and as the Democratic Party primary contest between Sens. Obama and Clinton was taking place, a drama far more meaningful to the workers of Puerto Rico took the stage in San Juan on May 31. Hundreds of members of the Federación de Maestros de Puerto Rico (FMPR), a militant, independent union of teachers, in a courageous display of creative and tactical skills, broke through metal barricades, scores of armed police and SEIU staffers.

FMPR President Rafael Feliciano Hernández gave a series of press interviews and exchanged views with SEIU delegates. In an on-the-scene telephone interview with a Workers World supporter of FMPR he said, "In the local newspapers and the TV news outlets, the protests of the FMPR and the solidarity expression of the [SEIU] delegates were the primary news."

Later, Feliciano commented on an evening workshop: "About 15 SEIU delegates and some 40 militant teachers came. The discussion was extraordinary. Solidarity was paramount and we shared how the bureaucratic, corrupt leadership hurts all of us. Moreover, we defined bridges of



Above, FMPR's Rafael Feliciano on the bullhorn.

communication for future actions."

The underlying lesson unfolding is the failure of business unionism—top down, opportunistic, class-collaborationist leaders. The FMPR is structured from below. FMPR President Feliciano earns \$2,600 a month, no more than the highest paid teacher. He is limited to two consecutive terms. Dues are based on affordability. Most important, the FMPR is dedicated to raising class consciousness, and to view management/the capitalist government as adversaries.

In a document—"Analysis of the Puerto Rico Teachers Strike of 2008"—Luis Ángel

Torres Torres, FMPR secretary of education, analyzes the lessons of the ten-day strike. His insights show how important the trade unions are as instruments of progressive change that elevate the role of the multinational workers/teachers. The document concludes, "There is no triumph without struggle, and no struggle without sacrifice."

Many feel strongly that when the convention is over, the FMPR will have made many new friends and will be stronger as they fight the Puerto Rican government and SEIU-Stern leadership's attempt to steal their members. □

Food, fuel & the escalating crisis in capitalist globalization

Continued from page 4

decline in real terms. Whether transitory or permanent, appropriate policy action for agricultural development and for addressing the needs of the hungry and the poor needs to take account of both these characteristics."

The report takes into consideration some of the changing characteristics in the global economy and their impact on rising food prices and growing food insecurity in the developing world. This food insecurity has also become more acute in the U.S. with the deepening economic crisis, illustrated through the rise in unemployment and underemployment, downsizing, rising fuel and energy prices and the decline in the real value of the U.S. dollar.

The OECD-FAO Outlook report "has been prepared in an environment characterized by increased instability in financial markets, higher food price inflation, signs of weakening global economic growth and food-security concerns. Although projections for agricultural commodity markets have always been subject to a number of uncertainties, these have taken on more importance in this year's edition."

FAO convened an international conference in Rome on June 3 to discuss the

growing international crisis in food security. According to a BBC report on the conference: "The hosts of the Rome conference—the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)—has warned the industrialized countries that unless they increase yields, eliminate barriers and move food to where it is needed most, a global catastrophe could result."

Can it happen here? Implications for the U.S.

In the U.S. there has been a significant rise in not only the price of food and other essential goods and services, but the impact of these increases has had detrimental effects on working families and the poor. This is clearly related to the crisis facing truckers and other transport workers and networks due to the sharp rise in diesel fuel prices.

Truckers in the U.S. have complained and have staged limited protests against the rising price of fuel. Yet the price of fuel continues to rise without any relief being proposed or offered to the general public aimed at lowering gasoline prices. It is obvious that the Bush administration is not interested in placing any restrictions on the actions of the multinational oil companies, which have, amid a growing economic downturn, reaped record

profits over the last year. The only solution proposed by the pro-oil-company policymakers is to open larger sections of the country to drilling.

These oil profits are not rechanneled into the state sector to offset the negative impact the price hikes are having on the working class and the poor. Consequently, unless the people intervene, there will be more of same in the near future.

Activists and organizers in the United States need to give greater attention to the impact of rising fuel and consequent food prices. With the growing problems facing truckers in particular, it could seriously impact the ability of these drivers to get food into stores across the country. Prices could soar and the crisis could even lead to food shortages.

How could activists organize around such a crisis? It is appropriate to proclaim that people have a right to energy and food, and to devise a program of demands to assist the people in fighting for these rights.

However, in the long term this problem can only be solved with the nationalization of the oil industry in the United States under a socialist economic system. Through nationalization under socialism, the price of petroleum products would be controlled for domestic usage and con-

sumption. The use of petroleum products in the areas of agricultural, commodities manufacturing and transportation would be carried out more efficiently and the surplus from the sales of these products and services could be re-invested in alternative, environmentally friendly sources of energy.

In addition, a serious national program aimed at developing a comprehensive public transportation system would not only conserve oil but also save significant amounts of money for individual households and at the same time take tremendous pressure off of the environmental degradations that are the result of outmoded means of energy production and usage.

These issues and demands must be raised by popular organizations since the current administration, and even most people in the U.S. Congress, as well as state and local governments, are beholden to the oil and energy interests. The fact that people could raise these demands would heighten the level of contradictions between the multinational corporations and various levels of government on the one hand and the interests of the people on the other and consequently intensify the class struggle inside the U.S.

Go to panafricannews.blogspot.com.

New U.S. fleet to threaten Latin American sovereignty

Continued from page 1

America and the Caribbean that is very upsetting for U.S. imperialism. The majority of these countries, forced in many cases by the uprising of the masses, are trying to move away from the U.S. sphere of dominance. And that also includes the most important area of financial domination.

Ideas of regional integration resonate

The countries south of the Rio Grande have political differences among them.

Some are undergoing revolutionary processes, as in Cuba and Venezuela, where the ultimate objective is to do away with capitalism and change the class relationships in order to build up the country on a socialist basis.

Then there are ones, like Argentina, Brazil and Chile, among others, that only want reforms and are leaving the capitalist mode of production intact while trying to implement progressive programs to benefit the poor.

Others, like Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua, are beginning to look towards socialism as the only way to develop. The first two are trying to take back control of their natural resources through nationalizations.

But even many of those that only want reforms are moving away from the financial domination of U.S. imperialism, represented by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Both Brazil and Argentina, for example, paid their enormous debt to the IMF to end their dependent relationship with the financial vulture. Bolivia in 2006 also broke relations with the IMF.

Many countries in Latin America are widening their markets. While in the recent past they traded mostly with the U.S. and Europe, they are now increasingly trading with China and, very importantly, with each other. The ideas put for-

ward by Cuba and Venezuela of regional integration and cooperation are more and more accepted.

Cuba and Venezuela, along with Bolivia, Nicaragua and Dominica, are members of the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America (ALBA), which is a tremendous effort of trade and cooperation in all spheres—education, culture, sports, health, finance, energy, infrastructure development, and so on. It has the ultimate goal of uniting the whole region following Simon Bolivar's ideas of "La Patria Grande" (The Great Homeland).

ALBA's proposals include energy development programs like Petrocaribe and Petrosur and, very crucial, the Bank of the South. This bank is an attempt to replace the WB and the IMF with a Latin American entity that will benefit all the peoples of the South and would operate not as a profit-driven organism but as a financial organization that will take into consideration each country's economic situation.

Many efforts are being conducted to stimulate cooperation and solidarity. One of those was the emergency summit in Nicaragua on May 7 under the theme "Sovereignty and Food Security: Food for Life," to deal with the food crisis in the area. Fifteen countries attended.

Besides ALBA, a new and larger regional organization was formally constituted on May 23 in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. Twelve South American countries signed the final document that has as a goal the eradication of poverty, defense of biodiversity, integration and cooperation. Taking into consideration the differences of each country, they will adhere to the treaty as their condition permits.

These working summits and proposals are in direct competition with the U.S. aim of controlling the region. Washington's desperation can be seen in its increased aggression toward the South.

U.S. secession strategy: Bolivia

The Fourth Fleet is only the latest action against the Latin American effort to pursue independence and sovereignty. Other tactics are stimulating the formation of secessionist movements, strengthening the opposition, working through allied governments and other military operations, like Plan Colombia.

Secession by itself is not a negative development, if it comes from the struggle of oppressed masses to liberate themselves from an oppressor. However, the secession tactic used by the U.S. is totally the opposite. It is promoting secession in several countries to strengthen the entrenched oligarchy and break away a wealthy area to the detriment of the poor majority of the nation, thus destabilizing what the U.S. perceives to be an "enemy country or regime." They are trying to use this strategy in Ecuador, Venezuela and Bolivia.

In Venezuela, the region targeted is the Zulia, the oil-rich area in the northwest that was the main reason for the creation of the Fourth Fleet during WWII. Now, once again, the same fleet can be a threat to help the secession of that wealthy part of Venezuela. However, this time, Venezuela's oil belongs to the people and they, with the leadership of President Hugo Chávez, have vowed to defend it.

Bolivia, however, is in great danger. The secessionist movement there, thoroughly fascist, has been very violent against the peasant and Indigenous majority. The Media Luna (Half Moon)—an area containing the wealthiest provinces of Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando and Tarija—has been threatening the progressive national government of Evo Morales with secession from the rest of the country. It is an attack on Morales's programs of nationalizing the gas and oil, establishing programs for the poor, and recognizing the rights of the Indigenous nations within Bolivia.

Even though these types of separatist referendums are illegal under the Constitution, which also prohibits the installation of foreign (U.S.) military bases in Bolivia, these provinces have moved to hold them anyway. Santa Cruz held its own on May 5. Although the abstentions, blank votes and "No" votes amounted to 50 percent, the oligarchy's media deceptively announced that 80 percent had voted "Yes."

On June 1, the provinces of Beni and Pando held theirs. Again, a significant abstention rate was reported in both, but the separatists claimed victory. Tarija will have its referendum on June 22.

The role of the U.S. government in all this is crucial. The Civic Union of Santa Cruz, headed by Croatian businessman Branko Marinkovic, is the leading organization behind the secessionist movement. It is allied with a viciously racist and violent group called the Youth Union of Santa Cruz. These groups go from province to province stimulating hatred against the Indigenous population and Morales in preparation for the referendums. Their propaganda gets financial support from the U.S. Agency for International Development, a long-time conduit for the CIA.

Interestingly enough, the U.S. ambassador to Bolivia is Philip Goldberg, who was instrumental in the secession of Kosovo from Yugoslavia. In February, according to Prensa Latina, Bolivian Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca stated that the U.S. Embassy had to explain why it was funding the "Organization for Police Studies," previously known as "Special Operations Command"—an intelligence service committed to promoting destabilization campaigns. Other similar organizations attached to the U.S. Embassy were being investigated for espionage and conspiracy.

Many of these organizations have now been dissolved.

E-mail: hjceci@workers.org

Next: Other strategies of aggression: Colombia as Washington's best ally.

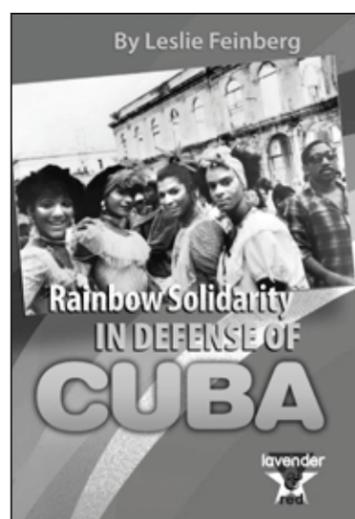
Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

This soon-to-be published work, a compilation of 25 articles from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper, shows how the Cuban Revolution has worked to overturn prejudice against same-sex love inherited from the colonial and imperial eras. The book shows the Cuban Revolution's trajectory of progress in hard facts. It's a must-read to understand the revolutionary process required to uproot prejudice.

While all the labor to edit, design, lay out and proofread the book is voluntary, printing costs are high. So your financial help is needed to make this happen!

Donors should specify how they would like to be listed in Acknowledgments. Write checks to World View Forum; put "Rainbow Solidarity" in the memo line.

Send to World View Forum, 55 W. 17th St., 5th fl., NY, NY 10011. For information, call 212-463-7146.



Puerto Rican independista defies grand jury

By Anne Pruden
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Brooklyn Grand Jury's district attorney agreed May 30 that Elliot Monteverde Torres, a Puerto Rican independence activist, would not have to testify. When it was clear that Monteverde Torres would refuse to testify, it was agreed to adjourn the case. As Monteverde Torres' attorney, Roger Wareham, explained, "It's a recognition of the strength of the movement" that this is left as an "open case."

Thirty representatives of many progressive and working-class organizations, who had come to the court in solidarity with Monteverde Torres, rallied and picketed for almost two hours at Cadman Plaza as they awaited a decision on the case. Ana López of the Hostos Grand Jury Resistance Campaign led the rally in chants of "FBI, CIA, out of Puerto Rico!" The next scheduled solidarity actions will be at the United Nations buildings in Manhattan on June 9 and 10. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes:

Racism, national oppression and self-determination

by Larry Holmes

Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery

by Sam Marcy

Harriet Tubman: woman warrior by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Causes of turmoil in Jamaica by Pat Chin

Black youth: repression & resistance by Leilani Dowell

Black & Brown unity: A pillar of struggle for human rights & global justice! by Saladin Muhammad

Are conditions ripe again today?

40th anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion by John Parker

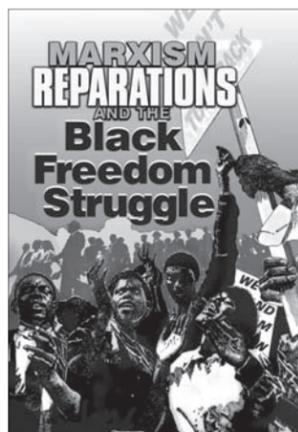
Racism and poverty in the Delta by Larry Hales

Domestic Workers United demand passage of a bill of rights by Imani Henry

Black Reconstruction: The unfinished revolution by Minnie Bruce Pratt

If you would like to help make sure that this book is widely distributed: call 212-627-2994 or email wwp@workers.org, online: www.workers.org. You can help promote the book or organize a book signing party.

Order online at www.Leftbooks.com.



COVER GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Cuban 5 appeal denied, protests set

June 4—As the Cuban Five near the end of their 10th year of unjust imprisonment, the 11th Circuit Court denied their latest appeal today. A three-judge panel upheld all convictions but ruled that the Miami trial judge must re-sentence Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, and Fernando González, who are serving life sentences.

The Cuban Five were jailed for monitoring Miami-based CIA-backed paramilitaries, who planned violent attacks on the Five's homeland, Cuba. Meanwhile Luis Posada Carriles, who in 1976 organized the first mid-air bombing of a passenger airliner, killing 73 people aboard Cubana 455, walks free in Miami.

Demonstrations demanding immediate freedom for the five heroes begin on Thursday, June 5. Make your voice heard! For more information on demonstrations see www.freethethefive.org, www.antiterroristas.cu and www.freethethefive.org. □



This week, we are using our editorial column to reprint excerpts from a talk given by WW Managing Editor Monica Moorehead at the Black Left Unity Conference held in Chapel Hill, N.C., May 30 to June 1. The panel discussion was entitled "The War at Home & Abroad: The War on Iraq & the Gulf Coast/Katrina Disaster." See page 5 article. Moorehead represented the Troops Out Now Coalition.

The Black movement, the anti-war movement and Obama

If any community has a stake in being in the forefront of fighting against the war, it is the Black community, considering that a disproportionately large number of troops that have died in wars from Vietnam to Iraq have been Black as well as Latin@ and Native and were forced into the economic draft.

Regarding some of the national anti-war coalitions, at best they can get out large numbers that are overwhelmingly white. We are not against anyone who comes out against the war—it is totally progressive. But it cannot stop there. We should unite with these coalitions when we feel it helps to push the struggle forward. But in general, their program, their main orientation is not about pushing the anti-war movement in the direction of the Black masses and the working class.

No matter how big and wonderful the anti-war marches are, these demos do not pose a threat to the government; the war makers are not afraid of them because in appearance these demonstrations are marginal at best, they are not centered in the working class or the masses.

When Black workers are a large component and in the leadership of the anti-war struggle, the dynamics change dramatically.

What is happening with the capitalist economic crisis—everything from the incredible rate of foreclosures along with evictions, to the gentrification from New Orleans to Harlem, to rising unemployment, rising food prices, people not being able to afford the gas to drive to work—more than anytime since the Iraq War and maybe since the 1930s, there is the real possibility of tying the struggle to end the war with the struggle against racist economic and political attacks.

The longshore workers shutting down the docks this past May Day against the

war is unprecedented. It was Black workers in the leadership of ILWU Local 10 who showed other workers and rank-and-file militants that there is a basis for pushing their labor organizations on a local or national level to follow suit. This shutdown showed that going from protest to resistance is possible. This action was a turning point and is an important lesson for those in the anti-war movement who are genuinely serious, not just about getting the workers involved in the anti-war movement, but having the anti-war movement centered in the working class.

If Barack Obama gets to the White House, there's going to have to be a strong reconstitution of the Black revolutionary left that has experience in the working class and that is bold, dynamic and forward-moving, to serve as a counter-development. [Ed.: This was written before it was announced that Obama had won the required number of delegates to become the Democratic Party nominee—the first time in history an African American has won the nomination of either imperialist party for high office. See the June 5, 2008, Workers World for Larry Holmes' analysis of the Obama candidacy.]

So much of the response will ride on the way the economic crisis is deepening, the way anger over the war is deepening and the wars and occupations in Iraq and in Afghanistan are not ending. The bill for the war is going to be anywhere from \$5 trillion to \$10 trillion before it's all done. Workers are realizing that this is not only money robbing their health care and their pensions; it's literally robbing the gas out of their car. Those of us who want to push the anti-war movement in this direction have a lot of thinking and strategizing to do before and after the elections. □

Support the paper that supports the workers

Trial Subscription for strikers four weeks for \$1 □

Send me a year's subscription to Workers World for \$25 □

Workers World Newspaper on the picket lines for 50 years

For 25¢ a day you can become a Workers World supporter

Workers World is able to publish anti-war, anti-racist news because we are truly independent. You can't get anything like it in any of the big business controlled media. We have no corporate backers or advertisers. We rely completely on your donations. A donation of \$100 a year is just about 25¢ a day. Become a member of the Workers World Supporter Program and help build the newspaper year round.

Sponsors who contribute \$100 a year or more receive a year's subscription to the print edition of the newspaper, a monthly letter, five free trial subscriptions to the print edition, and a book from WW Publishers.

Choose a Supporter Program option:

- \$75 Enclosed to become a WW Supporter.
- \$100 Enclosed to become a WW Sponsor.
- \$300 Enclosed to become a WW Sustainer.
- One time donation of \$ _____.
- Please send me more information about the Supporter Program.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

Clip & return to WW Publishers 55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011
 212.627.2994 fax: 212.675.7869 www.workers.org email: ww@workers.org

McClellan book confirms Lenin on 'free press'

By Gary Wilson

The Bush White House used propaganda and lies to justify its war on Iraq. The big media did not question this, but instead cheered it on. So says former White House press secretary Scott McClellan, a key propagandist for the war.

In a just released book, "What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception," McClellan confirms what many have known for some time and what Workers World has reported since before the war on Iraq was launched. There have been other, more detailed accounts about the lies, but none from someone inside the White House.

The reason for McClellan's book detailing how the White House has repeatedly lied is unknown. He was the official press secretary who put those lies into words. He could be set up to be the fall guy for those crimes, if there were a war crimes hearing. That might be motive enough for writing the book.

The media's response to the book was at first muted, though the book was available in bookstores for about a week. Then the politico.com Web site gave a summary of the most damning contents and that report spread like wildfire around the Internet.

The New York Times gave more space to reporting on reactions to the book than the book itself. One Times report said that "surprisingly, some prominent journalists have agreed" with McClellan's assertion that "the national news media" were "complicit enablers" of Bush's push for war on Iraq. The Times reporter was apparently not surprised by McClellan's assertion. After all, the New York Times played a key role in promoting the war. The Times reporter was surprised, however, that Katie Couric, anchor of CBS Evening News, and Brian Williams of NBC Nightly News both publicly agreed with McClellan.

Couric, speaking on the CBS Early Show, said, "I'll start by saying I think [McClellan is] fairly accurate." Couric added that she felt pressure from "the corporations who own where we work and from the government itself to really squash any kind of dissent or any kind of questioning of [the war]."

NBC's Williams agreed on the pressure. "I was in Kuwait for the buildup to the war, and yes, we heard from the Pentagon, on my cell phone, the minute they heard us report something that they didn't like."

In February 2005, CNN's chief news executive, Eason Jordan, was forced to resign after a videotape of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, was leaked in which he was heard complaining that the U.S. military had deliberately killed 63 journalists in Iraq whose reporting the Pentagon didn't like. (Washington Post, Feb. 12, 2005)

Jessica Yellin, who worked for MSNBC in 2003 and is now at CNN, said that the corporate executives that own the networks dictated the pro-war coverage. General Electric, one of the biggest Pentagon contractors, owns MSNBC.

"The press corps was under enormous pressure from corporate executives, frankly," Yellin said on Anderson Cooper's 360 on May 28.

At that time, GE executives demanded and got the removal of the Phil Donahue show on MSNBC because it was not sufficiently pro-war. Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR.org) revealed an internal memo from a corporate executive indicating that the show was cancelled because they wanted only pro-war shows. (FAIR, March 7, 2003)

There is a popular myth about the media in the United States, that it is somehow free. But it is in times of crisis like this that the media's corporate control is unveiled, if only partially.

The claim that there is "freedom of the press" is a lie. That's the reality of capitalism. Almost a century ago, V.I. Lenin wrote, "In practice the capitalists, the exploiters, the landowners and the profiteers own nine-tenths of the best meeting halls, and nine-tenths of the newsprint, printing presses, etc." If anything's changed it's that they now own 99 percent of the meeting halls and the printing presses and television stations. Lenin added that this means that the workers and farm laborers are, in practice, denied freedom of the press by "the sacred right of property."

Lenin continues, "The present 'freedom of assembly and the press' in the 'democratic' German republic is false and hypocritical, because in fact it is freedom for the rich to buy and bribe the press, freedom for the rich to befuddle the people with venomous lies of the bourgeois press, freedom for the rich to keep as their 'property' the landowners' mansions, the best buildings, etc." (Lenin on "Democracy" and Dictatorship, Pravda, Jan. 3, 1919)

Who'd have thought that the Bush administration would end up so publicly confirming what Lenin had to say about the capitalists? □



Send a check or money order using the form below. To contribute using a credit card, use our secure online Web site at www.workers.org

Introduction to Marx, Engels, Marxism by V.I. Lenin

State & Revolution by V.I. Lenin

What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement by V.I. Lenin

Bolsheviks & War Lessons for today's anti-war movement by Sam Marcy

INDONESIA Second Greatest Crime of the Century by Deirdre Griswold

Available from Leftbooks.com.

FARC leader MANUEL MARULANDA, PRESENTE!

By LeiLani Dowell

People struggling for national liberation everywhere and workers throughout the world lost a great leader with the death of Manuel Marulanda on March 26.

Marulanda, a founder of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP), was a skilled guerilla tactician as well as a Marxist theorist. Put into practice, his efforts led to the fruition of the largest and longest-lasting guerrilla movement in the Western Hemisphere. Building this movement was Marulanda's life work. His story is the history of this struggle.

While the U.S. imperialist government with its allies in the Colombian government and corporate media denounce the FARC as a so-called "terrorist" organization, they ignore the terror inflicted on the people of Colombia that provoked the creation of the FARC-EP in the first place.

After rebellions followed the assassination of Liberal Party leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on April 9, 1948, the Colombian government, led by the Conservative Party, carried out mass violence against communists and members of the Liberal Party. For ten years thereafter, a war between the two parties spread throughout the country, with hundreds of thousands massacred.

No one was closer to the situation than Marulanda himself, and in "Cuadernos de Campaña" (Campaign Notebooks), he describes the beginnings of the armed resistance: "It was enough that a region or a district was identified as having 'communist' or 'collarejo' residents for the police and the armed Conservatives to destroy it, killing some of the inhabitants,

burning their houses, taking prisoners who never appeared again, stealing their livestock and raping women. ...

"[Resistance] groups made their appearance in the Cordillera Central with many natural deficiencies at the beginning: inexperience, inadequate organization, objective limitations, etc. For those condemned to death by the *chulavita* death squads, they were something like a lifesaver. For the peasants who did not want to continue on the unknown road of roaming to the cities, temporarily or permanently abandoning the fruit of many years of hard work, it was the hope of staying, participating and once in a while having a glimpse of their native land to which they were so spiritually and materially attached. ...

"Many groups organized themselves and dissolved. There was still the hope among workers that the current situation was going to go away. But despite all that, something remained solid: people ready to take all the implicit risks of their



decision to resist, and to transform that self-defense resistance into a conscious mass attitude to achieve their goal so that future generations didn't have to experience the scourge of having guns in their hands. These men and women have merited a place in the true 'Homeland's History.' They formed the nucleus of the determined struggle."

The resolution of ten years known as "La Violencia" was a pact known as a National Front, in which the nation's presidency would switch back and forth between the two parties for four presidential terms.

However, while the type of governance might have changed, the repression against peasants and workers would only return and continue to this day. Marulanda points out: "The bourgeoisie wisely knew how to take advantage of these heroic struggles in order to take the leadership in overthrowing the reactionary dictatorship of 1953 and to open a new chapter in governing. This new chapter had slightly different characteristics, but was aimed at

preserving the same oligarchic and neocolonialist interests."

After a Pentagon-inspired military incursion into several independently governed peasant regions in 1964, the FARC set up camp in Riochiquito and formally organized themselves.

Despite a concerted campaign by the Colombian government, backed by the U.S. government to the tune of \$600 million a year, the FARC has not disappeared. Conversely, in the face of continued paramilitary massacres, the murder of trade unionists and a general level of repression against all unarmed social movements in Colombia, the FARC has continued its determined resistance against imperialism. Meanwhile, the truth about corruption and murder at the hands of the giant multinational corporations and the very heads of the Colombian government steadily surface.

Marulanda notes several factors in the resilience of the FARC despite all odds. In addition to truth, experience and solidarity, he states as the last factor: "We are guided by a revolutionary ideology. Our political beacon is the theory of socialism, shaped in the practice of communist activity."

Workers and youth around the world owe a debt to and will be forever inspired by Manuel Marulanda's life of struggle and tenacity in the face of overwhelming odds—proving once again that the power of the people can repel the forces of oppression.

Long live the struggle of the Colombian people!

All the Marulanda quotes come from translations in the book "War in Colombia: Made in U.S.A.," available at leftbooks.com.

Egyptian workers wage 'biggest struggle since British rule'

By G. Dunkel

A workers' movement in Egypt that disdains the official trade union is building its own independent organizations and is confident enough of its strength that it recently attempted a general strike. Faced with a wave of strikes that are growing larger and more intense, the U.S.-backed regime of President Hosni Mubarak has responded with concessions for some workers and repression for workers whose leaders are particularly militant.

Historian Joel Beinin, who teaches at the American University of Cairo, writes that the workers' movement "is the largest and most sustained social movement in Egypt since the campaign to oust the British after 1945." (Le Monde Diplomatique, May 2008)

Growing poverty and hunger among workers amidst a major boom for the Egyptian capitalists and the international capital flooding into the country are fueling the workers' anger and organizing. Egypt's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 6.8 percent in 2007 and is expected to exceed 7 percent for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. This growth produced 2.4 million new jobs, almost all requiring advanced skills or professional training, which means these jobs are beyond the reach of Egypt's workers and peasants.

While bosses and some skilled technicians are thriving, for most workers the situation is sharply different. Some 45 percent of them earn \$2 or less a day and can no longer afford the inflation that has more than doubled the price of many

commodities, such as peppers, cooking oil and onions, or even bread, a staple which is heavily subsidized. The International Monetary Fund has called on Egypt to stop subsidizing bread, which would make the suffering for the poor even greater.

Thirty-eight percent of Egyptian workers have no formal job contracts or social insurance, which means that they can be fired at will and have no benefits—like vacations, sick days, unemployment or even workers' compensation for on-the-job injuries. In the private sector, the proportion is an astounding 71 percent. There is evidence that privatization has led to deterioration in health and safety conditions.

Mubarak offers raises, but hikes gas prices

In April, after fights on bread lines left 15 people dead, Mubarak called out the army to restore order and also to set up military bakeries, since low-paid government bureaucrats had been diverting subsidized flour to the private sector. Egyptian blogs report that as May ended the lines weren't as long as they were in April and the fights weren't deadly, but bread was still not readily available.

Early in May, Mubarak gave government employees a 30-percent raise in an attempt to undercut the call for a general strike. But then he hiked the price of gasoline more than that to pay for the raise.

Misr Spinning and Weaving Co., a public sector conglomerate and the largest industrial enterprise in Egypt, is in Mahalla al Khurba, an industrial town in the Nile delta north of Cairo. It has



Egyptian strike
September 2007

PHOTO AL JAZEERA

and the organizations the workers are building. One thing the MB objects to is the role of women in the struggle. In the pictures of the strikes at Misr, there are always

been the leader in this strike wave, its workers conducting successful strikes in December 2006 and September 2007. The strike called there in April of this year was picked up nationwide.

While giving the Misr workers, state employees, a 30-percent raise, Mubarak arrested three of the most militant leaders, who had openly identified themselves as socialists: Kamal el-Fayoumi, Tarek Amin and Kareem el-Beheiri. On June 1 they were released from the State Security jail and are home with their families.

By freeing the three, the Mubarak regime avoided the heat that would have been generated if he had kept three workers in jail whose only crime was that they effectively represented the workers in their enterprise. Other strikes have been breaking out in plants that didn't get the raise and bonuses that went to Misr.

The Muslim Brotherhood, usually an opponent of Mubarak, has made ambivalent statements about this strike wave

women with their fists raised, some with head scarves, some without. One Mahallah female activist made the women's role clear (see arabist.net): "Don't call us ladies! We are workers and we are proud of it. We work in the factory, we work at home, and we work in the farm. We are workers!"

Muhammad al-Attar, an elected member of the strike committee at Misr, told a rally after he was released: "I want the whole government to resign. I want the Mubarak regime to come to an end. Politics and workers' rights are inseparable. Work is politics. What we are witnessing here—this is as democratic as it gets." (Le Monde Diplomatique, May 2008).

Egypt, with nearly 80 million people, is the strongest Arab ally of the U.S. and gets more U.S. aid than any other country, except Israel. It protects the southern and western flank of Israel as well as the Suez Canal, the route Mideastern oil takes to Europe. □

Si el liderazgo demócrata y republicano no respeta el derecho al regreso de l@s sobrevivientes de los huracanes Katrina y Rita, ¿cómo podemos esperar que defiendan el derecho al regreso de l@s palestin@s?



Cynthia McKinney

WW FOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Cynthia McKinney habla sobre Israel

“No en mi nombre”

El 16 de mayo, Cynthia McKinney, ex congresista por el estado de Georgia, y quien está en busca de la nominación presidencial bajo el auspicio del Partido Green, habló en un mitin en contra del 60 aniversario de la fundación del estado pro Sionista de Israel, llamada Al Nakba, (El Desastre) por el pueblo palestino. Las siguientes declaraciones fueron hechas por McKinney durante el mitin frente a la sede de la ONU.

El día de mi cumpleaños el año pasado, declaré mi independencia de un liderazgo que por medio de sus votos en apoyo a la maquinaria guerrista, es hoy cómplice en las guerras criminales, torturas, crímenes en contra de la humanidad y crímenes contra la paz.

Declaré mi independencia de cada bomba arrojada, cada veterano herido y cada niño muerto.

Observé que la dirección demócrata en el Congreso ha fallado al no restaurar en este país las normas constitucionales abrogando el Acta Patriótica, el Acta de la Evidencia Secreta y el Acta de las Comisiones Militares.

Que había ayudado al espionaje ilegal en contra del pueblo americano. Y que quitó la destitución presidencial de la mesa.

Además, observé que el liderazgo demócrata en el Congreso ha fallado en promover la integridad económica de este país al no rechazar los recortes en los impuestos propuestos por Bush. Fallaron en implementar un salario decente, cuidados de la salud del programa Medicare para tod@s, y dieron aún más dinero al Pentágono a pesar de que ese mal utiliza nuestros dólares que ganamos con tanto esfuerzo.

Y podemos agregar a esa lista la falta de defender los derechos humanos y la dignidad.

Si el liderazgo demócrata y republicano no respeta el derecho al regreso de l@s sobrevivientes de los huracanes Katrina y Rita, ¿cómo podemos esperar que defiendan el derecho al regreso de l@s palestin@s?

Si el liderazgo de este país tolera el asesinato de hombres negros y latinos desarmados por oficiales policiales—asesinatos extrajudiciales—¿cómo podemos esperar que pongan fin a las muertes en el Medio Oriente?

¿Si la dirección demócrata y republicana acepta la limpieza étnica en este país a través del re-aburguesamiento y los préstamos predatorios, por qué

debemos esperar que le pongan fin en Palestina?

Si el liderazgo de este país impide la autodeterminación de l@s indígenas de este país, ¿por qué debemos esperar que apoyen los derechos de l@s indígenas en otras partes?

Y muy tristemente, la prensa sensacionalista corporativa prefiere engañarnos haciéndonos pensar que reportar sobre un pastor, un ex candidato a la vice presidencia y un ex magnate de televisión por cable constituye una urgente discusión sobre su propio apartheid pasado y presente, ¿entonces, por qué debemos esperar una discusión honesta sobre el apartheid y el Sionismo?

Espero que ya esté claro. Nuestros valores nunca estarán reflejados en la política pública mientras nuestros partidos políticos y nuestro país permanezcan secuestrados.

Secuestrado por l@s patriotas fals@s que usurpan los aplausos del pueblo y a la misma vez traicionan nuestros valores.

He decidido que ni los demócratas ni los republicanos van a obrar más como si todo fuera normal—no en mi nombre.

Que ni los demócratas ni los republicanos usen mis dólares de impuestos y traicionen mis valores, un solo día más—no en mi nombre; que ni los demócratas ni los republicanos se han ganado mi máspreciado poder—mi voto.

Y que ahora es el momento para hacer algunas cosas que no he hecho nunca antes para tener algunas cosas que nunca he tenido.

Y entonces aquí ahora, declaro mi independencia de la transferencia de armas, incluyendo los helicópteros Apache; F16s; y los cohetes sidewinder, hellfire y Stinger.

Declaro mi independencia de la ocupación, de las casas demolidas, de los presos políticos y de los bebés muriendo en los retenes.

Declaro mi independencia de los vetos de la ONU, de las tierras expropiadas, de los recursos naturales robados y de la instalación de regímenes títeres. Declaro mi independencia de todas las formas de deshumanización y no temo hablar la verdad a los poderosos.

Y me siento feliz al unirme a los pueblos amantes de la paz por todo el mundo que saben que la paz no puede prevalecer sin la justicia.

Que nunca nos cansemos en nuestros esfuerzos para obtener justicia. Gracias. □

Difundiendo la verdad alrededor del mundo

De la redacción de Workers World/Mundo Obrero

El monopolio imperialista de las mayores fuentes de noticias ha provocado una reacción airada alrededor del mundo buscando noticias alternativas y análisis de eventos políticos. Much@s miran al Internet como la única posibilidad de encontrar un punto de vista que favorece a l@s trabajador@s y los pueblos oprimidos y much@s están encontrando este punto de vista en Workers World/Mundo Obrero. Los artículos de WW/MO han alcanzado a lector@s mucho más allá de los ejemplares impresos en inglés y español del periódico semanal.

Esperamos que este primer reporte de nuestros éxitos impulse ideas entre nuestr@s lector@s para difundir estos artículos aún más ampliamente.

En los EEUU, los artículos de WW/MO están difundidos por muchos lugares progresistas en el Internet. La Pan African News Wire en panafrican-news.blogspot.com y el Axis of Logic en axisoflogic.com son dos ejemplos de lugares importantes que publican los artículos de WW/MO con frecuencia. Se pueden publicar todos los artículos sin costo alguno, siempre y cuando se publiquen completos y se reconozca la fuente de origen.

El reportaje de la huelga en la American Axle por Bryan Pfeiffer, la defensa de Barry Bonds por Mike Gimbel, nuestros editoriales sobre las elecciones presidenciales—todos han sido reimpresos y difundidos ampliamente electrónicamente, como ha sido también la descripción del sindicalista Clarence Thomas de la huelga de los trabajadores portuarios del Primero de Mayo.

En el exterior, nuestros artículos se publican en la edición impresa del periódico The New Worker basado en Bretaña (newworker.org) algunas veces al mes. Los artículos son usados a veces por la revista progresista basada en Canadá encontrada en globalresearch.ca.

Los artículos nuestros que atraen más atención son frecuentemente los que desafían las mentiras de los medios de comunicación corporativos. Por ejemplo, el artículo de Gary Wilson de la dirección de la redacción sobre la crisis de China-Tibet fue citado extensivamente en China Daily, resultando en medio millón más de visitas al portal del WW/MO en el Internet. Desde entonces, amig@s polític@s han traducido ese artículo en portugués, francés, italiano y alemán, mientras que nuestr@s redactor@s de Mundo Obrero lo tradujeron al español.

El análisis antiimperialista de Abayomi Azikiwe de la lucha en Zimbabue fue publicado en mayo en el Herald de Harare, la capital de Zimbabue. El artículo de Sara Flounders sobre el intento de Bush de explotar el desastre en Myanmar fue citado en un periódico local de Myanmar y luego recogido por varios periódicos de otras partes.

Junto a nuestras propias traducciones

al español en workers.org, que están duplicadas en otros sitios, incluyendo corrienteroja.net, l@s lector@s pueden encontrar algunos de nuestros artículos en los siguientes idiomas: árabe, en la edición impresa del Ba'ath en Siria; en francés en el sitio de michelcollon.info; en portugués en las revistas odiario.info y resistir.info, con versiones editadas en Avante, el periódico semanal del Partido Comunista Portugués (avante.pt); en italiano, traducido por Curzio Bettio del grupo Soccorso Popolare, que se puede encontrar en varios sitios de la Red, por ejemplo, pane-rose.it; en holandés, en Manifest, en ncpn.nl; en ruso, el artículo sobre el hambre mundial y otros artículos, escritos por la redactora en jefe Deirdre Griswold, publicados en el sitio de un periódico de trabajador@s ucranian@s, proletar.org.ua; otros artículos son traducidos al chino y al coreano de vez en cuando.

Además de los artículos de WW/MO, una entrevista reciente con Larry Holmes del Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero, sobre las elecciones estadounidenses está en la edición de mayo del periódico del Polo de Renacimiento Comunista en Francia (PRCF). La contribución de Teresa Gutiérrez en una conferencia en México en la cual analiza la lucha por los derechos de l@s inmigrantes fue traducida por la cooperativa de traducción Tlaxcala y salió en tlaxala.es y en rebellion.org. La redactora asistente de WW Mónica Moorehead y la organizadora del movimiento contra la pena de muerte Gloria Rubac, colaboraron en un artículo significativo para un libro francés sobre el fascismo y la represión estatal, publicado por PRCF.

Los artículos y libros de la redactora asistente Leslie Feinberg sobre la lucha e historia del movimiento lesbiana/gay/bisexual/trasgénero han sido traducidos a todos los idiomas mencionados arriba, y algunos más.

Versiones de las charlas que resumen las primeras dos partes del libro venidero de Fred Goldstein, “Gigante con los pies de arcilla”, han sido traducidas al francés, italiano, portugués, y español, y publicadas en varios sitios y en Marxismo militante, la revista del Partido Comunista Boliviano.

El resumen de Goldstein, presentado en el Cuarto Seminario Marxista en La Habana, Cuba este mayo, fue traducido al español por la redactora de Mundo Obrero, Berta Joubert-Ceci, y desde entonces ha sido publicado en rebellion.org, visitado frecuentemente por el movimiento político de Latinoamérica. Fue publicado también en sitios por todo el continente, incluyendo ARGENPRESS.info y el portal del Partido Refundación Comunista de Puerto Rico (refundacion-comunistapr.com).

Si usted tiene información de otros sitios de la Red que no sabemos, o tiene ideas sobre cómo podemos difundir los artículos de Mundo Obrero, dentro y fuera de los Estados Unidos, comuníquese por favor con nosotr@s y escriba a jcat@workers.org. Gracias. □