

W50 years WORKERS WORLD

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\$1,000,000,000,000? United mass action can STOP giveaway to Wall Street bankers

By Fred Goldstein

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke have attempted to stampede Congress into handing them dictatorial financial authority so they can carry out a \$700-billion bailout of Wall Street.

The aim of the Paulson plan is for the government to buy up the bad debts of banks, mortgage brokers, insurance companies and any other corporation that can be classified as a financial institution.

These loan sharks are the same institutions that made huge profits trafficking in subprime and other mortgage loans. Now home prices are declining, adjustable-rate mortgage payments are going up, the cost of living is skyrocketing, and the economy is shrinking—leaving workers with fewer jobs and smaller paychecks. Millions can no longer pay their mortgages.

While screaming crisis, the bankers are rushing to the front of the \$700-billion bailout line.

If approved, the Paulson plan will raise the government's bailout of the super-rich to one TRILLION dollars. It has already committed \$315 billion to bail out giant insurer AIG as well as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and Bear Stearns banks.

What could be done with such a princely sum? It could be used to pay for universal health care, affordable housing, affordable education, day care, job creation and other basic needs. This money is urgently needed to deal with the real crisis of the workers and the oppressed.

The bankers' books are filled with bad debts. They bought up these debts thinking to increase their profits through collecting interest payments from the workers. But now the gravy train of interest payments is over, so they want the government to come in and take the bad debts off their books.

Their front man is Paulson, who spent 32 years at the investment bank Goldman Sachs and was the biggest single shareholder in the company. Now secretary of the Treasury, he is coming to their rescue.

Attempt at a financial coup

Paulson tried to terrorize Congress and the entire population into quickly giving him unlimited authority to dole out hundreds of billions to the banks. He threatened that the "credit markets" would seize up, leaving people's businesses, jobs and lives in jeopardy. In plain language, it means that these moneybags,

already bloated with hundreds of billions in assets, will stop lending unless they get their hands on the Treasury's money.

Paulson presented Congress with a paltry three-page proposal to explain why the Treasury needs to spend the \$700 billion! It was virtually empty of any specifics other than the authoritarian demand in Section 8 that: "Decisions by the Secretary pursuant to the authority of this Act are non-reviewable and committed to agency discretion, and may not be reviewed by any court of law or any administrative agency."

In this grab for unlimited financial power, Paulson wants to operate unimpeded by any legal or constitutional restraints. It was an attempt at a financial coup by the so-called banking fraternity, headed by Paulson.

He has around him a whole team of former Goldman Sachs bankers. Bush's White House Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten is also from Goldman Sachs. There's John J. Mack, head of Morgan Stanley, another giant investment bank. Paulson called on him for advice on the bailout of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. And he consults with William Gross of PIMCO, a giant bond fund with \$830 billion in assets.

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Protests delay Troy Davis execution

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Sept. 23—Jubilant supporters of Troy Davis gathered tonight for a celebration on the steps of the Georgia State Capitol here.

They had been expecting to hold a death vigil for the Savannah man, believed innocent by many, who was convicted of killing a police officer in 1989.

Even though the U.S. Supreme Court had agreed to hear a motion of appeal on Sept. 29, the state of Georgia, in a highly irregular move, went ahead and issued an execution order for Sept. 23.

The Supreme Court intervened less than two hours before Davis was to be
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BOSSES VS. IMMIGRANTS

From Tucson to Denver

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AFTER HURRICANE IKE

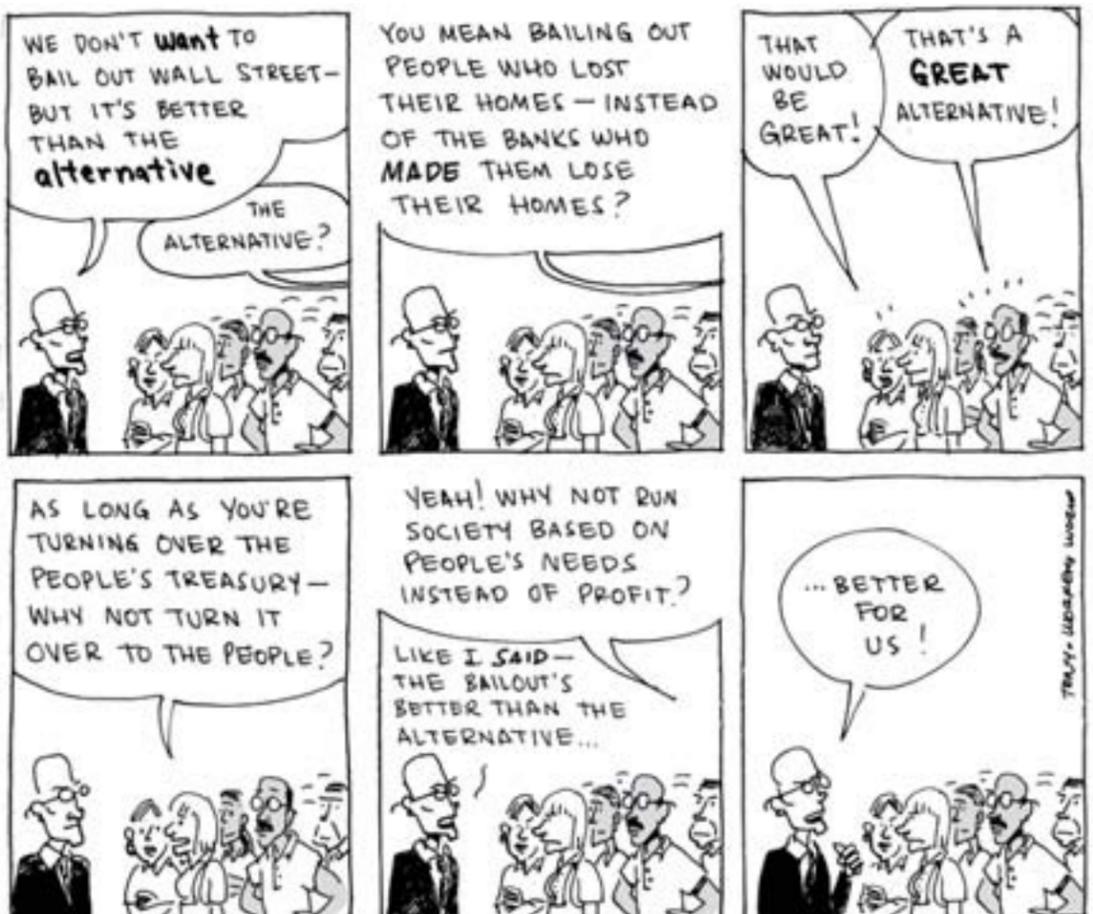
What big business hath wrought

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WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Robert Pratt of UNITE HERE at Michigan rally to stop foreclosures.



Foreclosure protests in Lansing, L.A., Boston

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The Jesse Jackson campaign: National oppression & class conflict

By Sam Marcy

This article by the founder of Workers World Party, which appeared Feb. 2, 1984, in this newspaper, explained why the party's position on national oppression in the United States required it to support the primary campaign of Jesse Jackson that year. The views Marcy laid out, when applied today, explain why WWP this election is supporting the candidacy of Cynthia McKinney and Rosa Clemente. Below are excerpts from the original. A full version of the article is available at www.workers.org.

We propose to discuss the propriety of a working class party giving support to the Jesse Jackson primary campaign in the Democratic Party.

The Jackson candidacy is unique in terms of presidential elections, not only in that it is the first time that a serious attempt is being made by a Black candidate to run for president, but that it has aroused a truly popular movement of the Black people.

It is necessary to distinguish the Jackson candidacy from other Black leaders who have run (some of whom were subsequently elected). This is necessary in order to isolate those particular features which are characteristic of his campaign. It will also enable us to deal with the campaign from the viewpoint of national oppression as well as its relation to the class struggle in general.

Unlike Brooke candidacy

In 1966, Edward Brooke of Massachusetts ran for the U.S. Senate and was elected on the Republican ticket. He was the first Black Senator since the days of Reconstruction. He was again elected in 1972.

Previously he had acted as Attorney General of Massachusetts and might have been reelected in 1978 had it not been for allegations of fraud or misconduct in relation to his divorce proceedings. This was used against him in very much the same way as the charges against Adam Clayton Powell a decade earlier.

Brooke did not proclaim himself and was not during his tenure in office a leader of any movement. He was a solid member of the bourgeois establishment. He ran as an establishment candidate.

Of course, he was in the forefront of the civil rights legislative struggles in the Senate and distinguished himself particularly in the successful fight to block the nomination of Nixon's ultra-right racist appointee for the U.S. Supreme Court, Harold Carswell.

In every other respect, Brooke was a capitalist politician identified most of the time with the liberal wing of the Republican and Democratic parties.

How different is the Jackson campaign? Is Jackson not indeed running in the primary of a capitalist party? Is he not, like former Senator Brooke, part and parcel of the capitalist establishment?

If one were to judge by superficial appearances, the answer would be yes. **In reality, however, Jackson is running against the establishment.**

Notwithstanding the fact that he continually promotes a left-liberal line on most fundamental political questions, which does not distinguish him very much from other liberals such as George McGovern, Gary Hart, or Alan Cranston, it is very plain that they are all part and parcel of the capitalist establishment which Jackson is running against. ...

The fundamental difference, however, is that Jackson is leading a movement—which was not the case with

Brooke and is not the case with any of Jackson's rivals in the Democratic primary.

Movement of oppressed people

What is the nature of the movement that he is leading? **It is a movement of the oppressed people.**

That is the crux of the matter.

Were he leading any other type of movement, let us say a more left-wing version of the McGovern-Hart-Cranston supporters, were his anti-war utterances (which are not anti-imperialist in character) sharper and more clearly defined, and even if he were more militant on labor and other social issues, his effort would merely be in the direction of a bourgeois liberal movement and would not be a truly progressive break from his presidential rivals.

It would merely be a 1984 version of the older populist movements, which were of course bourgeois in character, notwithstanding their radicalism. ...

It cannot be stressed too frequently that the Jesse Jackson movement is a movement against national oppression, the oppression of a whole people, and it is this which makes it a qualitatively different struggle. Viewed from this perspective, his campaign is objectively directed against the capitalist establishment, notwithstanding that he himself may subjectively be for it.

The very first and highly significant struggle of the Jackson forces against the National Committee of the Democratic Party over the very important rules governing the primary and caucus elections fortifies our conclusion only too well.

Rules issue

The rules, as they were defined two years ago, enabled an easy choice between the two candidates then presumed to be the front-runners, [Ted] Kennedy and [Walter] Mondale, by requiring that a candidate win 20 percent of the primary or caucus vote in order to receive a proportional share of a state's delegates to the presidential nominating convention. ...

By the very nature of the rule, it works against Black or Latin candidates. Viewed in that light, it is racially motivated.

Even if we consider Jackson's swift ascendancy in the polls and his rising popularity which all acknowledge, the 20 percent rule is clearly still an insurmountable obstacle in the way of getting the kind of primary vote for Jackson which would reflect the strength of the Black movement and such allies among Latin people, women, and whites as he might gather.

In an effort to persuade the Democratic National Committee to lift the rule or at least compromise to some extent, Jackson has proposed that perhaps a 10 percent threshold might be acceptable. However, after a great deal of behind the scenes maneuvering, the Democratic National Committee rejected the compromise and stood firm on the racist, exclusionary 20 percent.

Richard Hatcher, the mayor of Gary, Ind., and the campaign manager of Jackson, had this judgment of the Democratic National Committee's rejection of Jackson's compromise offer: "We have been told repeatedly the deck was stacked against us here, the deal was cut long ago, and the vote on anything we brought up would be 35 to 1."

Replying to Hatcher, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Charles Manatt, said this: "Enough is enough of having somebody trying to push the Democratic Party around." (Both quotes from the

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People tell Michigan legislators:

'MORATORIUM NOW!'

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Lansing, Mich.

Chanting "Bail out the people, not the banks," hundreds of poor and working people from across Michigan converged on the Capitol here on Sept. 17 demanding the State Legislature enact SB 1306, a two-year foreclosure moratorium bill. The action was sponsored by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions.

Protesters were outraged that the federal government has pledged hundreds of billions of dollars to bail out the same mortgage, banking and insurance companies that caused the foreclosure crisis. Activists were serious and determined to win relief by forcing the state and federal governments to pass a moratorium to

immediately halt foreclosures.

The very diverse, multinational array of people came from Detroit, Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Flint, Lansing, Ypsilanti, Adrian, Sault St. Marie and other cities and towns across Michigan. Many face foreclosure and eviction or are already victims of the home foreclosure epidemic.

Dozens of UNITE HERE union members came from Detroit on a bus sponsored by the Change to Win labor federation. Other unionists included United Auto Workers, Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of Teachers.

The Green Party of Michigan, Detroit Greens and the Cynthia McKinney presidential campaign were represented, as were Students for a Democratic Society, National Lawyers Guild, Workers World

Party, Food Not Bombs, the independent newspaper collective Critical Moment, Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice, Michigan Welfare Rights, Call 'Em Out, Latinos Unidos of Michigan, Grand Rapids Latino Community Coalition, Joint Religious Organizing Network for Action and Hope, and the Adrian Dominican Sisters & Associates for Peace.

After leaving buses, vans and carpools, protesters began marching in a huge picket line. Sandra Hines and Abayomi Azikiwe of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition led chants of "We the people demand relief—Moratorium NOW!" and "A home is a right—We're gonna fight, fight, fight!" The chants echoed loudly from the Capitol and other buildings in downtown Lansing.

"We must have the moratorium and we must have it now!" declared Azikiwe as

he and co-chair Kris Hamel kicked off the rally on the Capitol steps. "We're going to build the people's movement. We have to mobilize and organize. The solution must come from the people!"

Fight, fight, fight!

Reverend Ed Rowe of Central United Methodist Church in Detroit, one of the coalition's initiators, said, "We're fired up and ready to go. No more bailouts to the rich." Rowe said all faith-based organizations should be supporting SB 1306. He pledged ongoing support to the coalition, whose office is in his church. Rowe worked with state Senator Hansen Clarke in drafting and sponsoring SB 1306. Clarke told the crowd he was "outraged" over the bailouts to the banks and demanded that the

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Marta Rojas denounces bank auctions of people's homes.

WW PHOTO: LEILANI DOWELL

'Bail out Main St.—not Wall St.'

By LeiLani Dowell
Los Angeles

In the middle of a work day on Sept. 17, more than 60 people attended a protest and press conference at the downtown Los Angeles Federal Building to demand a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions. The event was organized by the Labor/Community Coalition to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions, under the theme "Bail out Main Street—not Wall Street."

John Parker, West Coast coordinator of the International Action Center and member of the Harvard Blvd. Block Association, explained that "The mortgage companies have been playing with and gambling on people's lives." He urged: "We have to change the government's priorities by demanding what we need. They don't count on the will of the people."

Father Richard Estrada, associate pastor of Placita Olvera Church, described how many of the people who attend his church have recently had their homes foreclosed by the banks. He told the assembled crowd, "The only way the people will get through this is to stand up and march."

Gloria Saucedo of Hermandad Nacional Mexicana said: "We all know families who spent years saving money to pay for their mortgage. Months later the banks tell them they have to pay exorbitant interest rates. All they are doing are working and trying to have a home for their children. The government is giving money to the rich, but what about the communities?"

Fernando Fernando of BAYAN-USA said about the world's largest insurance company: "AIG was bailed out for \$85 bil-

lion, but there are more homeless. Where is the justice? This country's taxpayers demand a moratorium on foreclosures!"

Sharon Black of the Ad Hoc National Network to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions explained the legal basis for the moratorium demand: "The law says that every time there is a disaster, there is supposed to be a moratorium on foreclosures. This economic crisis is clearly a state of emergency."

Marta Rojas, a member of the Service Employees International Union who narrowly avoided the foreclosure of her home this year, denounced the auctions of people's homes taking place throughout Los Angeles, calling them "vultures preying on the community." The Ad Hoc National Network to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions had protested one such auction a week before the Sept. 17 action.

A representative of the youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—described how the foreclosure crisis has extended to affect students, who are seeing student loan offers disappear. This is occurring particularly at community colleges, where working class youth and youth of color often begin their higher education.

Other speakers included Rosie Martinez and Marva Burgess of SEIU Local 721's executive board, and Caroline Hughes of the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, a non-profit community advocacy and counseling agency that fights discriminatory and predatory lending.

Dowell represented FIST at the Sept. 17 demonstration.

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'Foreclose the war, not our homes!'



Protest stopped at prison, and women inside responded by making "No war" sign with socks.

WW PHOTOS: LIZ GREEN

By Julia Morse
Boston

Activists from the Women's Fightback Network, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together and the International Action Center rallied in front of the Countrywide Bank in Boston's Lower Roxbury/South End on Sept. 20 to protest evictions and home foreclosures affecting thousands of people in Massachusetts.

The protest was part of the Emergency Moratorium Campaign demanding that Gov. Deval Patrick use his executive powers to declare an economic state of emergency to halt all home foreclosures, evictions and utility shutoffs.

Shouting "Foreclose the war, not our homes," the moving protest then marched up Massachusetts Avenue to South Bay Jail, which houses men and women serving sentences for mostly crimes of survival. The protesters stood on the street in front of the prison and confronted police and prison staff while directing chants of solidarity upward to the prisoners, who heard and saw them, banged on the windows of their cells and raised their fists in acknowledgment.

On the women's side of the prison, women on several floors put "NO WAR" signs in their windows, using toilet paper and socks.

"We stand in solidarity with you," said Miya Campbell, member of the WFN and FIST. "We will continue the fight on the streets because the Wall Street bankers are the ones who should be in prison and not you! Food, fuel and housing are a right. They can bail out the banks for a trillion dollars while they throw us on the streets!" Solidarity messages were also given by FIST member Jon Regis, WFN member Rachel Hassinger and Bishop Felipe Teixeira.

The moving rally continued down



Massachusetts Avenue to the South Bay Shopping Plaza across the street from NSTAR, a utility that recently sent out 125,000 shutoff notices to Massachusetts consumers. At the same time they are endangering the poor with electricity shutoffs, NSTAR executives and board members are fattening their paychecks with multi-million-dollar salaries and stock options. According to an NSTAR income statement, stockholders have been awarded more than \$900 million over the past year. All along the march, drivers eagerly accepted literature on the economic crisis and honked their horns in support.

Activists then brought the rally to shoppers at Stop & Shop, where, despite harassment from the cops, nearly 100 people signed a petition to declare an emergency and took copies to have others sign. (Copies can be downloaded from www.iacoston.org.) The protest was part of the campaign launched by the Ad Hoc National Network to Stop Moratoriums and Evictions (www.stopforeclosuresandevictions.org). □

Beware right-wingers denouncing 'Wall Street'

By Caleb T. Maupin

As banks fail, jobs disappear and the economy sinks deeper into a horrific crisis of poverty and misery, the television channels and political campaigns have suddenly become full of the most unlikely people denouncing "big business."

Lou Dobbs, Glenn Beck and even Sarah Palin and John McCain have suddenly become "defenders of the working people" against "Wall Street greed."

Dobbs and Beck are broadcast nightly on CNN, a privately owned, corporate-funded network. Their programs are paid for many times over with advertis-

ing dollars from the biggest banks and corporations.

Dobbs and Beck often criticize big business—but in totally distorted ways really meant to confuse workers and the middle class about the source of all their pain.

Dobbs rails at big business for hiring immigrant workers. But he is silent about the way U.S. corporations, through pushing for so-called "free trade" agreements, have ruined the economies of Latin America, forcing workers in those countries to come here just to survive. This is a crime of big business he has clearly forgiven.

Beck's way of being "anti-establishment" was to run an hour-long interview

with Bob Barr, the Libertarian candidate for president. Barr's platform calls for complete deregulation of big business and the abolition of every social program and protection won through progressive struggle, from children's services to college financial aid.

Beck has given no airtime to the campaigns of Cynthia McKinney or Ralph Nader, although they are clearly much more anti-establishment than Barr and ahead of him in some of the polls. How anti-establishment can Bob Barr be? He is author of the "Defense of Marriage" Act, which makes it seem like same-sex couples are the big problem confront-

ing families in this country. Meanwhile, families of all kinds are torn up by housing foreclosures and evictions, unpayable debts and health crises because of lack of affordable health care. What's Barr doing about that?

Among these right-wing demagogues who preach against big business is Ron Paul, who held his "Rally for the Republic" as a counter to the Republican National Convention. In his speech to this seemingly anti-establishment rally, Paul claimed that U.S. schools don't teach "free market economics" any longer. He also claimed that the U.S. needs to stop following ideas like "corporatism and socialism."

Is he at all in touch with reality?

Any youth who has attended school in the U.S. knows that "free market economics," not socialism, is shoved down your throat at every opportunity. And anyone who has ever been unemployed should know that the U.S. economy has nothing to do with socialism. Every socialist revolution has immediately led to guaranteed jobs for all. Unlike capitalism, which is totally built around providing profits for a few and needs a reserve of millions of unemployed to keep down wages, a socialist economy is publicly owned and can plan production to meet people's needs.

While these voices that play on people's frustration are now emphasizing pseudo anti-corporate rhetoric, they haven't let up on their attacks on immigrants, calls for militarization of the border or hatred of affirmative action.

Beck has defended the racist Philadelphia police and gave free publicity to the hate book "Murdered by Mumia." In his interview with the author, Maureen Faulkner, she was never confronted or challenged on her claims, all of which were made with the motive of having Mumia Abu-Jamal executed for a crime he did not commit. How anti-establishment is it to side with racist cops in their drive to kill an innocent man?

Lou Dobbs continues to spin John Birch-style fairy tales about the U.S. being conquered by globalist conspiracies while ignoring the terrorism that the U.S. government is committing against people in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan—wars initiated by the Bush administration on behalf of the huge oil and "defense" companies, the one sector of the U.S. economy

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\$1,000,000,000,000? United mass action can

STOP giveaway to Wall Street bankers

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As the quintessential Wall Street representative, Paulson fielded the requests of the financial industry as they lobbied to get in on the act. In an early draft of the proposal, security firms—i.e., stock brokers—were excluded from the bailout. In the final version, they were included. In the early version, only banks headquartered in the U.S. were included. The later version was broadened to include all financial institutions with operations in the U.S.

The feeding frenzy could not be hidden. "Even as policy makers worked on details of the \$700 billion bailout of the financial industry, Wall Street began looking for ways to profit from it." (New York Times, Sept. 22) The bankers successfully lobbied to have all manner of investments covered, not just mortgages.

They began to jockey for position to manage the same funds that the Treasury was going to take off the books of the banks. They stand to earn hundreds of millions of dollars a year in fees as Paulson draws up plans to hire his fellow bankers—the crooks who brought on the crisis—to advise on the bailout.

Trying to sell it to Congress

Paulson and Bernanke had to testify before the Senate Banking Committee on Sept. 23 to try to sell the bailout. It was clear that they had overreached. The senators were almost all forced to push back. Partly it was their usual demagoguery and posturing meant for the benefit of the electorate. But it was also fear that Paulson and Bernanke did not really have any workable plan.

Committee members also voiced skepticism on the excessive demand for totally arbitrary authority and the complete lack of even the slightest gesture of concrete assistance to the masses. After being pummeled in view of the television cameras with demands for oversight, Paulson, who wrote the "non-reviewable" provision, declared himself to be an advocate of "oversight" and "accountability."

Both Bernanke and Paulson stonewalled the committee over any measure to directly stop or even diminish home foreclosures. When Paulson was asked about the 10,000 foreclosures a day going on right now, he double-talked about how the plan would "eventually" lift the housing market and make it easier for people to stay in their homes—always predicting that without their plan, things would take an even more disastrous turn.

Much time was spent on the need to limit executive bonuses. It has become well known that in 2007 the bankers at Bear Stearns, Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers and Morgan Stanley gave themselves a total of \$39 billion in bonuses.

Both Paulson and Bernanke refused to budge on the issue, saying that the bailout program was voluntary and they did not want to be "punitive" or the bankers might not participate. The same argument was used to talk down a proposal made by some senators that the government have an ownership stake in any company that gets a bailout. Their reply: The bankers would never submit to such treatment and the whole program would fail.

There was endless posturing by the senators, many of whom are millionaires themselves, about helping Main Street, not Wall Street. As a popular slogan, this is very appealing and all the politicians used it. But the question is really not one of "streets." It is a question of class.

It is the financial oligarchy of the capitalist ruling class that is being bailed out at the expense of the working class and the middle class. The African-American, Latin@ and other oppressed populations are suffering the most.

The working class has debts it cannot pay; the financial rulers have debts they don't want to pay.

The masses face poverty and hardship. Some bankers and investors face getting down to their last millions.

Forcing workers to pay bankers' debts

No matter how much this bailout is "improved" by some minimal concessions on secondary issues, such as limiting executive pay—if that ever happens—or any other palliative measure, the fact is that the working class is going to be forced deeper into debt to pay off the debts of the bankers who robbed the workers in the first place. This bailout is a ruling-class solution.

Paulson's proposal, in whatever form it emerges from Congress, is predicated on there being only one choice: bail out the banks or suffer a Great Depression. There may well be a depression. But it will come as a result of capitalist overproduction inherent in the profit system. It cannot be stopped in the long run by a bailout of bankers.

To fight off the effects of a depression or any economic crisis, the workers must have their own program and advance their own demands.

After claiming for a year that the system was fundamentally sound, the financial bosses are now using the threat of an apocalyptic depression to terrorize everyone into accepting a bailout of billionaires and millionaires. This is calculated to promote fear, demoralization and passivity among the multinational working class, which is already struggling to survive.

According to Paulson and company, either the people give over \$700 billion or risk losing their homes, jobs and retirement. Pay the bankers' debts or the credit

markets will "seize up." This is the logic of unobstructed capitalism.

The working class must reject this dire choice. It is a choice posed by the bosses and their paid propagandists. Every struggling sector of society—youth and students; Black, Latin@, Native and Asian peoples; immigrants; women; the lesbian, gay, bi and trans communities; seniors and the disabled—will be affected and need to mobilize to fight back.

The bankers and the government can be made to change their tune when faced with a mass struggle demanding a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions. They can be pushed back by a movement demanding an end to layoffs and plant closings and the right to a job for all workers.

Housing is a right. Education and health care are rights. A job is a right. The only way to turn back this onslaught of foreclosures, evictions and layoffs, and stop the bailout at the same time, is to fight back in an organized, mass, militant way.

Workers have historically found ways of forcing open the pocketbooks of the bosses. Eighty years ago, no one thought the law would recognize the right to organize a union, the right to Social Security, the right to unemployment insurance, the right to Aid for Families with Dependent Children. These gains were won by struggles during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Faced with an organized, militant population, the bosses, who had been crying poverty, finally came up with the money. They can do it again. □

People tell Mich. legislators:

Continued from page 3

moratorium bill be passed.

State Representatives Gabe Leland, Shanelle Jackson, Bettie Cook-Scott and Steve Tobocman also addressed the crowd, as did state Sen. Martha Scott.

Speaking from her wheelchair, Rubie Curl-Pinkins declared, "I don't want anyone else to lose their home. Keep on fighting!" Her home was saved from foreclosure after two large, militant demonstrations targeted Countrywide and Bank of America, demanding they accept her mortgage repayment. Nikki Curl, Pinkins' daughter, said, "When we come together as one, we can make a difference."

Sandra Hines, whose family home of 40 years was seized by the bank, said, "This is a national fight. We're going to force elected officials to move. We have to win this moratorium."

Jerry Goldberg, people's attorney and coalition leader, said, "We can't wait one more day for a moratorium. We need an executive order from Governor Granholm. We need to stop every foreclosure block

by block. We need action now. Let's fight for the moratorium. Let's win it."

Juan Daniel Castro of the Grand Rapids Latino Community Coalition connected the struggles of poor and working people in the United States to those in Latin America. He stated, "People united will never be defeated. We want people's needs addressed, not corporate welfare!"

Linette Crosby from rural St. Johns told how her family's 140-acre mint farm, which has been in existence since 1912, is now in foreclosure. The bank intends to auction off the farm's inventory on Nov. 1. Crosby said some people told her not to speak out, but she was going to anyway. "Foreclosures and evictions touch everybody. We're not ready to give up."

Larry Holmes of New York City, a leader of the Troops Out Now Coalition and the Ad Hoc National Network to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions, told the crowd: "When the rich want something, nothing is ever enough. When it comes to poor and working people, we get nothing. It's an insult, a shame, a scandal, a crime

Meeropol: Gov't abuse persists in Rosenberg case

By Naomi Cohen

On Sept. 12, the New York Times ran an article based on an interview with Morton Sobell, the co-defendant of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in the "atomic spy" case that led to the execution of the Rosenbergs on June 19, 1953. The article gave the impression that Sobell for the first time admitted he and Julius Rosenberg were guilty of the charges against them.

This is not true. A close reading shows Sobell said that, while he and Julius Rosenberg had passed on military information to the Soviet Union during World War II to help it repel the Nazi invaders, they were not "atomic spies," as the prosecution against them claimed.

The context behind what happened is extremely important. The United States was supposedly an ally of the Soviet Union in the war against Nazi Germany. Yet when the Nazi armies invaded the USSR and millions were dying under the assault, the European and U.S. "Allies" did nothing to open a second front from the West. Only when it became clear that the Soviets would defeat the Nazis on their own, after the battle of Stalingrad, did the Allies launch the invasion of Normandy in June 1944.

In August of 1945, the U.S. demonstrated to the world the terror of nuclear weapons by dropping atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians in the space of a few days.

After World War II ended, the U.S. and European imperialists launched a broad political, ideological and economic assault on the Soviet Union, including military encirclement by NATO forces—the Cold War. In 1949 after the Chinese Revolution drove the Japanese and Western imperialist powers off the mainland of China, a wild witch hunt was unleashed in the U.S. In the same year, the Soviet Union tested its own nuclear weapon, sending a message that it would not be a defenseless victim of nuclear threats.

The anti-communist witch hunt intensified in 1950 with the opening of the Korean War. Trade unionists, teachers, scholars, writers, actors, artists, journalists and even some government officials were subpoenaed and dragged before the congressional committee headed by Sen. Joseph McCarthy. Many went to jail for

refusing to testify before this committee. Others were forced underground or into exile. Many more were targeted for political repression, losing their jobs and livelihood in a broad FBI sweep aimed at driving all leftists out of the labor and progressive movements.

This was the atmosphere in which Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were arrested in 1950 and charged with having given the "secret" of the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union. They were even blamed by the trial judge for the Korean War. In the hysteria created by the media, the FBI, Congress and the courts at the time, it was impossible for the Rosenbergs to get a fair or impartial trial.

Below are excerpts from a statement released by Robert Meeropol, a son of the Rosenbergs, who was six years old when his parents were executed. Meeropol is now executive director of the Rosenberg Fund for Children, which raises money to aid the children of political prisoners and targeted activists in the U.S. suffering from the same kind of repression and terror that he and his brother Michael experienced.

Excerpts from Robert Meeropol's statement

Over the last week I have read all 930 pages of Grand Jury testimony that have been released, and my brother has spoken to Mort [Sobell] directly to clarify Mort's statement. Many of you are wondering about my reaction to these revelations.

Here are my initial thoughts after integrating the information from this last week with the rest of the historical record.

(1) Since the 1980s I have maintained that it is possible that my father engaged in non-atomic espionage, but that he did NOT participate in ANY activities that resulted in him obtaining or passing the "secret of the Atomic Bomb" to the Soviets. Mort's statement moves me to acknowledge that it is virtually certain that Julius did, in fact, participate with others in passing along military information. But at the same time, I believe the still-evolving record makes it even clearer that Julius did not "steal" or transmit the "secret of the Atomic Bomb," the crime for which he was executed.

(2) Ruth [Greenglass] and her husband David (my mother's sister-in-law

and brother) cooperated with the prosecution in exchange for a comparatively light sentence for David, and for no charges being brought against Ruth. It was Ruth's trial testimony that provided the one, key piece of evidence that led to my mother's conviction. Ruth stated at trial that Ethel typed David's handwritten notes describing the Atomic Bomb, an act that would have made Ethel an active participant in the alleged spy ring.

However, despite being a cooperative witness trying to remain in the prosecutor's good graces, Ruth's Grand Jury testimony included NOTHING about Ethel ever typing any notes; included NOTHING about Ethel even being present at the meeting involving the notes.

(3) All that I have learned in the last week, coupled with all that I have gleaned from the information already available, reinforces the biggest lesson to be taken from my parents' case—that the U.S. government abused its power in truly dangerous ways that are still very relevant today. Those in power who were involved in my parents' case:

- Created and fueled anti-communist hysteria
- Capitalized on that political climate by targeting my parents, then making them the focus of the public's Cold War-era fear and anger
- Manufactured testimony and evidence
- Hounded witnesses for their political beliefs and associations rather than about any alleged illegal activities
- Arrested Ethel simply as leverage to try to get Julius to cooperate with the prosecution
- Used the ultimate weapon—the threat of death—to try to extort a confession from my parents and to force them to name and testify against others.

Ultimately, these new revelations have made me even more steadfast in my commitment to helping those whom the Rosenberg Fund for Children supports: today's families experiencing similar targeting and suffering similar personal tragedies.

For Robert Meeropol's full statement, go to www.rfc.org. □

Thank you, Josh Howard

By Monica Moorehead

Athletes in the U.S. are expected to keep their mouths shut when it comes to either questioning or criticizing any injustices that exist. They are ingrained from the time they are born with the notion, "My country, right or wrong, love it or leave," like the rest of society.

During the height of the Black liberation movement and the civil rights movement in the 1960s, Black athletes like Muhammad Ali, Tommie Smith and John Carlos took heroic stances against the Vietnam War and racist oppression at home, leading to a reactionary backlash.

Today, in the absence of a mass movement, professional athletes are paid millions of dollars in salaries, especially basketball, football and baseball players. At the same time, they pay a heavy price. These are high-priced "gladiators" expected to just perform and willingly take any kind of abuse from the spectators, as well as not say anything that smacks of being anti-patriotic.

This is why it is important to take special note of the actions of Josh Howard, a gifted African-American National Basketball Association player who is a member of the Dallas Mavericks. At a charity football game this past summer, while the Star-Spangled Banner was playing in the background, Howard was caught on YouTube saying that, in essence, he did not have to respect the U.S. anthem because he is Black.

This is not the first time that Howard has taken a progressive stance against U.S. policies. For instance, as a senior at Wake Forest University in 2004, Howard came out against the U.S. war on Iraq. He has also been criticized for publicly stating that he smokes marijuana, which so many athletes in all sports do. His Josh Howard Foundation is "dedicated to helping to improve the quality of life of economically challenged communities by utilizing programs and services that focus on academic improvement, community outreach, and



athletic and fitness training." (www.josh-howard.com)

Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, said that Howard had apologized for his comments. Cuban also posted comments about Howard's stance on his blog to show that he was more concerned about the horrendous racism expressed against Howard than about Howard's rejection of the U.S. anthem. (blogmaverick.com)

Some of the responses on the blog urged Cuban to fire Howard and others stated that Howard should leave this country. Other anti-Howard messages were linked to hostility toward Barack Obama's presidential candidacy. There are also positive comments defending Howard.

Sports commentators on Fox News and ESPN have added fuel to the fire by making negative statements about Howard's stance.

Just the fact that Howard said that he is "Black" is a powerful political statement understood by so many Black and other oppressed peoples. It goes to the very heart of institutionalized racism in the forms of police brutality; incarceration; lack of jobs, education and housing; and, last but not least, demonization that Black people, especially young people, face day in and day out in the U.S. So Josh Howard should be applauded and defended for doing what he did.

Larry Hales, a national organizer with the youth group Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST), told Workers World: "This is great and long overdue for a major sports star to make such a political statement. Though he probably didn't intend for it to go public and he hasn't been given the chance to expound, and probably will be made to apologize, I'm sure he refuses the anthem because it implies acceptance of the history of slavery, theft of land, genocide and U.S. imperialism." □

'Moratorium NOW!'

that your legislators haven't passed SB 1306. You are the working-class heroes of today, fighting for everyone else, against not just foreclosures and evictions but cuts in jobs, pensions and wages. Keep doing what you're doing. Power to the people. Moratorium NOW!"

Robert Pratt of UNITE HERE was put in foreclosure when he couldn't pay the mortgage after his 12-year-old son was tragically shot and killed. His lender refused to work out a payment arrangement after Pratt explained he needed to pay for funeral costs. Pratt, with dozens of union members in red shirts behind him on the steps of the Capitol, pledged to organize to help make the moratorium a reality.

Rosendo Delgado of Latinos Unidos of Michigan stated: "If we can get a moratorium passed in Michigan, it will spread like wildfire. Therefore we must fight to make this bill a reality."

People's hearing

After the rally, dozens lined up at a people's hearing to give testimony on how foreclosures, evictions, job losses, lack

of health care, racism and other ills have affected them and their families and why a moratorium is sorely needed in Michigan.

They gave heart-wrenching details about the criminal activities of the bankers and lenders who tossed them and their loved ones out on the street. The majority had lived in their homes for years but fell into dire economic straits due to such catastrophic personal crises as losing a job or having a major family health crisis.

The entire hearing was videotaped. DVDs will soon be available from the coalition. Organizers plan to deliver them to members of the State Legislature in a further effort to move SB 1306 out of committee and force public hearings around the state.

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition meets next on Sept. 27 at 11 a.m. Weekly open staff meetings are held on Mondays at 7 p.m. at the coalition's office at Central United Methodist Church, 23 E. Adams, 4th floor, Detroit. Call 313-887-4344; email moratorium@moratorium-mi.org; or visit www.moratorium-mi.org to send a donation or get involved. □



Arizona hospital lets ICE terrorize immigrants

By Paul Teitelbaum
Tucson, Ariz.

The University of Arizona Medical Center (UMC), Tucson's only tier-one trauma center, is working closely with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to make life for undocumented workers even worse. The hospital has a stated policy of "100 percent compliance with all law enforcement agencies." That is the excuse for engaging in a series of practices that target the Latin@ community, particularly the undocumented.

The southern Arizona border is the entry point for immigrants from Central and South America driven from their homes by extreme need and desperately seeking a means of subsistence for them-

selves and their families. The U.S. government spent billions of dollars in the 1980s crushing revolutionary movements and keeping the elites in power there.

The desert areas the immigrants are funneled into are unforgiving to those forced to travel through them. Besides the heat and dangerous terrain that most immigrants are unprepared for, they face more danger from the increasing presence of Border Patrol agents.

The Border Patrol has been engaging in high-speed chases in pursuit of vehicles, often ending with the chased vehicle losing control and crashing. One recent incident involved 19 Salvadorans packed into a van. Border Patrol agents chased the vehicle until it rolled over. The Border Patrol then notified the Arizona Highway

Patrol, which responded to the accident and transported the victims to the closest trauma center, UMC, where nine of them were pronounced dead.

The BP agents later showed up at UMC's emergency room and demanded they be notified when any surviving patients were released. UMC compliance means that patients are sent from the emergency room to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Detention Center, where they are coerced into either signing voluntary deportation papers or being charged with a criminal offense.

ER personnel at UMC—whose job is to provide health care, not act as a repressive arm of the state—are consistently providing details of patient releases to the Border Patrol. According to a worker in the emergency room, doctors and nurses are contacting DHS on their own and volunteering information about patients.

In addition, UMC has a policy of reporting to the DHS foreign nationals who haven't paid their hospital bills. In turn, a collection agency hired by UMC to collect the debts threatens to call Immigration if a payment is not made. These threats are made without regard to the person's actual legal status.

Patients have also reported instances of ICE agents entering their hospital rooms and harassing them. In at least

one case, they handcuffed a patient to the bed. Recently, an 8-year-old Mexican girl visiting relatives in Tucson developed appendicitis; her parents rushed her to UMC. The father, a miner in Cananea, Mexico, makes \$100 per week. He was told the surgery would cost \$98,000 and that UMC expected payment when the patient was released. The usual cost of an appendectomy is around \$8,000. When confronted, UMC officials said the \$98,000 figure was "an outlier" and that only under the most extenuating of circumstances would an appendectomy cost that much. But, for a person who makes \$100 per week, even \$8,000 is an impossible amount to pay.

Tucson immigrant rights activists have been advising people against going to UMC for health care. UMC cooperation with Homeland Security increases the presence of ICE agents in and around the ER. They are essentially denying health care to the Latin@ community, terrorizing them by allowing ICE agents into the hospital and threatening to call ICE if a bill isn't paid.

The increased presence of ICE agents in the community, at schools and hospitals, is part of the militarization of the border. We must unite and demand that ICE get out of our communities and that the racist attacks and deportations end. □

Muslim workers fired for protesting discrimination

By Larry Hales
Denver

In early September, at least 100 Muslim workers at the JBS Swift meatpacking plant in Greeley, Colo., most of them from Somalia, were fired for walking off their jobs to protest Swift's refusal to accommodate Muslim workers during the holy month of Ramadan.

The official number of fired workers, according to United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7, is 130, while Swift says the number fired is only 100.

The workers were asking to take their break at sunset so they could pray and break their fast, but the company denied the request.

Similarly, workers at another Swift meatpacking plant in Grand Island, Neb., were fired for the same reason. There, workers put the number fired at 150, though plant management says it was only 86.

In Nebraska, the workers were originally allowed to take time at sunset to pray and break their fast. Unfortunately, instead of exhibiting solidarity in dealing with the company, hundreds of other workers walked off the job there to protest Muslim workers being allowed the break time, saying it amounted to "preferential" treatment.

When managers at the plant reversed their original decision, the Muslim workers were fired after walking out a second time.

Last year Muslim workers walked off the job at the Nebraska plant because of discrimination, though they eventually returned.

James Abbi, a Somali Muslim in Nebraska, said of the sunset breaks, "We just asked for five minutes to pray. That don't hurt nobody."

It is not unusual for workers to get time off for special religious needs, like Catholics on Ash Wednesday, for example.

In Greeley, UFCW Local 7 filed a grievance on behalf of the Muslim workers for discrimination and wrongful termination.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations announced possible legal action, but Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman, said, "Really, you don't need attorneys in these cases. You just need a spirit of good will and cooperation." Citing the stubbornness of the Swift plant in Greeley, Hooper said, "Usually in these cases we're able to come to an amicable solution."

The battle is ongoing. Though Swift counters that it offered a break time at 8 p.m., that would have been too late for the evening prayer, which is timed for sunset. It is the one prayer during the day that has to be done at a specific time. □

La Peña celebrates 21 years of resistance

More than 150 community members, old and young, Black, white, and Latin@, gathered at St. Mary's Park in the South Bronx on Sept. 21 to celebrate the 21st birthday of La Peña del Bronx. This community center has fought against racism, gentrification, environmental pollution and police brutality. They dedicated the activity to amnesty for all immigrants.

La Peña was founded by two Chilean exiles. Víctor Toro is an original member of the MIR, the revolutionary organization that advocated arming the working people in Chile to defend the social gains they won under the Allende government. Toro's companion, activist Nieves Ayress, was captured and tortured during the coup against Allende sponsored by the U.S. in 1973. Víctor Toro, who was declared "dead" in Chile under the Pinochet regime, came here without papers.

Under the leadership of these two, La Peña became a community center for the homeless, persons with HIV, the unemployed, youth, the elderly and the disabled. It has consistently promoted and protected cultural expression. La Peña offers English classes, silkscreen workshops and lends its space to music, theater and folkloric dance groups.

Maintaining solidarity with revolutionary struggles in Latin America and the Caribbean, La Peña members face police and federal repression. Toro was captured in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid in the summer of 2007 and faces deportation. Members of Rebel Diaz, a political hip-hop group that got its start at La Peña, were arrested by the police last summer because the artists interceded against the police in defense of a street vendor.

Until the day before the fiesta in the park, the police were refusing a sound permit and said that every speaker and



performer would have to be identified in advance to the police. That didn't happen. Instead, the community celebrated with music, food, dance, solidarity and the resistance that began with its revolutionary founders 21 years ago. Their struggle continues.

—Report and photo by Heather Cottin

Protests delay Troy Davis execution

Continued from page 1

killed by lethal injection. However, if the Supreme Court justices decline to accept the case for review on Sept. 29, the stay will be lifted and Georgia will again set an execution date.

Nevertheless, Davis's family, friends and death penalty opponents around the country savored the reprieve, sure that the hundreds of thousands of calls, letters and faxes to Georgia officials, as well as the many protests and rallies held not just in the U.S. but elsewhere in the world, had registered with the ruling political circles. The Davis case had become a lightning rod for mass discontent with the injustice system.

A growing number of well-known people—including former President Jimmy Carter, South African Bishop Desmond Tutu and Georgia Rep. John Lewis—made public statements condemning the death sentence given Davis. Meanwhile, grassroots activists picketed Rainbow Medical

Associates, the private company that provides the medical personnel who insert the intravenous lines for the lethal injection. Also, on what was scheduled to be Davis's final day, mobile "die-ins" were staged at the State Office Building that houses the Georgia Pardons and Parole Board as well as at the State Capitol.

Numerous national media outlets have carried stories about the recanted testimony, the lack of any physical evidence, and the charges of police coercion and intimidation, all of which have made groups like Amnesty International express "overwhelming doubts" about the guilty verdict in the Davis case.

While joy was the prevailing emotion in Atlanta and for those gathered outside the prison in Jackson, Ga., everyone was all too aware that the struggle to save Troy Davis's life and to abolish the racist and unfair death penalty continues.

For the latest information on how to help, go to www.gfadp.org. □

Beware right-wingers denouncing 'Wall Street'

Continued from page 4

still turning in huge profits.

The Republican Party presidential candidate, John McCain, and his running mate, Sarah Palin, have been pro-big business from day one and get their funding from the same big banks and corporations as Barack Obama, but now they are attacking the first African-American nominee of the Democratic Party as "elitist."

Are we to believe that these folks are the answer to big business?

If anything, this should prove that running your mouth off and saying what's popular, as all these forces do, doesn't mean you are really fighting against the powers that be.

If a Dobbs or a Beck or a McCain is being paid by big business to speak against them, can he really be a threat to those footing the bills? □

Hurricane Ike was no equalizer

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

Sept. 22—As Hurricane Ike raged ashore in the early hours before sunrise on Sept. 13, its ferocious winds roared and whipped western Louisiana and 35 eastern Texas counties. Galveston Island and the Bolivar Peninsula bore the brunt of Ike, but the storm battered communities across hundreds of miles of the Gulf Coast.

The facts of the storm can be found in newspapers and online. But the reality of life for the working class is glossed over as story after story on radio, television and in the print media claims that people from all walks of life have been devastated and that Ike has been an “equalizer.”

Yes, everyone lost power. Everyone has tree limbs and debris in their yards. The bosses and workers alike have wet carpet and sheetrock that needs to be ripped out. But the similarities end there.

The wealthy have industrial-size generators built into their mansions or were able to buy them after the storm. But workers and the poor scrounged for ice chests and coolers, then spent hours and hours looking for ice each day they were without power. They tried to save what food they had in their homes.

As this article is being written, almost one million people in Houston still lack electricity. A map on the power company's Web site shows outages almost entirely on the eastern half of the city—home to Houston's working class, including the Black and Latin@ communities, as well as the oil refineries, chemical industries and the pollution they create.

Houstonians are still under curfew, which is strictly enforced in working-class and oppressed communities. The lucky are given \$500 tickets—others are taken directly to jail. Cops occupy the poorest communities like Nazi storm troopers.

It took the Federal Emergency Management Agency three days to set up what they called PODs—Points of Distribution—where people could line up in the hot sun to receive two bags of ice and a case of bottled water. Now, six days later, they have

Lenwood Johnson in Freedman's Town in Houston. He got power turned back on for Houston public housing within days after Ike hit. A week later he was himself still without power.

all but disbanded the PODs. People have to turn to private businesses, food pantries and other local agencies.

With FEMA's water and ice, people were given flyers telling them to call or apply online for disaster relief. Online? How can people without power apply online, even if they have a computer?

On one talk-radio show, people called in saying that FEMA wasn't answering calls. One man said he had called 166 times. A woman in tears, with crying children in the background, said she had called all day and never got an answer.

Local television showed police forcibly removing evacuees from motels, telling them that FEMA did not have them on its approved list. One woman cried as she explained that she had spent all her money on gas to leave the coast and now had nowhere to go. Another said that FEMA had told her not to worry, as it would pay for her motel costs until she could return home. Now the cops were threatening arrest if she did not leave the motel.

'Things are never equal'

“Equalizer my foot. Hell no!” says Lenwood Johnson, a Free Man's Neighborhood Association board member. “Ike was not an equalizer. Things are never equal—poor people always suffer after storms like this.”

Johnson has lived in public housing for decades since illness forced him out of his job in the petrochemical industry in 1979. He is still a resident of a public housing project in historic Freedman's Town, a community built in Houston in 1865 by formerly enslaved Africans.

After Hurricane Ike hit Houston, public housing residents were without power for several days. Johnson spent more than 24 hours on the phone talking with everyone he could think of to get power restored. He was particularly concerned about the



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

seniors. Without electricity, those on oxygen, who needed dialysis or insulin, or were not mobile could be in jeopardy.

He accomplished what the mayor, City Council and federal government chose not to do. “Lenwood Johnson did more for us seniors than the mayor or FEMA or anyone else in Houston,” says 88-year-old Casey Davis. “He got our lights turned back on!”

Less than eight hours after Ike passed over Houston, people in River Oaks, Houston's wealthiest neighborhood, were living their lives as if nothing had happened. This reporter observed lights on in many mansions and tree trimmers working in the rain to clear the carefully manicured lawns. Women dressed in designer workout suits were taking their daily jog around the neighborhood.

Prisoners left behind without lights, water

Galveston, the hardest-hit area on the Gulf Coast, had ordered the mandatory evacuation of its residents, but the 1,000 prisoners locked up in the Galveston County Jail were not included. They are still in jail with no power, no water and no functioning toilets. They haven't even been able to wash their hands since Ike hit 10 days ago.

Five days after the hurricane, President George W. Bush held a press conference

at the Galveston County Courthouse, which sits just below the jail. Two generators were brought in so Bush could have air conditioning and lights. The Galveston sheriff asked Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff if the county could keep the generators because his staff and the prisoners had no air or lights. Chertoff refused.

Power outages in Huntsville, 70 miles north of Houston, had no impact on the assembly line of death there. On Sept. 17, Huntsville state prison had no lights, but the authorities found the energy to put William Murray to death—making him the ninth person executed in Texas this year. The total is the highest in the country.

Around 2,000 undocumented workers live and work in Galveston. The majority did not evacuate because they feared that if they took the buses to a shelter, they would be deported. So they stayed on the island during the hurricane. Now they are without power and water and living in unsanitary conditions.

Radio commentators on a Houston Clear Channel news station had the nerve to talk about all Houstonians coming together, including the owners of the mobile taco trucks that are abundant around town. Several said how wonderful it was that the people with the trucks were serving food in Houston in the hours and days just after the hurricane. Everything else was shut down.

Ironically, this same station had been part of a racist, organized attempt by right-wing activists and legislators to shut down the taco trucks by imposing ridiculous restrictions on them.

It will be a long time before life gets back to normal along the Gulf Coast. But don't believe anyone who tells you that all were affected equally. The rich will continue their lives unaffected while some of the poor may never survive the property damage, the loss of lives or the psychological terror this hurricane unleashed.

Rubac's own home remains without power. She had to sleep on a friend's floor and defy the curfew to file this story.

Are layoffs to blame?

Power still out for hundreds of thousands in Ohio

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

Sept. 21—When Hurricane Ike got as far north as Ohio, the media called it the “remnants” or “remains” of the storm. For millions of working-class households here, that was a poor choice of words. While the suffering in Ohio cannot compare to Texas, the damage in 84 of Ohio's 88 counties was enough for the governor to declare a state of emergency.

Nearly one week later, hundreds of thousands of households are still in the dark. The majority of those without power are in the southwest part of the state. This includes 59,000 Dayton Power and Light and 85,000 Duke Energy customers. Duke covers the Cincinnati area but also rural Butler and Warren counties, where 18,000 residences wait for service to be restored.

In addition, 77,000 in the Columbus area, served by American Electric Power, are unsure when their lights will come back on. Northeast Ohio fared better, but it was a week before First Energy got the power back on and a few hundred homes still lack service.

Days of school closings have posed a hardship to working parents. For all but

the affluent, losing the ability to refrigerate food is more than an inconvenience.

Elderly and physically challenged individuals dependent on oxygen are in big danger. “Facing a fifth day without power, the residents of a senior housing community in western Ohio took to the street Friday with signs to protest the failure of Dayton Power and Light Co. to restore electricity. Power outages are more than an inconvenience at the retirement community in Beavercreek, east of Dayton, where some residents depend on oxygen devices, 911 service and working elevators. The protest seemed to get a reaction. Within hours of residents heading to the curb with their placards, crews were working to restore power.” (Associated Press, Sept. 21)

Profit motive drives delays

One would be hard-pressed to blame electrical workers' laziness for the crisis. Many around the state have been working 16-hour shifts, a schedule that increases the likelihood of injury in an already hazardous occupation. Since Ike hit, more than one utility worker has been killed working to restore power around the country.

However, since 1992 when Congress voted to allow states to deregulate the

energy industry, massive layoffs have occurred throughout Ohio. Unions have blamed these layoffs for declining service. A 2001 report by the Utility Workers Union of America stated that “in a recent survey of its locals the UWUA found that its staffing levels around the country are down 35 percent compared to 1991. Workers are worried about system reliability, their own safety, and safety of the public.”

After a power outage affecting 50 million homes in August 2003, due to a cascading problem with the country's energy grid, a news release from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers charged that, “In the 10 years since utility deregulation was first introduced, power companies have built or updated very few new transmission lines. Today demand continues to climb, but transmission investment in 2000 was less than half of what it was in 1975. In general, training programs for workers have been reduced or suspended indefinitely. The work force has been

reduced by one third in the past 10 years, with an obvious impact on maintenance.”

Akron-based First Energy was blamed by many for initially triggering the 2003 disaster.

The outage should have been a wake-up call, but the workforce reductions continued throughout the industry. Recently postings on a Web site for frustrated Duke Energy employees stated that, “In 1988, Duke further reduced knowledgeable workers by having its first company-wide layoff. Over the years, Duke has tried to shove the most experienced employees out the door by offering ‘Voluntary Separation Opportunities’—paying people to retire. In 2007, eligible employees were enticed to retire with a \$50,000 insurance benefit.”

Unfortunately, a great deal of publicity was given to an isolated incident of an angry customer threatening a utility worker. However, the bulk of public anger is directed at the power companies—and for good reason. □

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Storm-wracked Cuba tells Bush:

'We don't need your aid—just lift the blockade'

By Brenda Ryan
New York

José Ramón Machado Ventura, first vice president of the Cuban Council of State, spoke at a church in Harlem on Sept. 22 about the two issues hurting Cuba most now: the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike and the continued imprisonment of the Cuban Five.

Hundreds of people filled the Church of the Intercession to hear Machado speak. As he entered he was greeted with cheers of "¡Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" and "¡Viva Cuba revolucionaria!"

One of Cuba's elder statesmen, Machado had joined the guerrillas in the Sierra Maestra mountain range, where he served as a doctor and fought alongside Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

Such a high-level Cuban official has not visited New York since President Castro's visit in 2000. Machado was joined by Felipe Pérez Roque, minister of foreign relations, and Fernando Remírez

de Esteno, chief of the Department of International Relations of the Communist Party of Cuba.

The recent hurricanes were the most destructive to hit Cuba in many years, causing several deaths—a rarity in a country with a superb system for saving lives. The storms destroyed more than 60,000 homes and caused more than \$5 billion in damage. To ensure their safety, the government evacuated 3 million people from their homes, almost one-third of Cuba's population.

"It is our sacred moral duty to save the lives of our people," Machado said. He added that neighbors and relatives took in those who had to flee their homes. "That's the result of the education of our revolution, for solidarity not only to be proclaimed but to be carried out," he said.

Noting that Haiti has also been devastated by the hurricanes, he said it should receive as much assistance as possible.

Machado said the U.S. was deceitful in offering to send a "humanitarian

assessment team" to Cuba to inspect the affected area. Cuba said no to these spies and instead asked that the U.S. allow the sale of construction material to Cuba. In response, the Bush administration said this is not the time to ease the blockade of Cuba.

"If they want to help Cuba, why don't they lift the blockade?" Machado asked. "They say Cuba is sacrificing its own people and refusing assistance. But the most important issue is the blockade."

Machado also pointed to the struggle being waged on behalf of the Cuban Five, whose only crime was saving Cuban and U.S. lives from terrorist acts. He said while the five—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González—are subjected to harsh and inhumane treatment in U.S. prisons, real terrorists like Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch are free to walk the streets of Miami.

Attorney Leonard Weinglass also spoke at the event. He said that on the tenth

anniversary of their imprisonment, the Cuban Five remain resolute and strong in their struggle for freedom. The next step in the case is to seek a U.S. Supreme Court review of the 2006 ruling by the full court of the Eleventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. That decision overruled a three-judge panel of the court, which said the five should never have been tried in Miami and ordered a new trial.

During his talk, Machado also denounced the U.S. war in Iraq, which he said has killed thousands of U.S. youth and hundreds of thousands of youth in other countries, and the torture of those imprisoned in the illegally occupied Guantánamo.

Machado pointed to the victorious election of Evo Morales in Bolivia and the successes of the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela. "It's increasingly difficult for imperialism to deceive the people of the Americas," he said.

He concluded his talk with the battle cry of the Cuban revolution: "Ever onward to victory!" □

After four hurricanes, Haiti faces famine

By G. Dunkel

Haiti started the month of August as the poorest country by far in the Western Hemisphere. Then four hurricanes—Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike—hit the country, doing vast and unmeasured damage to its roads and bridges, housing, economy, crops and crop land, schools and hospitals.

The country that already had the least now has much less.

A map on Relief Web, a United Nations service, summarizes the homeless, missing, dead and injured in Haiti. Only one of Haiti's 10 provinces—the North East—was spared significant damage. (www.reliefweb.int)

The figures on the number of dead are

far too low. The Haitian government has stopped counting in order to concentrate on repairing roads and bridges, so it can get food and water to the 900,000 people who have nothing left except the clothes on their bodies.

MINUSTAH, the U.N. forces that began occupying Haiti after the coup in 2004 against President Jean Bertrand Aristide—a coup financed and organized by the U.S.—distributed 2,852,300 meals and 21,710 liters of drinkable water to refugees in Gonaïves from Sept. 5 to Sept. 20. Along with aid from the World Food Program and NGOs, this has kept people from dying of famine.

But it is not nearly enough. Gonaïves is believed to have 200,000 refugees. The city has been inundated by mud from the

surrounding mountains. The donated food amounts to slightly less than one meal per person a day.

In Baint, a small city on the southern coast between Côte-de-Fer and Jacmel, the situation is also catastrophic. Its deputy in parliament, Malherbe François, told the Haitian press, "We have registered 37,989 families affected by these storms. But nine rural communities, which are part of our district, aren't able to make contact with the city." So the Haitian government doesn't really know how many people need aid.

If Haiti doesn't get substantial and immediate foreign aid, thousands of Haitians could die.

However, Haïti-Progrès in its Sept. 17-23 edition says the U.N. aid being giv-

en comes from a need "to stifle the anger of the people, not from humanitarianism." Haïti-Liberté points out that a lot of this aid is being used to compensate the Haitian bourgeoisie for its losses, rather than for the needs of the people.

In addition, the Swiss News Service reported Sept. 19 that the U.N. has received only 2 percent of the \$108 million it had requested to aid Gonaïves.

Beyond the immediate threat of famine, Haiti needs to reforest its land so that rain from storms doesn't produce mudslides, which killed many in the past six weeks.

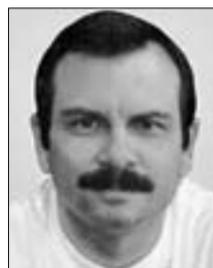
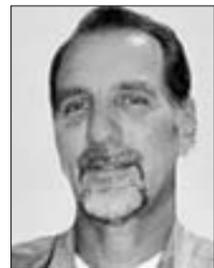
Haiti's plant cover is estimated at less than 2 percent. The recent heavy downpours led to severe flooding much worse than in the neighboring Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. In the Dominican Republic, plant cover is estimated at 30 percent and far fewer people died.

Haitian Environment Minister Jean-Marie Claude Germain said this process of deforestation dates back to the country's independence. Intense neocolonial exploitation by France so impoverished the people that the only fuel they could use for cooking was and is charcoal, often sold by the handful. When the U.S. became the neocolonial master of the Caribbean, it maintained and strengthened France's policies. President Aristide was demanding \$20 billion in reparations from France before he was kidnapped from the country by U.S. forces.

Two Haitian organizations in the New York area are collecting funds and medical supplies for use by Cuban doctors in Haiti. Volunteer Cuban personnel provide most of what medical care Haitians get.

Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees is accepting donations and funds at 35 Maple St., 2nd floor, Brooklyn, Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:30 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 718-735-4660. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to IFCO/Haitian Relief, 418 W. 145th St., New York, NY 10031.

The Haitian Coalition to Support the Struggle in Haiti (Kakola) is also collecting funds. Checks should be payable to Komite Chalo Jaklen Inc. and sent to KAKOLA, P.O. Box 250459, Brooklyn, NY 11225. For more information, call 718-629-4050. Members of both HWHR and Kakola will take the aid collected directly to Haiti. □



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, Rene González Sehwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez and Fernando González Llort.

Film star calls for release of Cuban Five

Actor Danny Glover sent the following message of solidarity on Sept. 13 to the concert "Five Stars and One Song" held in New York in support of the Cuban Five.

Weeks ago, I arranged my schedule to be with you tonight to support growing national and global efforts to free the Cuban five patriots who have been unjustly incarcerated by the U.S. government for defending their beloved fellow Cuban citizens and their government from the heinous, murderous terrorist attacks launched with impunity from the United States.

But, unfortunately I cannot be with you in person as my work and family responsibilities require me to remain in California tonight.

However, I am with you in spirit and in committed actions to right the injustice of imprisonment and isolation of the Cuban five from their families.

We must bear witness to the courage and commitment of the Cuban five to rid the world of terrorism with their heroic stand against the murderous plots and bloody execution of terrorism launched from the United States against the nation and people of Cuba.

We must bear witness and put a stop to the lies that these five Cuban patriots worked as spies to undermine or damage

the security of the United States and to harm the American people.

We must bear witness and publicly denounce U.S. government violation of its own laws against terrorism and its global call to prevent terrorism.

We must bear witness and publicly explain to all the American people who honestly desire peace with justice that continued incarceration of the Cuban five undermines our nation's credibility in the war against terrorism and tarnishes our nation's reliability as a partner and honest broker in the global pursuit of justice and peace.

As freedom and justice-loving Americans committed to civil, peaceful and fair diplomatic negotiations of differences between governments, and committed to mutual and respectful exchange among American and Cuban citizens, we must bear witness to the highest ideals we profess about fairness and justice and persuade our government, our elected officials, and our courts to exemplify those attributes in practice, not in empty rhetoric, and give just due to the Cuban five by releasing them to their country, their families, and their fellow citizens.

Let us stand forth until liberty is won for the Cuban five.

—Danny Glover

U.S. incursions sow turmoil in Pakistan

By John Catalinotto

Death and turmoil have rocked the Pakistani capital of Islamabad. The violence came after Washington ordered U.S./NATO forces in neighboring Afghanistan to violate Pakistan's sovereignty by making attacks across the border without Pakistani permission. In addition, the U.S. has increased its pressure on the new Pakistani government to use extreme repression in its areas bordering Afghanistan.

An explosion, reportedly of a 1,300-pound truck bomb, destroyed the Islamabad Marriott hotel on Sept. 20. Early reports said 53 people died and nearly 300 were wounded.

According to a Pakistani government statement, a dinner for many high officials of the regime had been scheduled in the Marriott dining room that day but was rescheduled at the last minute to the prime minister's residence. Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani announced that the attackers were aiming to strike at Pakistani leaders and could have killed many. (Bloomberg News)

Washington's intervention in the entire region from West Asia to South Asia has brought nothing but misery, death and displacement to millions of people, from Palestine to Afghanistan. Many fear this turmoil is now entering Pakistan, a coun-

try of 170 million people where the government possesses nuclear arms. On Sept. 22 British Airways canceled its London-to-Islamabad flights "in light of the security situation in Pakistan."

Pakistani officials also said on Sept. 22 that tribal members and the Pakistani armed forces had both opened fire on U.S. helicopters that crossed the border from Afghanistan, driving them back over the border.

There is so much popular opposition in Pakistan to the U.S./NATO occupation of Afghanistan that many now blame Washington—not the Islamic forces in the border regions or the Taliban—for the increased turmoil in their country.

An article in a London newspaper asserts that "the public reaction to the bomb attack on the hotel was significant in that it did not roundly condemn the militants but reflected widespread ennui [dissatisfaction] with America's military policy in neighboring Afghanistan." (Telegraph, Sept. 21)

Was gov't dinner the target?

There is press speculation that the Pakistani government's decision to order its army to aggressively pursue a military campaign against forces in the border region supportive of the resistance had provoked the attack on the hotel.

Spokespeople for pro-Taliban groups

in Pakistan, however, deny that their forces carried out the attack on the hotel. Amir Mohammad, an aide to a prominent Pakistani Taliban leader, said, "We have our own targets and we execute our plans precisely with minimal loss of irrelevant or innocent people. We have nothing to do with the Marriott hotel attack." (Associated Press, Sept. 22)

Just hours before the bombing, Pakistan's new president, Asif Ali Zardari, had made a speech before Parliament promising a full attack on pro-Taliban forces in what Pakistanis call the "tribal areas" on the frontier. Zardari is the widower of assassinated Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto. He grew extremely wealthy during the time Bhutto was prime minister, and is considered generally pro-U.S.

Bhutto was assassinated under suspicious circumstances in December 2007 while campaigning for election.

Even the pro-U.S. Zardari had to publicly insist that the Pentagon stop its cross-border incursions, as did Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Pakistan's military chief. Zardari told the parliament, "We will not tolerate the violation of our sovereignty and territorial integrity by any power in the name of combating terrorism." Legislators "loudly thumped on their desks to show their support." (New York Times, Sept. 21)

Tariq Ali in Brooklyn

Progressive Pakistani political analyst Tariq Ali was in Brooklyn Sept. 20 at a meeting of the Pakistani-U.S. Freedom Forum to introduce his new book, "The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power." He told Workers World that "Zardari had to make a statement on the border crossings that agreed with his military leadership."

One of Ali's main points to the Brooklyn meeting was that the U.S. policy of challenging Pakistani sovereignty had the possibility of provoking a split in the Pakistani military. This, Ali said, would "present the greatest danger of instability and chaos," a threat not only to the Pakistani people but also to the U.S. goal of keeping control of Pakistan's nuclear weapons.

Ali praised the movement of lawyers and their supporters who marched in defiance of the military regime of Gen. Pervaz Musharraf during the past year and who insisted on the reappointment of Supreme Court head-judge Iftikhar al Chaudhry, whom Musharraf had pushed out. While Musharraf was forced to resign in August, Chaudhry has not been reinstated.

"The duel," said Tariq Ali, "is the long struggle which has been waged by the people of this country, nearly 200 million of them, against a corrupt political elite backed by the military and the United States now for over 50 years." □

Le Feyt Declaration: Peace in Iraq is an option

The undersigned, friends of Iraq from France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the United States of America, Egypt, Sweden and Iraq, organized in the International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON) and gathered in Le Feyt, France, from 25 to 27 August 2008, have adopted the following position and declaration reflecting our commitment to a true end to the occupation and to a lasting, sustainable peace in Iraq.

The U.S. occupation of Iraq is illegal and cannot be made legal. All that has derived from the occupation is illegal and illegitimate and cannot gain legitimacy. These facts are incontrovertible. What are their consequences?

Peace, stability and democracy in Iraq are impossible under occupation. Foreign occupation is opposed by nature to the interests of the occupied people, as proven by the 6 million Iraqis displaced both inside and outside Iraq, the planned assassination of Iraqi academics and professionals and the destruction of their culture, and the more than 1 million killed.

Propaganda in the West tries to make palatable the absurdity that the invader and destroyer of Iraq can play the role of Iraq's protector. The convenient fear of a "security vacuum"—used to perpetuate the occupation—ignores the fact that the Iraqi army never capitulated and forms the backbone of the Iraqi armed resistance. That backbone is concerned only with defending the Iraqi people and Iraq's sovereignty. Similarly, projections of civil war ignore the reality that the Iraqi population overwhelmingly, by number and by interest, rejects the occupation and will continue to do so.

In Iraq, the Iraqi people resist the occupation by all means, in accordance with international law. Only the popular resistance can be recognized to express

and defend the Iraqi people's interests and will. Until now the United States is blind to this reality, hoping that a "diplomatic surge," following the military surge of effective ethnic cleansing, will secure a government it imposes on Iraq. Regardless of who wins the upcoming U.S. presidential election, the U.S. can never achieve its imperial goals and the forces it imposes on Iraq are opposed to the interests of the Iraqi people.

Some in the West continue to justify the negation of popular sovereignty under the rubric of the "war on terror," criminalizing not only resistance but also humanitarian assistance to a besieged people. Under international law the Iraqi resistance constitutes a national liberation movement. Recognition of the Iraqi resistance is consequently a right, not an option. The international community has the right to withdraw recognition from the U.S.-imposed government in Iraq and recognize the Iraqi resistance.

It is evident that Iraq cannot recover lasting stability, unity and territorial integrity until its sovereignty is guaranteed. It is also evident that the U.S. occupation cannot avoid accountability by trying to switch responsibility to Iraq's neighbors. A pact of non-aggression, development and cooperation between a liberated Iraq and its immediate neighbors is the obvious means by which to achieve this stability. In its median geopolitical position, and given its natural resources, a liberated, peaceful and democratic Iraq is central to the welfare and development of its neighbors. All of Iraq's neighbors should recognize that stability in Iraq serves their own interests and commit to not interfering in its internal affairs.

If the international community and the United States are interested in peace, stability and democracy in Iraq, they should accept that only the Iraqi resistance—armed, civil and political—can achieve these by securing the interests of the Iraqi people. The first demand of the Iraqi

resistance is the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces illegally occupying Iraq—including private contractors—and disbanding all armed forces established by the occupation.

The Iraqi anti-occupation movement—in all its expressions—in defending the Iraqi people is the only force empowered to ensure democracy in Iraq. Across the spectrum of this movement it is agreed that upon U.S. withdrawal a temporary administrative government would be charged with two tasks: preparing the ground for democratic elections and reconstituting the national army. Upon completion of these tasks the administrative government would disband, leaving decisions regarding reparations, development and reconstruction to a sovereign and freely elected Iraqi government in a state of all its citizens without religious, ethnic, confessional or gender discrimination.

All laws, contracts, treaties and agreements signed under occupation are unequivocally null and void. According to international law and the will of the Iraqi people, total sovereignty of Iraqi oil and all natural, cultural and material resources rests in the hands of the Iraqi people, in all its generations, past, present and future. Across the spectrum of the Iraqi anti-occupation movement all agree that Iraq should sell its oil on the international market to all states not at war with Iraq, and in line with Iraq's obligations as a member of OPEC.

The 2003 U.S. invasion was and remains illegal and the law of state responsibility demands that states refuse to recognize the consequences of illegal state acts. State responsibility also includes a duty to restore. Compensation should be paid by all state and non-state actors that profited from the destruction and plundering of Iraq.

The Iraqi people are longing for long-term peace. On the basis of the 2005 Istanbul conclusions of the World Tribunal on Iraq, and in recognition of

the tremendous suffering of the aggressed Iraqi people, the signatories to this declaration endorse the abovementioned principles for peace, stability and democracy in Iraq.

The sovereignty of Iraq rests in the hands of its people in resistance. Peace in Iraq is simple to attain: unconditional U.S. withdrawal and recognition of the Iraqi resistance that by definition represents the will of the Iraqi people.

We appeal to all peace-loving people in the world to work to support the Iraqi people and its resistance. The future of peace, democracy and progress in Iraq, the region and the world depends on this.

WW note: Those who developed the declaration were from the BRussells Tribunal Executive Committee, Iraqi International Initiative on refugees, International Action Center, International Initiative to Prosecute U.S. Genocide in Iraq, New Weapons Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Portuguese session of the World Tribunal on Iraq, Cubadebate, Rebelión and Tlaxcala, Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI).

Among the 100-plus initial signers of the declaration were Ramsey Clark and Cynthia McKinney from the U.S., former United Nations officials Denis Halliday from Ireland and Hans von Sponeck from Germany, François Houtart from Belgium, Manik Mukherjee from India, Eduardo Galeano from Uruguay, novelist Harold Pinter from Britain, Chairperson of the World Peace Council Soccoro Gomes from Brazil, Jan Myrdal from Sweden and many Iraqis, including Dr. Saeed H. Hasan, former Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations. The complete statement including extensive footnotes and all signers can be found at anti-occupation.org; it is available in 12 languages on www.tlaxcala.es/campagnes.asp, where individuals and organizations are invited to sign onto the declaration. □



Hands off Bolivia, Venezuela

As the lame-hawk Bush administration finishes its last four months, Washington has accelerated its efforts to overthrow the most progressive elected Latin American governments. Local rich are involved in the plots, but on their own these forces are weak. They depend on U.S. money, advice, arms, instructions and promises of future aid to keep them afloat.

The good news is that these plans appear to be headed for failure. A failure for the counter-revolution can open the road to progress.

But the battles are still undecided. And one important element in the outcome is the solidarity of people in the U.S. for the people of Latin America and against the reactionary and murderous plans of the U.S. government.

In Hugo Chávez's Venezuela the state appears to have broken up a serious coup in the planning stage. Former Vice President José Vincent Rangel charged that the U.S. government, a Colombian ambassador, and a few dozen Venezuelan military officers, including a former defense minister, were involved in the plot. Venezuela's government arrested four retired and one active military officers, questioned 33 others and—this is important—expelled U.S. Ambassador Patrick Duddy.

While the worldwide corporate media have tried to discredit Chávez's case against the coup plotters, a revealing taped phone conversation among retired Vice-Adm. Carlos Alberto Millan Millan, retired National Guard Gen. Wilfredo Barroso Herrera and retired Air Force Gen. Eduardo Baez Torrealba was broadcast on Venezuelan state television. The officers talked about a takeover and possible bombing of Miraflores presidential palace and the need to "take Chávez out."

Venezuelans didn't doubt the U.S. role in the plot. But Chávez expelled Duddy also as a move in solidarity with Bolivian President Evo Morales. A few hours earlier, Morales had expelled U.S. Ambassador Philip Goldberg.

Morales, the first Indigenous leader of Bolivia, is extremely popular and has won two elections, the last one with more than 67 percent of the national vote.

In Bolivia, the U.S. has been backing a scurrilous group of oligarchs and their racist hangers-on in four mineral and energy-rich eastern regions of the country known as the "Media Luna." The oligarchs want the four wealthy regions to secede. This too points to Goldberg, who was a key architect of Kosovo's reactionary secession.

A top official of Pando, one of Bolivia's regions or prefectures, had hired mercenaries to murder Indigenous peasants participating in a demonstration. The gangsters killed at least 30 and possibly 90 people. The Bolivian armed forces, operating after Morales declared a state of siege in Pando, arrested only the one prefect responsible for the massacre.

Seeing a crying need for independent action and self-defense, popular organizations have mobilized to fight against the fascist gangs. Popular leaders hope to mobilize 50,000 peasants and workers to prepare to march into Santa Cruz, the richest town and headquarters of the oligarchs and fascists.

The Morales government is negotiating with the Media Luna prefects in the city of Cochabamba to try to resolve the conflict short of civil war. Bolivia's masses are mobilizing also in and near Cochabamba to try to make sure the gains promised by a new constitution will be preserved.

The Pentagon has reactivated the Fourth Fleet to threaten South America. In return, Venezuela has decided to hold joint maneuvers with Russia.

The U.S. progressive movement can be most helpful to the workers and peasants of the region by doing everything possible to get the U.S. government and its secret agencies out of Latin America and put the new Fourth Fleet back in mothballs.

U.S. hands off Venezuela and Bolivia!

Will NATO's expansion bubble burst?

By Sara Flounders

Part II: U.S. more dependent on military solutions

Washington increasingly looks to threats of sanctions and/or military attack to resolve its every problem and challenge. But the Bush administration finds it more difficult to line up its imperialist allies for each new aggression. Even some U.S. puppet and client states now try to distance themselves from U.S. initiatives.

Every major capitalist country competing with the U.S. looks first to its own economic interests. Their calculations are that the U.S. has lost its competitive economic edge; its financial institutions are in crisis, weakening the entire capitalist system. The overcommitted U.S. military machine is bogged down in disastrous occupations, facing long-term resistance movements.

As Dick Cheney visited Georgia, Azerbaijan and Ukraine in early September, President George W. Bush announced \$1 billion in new aid to Georgia, describing it as a multi-year commitment. The U.S.-controlled International Monetary Fund will open access to another \$750 million in immediate aid to Georgia. Billions more in military aid are projected.

Simultaneous with NATO's aggressive stance in the Black Sea is expansion of U.S./NATO military raids and bombings in U.S.-ally Pakistan. This affront to Pakistan's sovereignty has already enflamed anti-U.S. and anti-NATO sentiment. In a Sept. 16 statement, Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani called for an immediate halt to U.S. incursions, adding that "the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country would be safeguarded at all cost."

NATO's bombing of a village in Afghanistan killing more than 90—primarily Afghan children and civilians—has forced even the puppet Afghan regime to denounce the attack.

U.S. occupation forces in Iraq are still unable, after more than five years, to secure their bases or provide even the most basic services of potable water and electricity to a population that has overwhelmingly refused occupation.

In the midst of all this, the U.S. threats and leaks about a possible military attack on Iran continue almost unabated. Half the U.S. Navy is in striking distance of Iran.

At the same time, the U.S. has pushed ahead with a wild escalation: the plan to base anti-ballistic missiles in Poland and radar sites in the Czech Republic in the

face of overwhelming popular opposition there.

Collapse of a U.S. puppet

The dangerous escalation of NATO ships in the Black Sea, the further expansion of NATO membership, the attempt to line up the other Western imperialist members of NATO to impose sanctions on Russia, Cheney's heavy-handed visit and the dramatic increase in aid to Georgia are all desperate U.S. imperialist efforts to reinforce its position. But these measures can't reverse the U.S.'s big setback in its Georgian client state.

The Georgian army had received five years of U.S. and Israeli military training and millions of dollars of high-tech equipment, along with U.S. political support and encouragement to join NATO. Thousands of U.S. corporate-funded nongovernmental organizations ran most of the state apparatus, keeping Georgia firmly in the U.S. orbit.

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili then initiated a devastating attack on the tiny autonomous region of South Ossetia on Aug. 7, bombing its capital, Tskhinvali, and the surrounding area and killing many South Ossetians.

Within a day of a Russian counterattack, the Georgian military collapsed in utter chaos. Officers abandoned their posts, hijacked ambulances and fled back to the capital of Tbilisi. Units could not communicate. Rank-and-file soldiers then dumped tons of new U.S. weapons on the roadways and also fled.

A Sept. 3 New York Times article put it all on technology: "Georgia's military shortfalls were serious and too difficult to change merely by upgrading equipment." The article, however, went on to say that "training and equipping new brigades, re-equipping existing forces and installing a modern air-defense network could cost \$8 billion to \$9 billion," and that this was under discussion.

Only U.S. solution is more war

The U.S. corporate ruling class is relying more and more on war to salvage its position. This is reflected in both Republican and Democratic support for U.S. aid to Georgia, along with continuing support for a further expansion of NATO, troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and U.S. bases around the world.

Even though the U.S. is suffering political, economic and military setbacks, the contradiction that leads invariably to an increased threat of war is that militarism is an endless subsidy for the dominant U.S. corporations—the military corporations of Boeing, Lockheed-Martin, McDonnell Douglas and GE—along with thousands of contractors and subcontractors. The war in the Caucasus was "a bell-ringer for defense stocks." (Wall Street Journal, Aug. 16)

The excuses for new wars and new arms shipments are mother's milk to these merchants of death.

The U.S. military budget is already larger than that of the rest of the world combined, and it is growing. U.S. imperialism today has no solutions to the crises emerging around the globe except militarism, war and the threat of war. This makes the entire capitalist system more dangerous and more desperate.

It is essential that the working-class movement and progressive and anti-war activists oppose not just the individual wars of U.S. imperialism. Opposing all U.S. wars and calling for the abolition of NATO is now on the agenda. □

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BOLIVIA

MUNDO OBRERO

Enfrentando ataque fascista, Evo Morales

Continúa de página 12

comenzaran a fomentar violencia fascista. Además, estos criminales no tienen respaldo popular ni moral en Bolivia ni en ninguna parte de Latinoamérica. No obstante, el Vice-Presidente Álvaro García Linera ha empezado discusiones con el prefecto de Tarija, Mario Cossío quien representa la oligarquía de la Media Luna.

Junto a la condena por los gobiernos latinoamericanos, los ataques contra Morales y el MAS han despertado indignación en los pueblos. En Argentina, cerca de 10.000 personas, muchas de ellas inmigrantes bolivianas, marcha-

ron el 12 de septiembre a la Embajada Estadounidense en la zona de Palermo de Buenos Aires para apoyar a Morales, e insistir que Estados Unidos no intervenga en Bolivia.

Desde el movimiento de solidaridad estadounidense, el 14 de septiembre el Centro de Acción Internacional ha enviado una declaración apoyando a Morales y el gobierno del MAS. Una parte de la declaración dice: "Apoyamos la declaración de Bolivia sobre el Embajador estadounidense Phillip Goldberg como persona non grata y su expulsión de Bolivia. Protestamos asimismo la intervención

de los Estados Unidos en Bolivia y sus esfuerzos por socavar y subvertir el proceso de cambio en Bolivia. Proceso que beneficiará a los sectores de la población que han estado más oprimidos, indígena y afroboliviano."

Apoyamos la demanda de Bolivia que el embajador estadounidense sea retirado, y que Estados Unidos deje de dar apoyo al movimiento secesionista racista y fascista de los departamentos orientales que son ricos en los recursos que son propiedad de todas y todos los bolivianos y de los cuáles todos/as deben beneficiarse. (www.iacenter.org) □

NIGER DELTA

Higher oil prices breed repression

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Nigeria is the world's eighth-largest oil exporter. Over the last several years, the United States has increased its imports of oil from the African continent. Some estimates suggest that approximately 25 percent of foreign oil used in the U.S. comes from Africa.

Despite the growing U.S. reliance on oil from the continent and the recent spike in oil prices on the international market, the peoples of Nigeria's petroleum-producing region, the Niger Delta, have sunk deeper into poverty and underdevelopment.

In response to the disparity related to the increased extraction of oil, the rising prices on the international market and the astronomical increase in profits reaped by the transnational oil corporations, the peoples of the Niger Delta have stepped up their resistance to the exploitation of their land and resources.

This resistance has taken on both an armed and a mass character. In recent years, women's organizations have occupied and disrupted oil production facilities to illustrate the social and environmental impact of the exploitation of the national oil reserves by multinational corporations.

A guerrilla organization known as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta has also formed. The group has engaged in seizing employees of various transnational firms as well as acts of sabotage against oil installations and pipelines.

Just recently MEND claimed responsibility for a series of strikes against pipelines, flow stations, and other oil and gas facilities. This was ostensibly done in response to what the group claimed were ground and air attacks against its bases by the military forces of the Nigerian federal government.

Impact of attacks on oil production

Officials from the Nigerian federal government have admitted that attacks against oil pipelines in the Niger Delta have significantly curtailed production. It was announced that up to 150,000 barrels per day were lost during a week of fighting between the military and MEND forces.

MEND claimed that it suspended its operations as a result of pleas made by elders within the communities surrounding the oil production facilities. A spokesman from the Nigerian Joint Task Force welcomed MEND's announcement but added that the group had to demonstrate its willingness to refrain from attacks on oil pipelines and installations.

MEND was held responsible for six attacks over the course of one week, the most intense series of attacks in several years. Royal Dutch Shell, which has

been hit the hardest by the recent spate of attacks, declared a "force majeure" on shipments of Bonny Light, a type of crude oil. Force majeure is a contractual term used by oil suppliers that indicates they are unable to reach their quotas as a result of conditions beyond the company's control.

Royal Dutch Shell, which drills onshore in Nigeria in partnership with the state-managed Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), has been reluctant to issue any exact figures relating to the fall in oil production.

The oil workers' union, Pengassan, has criticized the government for taking a "lackluster" approach to negotiating a meaningful settlement with the people of the Niger Delta. It points out that, as a result of the continuing unrest in the Niger Delta, the southwest African nation of Angola is providing an increasing portion of oil produced on the continent and is becoming "the alternative haven of oil investors."

MEND claims that it wants a greater share of the oil wealth allocated for development in the region, which has been devastated by environmental toxicity resulting from the lack of concern shown by both the transnational oil companies and the federal government toward pollution and the residual effects of production.

However, there is also the reality of a large market in the informal sector, where enormous amounts of oil are stolen and sold outside recognized commercial channels. The seizure of oil workers also brings in money for the gunmen, who are paid ransoms for the release of those employed by the transnational firms.

MEND is not the only organization engaging in sabotage activities against the foreign-owned firms. Among the Ijaw people, a relatively small nationality, armed groups have developed that engage in sabotage against oil pipelines and installations. Recently, representa-

tives of these groups declared a "full-scale war" against the Joint Task Force of the Nigerian military.

An Ijaw leader, Chief Edwin Clark, said in a press conference Sept. 17 that the source of the conflict in the oil-producing Niger Delta stemmed from the failure of the federal government to develop a system where the people could benefit from the large-scale extraction and production of petroleum.

Clark, who formerly served as an information minister in the government, criticized the JTF for atrocities carried out against civilians in the region. Nigeria's ThisDay newspaper reported on Sept. 17 that the JTF in Delta State attacked an innocent Agge community and burnt over 150 houses.

Clark said: "We sympathized with the Army when their base was attacked in Bomadi by some few militants, but we have also observed that each time it appears that peace will return to the area, the JTF will always launch an attack without any reason, in order to give reason for their stay in the Niger Delta where most of them engage in illegal bunkering"—supplying ships with oil.

National unity and the struggle against Big Oil

Not much information is available about the general program of MEND and other groups engaging in sabotage campaigns against the transnational oil firms and the NNPC. However, it is quite obvious that, with more than 100 million people—the largest population of any country on the African continent—Nigeria needs a national unity program to effectively challenge the transnational oil firms who work in conjunction with the federal government to rob the people of their most profitable resource—oil.

During the late 1960s, the contradictions between the peoples of the eastern region and those in the north and the

As U.S. imports more oil from Africa, poverty and underdevelopment intensify

west erupted into a civil war that lasted from 1967 to 1970. This tragic episode in Nigerian history, known as the "Biafran War," brought devastation to the peoples of this region.

These regional divisions in Nigeria are the direct result of the legacy of British imperialism. The colonial policy of "divide and rule" was used by the British to maintain control of the agricultural and later oil resources of the country. When Nigeria gained independence in 1960, it was almost inevitable that these divisions would continue and consequently hamper any real effort aimed at genuine national unity and development.

In general the peoples of the east and south have been separated economically and socially from those of the west, while the northern people have traditionally dominated the military. Adding to this crisis in governance is the dominance of the oil industry and the corruption it breeds. The failure of capitalism and capitalist production methods in Africa is most starkly illustrated in Nigeria, where there is little equitable distribution of the wealth emanating from the exploitation of oil and other national resources.

It will be absolutely necessary for the trade union movement, which has an umbrella federation known as the Nigerian Labour Congress, to link up with the people residing in the rural areas where oil is extracted to build a people's front designed to take control of the production of oil and utilize this national resource for the benefit of the people.

Sectional struggles based on ethnicity and regionalism will not be sufficient to fight effectively against the transnational oil companies and the successive governments that have been all too willing to carry out the bidding of these international conglomerates. □

The Jesse Jackson campaign:

National oppression & class conflict

Continued from page 2

Washington Post, Jan. 21)

So it turns out that merely demanding the lifting of a scandalously racist exclusionary rule is "pushing the Democratic Party around," and this after more than 30 hours of palaver about reaching out to Blacks, Latins, and women.

The rude rejoinder by Manatt is not just a case of one capitalist politician, Manatt, talking to another capitalist politician, Jesse Jackson. This is an imperialist stooge and agent on behalf of the bourgeoisie addressing an authentic representative of an oppressed people.

It illustrates what are the real, as against the surface, relationships. It tears the mask off the bourgeois establishment and discloses the nature of the relationship as that of exploiter and exploited. ...

Program, personal qualifications, and so on, have their place in this type of struggle, but that is not what is decisive.

What is decisive are the social, class, and racial relationships which govern the struggle.

Class contradictions of Democratic Party

Here it is necessary to understand also the makeup of the Democratic Party.

Probably more than any other party in the history of the U.S., it encompasses within its fold the sharpest class contradictions.

On the one hand it derives its basic support from the working class and oppressed people. On the other hand it is controlled by the bourgeoisie.

It used to and still does to some extent contain some of the most rabid racists from the South, such as Jesse Helms, before they defected to the Republican Party. It is also the party of the multimillionaire liberals—the Kennedys, Metzenbaums, Bradleys, Harrimans, and others.

On the one hand, it has within it the most rabidly anti-labor "open-shoppers." And then on the other hand it has virtually the entire organized labor movement, with the exception of the Teamsters.

It is a party of not only sharp class contradictions, but of warring contradictory groupings. It is the ideal of imperialist democracy, a broad coalition encompassing divergent and contradictory class and national groupings, but one which finance capital can more easily manipulate, supporting one group at one time, still another group at another, and pitting them against each other most of the time.

It is the bourgeois coalition, the umbrella group par excellence of the capitalist class.

When that instrumentality, however, does not suffice, the bourgeoisie quickly veers to its very own alternative, the Republican Party, which unlike the Democratic Party is the party of the bourgeoisie, whereas the Democratic Party is the party for the bourgeoisie desperately trying to be of it. ...

The Jackson movement is one of the varieties that have developed over these many decades since the Civil War, such as the Garvey movement, the Muslim movement, and the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s. Each of these have taken on a different form, but each is an authentic expression of the aspirations of Black people to finish the bourgeois democratic revolution begun by the Civil War and achieve full equality and self-determination.

The fact that the Jackson movement has taken on a parliamentary, that is, electoral form should not in any way deprive it of its progressive character. It is a genuine effort to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution and achieve those rights which white people as a whole achieved earlier.

We are talking of formal rights such as are achievable under a bourgeois democracy, which does not of course change the class character of the social system of capitalism. □

DAY of MOURNING
NOV. 27

The 39th annual Day of Mourning will be held on "Thanksgiving" Thursday, Nov. 27 at 12 noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth, Mass. A dinner/social will follow a march and rally. The event is being sponsored by United American Indians of New England. For more updates, go to www.uaine.org. For New York transportation, call the International Action Center at 212-633-6646. □



Ejecuciones hipotecarias de viviendas provocan lucha de costa a costa

Por Gerry Scoppettuolo
Boston

Si sólo se leen los diarios Wall Street Journal o The New York Times, o se mira el canal noticiero CNBC, se pensaría que la crisis de endeudamiento es algo que solamente está pasando en Wall Street, a pesar de las esporádicas noticias de “interés humano” sobre las ejecuciones hipotecarias y su impacto sobre l@s inquilin@s y propietari@s.

La verdad sobre la epidemia de desahucios por los bancos se está escribiendo en las calles y en los bloqueos de los desalojos y en las luchas comunitarias. Los verdaderos actores en este drama no son los poderosos corredores de las acciones o los funcionarios que manejan este mercado, sino las familias obreras—africanas-americanas, latinas y blancas—que están luchando al organizar comités comunitarios y unirse a mítines y manifestaciones.

Una líder en esta lucha es Paula Taylor, cuya casa en la vecindad de Roxbury en Boston fue retomada por el Banco de América el 5 de septiembre mientras un grupo multinacional de 75 personas rodeaban su casa en lo que fue el octavo bloqueo contra los desalojos en este año.

El comisario policial con una escuadra de 16 miembros de la policía de Boston

tuvieron que arrestar a cuatro personas en la lucha que duró dos horas. Los manifestantes se encadenaron a la puerta trasera de la casa de Taylor después de que los agentes de la policía fueran bloqueados en la puerta principal. Jim Brooks, un organizador africano-americano del grupo pro derechos de los inquilinos, Boston's City Life, había encadenado su silla de ruedas al balcón de la casa. Tan pronto se fue la policía, una delegación de los manifestantes bajo el liderazgo de City Life, marchó hasta la sucursal del Banco de América más cercana donde continuaron su protesta.

El concejal municipal de Boston, Chuck Turner se unió al bloqueo, el cual incluía a partidarios de Vida Urbana, Four Corners Neighborhood Association, el sindicato Service Employees, la (ACE), Alternative for Community and Environment, T Riders Union, la Red de Mujeres en Lucha, el capítulo de F.I.S.T de Boston, y el Centro de Acción Internacional.

El 17 de septiembre tres grandes manifestaciones en contra de las retomas se llevarán a cabo en Estados Unidos; en Michigan l@s manifestantes se reunirán en el Capitolio de Lansing comenzando a las 11 de la mañana para una acción masiva auspiciada por la Coalición para Detener las Retomas y los Desalojos,

¡Moratoria AHORA! Exigirán que se promulgue una moratoria por dos años contra las retomas y que se introduzca en la legislatura del estado. Para firmar una petición por el internet apoyando la moratoria, ir a www.moratorium-mi.org.

También el 17 de septiembre otra manifestación tendrá lugar en Los Ángeles frente al Edificio Federal comenzando al mediodía, auspiciada por la Coalición Los Angeles Labor/Community, la cual incluye al Local 721 del sindicato Service Employee. L@s manifestantes exigirán que se declare una moratoria en contra de las retomas a nivel nacional. El 20 de septiembre en Boston, activistas se reunirán al mediodía frente a la sede del banco Countrywide en la avenida Mass 811 y la calle Albany en una protesta organizada por la Red de Mujeres en Lucha de Boston. La manifestación en Boston es parte de una campaña de petición permanente exigiendo que el Gobernador de Massachusetts use su poder constitucional para declarar un Estado de Emergencia Económica en el estado y promulgue ordenes ejecutivas para detener los cortes del agua y electricidad, las retomas y los desalojos y reduzca los precios de los alimentos y los combustibles. Para más información y para bajar una copia de los volantes y peticiones, vaya a www.iacoboston.org/wfn.

[iacoboston.org/wfn](http://www.iacoboston.org/wfn).

La Red Nacional Ad-Hoc para Detener las Retomas y los Desahucios (Ad-Hoc National Network to Stop Forclosures and Evictions) envió una carta de emergencia el 16 de septiembre al Comité Senatorial sobre Bancos, Viviendas y Asuntos Urbanos exigiendo una moratoria nacional contra las retomas.

La ley federal impone una moratoria obligatoria por 90 días en las ejecuciones hipotecarias durante un estado de emergencia declarado por el gobierno. La carta señala que la reciente toma de poder federal de las agencias Fannie Mae y Freddie Mac es de hecho, una declaración de estado de emergencia, y que el gobierno debe cumplir con sus propias leyes e implementar una moratoria obligatoria de las ejecuciones hipotecarias que son propiedad de o estén aseguradas por estas instituciones.

La Red también ha lanzado una campaña de peticiones en el Internet dirigida al nuevo Conservador de Fannie Mae y Freddie Mac, al Secretario del Tesoro, y a los Comités del Sistema Bancario y de Finanzas del Senado y de la Cámara de Representantes demandando una moratoria federal sobre las ejecuciones hipotecarias y los desahucios. Para firmar, visite a www.stopforeclosuresandevictions.org.

BOLIVIA

Enfrentando ataque fascista, Evo Morales contraataca

Por John Catalinotto

La lucha entre el imperialismo de los EEUU por un lado y el movimiento por la soberanía y la autodeterminación de los países de Latinoamérica por el otro, alcanzó una nueva etapa a principios de septiembre con el uso de fuerzas paramilitares contra el gobierno popular de Evo Morales en Bolivia. Esta intensificación ya ha conducido a más de 30 muertes, la expulsión de dos embajadores de los EEUU y una reunión de emergencia entre jefes y jefas de estado latinoamerican@s en Chile.

Algunas voces advierten que la guerra civil que se ha estado fraguando hace tiempo en Bolivia ya ha brotado. El presidente de Venezuela Hugo Chávez, sonó la alarma con claridad a través de Latinoamérica señalando la intervención del imperialismo de los Estados Unidos en los recientes hechos ocurridos comparándola con el derrocamiento sangriento de Salvador Allende el 11 de septiembre de 1973 en Chile.

El progresista Presidente de Bolivia y su partido, el Movimiento al Socialismo, MAS, necesitan de toda la ayuda que puedan encontrar de parte de sus vecinos y de los movimientos de solidaridad del mundo. Sin embargo, la situación está lejos de estar perdida. Las Fuerzas Armadas de Bolivia todavía no se han alineado a la contrarrevolución. También existe el potencial de que las masas bolivianas, mayormente indígenas, quienes acaban de votar abrumadoramente a favor del gobierno de Morales en un referendo revocatorio, puedan movilizarse para defender al gobierno y a una Bolivia unificada.

Convocados/as por Chávez, ocho de los 12 jefes y jefas de estado del UNASUR se reunieron en Santiago de Chile el 15 de septiembre. Morales dijo que había venido para “explicar a los/as presidentes/as de América del Sur el golpe de estado cívico por prefectos en algunos estados bolivianos en días recientes. Hemos visto el pillaje, el saqueo de varias instituciones, atentados contra la policía y las Fuerzas Armadas”, dijo. (BBC, 15 de septiembre) Al igual que el sabotaje de las instalaciones petroleras en Venezuela en 2002 que tuvo la meta de obstaculizar la economía principal del país, fueron saboteados gasoductos, temporalmente interrumpiendo el flujo de gas al Brasil y a la Argentina.

No sólo Venezuela y Ecuador, pero hasta aquellos estados considerados “moderados” como Chile y Brasil, firmaron la declaración en apoyo a Morales, prometiendo rehusarse a cooperar con cualquier régimen golpista y condenando la violencia paramilitar organizada por la derecha boliviana.

Masacre en Pando

Pando, Santa Cruz, Beni y Tarija son los nombres de los cuatro departamentos que conforman la región boliviana reaccionaria conocida como la “Media Luna” —así denominada porque el territorio combinado de los cuatro estados tiene la forma de una media luna. Esta región rica en recursos minerales y energéticos todavía está dominada por oligarquías de origen europeo apoyadas por el imperialismo estadounidense.

El gobernador de Pando empleó una pandilla de sicarios criminales—algunos

reportes dicen que eran de Brasil—quienes abrieron fuego contra una concentración de gente mayormente campesina e indígena el 11 de septiembre. Treinta personas, todas campesinos desarmados, fueron asesinados cerca de la ciudad capitalina de Cobija. (BBC) Esta masacre fue el crimen más patente en una serie de ataques contra edificios que albergaban oficinas del gobierno central y de organizaciones populares.

Es obvio el porqué el embajador estadounidense Philip Goldberg, un profesional del Departamento de Estado, fue escogido para el trabajo en Bolivia. Sus credenciales incluyen dirigir la estrategia de dividir-y-conquistar que usó a la gente de Kosovo de origen albanés para facilitar al imperialismo estadounidense el dividir a la Yugoslavia socialista.

Así que no debe sorprender que el primer paso de Morales para defender su gobierno fuera declarar a ese agente imperialista “persona non grata” y expulsarlo. En solidaridad con Morales, Chávez expulsó de Venezuela al embajador estadounidense. Hasta Honduras rechazó reconocer las credenciales del nuevo embajador de los EEUU a su país.

Hay que notar que ambos candidatos presidenciales tanto del Partido Demócrata como el Republicano, hicieron comentarios hostiles sobre la legítima acción de autodefensa de Morales — la expulsión de una figura clave en una conspiración internacional contra su gobierno.

El gobierno del MAS también declaró un “estado de sitio” en Pando. Las fuerzas armadas federales tomaron control del aeropuerto de Cobija y comenzaron

a vigilar las calles. El prefecto de Pando, Leopoldo Fernández, fue detenido por las fuerzas armadas bolivianas la mañana de martes. Anteriormente, Chávez había criticado al comandante-en-jefe de las Fuerzas Armadas de Bolivia General Luis Trigo por no actuar más contundentemente contra los elementos fascistas.

La contrarrevolución provoca revolución

Según un artículo del 15 de septiembre escrito por un líder del Partido Comunista de Bolivia, Marcos Domich: “Se puede oír en algunos círculos militares que las medidas tomadas fueron aplicadas muy lentamente y sin firmeza. Esto fue percibido inmediatamente por la población y fue la causa de mucha agitación popular.”

“Cientos de miles de manifestantes, en diversas asambleas y reuniones, especialmente en los departamentos del Centro y del Oeste, casi de manera espontánea, han empezado a hablar sobre la organización de destacamentos, brigadas u otras formaciones con un solo objetivo: el de prepararse para defender la integridad, democracia, y soberanía nacional de Bolivia, para continuar con el proceso de cambio progresista. El elemento de mayor importancia en este espíritu social es el patriotismo.”

Washington entonces exigió que el gobierno de Morales negociara una “concesión” con los secesionistas de la Media Luna. Esto es luego de que estos elementos oligárquicos y fascistas perdieran en un referéndum nacional — Morales ganó por más de 67 por ciento de los votos — y

Continúa a pagina 10