

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

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World's people stand with Gaza

Terror war arouses global anger

By John Catalinotto

Mobilized on six continents—Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and North and South America—millions of people have demanded that Israel cease its attack and lift the siege on Gaza. The protests target the Israeli and often the U.S. embassies and consulates, because everyone knows the U.S. funds, supplies and apologizes for the Israeli war atrocities.

Many protests in Europe also hit the European Union for backing Israel. And in some countries, the protests have also targeted the government for collaborating with the Israeli genocidal assault.

The blatant and brutal Israeli bombing raids and invasion against the civilian population of Gaza have mobilized a worldwide anti-war movement. Arab and Muslim countries and the immigrant Palestinian, Arab and Muslim communities have impelled this struggle, and activists in the anti-war and working-class movements have joined it in growing numbers as the invasion continues.

Some of the same organizations that pulled together massive protests before the invasion of Iraq in 2003—protests the Bush administration ignored while plotting and executing the criminal war on Iraq—helped mobilize solidarity with Gaza. But the worldwide capitalist economic crisis had already led to general strikes in Italy, Portugal and Greece, and major student protests in France and Spain. The failure of the U.S. to conquer Iraq and Afghanistan, and the defeat of Israel in Lebanon had added to the

Continued on page 8

Solidarity protests sweep U.S.

By Cheryl LaBash

Jan. 5—Attention customarily turns away from news of the world during a holiday week when U.S. schools, organizations and workplaces close. But even so, outraged demonstrations to stop the U.S./Israeli bombing of Gaza flared in every major U.S. metropolitan area more than once and in some cases, daily.

Filled with anguish and anger, 25,000 to 30,000 people rallied in Times Square in **New York City on Jan. 3.** It was one of the largest protests held around the country against Israel. The crowd stretched down Seventh Avenue from 42nd to 36th Street. It swelled in size as people arrived from throughout the region, including busloads from Brooklyn and elsewhere.

People marched through midtown Manhattan to the Israeli Mission to the United Nations, where the five-hour demonstration ended with another rally. One boy about 4 years old sat on his father's shoulders rousing the crowd as he shouted over and over "Free, free Palestine!" and "End the Occupation!"

The rally at Times Square was chaired by Raja Abdulhaq of the General Union of Palestine Students; Lamis Deek of Al-Awda; Wael Mousfar, president of the Arab Muslim American Federation; and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center. Samia Halaby, a long-time Palestinian activist and artist, told the crowd that it is time to up the ante and ask the

Continued on page 6

Workers World Party statement Support Gaza resistance!

GAZA is a strip of land, four-fifths the size of the New York borough of Queens, home to 1.5 million Palestinians, of whom 800,000 are children. By entering Gaza, Israel's war machine, backed in full by U.S. imperialism, is writing a new chapter of war crimes in world history.

The workers' movement of the entire world should leave no doubt that it stands on the side of the Palestinian resistance, and will give unconditional support to whatever the Palestinians need to do to defend the people of Gaza and their organizations, which includes Hamas. Every weapon in the hands of oppressed peoples fighting for self-determination is a legitimate weapon. Every weapon in the hands of the imperialist oppressors and their local agents—in this case the Israeli state—is illegitimate.

ISRAELI ATTACK Paved by U.S. 9

Defend Hamas! Defend Palestine!

The governments of the U.S. and the European Union and the corporate media have demonized Hamas, vilifying this group as "terrorist." Not long ago the entire imperialist world used the same words against Fatah, which now leads the Palestinian government on the West Bank. And the Israelis and their backers did their utmost to crush Fatah, led by Yasser Arafat, whom they murdered. The truth is that imperialists and the Zionist state will vilify and attack Hamas or any other group that represents the Palestinian desire for liberation.

In 2006, the Palestinian people elected Hamas as their government by a landslide because this organization was leading the resistance to oppression and occupation. Refusing to recognize this legitimate choice, both Tel Aviv and Washington targeted Hamas—by waging a genocidal attack on all Palestinians. The Israelis put Gaza under siege, starving and freezing the people, cutting off food and medicine, fuel and power for the past 18 months.

Washington and Tel Aviv claim that Hamas broke the cease-fire. But there was never a real cease-fire, because the Israelis never lifted the blockade as they had agreed to do and left the people of Gaza hungry, cold and desperate. Meanwhile Israel kept provok-

Continued on page 5



Tel Aviv, Israel, Jan. 3.

PHOTO: JESSIE BOYLAN



Khartoum, Sudan, Dec. 27.

END THE SIEGE OF GAZA!

- Ramsey Clark's appeal
- **FIST: 'Stop the massacre'** 5

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UAW vs CAPITALISM 4

GUINEA-CONAKRY

Behind the coup 11

CUBAN REVOLUTION

50 years and counting 10



Right, New York City, Jan. 3.
WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Crisis and struggle in the Middle East

The following are excerpts from a talk given by Joyce Chediak at the Nov. 15-16 Workers World Party National Conference in New York City.

The hike in food prices was causing great pain in much of the Middle East even before the worldwide economic meltdown began. Prices skyrocketed not just due to inflation, but also due to the U.S. government policy of paying farmers not to grow wheat in order to raise prices and from U.S. agribusiness taking wheat off the international market and directing production toward biofuels.

In Egypt—a U.S. wheat importer—major bread shortages in April 2008 and rising food prices provoked large-scale strikes and demonstrations. Strikes and job actions in Egypt doubled from 2006 to 2007, fueled by food price hikes and 12 percent inflation.

Poor people in Yemen are spending more than a quarter of their income on bread. Police have attacked food protests in Tunisia and Morocco. Even in oil-rich Saudi Arabia, boycott campaigns have protested the high cost of food and other staples.

To understand the impact of the world economic crisis in the Middle East, let's start with Dubai, one of the United Arab Emirates. This center of banking and commerce experienced a real estate boom unprecedented in Middle East history.

In a few years it became a sparkling city of high-rises—not for the Arab or East Asian workers who worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week building them—but for Western business interests operating there tax-free.

When the world stock markets crashed in October, the Persian Gulf countries lost \$160 billion in one week. The Emirates injected \$32 billion into the banking system, with other Gulf states following suit.

Dubai's construction boom was all based on borrowing. Dubai's debt was 100 percent of its gross national product. It needed an injection of capital from the Emirates to keep its banks afloat.

The real estate boom in the Gulf came to a halt. Add to this the declining price of oil, the flight of foreign capital and dwindling tourism, and one sees the effect of the economic crisis on the richest Arab countries.

The oil-rich countries of the Gulf are economic lifelines for financially-strapped Middle Eastern countries. The slowdown in the Gulf countries felt like a crash in places like Egypt, Jordan and Syria where Gulf money has helped prop up strained economies. (New York Times, Oct. 28)

Egypt receives about half of its \$6 billion in annual remittances from 2 million Egyptians living and working in the Gulf. Jordan receives about \$2 billion annually in remittances from its workers in the Persian Gulf, and Syria has a million workers there. These jobs no longer exist.

Anti-imperialist sentiment is always high in the Middle East. Now, with the economic crisis, we can expect more struggles in the Middle East. While we can't predict what form these struggles will take, we must be ready to defend our Middle Eastern brothers and sisters. Their struggle will be distorted here by the lens of anti-Arab, anti-Iranian, anti-Muslim and racist invective, in order to obscure the just nature of the struggle.

Ruling class united on Middle East

Progressive groups and individuals in the Middle East have different degrees of understanding of the national question in the U.S., and what the election of an African-American president means here. What is on their minds is:



PHOTO: PEOPLES VIDEO NETWORK

Joyce Chediak speaks at N.Y. pro-Gaza rally, Jan. 3.

Will the Obama presidency lessen the suffering imposed on them by the Pentagon, U.S. client-states like Israel and U.S.-backed Arab reactionary regimes like those in Saudi Arabia and Egypt?

Most are not optimistic. Leila Ghanem from Bada'el Magazine, Beirut International Forum, stated: "We observe with great concern [Obama's] positions on the Palestinian issue. In this respect, we expect no change and feel we must fight against what is already in progress—war, discrimination and extermination of the Palestinian people."

Ghanem is referring to Obama's appointment of Rahm Israel Emanuel as White House Chief of Staff, the most powerful executive branch position next to the president. As a U.S. Congressman from Chicago, Emanuel has been consistently and vocally pro-Israel, sometimes more so than George W. Bush.

In a July 2006 speech supporting a House resolution backing Israel's bombing of occupied Palestine and Lebanon, Emanuel called the Lebanese and Palestinian governments "totalitarian entities with militias and terrorists acting as democracies."

Choosing Emanuel as Chief of Staff sends a clear pro-Israel message. Meanwhile, Obama has said nothing of Israel's recent tightening of the siege of Gaza, a collective punishment of the population which has caused acute shortages of food, fuel and medical supplies.

Obama wants to increase troop presence in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He is hawkish on Iran. He competed with McCain on who most supports the Israeli settler state. Obama has not talked about dismantling U.S. bases in the Middle East or removing the huge naval armada in the Persian Gulf menacing Iran.

Obama's Middle East policy is not fundamentally different from the policies of Bush or McCain except for Iraq. His position on Iraq reflects the overwhelming opposition to that war in the U.S.

Obama is not for a full pullout in Iraq, but calls for "a residual force [to] remain to conduct targeted counterterrorism missions against al Qaeda in Iraq and to protect American diplomatic and civilian personnel" and for the Pentagon to "train and support Iraqi security forces."

Obama will head a government which rules collectively for the U.S. ruling class, the same rotten oppressive ruling class that the Bush administration serves.

The U.S. ruling class is totally committed to maintaining its stranglehold on plentiful, high-quality and easily extracted Middle Eastern oil. Control of this oil is used by the U.S. to dominate the rest of the world.

This is why there is no more important region of the world to U.S. imperialism. This is why it has zero tolerance for struggle in the Middle East. There are no splits in the ruling class on this, though there might be differences

Continued on page 6

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

- Solidarity protests sweep U.S. 1
- Conference will unite the struggles. 3
- Jailing of anti-racist leader spurs justice fight 3
- Mumia: A tribute to Eartha Kitt 3
- Capitalist state wages war on UAW 4
- On the picket line 4
- Wall Street's three-headed butcher. 4
- U.S. youth group demands end to Gaza massacre 5
- Black coalition condemns Israeli atrocities. 7

★ Around the world

- Terror war arouses global anger. 1
- Support Gaza resistance! 1
- Crisis and struggle in the Middle East 2
- Urgent appeal to stop Israel's bombing of Gaza! 5
- U.S. paved way for Israel's attack 9
- Long live the Cuban Revolution! 10
- Gift of fish is a gift of hope 10
- Harold Pinter unraveled the 'Tapestry of Lies' 10
- Behind the military coup in Guinea-Conakry 11
- Koreans reaffirm self-reliance and socialism 11

★ Editorials

- Rick Warren and the Obama inauguration. 10

★ Noticias En Español

- Llamado urgente por Gaza 12
- Solidaridad con Gaza 12

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
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Web: www.workers.org
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Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
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National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
www.workers.org

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

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St., Bsm.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443-909-8964
baltimore@workers.org

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

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-883-2534
buffalo@workers.org

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

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

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202
313-831-0750
detroit@workers.org

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

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

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 23843,
Philadelphia,
PA 19143
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Raleigh, N.C.
raleigh@workers.org

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

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

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355

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

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

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

From Gaza crisis to economic crisis

Fightback conference will unite the struggles

Following are excerpts from a Dec. 29 statement issued by the organizers of the Bail Out the People Movement. Go to www.bailoutpeople.org to register, endorse and donate to the conference.

In 2009 more and more lives are going to be devastated by the biggest global economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. What we do, or fail to do, will prove decisive to the coming battle over whose interests in society shall prevail—the needs of the people or the greed of the super-rich few who insist that their profits always come first.

The Bail Out the People Movement invites you to come together in New York City on Sat., Jan. 17, 2009, and help plan the fightback. If you live in the western part of the U.S., we invite you to come to our West Coast Fightback Conference in Los Angeles on Sat., Jan. 24, 2009.

How fitting it is that we meet on the anniversary of the 80th birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. If ever there was a time to remember King's legacy of struggle against war, racism and for economic and social justice, now is such a time!

That Barack Obama will become president on Jan. 20 realizes a measure of King's dream. But depression-level joblessness, evictions and foreclosures made worse by cutbacks, war, bigotry and rac-

ism are not a dream but a nightmare.

The nightmare is borne out in the numbers: \$1 trillion for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, \$8 trillion to bail out the biggest and richest banks and bankers, while millions lose their jobs, homes, health-care, ability to go to school and sink into life-threatening poverty.

There is the promise of a "stimulus program that will create or save some jobs." But the stimulus will be a drop-in-the-bucket; it's expected that one million jobs will be lost per month in 2009 in the U.S.

It is up to the people to fight for the right to jobs or a living income, along with a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions.

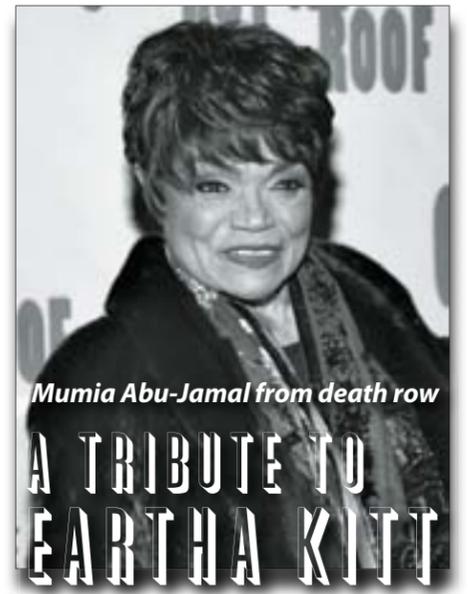
No election or president, however historical and inspiring, can be a substitute for a mass movement in the struggle against war or for social and economic rights.

Let's take inspiration and example from the Republic Glass and Doors Co. workers in Chicago who occupied their factory to fight for their rights, or the workers at the Smithfield meat processing plant in Tar Heel, N.C., who fought for and won a union. Or the students at New York City's New School who held a successful sit-in. Or the youth in Greece who are fighting police terror and economic oppression. Or

the Palestinian people heroically resisting the genocidal U.S.-backed Israeli war in Gaza. The lessons of these struggles are that we will need to utilize both mass action and direct action in the fightback ahead of us.

Join with activists in New York and from across the country: If you are an anti-war activist, a union organizer, a student activist or someone who first became excited about politics because of Obama's campaign, or if you face losing a job, a home, the ability to go to college, health-care or a pension—and you are ready to unite and fight back—let's come together and determine what we can do to help give birth to a desperately needed fightback movement.

Some of the issues to be raised in workshops and breakouts include: Stop the war on Gaza—defend the Palestinian liberation struggle; the role of youth and students in the fightback; uniting the community with organized and unorganized workers; the anti-war movement and the struggle vs. the war at home—forging a new relationship; they say cutback, we say fight back—the growing struggles against cutbacks, tuition increases, transit fare hikes, layoffs and more; creating an army of organizers; and immigrant workers' rights—fighting racism is the key to solidarity. □



Following are excerpts from a Dec. 25 audio column. Go to www.prisonradio.org to hear Mumia's political commentaries.

For generations the name Eartha Kitt was synonymous with sexy, sultry and outspoken. In an industry where careers can sometimes be measured in minutes, Eartha Kitt was the real thing for quite a while: dancer, singer, actress and, on occasion, a comedian.

Since the tender age of 14, she worked the stage, and for nearly seven decades. She left her indelible imprint by her work on the big screen, TV and on recordings.

On Jan. 26, 1928, she was born in South Carolina as Eartha Mae Kitt. She danced, sang and acted her way into the hearts of millions.

In 1968 she dared speak out against the Vietnam War, when the war was raging at its hottest, and was both black-listed and hounded for doing so. That's because she spoke at a photo op at the White House in the face of First Lady Lady Bird Johnson—wife of President Lyndon B. Johnson. For daring to speak her mind at the heart of the empire, and for denouncing an imperial war, the media and the state tried to "disappear" her. She had to go abroad to find her freedom of speech, where she remained for nearly a decade. Her comings, goings, doings and sayings were tracked by both the FBI and the CIA.

She moved through life with an intelligence, wit and nerve that made her distinctive and unforgettable. Eartha Mae Kitt was 81. □

Jailing of anti-racist leader spurs fight for justice

By Caleb T. Maupin and Sharon Danann
Cleveland

A police raid on the Superfly Barber Shop took place on Dec. 24. The shop is owned by Art McKoy, a long-time anti-drug and anti-police-brutality activist. McKoy rents out the barber chairs but is rarely there in person. Cops arrested McKoy and two other men.

McKoy's supporters cheered his freedom in a meeting on Dec. 30. He told them how he spent Christmas locked up in the East Cleveland jail in what he called "the dungeon"—in solitary confinement. He stated he thought he would be there at least five days.

But on Dec. 24 and 25, McKoy's supporters flooded the East Cleveland police department with over 200 phone calls. As a result, the police were forced to process McKoy's paperwork on Dec. 26 so he could be transported to the county jail—the so-called "Justice Center"—to await a bail hearing.

Prosecutors—whom McKoy has loudly criticized for their failure to charge police when they kill Black youth—have charged him with one felony count of permitting drug abuse. However, the charge of allowing drugs to be sold on one's property is usually charged as a misdemeanor. (Plain Dealer, Dec. 27)

Since the 1970s, Art McKoy has defended the oppressed people of Cleveland. The organization which he leads, Black on Black Crime Inc., started as an organization which sought to prevent violence within the Black community of Cleveland, and it still actively fights for "Peace in the Hood."

But since its founding, BBCI has also challenged the violence oppressed people suffer at the hands of the cops. McKoy and

BBCI have protested the brutality of the local police departments whenever attacks occur, such as in 2005 when 15-year-old Brandon McCloud was fatally shot when Cleveland cops burst into McCloud's bedroom.

McKoy speaks on WTAM radio each week, calling out the police for their brutality against the oppressed people of Cleveland.

The arrest came as McKoy's organization is planning a large demonstration for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Called "Ring Around the Justice Center," the demonstration will take place on Jan. 19 at Ontario Street and Lakeside Avenue in downtown Cleveland starting at noon.

The action is being held to protest the racism routinely practiced by the courts in giving statistically higher sentences to people of color; to demand "open discovery" so that defense attorneys have access to all necessary documents; and to demand investigations of both mistreatment of prisoners in the Cuyahoga County jail and malfeasance in the judicial system as a whole.

The Jan. 19 protest is being organized by BBCI, Survivors/Victims of Tragedy, the Carl Stokes Brigade and journalist Kathy Wray Coleman, whose inhumane and illegal treatment in the Justice Center in August 2008 was detailed in a recent BBCI hearing.

History of police killings and abuse

One inspiration for the protest was the March 30 death in the jail of R&B singer Sean Levert, 39. His death, according to the coroner, was due in part to abrupt withdrawal from the prescription anti-anxiety medication Xanax.

Levert turned over 37 Xanax pills to the jail officials when he entered on March



Art McKoy

WW PHOTO: SHARON DANANN

24, but he was denied his medication despite having hours of hallucinations, panic attacks and other symptoms before a fatal heart attack. (Plain Dealer, Nov. 11 and 24)

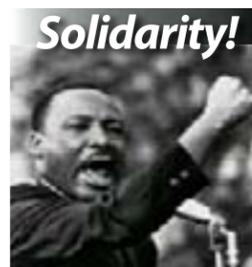
The police resumed undercover surveillance of McKoy's barber shop on Dec. 18, the day after a standing-room-only fact-finding hearing at the BBCI offices. The hearing was presided over by retired Judge Sara J. Harper.

Coleman, an investigative journalist who has written on topics such as racial disparities in sentencing, testified under oath about being jailed without charges and treated abusively for five days. When

she asked in jail, "Is this what happened to Sean Levert?" they "shot [her] up with something." Before she passed out, she was forced to remove all her clothes.

In sworn testimony Charles Pearson told how the jail withheld his post-stroke anti-seizure medication and 13 other vital drugs although he became increasingly ill. The nurse offered him Tylenol. He could not even walk to his hearing in front of a judge. Pearson was told to move it—that he was "holding up the line."

Two days after the BBCI hearing, the jail proposed a change in policy so that prisoners will not have to wait more than 24 hours for prescription anti-anxiety medications. (Plain Dealer, Dec. 19) Other drugs, however, were not addressed. □



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ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

Labor groups condemn Israeli attacks on Gaza

Two U.S. labor groups—the Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace and Justice and New York City Labor Against the War—added the voice of labor to those condemning the U.S./Israeli attacks on and occupation of Gaza. In a resolution passed unanimously on Jan. 4, the Bay Area committee “unreservedly condemns the murderous Israeli military assault on Gaza, their deliberate targeting of the civilian population of Gaza, and Israel’s ongoing collective punishment of the Palestinian people—in violation of the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—and carried out with the strong support of the U.S. government.” Both NYCLAW and the Bay Area committee reaffirmed their endorsement of the international campaign for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. On Dec. 31 the three co-conveners of NYCLAW initiated a petition entitled “Labor for Palestine” calling on the U.S. government and labor to stop all support for Israel. To sign it, go to www.ipetitions.com/petition/LaborforPalestine1/.

Will actors vote to strike?

The Screen Actors Guild mailed out strike ballots to its 120,000 members Jan. 2. Even though the contract offered by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers does not include payment minimums or payment for reruns (residuals) in new media—the same sort of issues that compelled the Writers Guild of America to strike for three months in 2007-08 in order to win its demands—a vote to strike by SAG members is not a slam-dunk. There’s a ferocious debate within the union about whether it’s a winning strategy to strike during bad economic times. A statement posted Jan. 2 on www.sag.org reminds members that the union was formed in 1933 at the height of the Great Depression and fought off the producers’ demands for a 50-percent pay cut before signing its first contract in 1937. The SAG board and well-known activists like Ed Asner and Martin Sheen are backing a strike. The results of the referendum will be tabulated on Jan. 23. Stay tuned.

Starbucks violates labor laws

The National Labor Relations Board ruled on Dec. 23 that Starbucks had illegally fired three workers who were active in organizing for the Industrial Workers of the World in April 2007 and must reinstate them with back wages. It also found that Starbucks violated other labor laws, such as giving negative job evaluations to union supporters and prohibiting employees from discussing the union, in its attempts to stop IWW organizing at four cafes in New York City. “This decision conclusively establishes Starbucks’ animosity toward labor organizing,” Stuart Lichten, a lawyer for the union, told the *New York Times*. “For the first time, a judge has confirmed the existence of a nationally coordinated antiunion operation at Starbucks.” (Dec. 24) In an earlier NYC case settled in March 2006, Starbucks agreed to pay \$2,800 in back pay and reinstate two other workers who had been fired illegally for union organizing. The IWW has been actively organizing Starbucks workers since 2004 in Minnesota, Michigan and other states in addition to New York.

Subway signs with CIW

Subway, the third largest fast-food chain in the world and the biggest fast-food buyer of Florida tomatoes, reached an agreement Dec. 2 with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to pay a penny more for a bushel of tomatoes. That deal, which Taco Bell, McDonald’s and Burger King have already agreed to, will help improve wages and working conditions for the mostly immigrant workers who pick tomatoes for fast-food chains. For more information on CIW’s campaign, visit www.ciw-online.org. □

Capitalist state wages war on UAW

By Martha Grevatt

On Jan. 1 and 2, General Motors and Chrysler LLC began the New Year by depositing the first installments of a federal government loan in the bank. Through the Troubled Assets Recovery Program, GM and Chrysler will receive \$13.4 billion and \$4 billion, respectively, with an additional \$6 billion approved for GM’s financial arm, General Motors Acceptance Corporation.

Meanwhile, all but a small fraction of Chrysler’s workers will spend the first month of the year laid off. GM workers will be unemployed at least part of the first quarter. None of them will see an improvement in their situation due to the bailout. At best they can heave a sigh of relief that their final paychecks of 2008 won’t bounce.

The terms of the loans, if imposed, will prove devastating to the United Auto Workers. The Summary of Terms drawn up by U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson calls for a “reduction of the total amount of compensation, including wages and benefits ... by no later than December 31, 2009,” to “an amount that is competitive with the average total amount of such compensation ... paid per hour and per person to [U.S.] employees of Nissan Motor

Company, Toyota Motor Corporation, or American Honda Motor Company.” (www.treas.gov)

The government goes on to demand the “elimination of the payment of any compensation or benefits to U.S. employees of the Company or any subsidiary who have been fired, laid-off, furloughed, or idled” and “application of the work rules to their U.S. employees ... in a manner that is competitive” with the U.S. plants of Japanese automakers.

UAW retirees will also suffer if the Treasury has its way. At least half of the negotiated payments to the Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association, set up to fund retiree health benefits, “shall be made in the form of the stock of the Company or one of its subsidiaries.” With GM stock worth less now than half a century ago and with market conditions volatile, that’s quite a gamble.

With “non-competitive work rules” slated for elimination, everything from seniority to safety to the already weak language on job security could be undone. If negotiated wages and benefits go, if Supplementary Unemployment Benefits and the jobs bank—which merely allowed laid-off workers to survive on more than a paltry unemployment check—are a thing of the past, what of the union contract would remain? The

management rights clause, the no-strike pledge and a grievance procedure—with nothing left to grieve.

By March 31 the automakers must provide proof—to a Bush-designated “car czar”—that the members of the UAW (and any union that represents the workers) have agreed to Washington’s draconian demands. Otherwise the loans must be paid back immediately, which could lead one or both companies to declare bankruptcy, again jeopardizing wages, benefits and jobs.

This loan scheme has nothing to do with making the auto companies “competitive” or “viable.” Wages and benefits of current employees—who do not make anywhere near the frequently cited figure of \$80 an hour—come to less than 5 percent of the price of a vehicle.

Hourly wages at Nissan, Honda and Toyota, when “profit-sharing” bonuses are included, are actually higher than those at Ford, GM and Chrysler. If the only real difference in compensation—that between union and non-union benefits—was eliminated, it might shave \$100 or \$200 off the cost of building a car.

Biggest attack on labor since Taft-Hartley

This is all about union busting. While the Detroit Three workforce constitutes a tiny and shrinking fraction of the whole working class, the existence of the UAW compensation package is viewed as an impediment to the ruling class’s ongoing drive to level wages.

GM, Ford and Chrysler bosses are more than happy to lower pay and reduce benefits further. They might prefer to negotiate down the price of labor power with a compliant and fearful labor leadership—at least for the time being. Of course the rank-and-file autoworker loathes a pay cut and is bombarded with the message that “it’s better than not having a company at all.”

The capitalist state, which is not so much concerned with this or that individual boss but with the capitalist class as a whole, is ready to dispense with such niceties. Ronald Reagan fired the opening shot when breaking the air traffic controllers union in 1981. Bush is poised to finish the job by smashing the UAW outright.

With bipartisan support, the state has brazenly violated the Wagner Act, which during the turbulent 1930s gave workers the right to organize unions and to “free collective bargaining.”

According to the *Law Dictionary*, the National Labor Relations Act “requires the employer to bargain in good faith with the representative of the employees. The results of the bargaining process, however, are left wholly to the parties themselves, free from governmental intervention or influence.” The Supreme Court has upheld this principle on multiple occasions. (www.answers.com)

With the Treasury Department’s Summary of Terms, the state has illegally undermined the right to organize unions, whose purpose is to wrest concessions from the capitalist class on behalf of the workers. This governmental trashing of a major union contract may be the biggest attack on labor since Taft-Hartley. That 1947 amendment to the NLRA so encroached on the right to strike that it was called a “slave labor law.”

This is an act of war on the entire working class! Hands off the UAW!

Martha Grevatt, a Chrysler worker with 21 years of seniority, is currently laid off. E-mail: mgrevatt@workers.org

Wall Street’s three-headed butcher

By Martha Grevatt

What has three heads, drops bombs and destroys jobs? Cerberus, the three-headed guard-dog of Greek mythology, is the name and mascot of the Wall Street hedge fund that owns Chrysler LLC.

When the former owner, DaimlerChrysler, announced in Feb. 2007 that 12,000 jobs would be cut, workers called it the St. Valentine’s Day Massacre. When Cerberus bought 80.1 percent of Chrysler later that year, CEO Stephen Feinberg promised no additional job reductions.

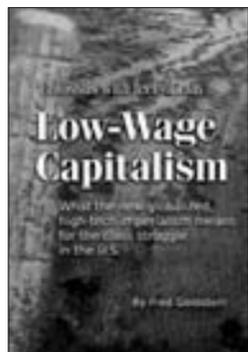
A total of 33,000 Chrysler jobs have been taken out of the economy since 2007. Nearly all of the remaining Chrysler workers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico are currently on temporary or indefinite layoff.

Now Cerberus is engaged in a massa-

cre of a different type. The firm controls Israel’s second largest bank, Leumi, and collaborated with Prime Minister and former Finance Minister Ehud Olmert in the privatization of Israel’s state banking system. A 2006 photo shows Cerberus representatives holding a giant check with a smiling Ariel Sharon. The butcher Sharon was smiling because the Israeli state had just become debt-free.

When the Israeli state needs to borrow money, Leumi is there. The blood of Gaza is on Cerberus’ fangs.

In the Greek myth, capturing Cerberus was the final task for Hercules before being freed from bondage. Whether we’re fighting layoffs, sweatshop conditions or military occupation, workers all over the world can draw inspiration from the more-than-Herculean courage of the Palestinian people’s fight for freedom. □



“With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, irrational, and prone to intermittent crises, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein’s *Low-Wage Capitalism* does exactly that.”

— Howard Zinn

Low-Wage Capitalism

Timely new book by Fred Goldstein describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx’s law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval. The analysis rests on three basic developments in the last three decades:

- The world’s workforce available to exploitation by transnational capitalist corporations doubled in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and Eastern Europe.
- The technological revolutions of the digital age, in both production and communications, have allowed transnational corporations to destroy high-wage jobs and simultaneously expand the global workforce to generate a worldwide wage competition.
- The decline in the economic condition of the workers, driven by the laws of capitalism and the capitalist class, is leading to the end of working-class compromise and retreat and must end up in a profound revival of the struggle against capital.

Order online at www.Leftbooks.com

Urgent appeal to stop Israel's bombing of Gaza!

Following are excerpts from a Dec. 30 online appeal issued by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, co-founder of the International Action Center and recipient of the 2008 U.N. Human Rights Award. The appeal and petition have led to more than 500,000 messages being sent to President George W. Bush, President-elect Barack Obama, members of the U.S. Congress and Senate, U.N. officials and missions, Israeli offices and many media representatives. To read the entire appeal and send a message against Israel's war on Gaza, go to www.iacenter.org/gazapetition/.

For 60 years, Israel has persecuted the Palestinian people with impunity in defiance of United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, orders of the International Court of Justice, international law and fundamental human rights.

Now in the waning days of the disastrous Bush administration, the government of Israel with its Prime Minister under criminal indictment, is testing whether world opinion will permit it to escalate its isolation and impoverishment of Palestine and selective and systematic assassination of Palestinian leadership in Gaza to a genocidal, indiscriminate assault and invasion of Palestinian Gaza, knowing full well its acts will inflame passions throughout the Middle East and Arab and Muslim worlds.

Beyond crushing Gaza's capacity to resist and imposing its final solution on Palestinians, Israel is seeking confrontation that will lead to war with the U.S., the European Union, and NATO fighting for Israel against Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Pakistan and Afghanistan to impair their ability to prevent expansion of Israel's domination of the region while the "only one President at a time" the U.S. has,

George W. Bush, will support Israel, finding all fault with Gaza.

In these dangerous and difficult days and hours the undersigned ... demand an immediate ceasefire throughout Israel and Palestine and the assurance of peace. All borders to Gaza, Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea must be opened for humanitarian relief and a complete arms and trade embargo [placed] on Israel until it fully complies with all the requirements of permanent peace.

We call upon all the people, the ultimate power in every nation when organized and energized, to take to the streets where they live and demand that their governments do all in their power to cause Israel to stop its war of aggression against Palestine and ... for Israel, the U.S. and other nations who have provided material support for Israel's aggression to be held accountable for the deaths, injuries and damage Israel has inflicted. □

Ramsey Clark, Jan. 3 N.Y. pro-Gaza rally.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL



Chicago, Dec. 28

PHOTO: N. SINGH



WORKERS WORLD PARTY STATEMENT:

Support Gaza resistance!

Continued from page 1

ing Hamas by going into Gaza and killing Hamas' people—and anyone around them.

Fighting back, in this case launching rockets, is the legitimate self-defense of a blockaded nation.

U.S. role in Israeli war crimes

For anyone uncertain about the U.S. role in Israel's crimes, world-class war criminal George W. Bush has clarified it. The lame-hawk president in his weekly radio talk gave a full go-ahead to the Israeli genocidal assault on the Palestinian people. And this diplomatic green light is backed up by the U.S.-made F-16 jets and "Apache" helicopters provided to the Israeli assassins who have already killed 500 Palestinian adults and children.

The Israeli leaders—Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defense Minister Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni—are war criminals on a regional scale. Bush, on the other hand, is a global war criminal. Bush lied his way into the invasion of Iraq, helped destroy the New Orleans' Black community, intensified raids and deportations of immigrant workers, even tried to privatize Social Security and invest it in the stock market, and in general robbed the workers to stuff the pockets of the rich.

After invading, destroying and failing to conquer Afghanistan; invading, destroying and failing to conquer Iraq; and aiding the Israelis to invade, wreak havoc and fail to conquer Lebanon, Bush and his Israeli junior partners are trying it again, killing more children and civilians in Gaza in the hope of reversing their losses.

Join the anti-war and workers' struggles

How then to best take the side of the people of Gaza and their elected government? The world's people are showing how. Within hours of the initial U.S.-Israeli bombing attack last Dec. 27—that's U.S. planes, helicopters, bombs and rockets and Israeli pilots—people all over the world, including in the United States, began demonstrating in solidarity with the Palestinians. After the land invasion, hundreds of thousands came out again in hundreds of world capitals and smaller cities and towns.

Many of the initial protesters were Palestinian or other Arab and Muslim people who are now living in exile all over the globe. But where the workers' and anti-war movements were strong, these forces also joined the Palestinians. This has begun to happen also in the United States, and everything must be done to increase this solidarity with Palestine.

This is not charity. It is not just out of sympathy with Gaza's suffering people. It is mutual solidarity with the heroic Palestinian struggle against the common enemy. For the working class too—not only in the "global South" but also in Europe, Japan and the United States—has been under attack. Its jobs have disappeared, its wages diminished, and its social services cut. The workers have begun fighting defensive battles, and can identify with the defensive struggle of the Palestinians.

A political activist in Texas, recently thanked for her assistance at a series of protests by the Palestinian community, put it this way: "Yes, I'm in solidarity with Palestine, but I also don't want my tax money used for bombs and war planes instead of education for my grandchildren. We have the same enemies."

She got an answer: "You have a point. I'm Palestinian, but I'm also a Houstonian. My services, my children's services are cut. I need to fight those local battles, too."

A Hamas leader recently called for a "Third Intifada," referring to the two heroic and determined mass uprisings of the entire Palestinian population, the first beginning in 1988 and the second in 2000, both of which lasted for years and which left as their legacy the pictures of Palestinian children throwing stones against the Israeli armored vehicles.

What then is the strongest way to express international solidarity? By joining the workers' struggle right here to the defense of Palestine and bringing the spirit of the Palestinian struggle for national liberation—the Intifada—into the workers' and anti-racist movement. This would be the best way to turn the taste for conquest into bitter ashes in the mouths of Bush, Cheney, Olmert, Barak and Livni.

Defend the Palestinians and their organizations! Globalize the Intifada! Solidarity forever! □

U.S. youth group demands end to Gaza massacre, siege

The youth organization FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) issued the following excerpted statement on Dec. 28.

The massacre of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip by the Zionist military, using U.S.-supplied F-16s and "Apache" attack helicopters, is the latest in a long line of crimes against humanity committed by Israel.

The government in Israel continues to posture, saying they are resolved to continue. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said, "Israel is now seeking to wipe out the terrorism which is trying to undermine the whole area. We will not hesitate to strike anywhere where we are attacked." Olmert claims, "The instructions that we have given to our forces are to refrain from inflicting injury and harm on the innocent."

Any person with an inkling of what has transpired in Palestine, and specifically the Gaza Strip, this past year would find Olmert's statements to be contradictory and/or cynical. These are cold words from a pathological bigot whose government would like nothing more than to forcibly remove or completely wipe out the Palestinian people.

The creation of the Gaza Strip is no different than the creation of ghettos by Nazi Germany, the Bantustans in South Africa or the forced removal and relocation of Indigenous people in North America.

Gaza is a virtual prison, with no freedom of movement. The Israeli government cuts off access to vital resources, including



PHOTO: RALEIGH FIST

Raleigh, N.C., protest Jan. 5 against Israeli assault on Gaza.



food, fuel and medical supplies.

The raining down of bombs exacerbates the inherent problems of the Gaza Strip, created by the conditions imposed by Israel, leaving rampant destruction, death and injuries.

The daily conditions of life in Palestine for the Palestinian are those of poverty, degradation and physical violence—from the checkpoints that Palestinians have to pass through, where they are humiliated, beaten and denied access to medicine, to the incursions by Israeli military and police into Palestinian areas. The situation is one of severe oppression and repression designed to crush the spirit of a people demanding freedom.

The U.S. movement has to raise the

struggle of the Palestinian people to the level of importance that it demands—to support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their fight for freedom and one secular Palestine.

The anti-war movement must immediately mobilize and demand that these attacks stop, that the blockade of the Gaza Strip be lifted and that the U.S. cease giving military and monetary aid to the terrorist government of Israel. □



Anaheim, Calif., Jan. 4

PHOTO: LOS ANGELES IAC



Baltimore, Maryland, Dec. 30

WW PHOTO: SHARON BL

WORLD'S PEOPLE STAND WITH GAZA

Solidarity protests sweep U.S.

Continued from page 1

international community to disarm Israel or "the whole world will go into Intifada and disarm Israel." Larry Holmes from the Troops Out Now Coalition declared, "The whole world is with Gaza."

In **Houston**, over 1,000 came out to the Israeli Consulate on **Jan. 2**. Each of the daily demonstrations has seen Palestinian youth flying large Palestinian flags as they drive up and down the streets.

Ester King, a representative of the Black Heritage Society, which is organizing its 31st annual Martin Luther King Jr. parade this month, participated in the **Jan. 4** demonstration. She told the leaders of the Palestinian community that not only could they be in the parade for Dr. King, but they should lead the parade. "If Dr. King were alive today, he would be standing out here on the street with us supporting the people in Gaza. We welcome you to our parade and the Black Heritage Society will be a member of the Houston Coalition for Justice and Peace in Palestine and be at the next meeting," she said.

Hundreds of people have protested at the Texas Capitol in **Austin** almost every day. In **San Antonio** there have been two demonstrations.

Over a thousand gathered at the federal building in **Dallas** on **Jan. 2** with a march to Ferris Plaza. The Council on American-Islamic Relations and several mosques organized this rally. On **Dec. 30** in Dallas hundreds gathered at Dealey Plaza.

On **Dec. 30**, 100 gathered in **Tucson** and 80 in **Phoenix, Ariz.**, demanding a ceasefire. On a rainy **Jan. 4** night, 185 people countered a pro-Zionist "Stand with Israel" event in Tucson chanting, "End the Occupation Now!" and "Free Gaza!"

An emergency action hit the streets of **Anaheim, Calif.**, just south of Los Angeles, on **Jan. 4**. It followed large demonstrations at the **Los Angeles** Israeli Consulate on **Jan. 2** and **Dec. 30** that forced police to close busy Wilshire Boulevard. More than 1,500 people par-



Buffalo, N.Y., Jan. 2.

WW PHOTO: LESLIE FEINBERG

icipated on **Dec. 29** in Anaheim. A coalition made up of Al-Awda, Muslim student organizations and many others, including the International Action Center and ANSWER, are mobilizing.

On **Dec. 30** several thousand Palestinians and supporters held a loud and militant march through downtown **San Francisco**. According to ABC news, the chants could be heard in the Israeli Consulate several floors above the street.

In **San Diego** on **Jan. 4**, 500 demonstrators responded to the Israeli land invasion of Gaza. The strong and angry demonstration marched through Balboa Park and out-chanted 50 Zionist provocateurs, who were forced to retreat.

The Palestinian community came out in large numbers for a statewide rally and march held in **Columbus, Ohio**, on **Jan. 5**. The demonstration was called by Justice for Palestine, based on the campus of Ohio State University. Around 700 participated, chanting "Yes, we can free Palestine!"

In **Cleveland** on **Dec. 29**, with less than 48 hours notice, 250 people came out to a demonstration in the downtown area called by the Middle East Peace Forum. Another protest on **Jan. 2** drew, according to organizers, over 1,000 people.

In **Dayton, Ohio**, on **Jan. 2** about 120

people organized by Al-Awda found the most positive responses from passersby came from African Americans.

In **Chicago**, about 5,000 Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims of all ages, joined by supporters from other progressive communities and movements, packed into Pioneer Plaza in front of the Chicago Tribune building on **Jan. 2**. A contingent of 70 traveled from the **Milwaukee, Wis.**, Islamic Center to join this massive gathering.

Hemmed in by police lines, the tightly packed crowd continued their protest in front of the Israeli Consulate.

More than 500 people attended the **Dec. 28** Chicago rally at the Water Tower Park. The flag of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah was well received by the crowd. One protester brought an Israeli flag attached to a broom with a pair of shoes tied to it, a reference to Muntader Al-Zaidi's heroic act of resistance to the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

In **Minneapolis** 40 protesters occupied Sen. Amy Klobuchar's office on **Dec.**

30 for two hours until she met with them.

On **Jan. 2** in **Buffalo, N.Y.**, over 150 demonstrators faced down single-digit cold weather and equally icy police to protest the most recent Israeli bombing of Gaza and assault on Palestinian self-determination. Throughout the two-and-a-half-hour demonstration, car horns blared almost constantly, as passing drivers made known their support for Palestine. On **Dec. 30** some 200 mostly Palestinian, Yemeni and other Arab youth demonstrated.

More than 100 people protested in **Rochester, N.Y.**, on **Jan. 2**. At the rally, shouts of "Long Live Palestine!" overrode the sounds of rush-hour traffic.

On **Jan. 3** in **Boston**, about 1,500 people took to the streets and marched through the main shopping area of downtown Boston, stopping at the U.S. military recruiters' office and the Israeli Consulate for minirallies. The demonstration was led by a militant contingent of Palestinian youth.

The demonstration was co-chaired by longtime Palestinian activists Ahmad Kawash from the International Action Center and Kathy Hanna from Gaza on Our Minds. Representatives of local mosques spoke.

Stevan Kirschbaum, a Jewish trade unionist from USW 8751 and the IAC, said support for the people of Gaza and their struggle means supporting their organizations and leaders who are conducting that struggle—the Hamas-led resistance.

Miya Campbell of FIST saluted Hamas and the resistance in front of the military recruiters and raised Cynthia McKinney's struggle to bring material support to Gaza on the ship Dignity, which was attacked by an Israeli patrol boat.

On **Jan. 3** around 1,000 people stretched across the steps in front of **Philadelphia's**

The crisis & struggle in Middle East

Continued from page 2
from time to time on tactics.

Despite threats and attacks at every turn, the struggle in the Middle East continues and grows stronger. The Pentagon cannot stop the Iraqi resistance. The Lebanese resistance, which kept out Israeli ground forces in 2006, remains strong. The Palestinian people remain steadfast.

What the people of the Middle East need and deserve from the U.S. is a thoroughly anti-imperialist opposition to imperialist war in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and throughout the Middle East. The people of the Middle East must be able to determine their own lives and control their own resources. All U.S. forces must leave. All U.S. aid to Israel and

client Arab regimes must stop.

Obama will not do this. But there is a force here that can. The force that is most capable of bringing positive change to the Middle East is the U.S. working class. Today \$3 trillion goes for U.S. wars and \$15 million a day for Israeli attacks, while our schools are falling apart and homes and jobs are taken away.

The worldwide economic crisis has raised the prospect of class struggle here. This presents a historic opportunity for our party to find creative ways to educate our class on where their interests lie abroad as well as at home. Workers here have everything in common with the workers and liberation struggles of the Middle East and nothing in common with the U.S. ruling class, which oppresses both. □



Boston, Jan. 3.

WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Black coalition condemns Israeli atrocities

The Blacks Against Genocide Coalition is composed of groups and individuals who have come together in response to the criminal Israeli assault on the Palestinian people. The coalition is circulating the Palestinian People by African People in the United States of America." Individuals and organizations can sign by calling 718-398-1766.

We, Black people in the United States, condemn the criminal Israeli attacks on the people of Gaza. These war crimes are being conducted with the overt material and unapologetic political backing of the U.S. government.

Most importantly, we have learned the lessons of

four centuries of racist oppression in the Western hemisphere: that the liberation struggles of the oppressed must not be divided by language, geography, gender, religion or race; that if they come for Gaza in the morning, they will most certainly come for Harlem at night.

In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke out against the U.S. war in Vietnam. He called the U.S. "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world." For speaking this truth, Dr. King was condemned by the rulers of the U.S. and their loyal servants in the mass media, who arrogantly and condescendingly told him that the Vietnamese war had nothing to do with the Black struggle for equality. Dr. King refused to be intimidated.

The stand taken by former U.S. Congresswoman and Green Party presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney in escorting the humanitarian supplies being taken by ship to break the Gaza siege is another example of Black people's support of justice. Her response after the "Dignity" was rammed by an Israeli military boat was not to cower but to "organize."

In the spirit of all those who have fought in our centuries-long river of struggle, we will fight by all means necessary to ensure that this genocidal attack on and blockade of the Palestinian people is ended.

We demand that our elected officials, especially the Congressional Black Caucus, stand in opposition to the Israeli assault. We demand that sanctions be brought against Israel as they were brought against the racist apartheid regime of South Africa. We demand disinvestment in U.S. corporations which support Israel. □



Charlotte, N.C., Jan. 3.

PHOTO: HENK JONKER

City Hall with a banner: "War is Terrorism with a Bigger Budget—Stop U.S.-Israeli War on Palestinians." Speakers linked budget cuts in Philadelphia that will close 11 libraries to U.S. funding of Israeli bombs being dropped on elementary schools in Gaza. Passing motorists honked in support.

A 10-foot banner with enlarged photos graphically illustrating the carnage from Israel's bombs was presented to FOX camera crews filming the rally.

The demonstration was initiated by the Philadelphia International Action Center, with strong support from local Arab, Muslim and Palestinian groups and peace and justice organizations.

In **Baltimore on Dec. 30** some 80 mostly young people attended an emergency demonstration in support of Gaza at the War Memorial Plaza.

In **Washington, D.C., on Jan. 2** several thousand people rallied at the Israeli Consulate and marched to the Egyptian Consulate, where protesters began beating on the plastic road barriers set up in front. A long standoff between the protesters and the police followed.

Three mothers from the Atlantic Life Community, Heidi Schloegel, Ellen Grady and Clare Grady, were arrested outside the Israeli Embassy. They were held in D.C. jails overnight and finally released the following day. Irish-Americans carried Irish flags comparing the struggles against British colonialism in Ireland to the ongoing occupation of Palestine.

Organizers included the Muslim America Society Freedom Foundation, ANSWER, the Arab American Free Palestine Alliance, the National Council of Arab Americans, and Al-Awda—the International Palestine Right to Return Coalition. Over 50 people, mostly Arab youth, caravanned up from Raleigh, N.C. The caravan was organized by Khalilah Sabra of the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation.

On **Jan. 5** more than 400 mostly Palestinian youth and community members, as well as various social justice activists, converged at the steps of North Carolina State University's Bell Tower in **Raleigh, N.C.**, to protest the continuing massacre of Palestinians in Gaza.

A newly formed student group at N.C. State University called Palestine United effectively mobilized the mostly youthful crowd, while also bringing many people from area mosques and Muslim organizations.

On Sat., **Jan. 3** over 200 people gathered in downtown **Durham, N.C.**, for an event organized by sisters in UBUNTU, a women-of-color, survivor-led organization formed in response to the Duke Lacrosse



Dearborn, Mich., Jan. 2.

WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

rape case. Many organizations and people throughout the Durham/Raleigh/Chapel Hill area helped to build for the rally, including Raleigh Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST), Black Workers for Justice, Al-Awda N.C. and others.

On **Jan. 3 in Charlotte, N.C.** 500 rallied and marched for Gaza, Palestine, taking over downtown Charlotte with a sea of Palestinian flags and energetic chants. Palestinian and Muslim youth led the march. On **Jan. 1** a vigil received overwhelming public support.

On **Jan. 3 in Atlanta** more than 500 people massed in front of CNN, took to the streets in a spirited march and rallied at Woodruff Park with two black caskets draped with Palestinian flags and more than 100 signs with the names of people who have died in the assault. Then the protesters again filled Marietta Street and returned to the CNN building to continue the demonstration.

On **Jan. 2** more than 60 people turned out in **Richmond, Va.**, for a protest at City Hall initiated by longtime Richmond African-American activist Umar Kenyatta and sponsored by the Coalition of Conscientious Organizations. Activists in **Norfolk and Blacksburg, Va.**, also organized demonstrations.

On **Jan. 3** nearly a thousand chanting pro-Palestinian demonstrators lined a busy intersection in suburban **Detroit**. The day before, nearly a thousand gathered at the **Dearborn, Mich.**, City Hall for a candlelight vigil braving frigid temperatures and high winds. At this rally, Michigan Emergency Coalition Against War and Injustice (MECAWI) activist Jerry Goldberg told the crowd, "As a Jew, I stand here today in solidarity with Palestine." At the earlier demonstration on **Dec. 30**, 5,000 people lined an Arab community shopping district along Warren Avenue.

A small group of placard-waving pro-

Palestinian demonstrators gathered near U.S. President-elect Barack Obama's vacation retreat in **Hawaii on Dec. 30** to protest the Israeli air strikes in Gaza.

Demonstrations were held in **Denver** at the state Capitol building on **Dec. 30** and **Jan. 3**, and on **Dec. 31**, New Year's Eve, in **Salt Lake City**.

Contributing to this article were Abayomi Azikiwe, Betsey Piette, Bob McCubbin, Brenda Ryan, Bryan Pfeiffer, Dante Strobino, David Dixon,

Dianne Mathiowetz, Eric Struch, Frank Neisser, Gloria Rubac, G. Dunkel, Joan Marquardt, John Parker, Kris Hamel, Lou Paulsen, Martha Grevatt, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Phil Wilayto, Scott Williams, Steven Ceci and Paul Teitelbaum. Other sources include Al-Awda, Arab American News, the Salt Lake Tribune, IMEMC News, and Indymedia.

Go to www.workers.org to read the entire article.



San Diego, Calif., Jan. 4. WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN



Seoul, South Korea, Dec. 30 PHOTO: GLOBAL PEACE



Paris, Jan. 3 PHOTO: SANDRINE AGEORGES

WORLD'S PEOPLE STAND WITH GAZA

Continued from page 1

change in the popular mood worldwide.

There was little doubt this sharpening of class struggle would be reflected in the movement protesting the U.S.-Israeli assault on Gaza.

Two of the most massive protest actions were in countries where the government had collaborated with the Israelis before the invasion—Turkey and Lebanon. In Beirut, Hezbollah and others called out hundreds of thousands to prepare for struggle against the Israeli state. One report said almost 1 million people filled Istanbul's streets on Jan. 4 following Israel's land invasion. Turkey's prime minister then said Israel was perpetrating "inhumane actions" which would "lead to its destruction." (Jerusalem Post, Jan. 5)

In Yemen, another massive action estimated at 1 million in Sana'a demanded the government aid the Palestinians. As in Iran, youths in Yemen were volunteering to go to fight in Gaza like the 1930s International Brigades did in Spain. In Egypt, where the Hosni Mubarak regime is under attack for its role in closing one section of the Gaza boundary, opposition groups spontaneously joined for militant actions, which riot and plainclothes police viciously repressed.

Within the 1967 borders of the Israeli state, over 100,000 Palestinians demonstrated in the town of Sakhnin, and in Tel Aviv there was a protest on Jan. 3 of 15,000 people, Arabs and Jews, against the Israeli offensive.

Demonstrations against Israel even took place in Jalalabad, in occupied Afghanistan, and in Baghdad and other cities of occupied Iraq. There were other significant protests of tens of thousands in Rabat, Morocco; in Khartoum, Sudan; in Kano City, Nigeria; and in Johannesburg, South Africa. And there were also protests in New Delhi and Kolkata, India, and Dhaka, Bangladesh.

In East Asia there were protests at the Israeli embassies in Seoul, South Korea, and Tokyo, Japan, where the governments and the corporate media are both pro-U.S.



Caracas, Venezuela, Dec. 29

and pro-Israeli. Similarly, in Australia some 10,000 demonstrated in Sydney on Jan. 4, not only against the Israeli attack, but against the Australian government for supporting Israel.

'Treat Israel as we treated apartheid South Africa'

Would Israel's brutal actions—exposed to the world despite the clampdown on coverage—turn it into a pariah nation even in Europe and North America? There are indications this is possible.

Western Europe saw demonstrations in every country and in hundreds of cities, most in the thousands and a few in the tens of thousands. One of the largest was the Jan. 3 protest in London, England, where demonstrators not only marched but threw shoes at 10 Downing Street, the residence of Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

According to a report from the Stop the War Committee, one of the organizers of the protests throughout Britain, at an earlier protest in London, MP George Galloway said, "We should treat Israel as we treated South Africa during apartheid. They should be shunned." There were also demonstrations in Cardiff, Wales, and Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland, and in a total of 18 other cities on the island from Dec. 28 to Jan. 4.



Beirut, Lebanon, Dec. 28

In nearby Ireland, there were also protests of hundreds or thousands of people in a half dozen cities, including Dublin and Belfast, Limerick and Derry. The Portugal movement, including the national labor confederation, scheduled actions for Jan. 5 and Jan. 8 against Israel. In the Spanish state, where there has always been a strong solidarity movement with the oppressed Arab world, protests of hundreds or some thousands took place in every region—in Bilbao in the Basque Country, Barcelona in Catalonia, Coruña in Galicia, as well as in Valencia, Seville and the capital, Madrid, and even on the islands of Mallorca and Canaries.

In France there were protests throughout the week, the largest one of 25,000 in Paris on Jan. 3, with protests of thousands in another dozen cities across the country. Similarly in Italy, where there was one national protest in Rome on Jan. 3 and many local demonstrations, mostly of thousands, in Vicenza, Milan, Pisa, Genoa, Naples, Florence, Bologna and other cities throughout the week. The most militant actions were in Greece, where youth for the past month have been fighting with the state following the police murder of a young person.

A surprising 8,000 people demonstrated in Vienna, Austria, on Jan. 2. Some 10,000 were in the European Union's and Belgium's capital, Brussels, ear-

lier, and there were significant actions in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and in Berlin and Dusseldorf in Germany, where Turkish and Arab immigrants played a strong role. In Scandinavia, there were demonstrations sometimes into the thousands in Copenhagen, Denmark; Oslo, Norway; and in a half-dozen cities in Sweden.

South and North America

In South America, there were protests at least in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Lima, Peru; Bogotá, Colombia; and Caracas, Venezuela, where one sign made a political pun on a favorite slogan, changing it to "Oh, ah, iHamás no se va!" [meaning Hamas won't leave instead of Hugo Chávez won't leave]. Most targeted the Israeli embassies and the U.S. There were also protests to the north in Costa Rica and in San Juan, Puerto Rico, as well as in Mexico City and Oaxaca in Mexico.

Cuba's revolutionary government spoke out against the Israeli attack, as did Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. President Lula of Brazil also criticized the Israelis.

In Canada, there was a protest Jan. 3 of 10,000 in Toronto, of 2,000 in the capital, Ottawa, and smaller ones in Vancouver and Winnipeg. In Montreal, Quebec, some 9,000 people marched on Jan. 4, chanting, "Down, down Israel!" and "Shame, shame USA!" □



Berlin, Jan. 3 PHOTO: BARBARA FUCHS



Cairo, Dec. 28

U.S. paved way for Israel's attack

By Deirdre Griswold

The response of the world's imperialist governments to Israel's ferocious assault on the 1.5 million Palestinians packed into the Gaza Strip shows once again who is really calling the shots in Tel Aviv. Israel has created a desperate humanitarian crisis that will be felt for decades to come. It has violated every international law regarding military violence against civilians. It has violated its own agreements with the Palestinians.

Yet nothing has been done by the "international community" to stop it. Significant opposition to this monumental crime comes from the streets, not the suites.

No other small country gets such kid-glove treatment. But Israel is not just a small country. It is a strategic partner of the world's lone superpower, the United States.

The U.S. ruling class reaps hundreds of billions in profit from the exploitation of Middle East oil. If any government there tries to defend its sovereignty and gain greater control over its own resources, Israel is usually the first to threaten military action, as it has done with Iran. And it gets the favors that Washington bestows on its mercenaries: an average \$15 million a day in aid plus unlimited credit and access to priceless wheeling and dealing.

With Washington behind them, the Israeli rulers know there will be no U.N. Security Council resolutions to stop the carnage. No neighboring Arab countries will be able to come to the defense of their brothers and sisters without making themselves targets of the same U.S. planes, U.S. tanks and U.S. bombs now ripping apart the people of Gaza.

The Palestinians in Gaza had already been under a tight economic blockade for 18 months. Everything was in desperately short supply, including food, medicines, hospital equipment, fuel for heat, cooking, transportation and generators. Electric power was available only a few hours each day—the rest of the time there were no lights, no way to recharge cell phones or radio batteries, no working pumps for water. Sanitation barely functioned.

And then, on Dec. 27, Israel began its bombardment from the air. Using F-16s and "Apache" helicopters supplied by the U.S., it systematically targeted places where people might seek shelter.

One week later, on Jan. 3, its tanks and troops rolled across the border into Gaza's cities and towns, preceded by the raining down of white phosphorus from the air.

Phosphorus is so fearsome that it has been banned as a weapon. It burns at high temperatures and adheres to flesh so tightly that if even a small blob lands on a person's skin, it will burn right through to the bone. The U.S. used phosphorus and napalm against the Vietnamese people, prompting charges of war crimes.

Israel claims the phosphorus bombs were used only to create a "smokescreen" in advance of its ground troops. Its foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, said at a press conference in Paris on Jan. 3, the day the ground invasion started, that Israel had been careful to protect civilians and there was no need for a humanitarian truce, since there was no humanitarian crisis.

In the first week and a half of their offensive, the Israelis killed an estimated 560 people and wounded thousands



Philadelphia protest on Jan. 3 exposes Israeli war crimes.

PHOTO: KELLY VALDEZ

more. The U.N. relief agency says at least a quarter were civilians. But that number soared to more than 600 dead on Jan. 6 when Israeli mortars fell in a crowd of 350 people who had gathered for safety around the United Nations school in the Jabaliya refugee camp.

The Israelis claimed the refugees had fired on them, but a U.N. official confirmed that no one in the crowd had weapons. The Israelis have bombed and/or shelled residential buildings, market places, mosques, hospitals and other schools, including the prestigious American International School.

Eyewitnesses tell of carnage

Israel has put a noose around Gaza and drawn it tight. It refuses to allow news media into the strip. However, the Arab news service Al-Jazeera was able to interview residents of Gaza after the ground assault began.

Iyad Nasr of the Red Cross in Gaza City told Al-Jazeera that "The size of the operations and the size of the misery we are seeing here on the ground is just overwhelming."

John Holmes, head of the U.N. Relief Agency, said in response to Israel's claims, "This is, in our view, a humanitarian crisis. It's very hard for me to see any other way you could describe it, given the conditions in which the population are living."

Holmes added that "cluster munitions are being used" and that it was "a fair presumption" that most of the civilians killed were women and children. (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 6)

The Sydney Morning Herald on Jan. 5 published an eyewitness report from Shifa hospital in Gaza City—one of the few such first-hand accounts to appear in a major newspaper outside the Arab world.

Taghreed El-Khodary wrote: "The casualties at Shifa on Sunday [Jan. 4]—18 dead, hospital officials said, among a reported 30 around Gaza—were women, children and men who had been with children. One surgeon said he had performed five amputations.

"I don't know what kind of weapons Israel is using," said a nurse, Ziad Abd al Jawwad, 41, who had been working 24 hours without a break. "There is so much amputation." ...

"For 10 days doctors have been battling to keep Shifa running. Cleaners constantly

mop up blood while Hamas security officers stand guard. ...

"Mads Gilbert, a Norwegian doctor who was allowed into Gaza last week to give emergency medical aid, and who has worked in many conflict zones, said the situation was the worst he had seen. The hospital lacked everything, he said—monitors, anesthesia, surgical equipment, heaters and spare parts. Windows had been blown out by a bombing nearby and like the rest of Gaza, limited fuel supplies were running low."

Israel uses 'bunker busters' made in USA

And now another fearsome weapon has been added to Israel's arsenal, thanks to Washington. The Jerusalem Post reported on Dec. 30 that its pilots had dropped GBU-39 "bunker-buster" bombs on Gaza in the current offensive. In September, the U.S. Congress approved the sale to Israel of 1,000 of these weapons, whose concentrated explosive power is eight times that of a conventional bomb.

Such transactions are called sales but in fact amount to grants, since Washington has allowed Israel to run up a huge external debt without calling in its chips. Today, Israel's foreign debt is equal to 99 percent of its gross domestic product. Half of this is owed to the U.S. (CIA World Factbook)

The Israelis say these bombs have been used to blow up tunnels in Gaza in the current offensive. They say their goal is to stop the smuggling of weapons. But the tunnels have been used to bring in needed supplies, so blowing them up has the effect of reinforcing the blockade of Gaza.

The Israeli propaganda machine, aided enormously by the supposedly "objective" U.S. media, tries to present this blitzkrieg as defensive—a needed action against rockets fired from Gaza into Israel by militants of Hamas. The figures, however, speak for themselves.

While in the first 10 days more than 500 Palestinians were killed and thousands more wounded, just four Israelis were killed by rockets. The number of dead Israelis doubled after the ground invasion started—but only because four of its soldiers were wasted by fire from their own tanks as they searched residential buildings in northern Gaza. (New York Times, Jan. 6)

Open and covert warmongering

The Bush administration is blatant in its support for this vicious blitzkrieg. On Jan. 3 it prevented even the mildest call for a cease-fire from being voted on in the U.N. Security Council.

It is totally hostile to Hamas—the party leading the resistance which was elected overwhelmingly by the Palestinian people in their last parliamentary vote. A recently revealed internal U.S. document shows that the U.S. secretly pledged \$86 million to "strengthen and reform elements of the Palestinian security sector" in opposition to Hamas, thus trying to pit Palestinian forces against each other. (Reuters, Jan. 5)

Noting that this administration will be gone soon, some of his critics are calling Israel's assault "Bush's last war crime."

They are hoping for a less bellicose foreign policy under Barack Obama, who has so far refrained from commenting on Israel's air assault and invasion.

The position of both the Democratic and Republican parties, however, is all-out support for Israel's existence, which means the perpetuation of a racist settler state on Palestinian land. The rationale given is the assumption that Israel is the only place, since the Nazi Holocaust of World War II, where Jewish people can be safe.

Why Palestinians, a largely pastoral people who played no role in the crimes of German imperialism, should have to pay the price for them is never addressed.

Also seldom mentioned is the dismal truth that many Jews in Israel, as well as the great majority of the Palestinians who live there, suffer deep poverty. In fact, of all the countries in the developed world, Israel comes in second-worst for income inequality. Which country is first? The United States. (BBC News, March 27, 2006)

Israel's National Insurance Institute found in 2007 that one in every four Israelis lives below the poverty line. For children, it is even worse. Some 35 percent of Israeli children are in poverty—ranking it among the Western countries with the greatest percentage of poor children. At the same time, the number of Israeli millionaires per capita is twice the world average, according to the 2005 World Wealth Report. (The Jewish Journal, March 8, 2007)

The situation in Jerusalem is even worse, with "62 percent of Arab families living below poverty line compared to 23 percent of the city's Jewish families. Seventy-six percent of Arab children and 44 percent of Jewish children live in poverty in Jerusalem." (Haaretz, Jan. 24, 2008)

Among those Israelis suffering poverty at the hands of its billionaire-controlled government are seniors, including many of the Holocaust survivors still alive.

In recent years, as Israel's constant wars have gobbled up ever more state funds, its social services have been cut way back.

Israel is an artificial political creation, imposed on Palestine in 1948 by U.S. and British imperialism in a maneuver with the reactionary Zionist movement. For the good of all the peoples of the area, Washington must stop its financing and arming of this lawless and oppressive regime.

E-mail: dgriswold@workers.org



Rick Warren & the Obama inauguration

Last month's announcement that the Rev. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif., will deliver the invocation at Barack Obama's presidential inauguration drew anger and outrage.

Warren is a reactionary evangelical minister who proselytizes against lesbian/gay/bi/trans rights and women's right to reproductive freedom. This past fall he made a series of vile anti-gay statements to support California's Proposition 8, which outlaws same-sex marriage. Yet Warren also styles himself as an advocate of "social justice." This is pure posturing.

Warren's "activism" is a cynical, calculated effort to sow division among oppressed communities, to pit against each other groups that are in fact natural allies in the struggle for justice and liberation.

So the disappointment at Warren's role in the inauguration ceremony is understandable. The Obama election was a watershed moment in U.S. history because it represented a breakthrough in the struggle against racism. The inauguration will signal a step forward in this centuries-long struggle. There is enormous hope among the masses that the Obama presidency will turn away from both politics as usual and the horrid policies of the Bush administration.

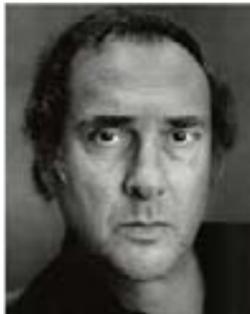
It's worth remembering, though, that as a candidate Barack Obama stressed that he would listen to "all sides," include all viewpoints within the spectrum of conventional bourgeois politics, in his

administration. His selection of Warren to lead the inaugural prayer is consistent with this stance. So is the fact that the Rev. Joseph Lowery, the longtime civil-rights leader who, unlike Warren, is a firm supporter of LGBT rights, will also have a role, albeit a lesser one, delivering the benediction.

Why is there an invocation anyway? Whatever happened to the separation of church and state? Well, anyone who's looked at a dollar bill or attended a session of Congress or sat in any courtroom knows the answer to that. When it comes to inaugural preachers, Warren is by no means the worst of the lot. A whole lineup of presidents including Bill Clinton chose Billy Graham, an ultrareactionary who managed to maintain a respectable veneer despite, among other things, being caught on tape spewing anti-Semitism.

Once he takes the oath of office, President Obama's job will be to lead the imperialist state. When this reality hits home, there will be new challenges for progressive activists. As for the choice of Rick Warren to deliver the inaugural invocation, the best to be gleaned from it is a reminder, a lesson for all of us who dream of a world free of racism, imperialist war, sexism, LGBT oppression, exploitation: The only way to create that world is through the class struggle. We can't rely on politicians to wage that struggle for us. No one but we, the workers and oppressed, can do it. Let's get on with it. □

HAROLD PINTER unraveled the 'Tapestry of Lies'



By Heather Cottin

Harold Pinter, Nobel-prize-winning British playwright, died of cancer on Dec. 24 at the age of 78.

Pinter was regarded as the foremost representative of British drama in the second half of the 20th century, but his 29 plays, numerous screenplays, prose and poetry made the British bourgeoisie uncomfortable.

Pinter's plays and poetry exposed hypocrisy, corruption and viciousness. As one of his characters said, "The present is truly unscrupulous." ["No Man's Land," 1975]

An outspoken critic of imperialism, Pinter spoke against the Gulf War, the invasion and breakup of Yugoslavia and the War on Iraq. At a conference on the Balkans in 2000, one year after NATO's "humanitarian bombing" of Yugoslavia, Pinter said, "The United States has opened up the way for ... more 'humanitarian intervention', more demonstrations of its total indifference to the fate of thousands upon thousands of people." (haroldpinter.org)

When he received the Nobel Prize for literature in 2005 Pinter said, "The United States supported and in many cases engendered every right-wing military dictatorship in the world. ... [It has] brought torture, cluster bombs, depleted uranium,

innumerable acts of random murder, misery, degradation and death to the Iraqi people and calls it 'bringing freedom and democracy to the Middle East.' ...

"Language is actually employed to keep thought at bay ... suffocating your intelligence and your critical faculties."

He saw that the U.S. was openly creating what it called "full spectrum dominance"—control of land, sea, air and space. In his Nobel lecture, he called the U.S. "brutal, indifferent, scornful and ruthless," exercising a "clinical manipulation of power worldwide while masquerading as a force for universal good." (nobelprize.org)

He won't be buried at Westminster Abbey. The British establishment won't allow it. (Telegraph, Jan. 3). □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes: **Racism, national oppression and self-determination** by Larry Holmes

Black youth: repression & resistance by Leilani Dowell

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

Are conditions ripe again today? 40th anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion by John Parker

Racism and poverty in the Delta by Larry Hales

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

Long live the Cuban Revolution!

Workers World Party extends our deepest congratulations and solidarity to the Communist Party of Cuba and the Cuban people, who are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the heroic triumph of the Cuban Revolution.

It is indeed a glorious occasion, and not only for Cuba. Workers and the oppressed around the world share the deepest respect and pride for all that the Cuban people have accomplished over this last half-century—despite tremendous aggression from imperialist countries, and from the U.S. in particular.

Once a country firmly under the boot of the U.S. military and multinational corporations, Cuba has now lived freely for five decades. This small island nation managed to throw off the chains of hundreds of years of foreign domination to forge a fiercely independent path, in full and open solidarity with virtually every progressive struggle around the world.

Cuba, a geographically isolated country with a small population, could have just declared their revolution a struggle for national liberation. Such an achievement alone would have been most impressive. But soon after Fidel Castro and the Cuban people declared victory over puppet dictator Fulgencio Batista, Fidel declared that theirs was a socialist revolution.

With that declaration, the leaders of the Cuban Revolution tied their fate to that of millions around the world struggling to throw off their own oppression. The tremendous success of their revolution remains an inspiration to all who want to end capitalism and imperialism and form a society based on cooperation and meeting human needs.

What Cuba has been able to achieve since 1959 is simply astonishing. Prior to the Revolution, the average life expectancy in Cuba was 58.8 years. Disease was rampant, as was illiteracy. Now the average Cuban lives to be more than 77 years old! Today education and health care are free at every level for all Cubans. The Cuban education and health care systems are generally regarded as among the best in the world.

There has also been tremendous social progress. One of the first acts of the revolutionary government was to declare racism illegal and to end discriminatory laws against Afro-Cubans. Women, previously employed almost exclusively as domestic servants or forced into prostitution, now make up 40 percent of the Cuban workforce and 60 percent of Cuba's technical and professional workers.

Cuba's achievements for its people since the Revolution in every measure of human development and progress are staggering. Workers the world over look to Cuba and

thirst for the material and social progress socialism can achieve.

But not content just to lead by example, the Cuban people jumped with both feet into the global anti-imperialist struggle, sending troops to Angola, Namibia and South Africa to fight against colonialism and the racist apartheid states. They declared open solidarity and support for the national liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, despite condemnation and threats from the imperialist countries.

They have sent thousands of doctors, engineers, teachers and other skilled workers to oppressed countries to help the poorest people, even as they have been economically devastated by the criminal U.S. blockade which they have endured almost from the very inception of the Revolution.

Cuba has, time and again, extended a level of international solidarity to the oppressed people of the world that is incredibly far beyond what anyone could have asked or expected of them. And for these tremendous gifts of solidarity that they have given to the world's people, Cuba has asked for nothing in return.

But they have received the love, respect and gratitude of millions of workers and oppressed the world over, no matter how Cuba is demonized by the U.S. and other imperialist countries.

And Cuba has been thoroughly vilified and attacked by the U.S., both militarily and politically, since the very beginning of the Revolution. From the Bay of Pigs invasion; the illegal and immoral U.S. blockade; the countless assassination attempts on Comrade Fidel Castro's life; the acts of terrorism against the Cuban people by U.S. backed militias in Miami; and the unjust and heartbreaking imprisonment of the five Cuban heroes who tried to defend Cuba from these terrorist attacks, the Cuban people have shown remarkable resilience and strength throughout these past 50 years.

Workers World Party is also celebrating our 50th anniversary this year. We are tremendously proud to say that our 50 years of struggle here in "the belly of the beast" have included 50 years of total solidarity and support for the Cuban Revolution.

We congratulate Cuba on all of your achievements and extend our deepest revolutionary love to all the Cuban people, who are an inspiration to every member of our Party. We look forward to someday achieving here in the U.S. what you have achieved and to break the chains of capitalism and imperialism once and for all!

Long live the Cuban Revolution!

Free the Cuban Five!

End the blockade now! □

Gift of fish is a gift of hope

A few days before the 50th anniversary of its victorious revolution, Cuba made a significant gesture of international solidarity to its nearest neighbor, Haiti.

It delivered three million fish and 500 breeding adult fish to Haiti's Toussaint Louverture International Airport, according to Haiti-Liberté (Dec. 31) The Haitian government is going to use these fish to restock Haiti's lakes and develop fish farming (pisciculture) to relieve the country's chronic lack of protein.

Ever since U.S. imperialism forced Haiti to eradicate its Creole pigs in the 1980s by whipping up false fears of swine flu, Haiti's production of protein has been on a downward spiral.

Cuba's gift, made despite 46 years of a criminal blockade imposed by the United States, gives Haiti the hope of improving the lives of its people.

— G. Dunkel

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What's behind the military coup in Guinea-Conakry?

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

Following are excerpts from an article that can be read in its entirety at www.workers.org.

After years of political and economic turmoil, lower-ranking military officers—led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara—in the West African nation of Guinea-Conakry took power on Dec. 23 in the aftermath of the death of longtime Western-backed dictator Lansana Conté.

Conté came to power in a military coup in April 1984 during the immediate aftermath of the sudden death of President Ahmed Sékou Touré, the leader of the ruling Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG).

The first indications that a change of power was underway took place with a radio broadcast over Guinean national radio on Dec. 23, which stated that the military had taken control of the national government and suspended the country's constitution.

Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, representing what he called the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), read a statement that included: "At the time of celebrating the 50th anniversary of its independence on 2 October, Guinea was ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world despite its abundant natural resources."

The betrayal of the revolution

Guinea was set apart from other states in West Africa that were colonized by France when in 1958, under the leadership of the Democratic Party of Guinea, the people broke with the neocolonialist scheme of Charles de Gaulle, who sought to keep all the former colonies within the political and economic framework of imperialist domination.

As a result of the growing mass agitation in the aftermath of World War II and the emergence of the armed revolutionary struggle for national independence in the North African colony of Algeria after 1954, the French colonial regime offered their subject territories in West Africa the option of becoming part of a semi-inde-

pendent, neocolonial federation or striking out on their own as genuine independent nations.

Guinea, under the leadership of the PDG and its Secretary-General Sékou Touré, voted a resounding "No" and, on Oct. 2, 1958, declared itself an independent state. In retaliation for this act of political defiance, the French colonial authorities withdrew all structural, monetary, material, political and diplomatic support for the transitional Guinean state.

Guy de Lusignan, in his 1969 book entitled "French-Speaking Africa Since Independence," notes that "The Guinean venture was seen as a challenge to the rest of Africa and the Third World: a country starting without help, beginning everything from scratch, gathering together all the national effort within one strong nation-wide party that would reach out to and rouse everyone, even in the remotest bush village.

"Youth brigades built bridges, village women brought their crops, everyone toiled, with or without recompense, for the country's sake. As early as 1956, before independence, Sékou Touré, then a young trade-union leader and party dialectician, had argued that human investment, so easy to come by in Africa, could replace or at least supplement the financial investments from overseas."

The country was well-endowed with mineral resources and agricultural and hydroelectric potential. Encompassing 95,000 square miles, the center of the country has the high mountain ranges of the Fouta-Djallon, which reach almost 5,000 feet. At this range are four of the greatest African rivers: the Senegal, the Niger, the Gambia and the Konkoure.

During the colonial period the French considered Guinea one of its most prosperous territories. There are gold and diamonds mines, iron ore and the largest bauxite deposits in the world. In the Kaloum area, near the capital of Conakry, iron ore mines have been exploited for decades.

In the early days of the Guinean Revolution, the country was assisted with a loan from the government of Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah. The creation of

the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union in 1960 sought to set the pace for larger political and economic alliances among independent states in Africa.

Despite the country's break with the former French colonialists, during the early days of independence, the mining sector was still dominated by several French-based firms. By the end of 1961, the French firm Société des Bauxites du Midi was ordered to cease operations. The government began to work with the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

According to Lusignan, "Aid agreements with Eastern countries enabled Guinea to start on its industrial programme—brick and cement factories, a light hydroelectric plant, printing works—but they worked, at the beginning especially, at a low capacity."

By 1962, Guinea signed new mining agreements with a number of U.S. and Canadian aluminum firms. Bauxite was utilized in the production of aluminum, which therefore made Guinea a valued partner for the international mining industry.

Again Lusignan reports that "An agreement related to the Boke scheme was signed with Harvey Aluminum for the building of three factories—one for bauxite, one for alumina, one for aluminum—a harbour and a railway line. The firm was also granted exploitation rights for the bauxite deposit of Kassa on Loos Island.

"In 1965, Alcan Aluminum, a Canadian firm, joined Harvey Aluminum in the proposed exploitation of Guinea's bauxite. These arrangements were maintained through the mid-to-late 1960s when relations between Guinea and the United States became strained in the aftermath of the right-wing, US-backed coup against Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana."

Nkrumah, who was overthrown with the backing of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency on Feb. 24, 1966, relocated to Guinea and was made co-president by Sékou Touré. By 1967-68, a new international consortium was created known as the Compagnie Bauxite de Guinee. The arrangements were that the Guinean gov-

News
ANALYSIS

ernment controlled 49 percent of the firm and receive 65 percent of the profits.

However, despite the tremendous potential for economic development, Guinea remained an underdeveloped country. Due to the fact that it was virtually alone among the countries in West Africa that sought an independent course, it continued to be isolated from other countries in the region that followed a pro-Western course of development.

During the 1960s the country declared itself committed to building a scientific socialist society and maintained alliances with the nations of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China. The PDG government revealed numerous imperialist plots aimed at overthrowing the ruling party.

In 1970 an attempt to invade and overthrow the country was backed by Portugal. Guinea had provided a rear-base for the armed struggle being wage by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), which was fighting to destroy Portuguese colonialism in neighboring Guinea-Bissau.

In the immediate aftermath of Touré's death, a military coup against the PDG led by junior officers took place. Lansana Conté and Diara Traore took control of the state and subsequently abolished the PDG and other popular organs of the state. In 1985, a dispute between Traore and Conté led to the removal of Traore from his position of leadership. Later Traore was lured back from exile and then tried and executed under Conté's aegis.

After the military coup against the PDG, the country moved closer to France and the United States. Despite this neocolonial political orientation, Guinea remained underdeveloped and still dependent on the Western mining companies for the generation of foreign exchange.

Over the last several months, there have been a series of strikes and rebellions in Guinea in response to the worsening global capitalist economic crisis. Conditions within the military and the police became acute with rising discontent over working conditions and pay that helped to lead to the present coup. □

Koreans reaffirm self-reliance and socialism

By **Deirdre Griswold**

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was the very first country in the world to successfully repel an all-out U.S. invasion and war.

U.S. strategists had seen the 1950-53 conflict as an essential element of the Cold War. Their aim was to roll back the socialist revolutions that in many parts of the world had been sweeping out comprador capitalist regimes subservient to the colonial powers. The U.S. ruling class, presiding over an enormous productive apparatus undamaged by World War II, was hungry for raw materials and markets and viewed Korea, a former colony of Japan, as ripe for the picking.

But the mass resistance and sacrifice of the Korean people, led by Kim Il Sung, defeated the Pentagon war machine and kept the northern part of the peninsula out of the clutches of the imperialists.

That strong spirit of resistance, self-reliance and commitment to building socialism could be seen once again in the recent joint New Year's editorial of the DPRK's leading newspapers—Rodong Sinmun, Josoninmingun and Chongnyonjonwi.

This annual message conveys to the people the accomplishments and challenges that have been met in the outgoing year and what the Workers Party of Korea sees as the most important tasks for the future.

The editorial stresses "our Party's invariable will to build a powerful socialist country" and recalls that since the war ended in 1953 it has "built on the war debris a strong country independent in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliant in national defense."

Summing up the last year as one of "improving technology and boosting food production," the editorial said that, "Collectivism and self-reliance are our peculiar mode of revolution and nothing is better than this. ... Science and technology must be the basis of economic development." And it added that "The working class is the main force in the building of an economic power."

Korea has been divided ever since World War II and U.S. troops still occupy the south. For decades military dictators ruled South Korea with Washington's blessing and were openly hostile to the DPRK. However, after great mass struggles there, somewhat more liberal governments were

elected. In the 1990s, a process of dialogue with the north opened up and important agreements were reached to move toward some form of reunification.

In the past year, however, this process has been set back after a right-wing government took power in the south.

The editorial puts great stress on renewing the struggle for reunification. "The country's reunification is the unanimous aspiration of the fellow countrymen and the supreme and urgent task for the nation. ... The national reunification movement ... faced a grave challenge due to the advent of the conservative authorities in south Korea last year.

"The drift of affairs last year shows that

national reunification can be accelerated only through the determined struggle against the moves of the partitionist forces inside and outside the country.

"We should reenergize the national reunification movement this year under the slogan 'Advance dynamically along the road of independent reunification under the banner of the June 15 Joint Declaration and the October 4 Declaration!'

"All the Korean people should resolutely check and foil the maneuvers of the anti-reunification forces that run counter to the trend of the times towards independent reunification [and are] steeped in pro-U.S. sycophancy and hostility towards the fellow countrymen." □

What YOU should know about the hidden war in CONGO —past & present

By **Abayomi Azikiwe** Reprinted from Workers World

Summit fails to resolve crisis

Nov. 20, 2008

Fighting continues in eastern Congo; imperialist states weigh intervention

Colonialists plot return

Nov. 13, 2008

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¡Llamado urgente para que Israel cese inmediatamente su bombardeo asesino, el estado de sitio y la invasión de la Gaza palestina!

Iniciado por Ramsey Clark, recipiente del premio de la ONU 2008 sobre Derechos Humanos

Para: Presidente George W. Bush, presidente electo Barack Obama, secretaria de estado Condoleezza Rice, secretaria de estado electa Hillary Clinton, vicepresidente Richard Cheney, vicepresidente electo Joe Biden, líderes del congreso, Secretario general de la ONU Ban, presidente de la Asamblea General de la ONU d'Escoto-Brockmann, miembros/as del Consejo de seguridad de la ONU, Estados miembros de la ONU, presidente, primer ministro, gabinete y líderes de la oposición de Israel, y representantes de los medios:

Por 60 años, Israel ha perseguido al pueblo palestino con impunidad desafiando las resoluciones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas y del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, las órdenes del Tribunal Internacional de Justicia, el Derecho Internacional y los derechos humanos fundamentales.

A través de los años, Israel se ha proclamado la víctima mientras se hacía más rico, más poderoso y más violento; mientras que los/as palestinos/as eran abusados/as, empobrecidos/as, divididos/as y degradados/as.

Una táctica constante de Israel durante años ha sido la de dividir a los/as palestinos/as en contra de sus organizaciones más eficaces. Durante los años recientes Israel ha atacado a Fatah. Ahora es Hamas la que Israel ataca. Pero hay solamente un pueblo palestino y sólo puede haber un estado palestino. Éste ha sido el principio de guía de la OLP. La política de Israel ha sido siempre la de destruir la posibilidad de un estado palestino. Su asalto criminal contra Hamas es verdaderamente la



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San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1 de enero. Movilización en solidaridad con el pueblo Palestino.

continuada agresión en contra de la posibilidad de un estado palestino: dividir y conquistar.

Ahora, en los restantes días de la desastrosa administración de Bush, el gobierno de Israel con su primer ministro acusado de crimen, está tratando de probar si la opinión internacional permitiría la escalada del aislamiento y empobrecimiento del pueblo palestino y el asesinato selectivo y sistemático de la dirección palestina en Gaza hacia un asalto e invasión genocida e indiscriminado de la Gaza palestina, sabiendo muy bien que sus actos inflamarán las pasiones a través del Oriente Medio y del mundo árabe y musulmán arriesgando un conflicto de magnitud desastrosa en el Líbano, Siria, Irán, Afganistán y en otras partes, incluyendo India y Paquistán.

Más allá de destruir la capacidad de Gaza para resistir y de imponer su solu-

ción final ante los/as palestinos/as, Israel está buscando una confrontación que conduzca a una guerra con EEUU, la Unión Europea, y la OTAN luchando por Israel en contra de Irán, Siria, Líbano, Paquistán y Afganistán para deteriorar su capacidad de prevenir la extensión de la dominación de Israel en la región mientras que el "único presidente ahora" que tiene EEUU, George W. Bush, apoyará a Israel, encontrando todas las faltas en contra de Gaza.

En estas horas y días difíciles y peligrosos los/as abajo firmantes llaman a las Naciones Unidas, a los Estados Unidos, a la Unión Europea, a los miembros de la OTAN, y a los países europeos independientemente, a los gobiernos de Asia, primordialmente los de China, India, Indonesia y Paquistán, a las naciones de África y de las Américas, para exigir un

inmediato cese al fuego a través de Israel y Palestina y asegurar la paz. Todas las fronteras de Gaza, Israel, Egipto y del Mar Mediterráneo se deben abrir para la ayuda humanitaria y establecer un embargo total de armas y comercio contra Israel hasta que cumpla completamente con todos los requisitos de una paz permanente.

Llamamos a todos los pueblos, el poder máximo en cada nación cuando está organizado y en movimiento, a salir a las calles donde viven y exigir que sus gobiernos hagan todo lo posible para que Israel detenga su guerra de agresión contra Palestina y para que todos los partidos persigan la paz y que Israel, EEUU y las otras naciones que han proporcionado ayuda material para la agresión de Israel, que se consideren responsable de las muertes, las lesiones y el daño que Israel ha infligido.

Llamamos a los gobiernos y a las agencias humanitarias para que proporcionen toda la ayuda de emergencia necesaria a Palestina - asistencia médica, alimentos, fuentes humanitarias, vivienda; y a todos los medios de comunicación que intentan llevar verdaderamente la paz, la justicia y el respeto a la dignidad de cada niño/a, mujer y hombre en la tierra, a que pongan en sus titulares la demanda de que Israel detenga su agresión inmediatamente. Todos los partidos deben estar en negociación continua con todos los palestinos hasta que se convenga una solución de un estado, o que el estado de Palestina sea creado según lo asignado por el mandato de la resolución 181 (1947) de la Asamblea General de la ONU.

Sinceramente,
Ramsey Clark

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Declaración del Centro de Acción Internacional

Solidaridad con Gaza heroica

El Centro de Acción Internacional condena la criminal masacre por bombardeo en Gaza perpetrada por Israel con el apoyo de los EEUU que hasta la fecha ha causado la muerte de más de 200 palestinos/as dejando a más de 300 personas gravemente heridas. Hacemos un llamado al movimiento progresista, contra la guerra y de los/as trabajadores/as en Estados Unidos para que se unan a las crecientes protestas mundiales contra éste último crimen de guerra israelí cometido con la complicidad de los EEUU. Rechazamos la impunidad para el estado israelí y sus patrocinadores.

El derechista régimen sionista tuvo la arrogancia de anunciar por adelantado su intención de atacar a los/as civiles asediados/as de Gaza. Como cada movimiento grave israelí, este último asalto fue hecho con la luz verde de los EEUU usando armas y servicios de espionaje estadounidense.

Complicando esta arrogancia, el minis-

tro de defensa israelí Ehud Barak ha dicho ya que "la operación se continuará y será intensificada mientras sea necesario." (AFP, 27 de diciembre) exponiendo así su intento genocida. Los ataques israelíes, apuntando contra centros civiles de la población y coincidiendo con el final del día escolar, revelan un intento perverso para ocasionar tantas muertes como sea posible, incluyendo la de niños/as.

Bajo un estado de sitio israelí por más de un año, el pueblo de Gaza había estado luchando para sobrevivir con escasos alimentos y energía eléctrica y con un sistema de servicios de salud deshecho y agotado. El mundo ha condenado este bloqueo como un crimen israelí de lesa humanidad. Los israelíes han realizado este criminal bloqueo sin la protesta de sus aliados en Europa occidental y los Estados Unidos. Y el pueblo palestino en Gaza le ha dado frente a este bloqueo por más de 18 meses, proporcionando de nuevo un ejemplo para los pueblos del mundo, algo

que la criminal alianza EEUU - Israel ha querido desesperadamente destruir.

Como el bombardeo, el estado de sitio en sí es un crimen de guerra de EEUU e Israel, con los miles de millones de dólares anuales procedentes de los EEUU en ayuda utilizados para bombardear a los 1.5 millones de palestinos/as en Gaza, cortar su electricidad, y quitarles de sus hogares. Mientras tanto, acá en el mismo EEUU, el gobierno deja a los bancos desahuciar los hogares de los/as trabajadores/as y las empresas despiden a millones de trabajadores/as y dejan a decenas de millones vivir con el miedo de que por una enfermedad se agoten sus ahorros-si acaso la crisis no los ha agotado.

No está en nuestros intereses el permitir los ataques genocidas de EEUU-Israel contra el pueblo palestino de Gaza. Estamos en solidaridad con el pueblo palestino y en contra del imperialismo estadounidense y su asentamiento militar en el Oriente Medio, Israel.

Exigimos que la ayuda estadounidense para Israel se recorte a cero, y que ése dinero se utilice para pagar reparaciones al pueblo palestino, para asegurar su derecho a volver, y para viviendas, trabajos, cuidado médico y educación para el pueblo trabajador en los EEUU.

Demostraciones de protesta ya han ocurrido en Amman, Damasco, El Cairo, en las ciudades de la Franja Occidental y en ciudades árabes dentro de los límites de la frontera del 1967 de Israel. Organizaciones en Bruselas, Madrid y otros centros europeos también han llamado a protestas. En Estados Unidos, la primera acción se ha llamado para el Centro Rockefeller de Nueva York, el domingo 28 de diciembre.

¡Defendamos Palestina!
¡Solidaridad con Gaza heroica!
¡Solidaridad con Palestina!
¡TODOS/AS A PROTESTAR LAS MASACRES EN GAZA!

IACenter.org
En español: IAC-CAI@action-mail.org □