

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org



Nov. 5, 2009 Vol. 51, No. 44 50¢

ALL OUT NOV. 12 IN D.C.

Protest to save Mumia's life

Civil rights investigation demanded

By Dolores Cox
Philadelphia

The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal coalition convened an urgent meeting here on Oct. 17. Mumia supporters from Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C., were in attendance. It was a fightback strategy meeting of critical importance. Mumia, who has been on death row for over 27 years, is now, more than ever, faced with having his life snuffed out by the political powers that be.

At the Oct. 17 meeting organizers said that if the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the original 1982 death penalty verdict and overturns the current verdict of life without parole, then Mumia's execution is imminent.

History of injustice

Former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge signed Mumia's death warrant. The execution was scheduled to take place on Aug. 17, 1995, Marcus Garvey's birthday. That execution was stayed by a national emergency protest, and Mumia's life was saved, pending further appeals.

However, in December 2001, Mumia's 1982 death sentence was actually overturned by the federal court and subsequently upheld by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals this past April, though it nonetheless upheld his guilty verdict. He was thus granted life in prison without parole. The prosecution then appealed that ruling, again seeking the death penalty.

In April the U.S. Supreme Court refused to review an appeal demanding a new trial for Mumia. This court's next step will be to decide whether to reinstate the death penalty, which the Philadelphia District Attorney's office is clamoring for, or to rule in favor of life in prison without parole. If the Supreme Court rules to continue with the current sentence of life without parole, the D.A. can choose to accept this decision or request a review of it and continue to pursue Mumia's execution. Neither decision is acceptable to Mumia supporters who are continuing to fight for his release or a new, fair trial at the very least.

A case currently being heard by the U.S. Supreme Court (Smith v. Spisak) could have implications for Mumia's fate, which now hangs in the balance. At issue is whether the judge's instructions to the jury were confusing and faulty regarding when a verdict is arrived at and if juries are being confused as to whether mitigating factors that could lead to greater leniency require unanimity. A 1988 Supreme Court case (Mills v. Maryland) ruled the judge erred in instructing the jury and overturned the lower court's death sentence. Both Mumia and Spisak share this issue. The question is also whether that ruling applies to states other than Maryland.

Grave situation requires response

The gravity of Mumia's situation is compounded by other events. The current Philadelphia District Attorney has petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court for reinstatement

of the death penalty. And the leading candidate running for the D.A. position, Seth Williams, an African American, is campaigning on the promise to sign a warrant for Mumia's execution, with the backing of Philadelphia's Fraternal Order of Police.

Additionally, current Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell was actively involved in Mumia's prosecution, and has made it eminently clear that he would sign a death warrant for Mumia if the Supreme Court affirms the death sentence. Another factor is the scheduled December release of a documentary film about Mumia by Tigre Hill, also an African American, called "Barrel of the Gun," which supports the police version of events on Dec. 9, 1981, that led to Mumia's arrest.

The ICFMMAJ, the New York Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition, and numerous other organizations and collectives in Washington, New York and Philadelphia are presently mobilizing an international demonstration in Washington on Nov. 12 at the U.S. Department of Justice. There they will be delivering a collection of signed letters to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder demanding a civil rights investigation of the 28-year conspiracy to execute Mumia, an innocent man, for his political beliefs. Locally, Philadelphia activists will also be protesting against Seth Williams.

An urgent appeal is being made for all activists to participate in the Nov. 12 press conference and letter delivery actions in Washington. A civil rights investigation into this case could mean the difference between life and death for Mumia, and might open the door for his release from the hellhole of death row.

Massive outreach and publicity are needed. For transportation from New York City on Nov. 12, call 212-330-8029. For more information visit www.freemumia.com or call 212-330-8029, 215-476-8812, or 301-762-9162.

Join the fight against injustice and racism. We must act now before it's too late. Free Mumia!

The writer is an International Action Center volunteer in New York.



TEXAS MARCH DEMANDS: Stop Executions

3

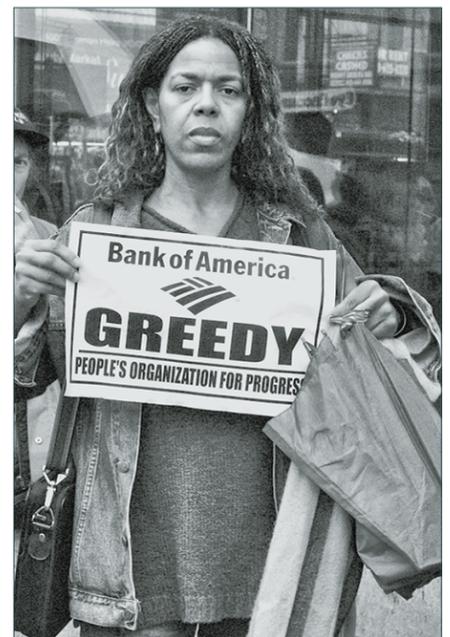


PHOTO: JON LEVINE, POP

WORKERS, COMMUNITY IN MOTION

- Int'l Climate Action Day
- Hotel union readies for strike
- Locked-out workers protest
- Striking miners rally
- Bronx activists struggle for justice
- Food workers win

6-7

WWP CONFERENCE Fight vs. capitalism

2

HONDURAS

- Resistance continues
- Teachers targeted

9



WW PHOTO: LEILANI DOWELL

Subscribe to Workers World newspaper
 Eight weeks trial: \$4 One year: \$25

NAME _____ PHONE _____
 EMAIL _____
 ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
WORKERS WORLD 55 W. 17 St., 5 Fl., NY, NY 10011
 212-627-2994 WWW.WORKERS.ORG

WWP conference will show

'Capitalism has no way out'

By Monica Moorehead

The Workers World Party 50th anniversary conference will take place in New York City Nov. 14-15. A major focus of the gathering will be the global capitalist economic crisis and the great need to intensify the prosecution of the worldwide class struggle.

Current struggles for national liberation on almost every continent, including Afghanistan, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Philippines, Somalia and Palestine, along with the growing mass struggles for jobs, health care, housing and education at home, will be analyzed within the context of this crisis.

Understanding how the restructuring changes that have taken place within the inner workings of the capitalist mode of production for the last quarter century, their impact on the changing social character of the working class, and the potential for struggle will be examined in plenary and discussion sessions among Party members, friends and allies. Spanish translation will be provided at some sessions.

The conference is taking place at a critical moment. Throughout the U.S. progressive movement, more and more political activists and thinkers, young and old, are taking a serious interest in Marxist ideology and socialism as the only real solutions to all the ills fostered under class society.

Fred Goldstein, author of "Low-Wage Capitalism" and a WWP secretariat member, led a workshop at a major conference of the Union of Radical Political Economists, known as URPE, in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Oct. 24. Important political outreach for the WWP conference took place at this gathering. The following excerpted remarks were made by Goldstein at that workshop.

The condition of the working class in the world has been changed by two monumental developments in the last part of the 20th century—one political, the other economic.

The political changes were the collapse of the USSR and Eastern Europe, the opening-up of China to imperialist investment, the opening-up of India in 1991, and the opening more widely of formerly oppressed countries to the invasion of capital—countries which had been partially shielded from full-scale takeover of their economies by the existence of the Soviet Union.

The result of this political setback was that the world working class available to capitalist imperialism for super-exploitation doubled between the years 1985 and 2000 from 1.5 billion to 3 billion. This expansion took place in countries with historically low wages and massive unemployment.

The economic development that coincided with the political transformation was the leap forward in the scientific-technological revolution in the capitalist world. By that I mean the development of computerization, the Internet, satellite communications, fiber optic cable, vast computerized ports, containerization, super tankers

with powerful turbine engines, jumbo jet transport, and so forth.

All this enabled the capitalist class in the imperialist countries to engineer a restructuring of the world economy that was as significant as the growth of the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries. "Low-Wage Capitalism" is not just a catchy phrase for the title of a book, but a description, a characterization, of the entire period of the last three decades brought about by these developments.

Wage competition and pauperization

What the ruling class did was to break up the production process into fine-tuned sub-processes and farm them out across the globe, seeking the cheapest labor in the enormously expanded pool of low-wage workers.

They set up a worldwide wage competition for workers in the imperialist countries on a job-for-job basis—so autoworkers in Detroit had to compete with autoworkers in Thailand. Service workers in Arizona had to compete with service workers in the Philippines. Computer programmers in New York had to compete with programmers in India, and so on.

The new world division created chains of production, global chains of exploitation, in which workers could be drawn into producing for the monopolies wherever they could be rounded up across the planet.

Wages are now being determined internationally based on the global low-wage workforce instead of nationally as they used to be. This was leading to the pauperization of the working class in the U.S. before the economic crisis hit.

The economic crisis has only deepened this. And capitalism has no way out. The new development in the U.S. capitalist system which began with the 1991 recession is the jobless recovery. It lasted 18 months in that recession. In the Clinton recession of 2000 to 2001 it took four years before employment reached pre-recession levels, and predictions for this crisis are anywhere from five to eight years.

But these predictions are not based on anything real. With the ruthless carrying-out of the technological destruction of jobs, speed-up, increasing productivity of labor, and the shrinking of the auto industry and the housing and construction industry—the two jobs engines of the economy—it will be impossible to put the 30 million workers already unemployed and underemployed back to work in any significant numbers.

Capitalism has entered a declining period of permanent crisis. The model established by the Republic Windows and Doors workers in Chicago, who occupied their plant to demand they be paid what was owed to them by Bank of America, is the model for the class struggle of the future, which is bound to come.

For more information about the WWP conference, including literature, registration and housing information, go to www.workersworld.net or call 212-627-2994.

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

- Protest to save Mumia's life 1
- WWP conference 2
- Texas death penalty 3
- Tenants score legal victory against big landlord 3
- Sickness & struggle, part 7 4
- Demand justice for Oscar Grant 5
- NYC action demands 'Stop police brutality!' 5
- Action hits Bank of America, foreclosures 5
- Climate Action Day exposes dangers to planet 6
- San Francisco hotel workers authorize strike 6
- Unions, community fight against lockout 6
- Struggle heats up in the Bronx 7
- Cafeteria workers win at Hunter College 7
- Striking miners hit Wall Street 7
- WW journalist get Project Censored award 10

★ Around the world

- Meeting features reports on world struggles 4
- Nahr al-Bared destroyed by Lebanese Army 8
- Conference to strengthen bonds of solidarity 8
- Honduran resistance vows to keep struggling 9
- Honduras teachers struggle against coup 9
- Grassroots migrant groups to meet in Athens 10
- U.S.-backed Ethiopian regime faces food crisis 11

★ Editorials

- Terrorism against Iran 10
- Racism, Rush Limbaugh and the NFL 10

★ Noticias En Español

- 100.000 marchan en Puerto Rico 12

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

Vol. 51, No. 44 • Nov. 5, 2009
Closing date: Oct. 27, 2009

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson

West Coast Editor: John Parker

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champione, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac

Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno

Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator
Copyright © 2009 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

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

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Sat & Sun **NOV. 14-15** School Auditorium
127 E. 22nd St., New York City

1959-2009-50 Years of Struggle

For more information go to www.workersworld.net or call 212 627-2994

JOIN US.

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

National Office

55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org
Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org
Baltimore
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

Durham, NC

Durham@workers.org
Houston
P.O. Box 595
Houston,
TX 77001-0595
713-861-5965
houston@workers.org
Los Angeles
5274 W Pico Blvd
Suite # 207
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org
Philadelphia
P.O. Box 23843,
Philadelphia,
PA 19143
610-931-2615
phila@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

TEXAS

'The death penalty? Shut it down!'

By Gloria Rubac
Austin, Texas

Electricity was in the air Oct. 24 as hundreds of people filled the south steps of the Texas Capitol in Austin to shout loud and clear: "Todd Willingham was innocent!"

Gathering for the 10th Annual March to Abolish the Death Penalty, abolitionists from all over Texas, around the country, and a few from overseas turned out in record numbers to demand that Texas Gov. Rick Perry immediately stop all executions in Texas.

In recent months the national media has written extensively that there was no credible evidence of arson, and therefore the 2004 execution of Willingham was the execution of an innocent man.

Willingham's mother sent a message to the march that read: "I sincerely appreciate the concern by everyone at today's 10th Annual March to Abolish the Death Penalty in your efforts to gain attention to the senseless execution of my son Todd and for his exoneration. I have received letters of support from some of the men on death row stating that Todd's murder is the reason the appeals court is taking more time going over their cases and they are getting stays of execution. This won't bring Todd back, but I take comfort in knowing that others may be freed because of him. Also thanks for making this Todd's day."

Liz Gilbert, a Houston teacher and playwright, met Willingham after she got his name on a bus trip to Philadelphia for a Millions for Mumia Rally in 1999. As she began to know Willingham and learn about his case, she decided to begin her own investigation. She went to Corsicana, Texas, where Willingham's three young girls were killed in a fire in their home. She began to figure out that there was no evidence to prove arson and contacted a fire investigator and the Innocence Project in New York.

Their investigation has now catapulted Willingham's execution into national news and prompted a cover-up by Gov. Rick Perry, who presided over the execution. "I am hoping to bring attention to the fact that if only one innocent person was executed, that's enough," said Gilbert at the rally. "In Todd's case, Texas executed a person who did not commit a crime."

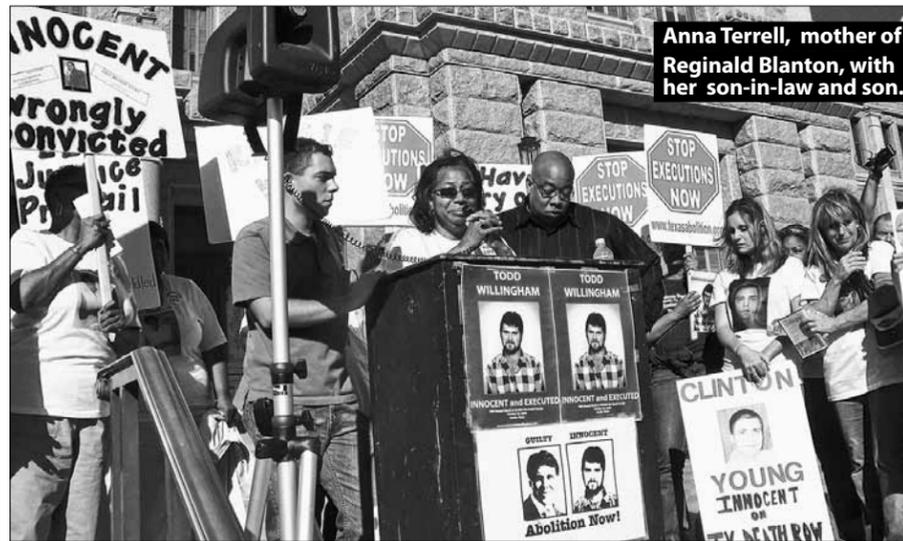
After the opening speaker got the protesters chanting "Todd Willingham was innocent!" the crowd of around 500 people screamed when asked if they remembered other innocents who had been executed like Shaka Sankofa and Frances Newton.

There was great applause and a rousing welcome for three men who have been released from death row because they were innocent. The Journey of Hope sponsored Shujaa Graham, who was on death row at San Quentin. Curtis McCarty did 22 years on Oklahoma death row before getting out in 2007. Ron Cuney, sponsored by Witness to Innocence, was on New Mexico's death row in the early 1970s and came within 90 days of execution.

'Save Reginald Blanton!'

Silence swept the crowd as Anna Terrell, the mother of Reginald Blanton, an innocent man set for execution in just three days, bared her heart and soul to all who could hear her voice.

With her voice and hands trembling with fear of the impending execution, Terrell said, "It is kind of hard to speak because of the pain that I feel—it is my son, my life, that they want to kill on Tuesday. When you take away a life and then later you find out he was innocent—how are you going to bring my baby back



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

to me? How are you going to bring him back? You're punishing his whole family. You've already killed his father. His father and his uncles have fought in the military for freedom, but what kind of freedom do they give my son?"

"I feel so much anger. I can't begin to tell you the life I am living, awaiting my son's death. It is true that if you have deep pockets, you can buy justice. My son has never stopped writing and screaming that he is innocent. They let me visit him for the first time in a year yesterday, and while we were talking, they told us the board denied a stay, refused to stop the killing. I haven't held my son for 10 years, and now they want to kill him, and he is innocent."

As the crowd fought back tears, they clapped their support and began an impromptu chant of "Save Reginald Blanton!" Terrell gained strength and loudly proclaimed, "Rick Perry, you are sitting in your ivory tower, but you are not going to get away with this. You are going to pay for your wrongs. You are evil and you have no right. Anyone who was selected for anything by George Bush—you know where Bush has gotten us. Those people all sleep together, but we can kick them out. We are dealing with no-good,

low-down suckers, and we are going to get rid of them. This is a new era and change is coming. We're not going to stand for this anymore. We're going to bring this killing to an end."

Moving testimony of innocence

Families of many men claiming innocence also spoke. Sandra Reed has been publicly fighting for her son Rodney Reed for over 10 years. Regina Guidry told the crowd that her spouse Howard was innocent and still fighting for his life. Supporters and family of Clint Young also spoke about his case.

Connie Wright spoke almost a year after her spouse, Greg, was put to death despite overwhelming evidence of his innocence. She moved the crowd when she said she was willing to keep on fighting against the death penalty despite her loss. Former Congressperson Cynthia McKinney, who stood outside the death house to protest Wright's execution last November, sent a message of solidarity to Connie's family and to the march.

Delia Perez-Meyer spoke for her brother Louis Castro Perez, who has strong innocence claims, and is affectionately called "Big Lou" by his friends on the row. Perez-Meyers is on the Austin Human

Rights Commission, which has passed a resolution calling for a halt to executions in the city of Austin. She then asked all death-row families to come to the front, and dozens and dozens of protesters surged to the top steps of the Capitol with signs and banners for their loved ones.

A number of families spoke for their loved ones who were convicted under Texas' law of parties, which condemns people to death row even if they allegedly were only accessories to a capital crime. Terri Been spoke for her brother, Jeff Wood, who did not kill anyone and was not even in the store where a person was murdered. Crystal Halprin spoke for her spouse, Randy, as did Marisol Ramirez about her spouse, Juan. Sylvia Garza came from the Rio Grande Valley to stand up for her son, Robert. She and Robert's sister distributed fliers about his case. Lydia Garza, also from the Valley, spoke about her son, Humberto.

A bus took activists from the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement in Houston to Austin. From Jazzlyn Jefferson, 7, to Joanne Broussard, 74, the activists left the SHAPE Community Center with signs on the bus and coolers loaded with water and soda. Broussard's son, Windell, was executed in 2002. Jefferson's mom and grandmother were also on the bus; all three have been protesting the death penalty for years. An older Palestinian activist, Hasan, made the trip, as did Ray Hill, host of Pacifica Radio's The Prison Show broadcast in Houston. Several death row family members were on the bus as well.

"We hope that we will not be back for the 11th Annual March, but we will be here until the death penalty is totally shut down," said Laura Brady of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, who co-chaired the rally with Scott Cobb of the Texas Moratorium Network.

Editor's note: Reginald Blanton was legally murdered by the state of Texas on Oct. 27.

Tenants score legal victory against big landlord

By G. Dunkel
New York

The highest court in New York state held Oct. 22 that Tishman-Speyer, a big landlord that controls 11,277 apartments in one major Manhattan apartment complex alone, must significantly lower the rents on over 4,000 apartments that it leases at "market rate" and put them back under rent regulation.

The current advertised price for one of its two-bedroom apartments is \$3,200 a month, while the same apartment under regulation rents for \$1,400 to \$1,600.

Tishman-Speyer, as well as the previous landlord Met Life, took about \$25 million in government money to maintain and modernize the buildings. The court held that taking this money prevented landlords from deregulating apartments.

While precise figures don't appear to be available, a former deputy housing commissioner told the New York Times that he thought this ruling would apply to 35,000 to 70,000 apartments throughout the city. (Oct. 23) New York has a million apartments under rent regulation, a majority of the rent-regulated dwellings in the United States.

Tishman-Speyer put together a consortium of pension funds and real estate speculators to buy the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper complex of 110 buildings for \$5.4 billion three years ago. Calpers, the California pension system, put up \$500 million (Los Angeles Times, Oct. 21); the Florida pension system put up \$250 million (St. Petersburg Times, Sept. 9); and other smaller funds also put up significant funds. Tishman-Speyer put up only \$56 million of its own money.

Tishman-Speyer promised its investors a 20 percent return. It thought it could achieve this rate by removing most of the apartments from rent control, but ran into tenacious resistance from well-organized tenants as well as the end of the real estate bubble.

The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, two major business-oriented newspapers, covered the financial aspects of this decision extensively—how much the landlord will have to refund; how it will affect when they go into default; how much tenants will get, if anything but a reduced rent; how it has devastated the residential real estate market in New York City; and so on.

Ever since New York state took over

rent control from the federal government in 1950, landlords and tenants have been locked in a seesaw struggle. New York City tenants know in their bones that without rent regulation they would have no protection against greedy landlords. Landlords have lied and cheated to get this obstruction to their greater profits removed.

The tenants at Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper are well organized. Depending on the circumstances, they can get 200 to 500 people to a meeting to defend their homes. They are going to push the landlord hard to carry out this decision in the tenants' favor.

A few tenants, perhaps aspiring landlords, condemned the decision, but most felt such a decision was long overdue. "I'm going to be able to stay where I moved 35 years ago," one retired tenant told Workers World. "They tried to screw the little guy, and we won," said another retired tenant. (Daily News, Oct. 22) Others condemned all the fancy landscaping and new, glitzy, expensive services Tishman-Speyer is offering.

This legal victory wouldn't have been won without a lengthy, determined political struggle on the part of tenants to protect their homes. □

Meeting features reports on world struggles

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

An International Action Center meeting on Oct. 25 featured dynamic eyewitness reports from three epicenters of struggle—Honduras, Pittsburgh and Gaza.

Dave Welsh, a member of the San Francisco Labor Council and an activist with the Haiti Action Committee, recently returned from a fact-finding visit to Honduras with the IAC. Welsh reported that the struggle against the coup and for the immediate return of President Manuel Zelaya is alive and well. “The people’s resistance movement is broad and tireless, young and old, and right up in the face of the police and the army.”

Welsh said the IAC delegation was well-received wherever it went and its solidarity banner was very popular. “Young people and women are an important part of the leadership of the resistance movement in Honduras. The labor movement there is class conscious and at the center of the struggle to return Zelaya and dismantle the present government, which was responsible for the coup.”

Welsh described a meeting that the delegation had with a representative from the U.S. Embassy in Honduras. “It’s clear that the U.S. is maneuvering to maintain its hold on Honduras and all of the other countries of the region,” Welsh added.

Clarence Thomas, a leader of the International Longshore Workers Union



From left: Dave Welsh, Judy Greenspan and Clarence Thomas

Local 10, talked about the Sept. 20 National March for Jobs that took place in Pittsburgh at the beginning of the G-20 summit. Thomas said the march was held to expose “the face of U.S. imperialism at home.”

Thomas reported that the local and federal governments both worked hard to prevent demonstrations during the Pittsburgh G-20 summit, a meeting of the richest countries of the world. It was the hard work of the Bail Out the People Movement in reaching out to the local

communities that enabled the march and tent city to happen, according to Thomas.

“The Tent City [organized by BOPM to focus attention on the life and death issues faced by the workers and oppressed] became a magnet for the media,” Thomas stated. He added that even a Wall Street Journal reporter came around to “investigate” the workers’ fight back movement.

“It was the Bail Out the People Movement that overcame the climate of fear that the G-20 summit and the government tried to spread,” said Thomas.

Judy Greenspan, a member of the San Francisco IAC, spoke about her trip to Palestine this summer with the Viva Palestina U.S.A. Convoy to Gaza. Greenspan, along with about 250 other activists and supporters, broke through the U.S.-backed, Israeli-imposed blockade of that embattled city and was able to spend 24 hours in Gaza delivering medical humanitarian aid.

She described the devastation that the Palestinians suffered last December and January at the hands of the Israeli military, which intentionally destroyed much of the infrastructure of Gaza—schools, hospitals, clinics, government buildings and mosques—in a well-orchestrated terror campaign against the Palestinian resistance to the Zionist state of Israel.

The IAC representative described the warm welcome that the Viva Palestina delegation received from the Palestinian authorities and how the government, with so few resources, was able to organize an unforgettable visit for the convoy. “Even though we came to Gaza with only one-half of the material aid that we had purchased, because Egypt confiscated our vehicles, the Gaza government officials told us that our presence in Palestine was what counted,” Greenspan explained.

The meeting ended after a lively discussion linking the resistance movement abroad from Honduras to Palestine with the growing struggles at home against foreclosures, joblessness and lack of health care. □

Sickness & struggle, part 7: 2003 Medicare changes

Corporate giveaway in the name of reform

By David Hoskins

On Dec. 8, 2003, former President George W. Bush signed into law the misnamed Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003. The Act, better known as Medicare Part D, was touted as a landmark reform to provide seniors and the disabled with a prescription drug benefit, more choices and better benefits under Medicare.

The evidence demonstrates that, in reality, this legislation has been a corporate giveaway to the same insurance and pharmaceutical companies that make billions of dollars by denying care to those who cannot afford it and overcharging those lucky enough to have health insurance.

Medicare Part D represents government collusion with industry to redistribute huge amounts of taxpayer money to the health corporations. President Bush and congressional leaders of both parties, in typical right-wing fashion, adopted the language of populism and reform to carry out this redistribution of wealth away from poor and working-class taxpayers.

Taxpayer fleeing revealed

The U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform examined confidential information on drug prices to compare the costs of drugs purchased under Medicare Part D with those purchased through Medicaid, a federal-state program that provides health care to 60 million individuals living in the U.S. The findings were published in a July 2008 report titled “Medicare Part D: Drug Pricing and Manufacturer Windfalls.” (oversight.house.gov)

The report findings provide a scathing indictment of this so-called reform. Medicare Part D pays an average 30 percent more for prescription drugs than

does Medicaid. Administrative expenses and profits of private insurers account for nearly 10 percent of Part D costs, nearly six times that of traditional Medicare.

This produced in excess of \$3.7 billion that went straight to the drug manufacturers in the first two years of the program. Johnson & Johnson received the largest windfall, making \$615 million off the program in 2006 and 2007. More than \$500 million of that additional revenue came from the sales of just one drug—the anti-psychotic Risperdal. Bristol-Myers Squibb received a boost of \$400 million, including over \$200 million in additional revenue from sales of Plavix, a heart-attack and stroke medication.

The report arrives at its estimate of \$3.7 billion by examining the 100 drugs most used by beneficiaries. If the discrepancy is the same for other drugs as it is for the top 100, the windfall could actually be billions of dollars more for the pharmaceutical companies.

Much of this money is obtained as the result of a dual-eligibility provision which transferred the drug coverage of elderly and disabled individuals who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid away from the more cost-effective Medicaid to the Medicare Part D program.

The dual-eligibility scam portends even greater profits for the rapacious drug companies. Dual-eligible beneficiaries are expected to consume \$432 billion worth of prescription drugs in the first 10 years following the report’s publication. If Medicare Part D negotiated the same prices that Medicaid receives, the cost of these drugs would fall by an estimated \$86 billion.

None of these figures address the larger imperative of removing the private pharmaceutical firms from the equation altogether, but they do illustrate the real

intent of Medicare Part D—to pad the already flush coffers of the big drug companies with public funds.

Donut hole fails sick, elderly

One of the biggest failures of Medicare Part D is the gap in coverage popularly known as the donut hole. This refers to the gap that exists between the initial coverage limit and the eligibility threshold for catastrophic coverage. During this period enrollees are responsible for paying all prescription costs out-of-pocket with no assistance from Medicare.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 71 percent of plans offered no assistance with gap coverage in 2008. Last year the coverage gap totaled \$3,216 for plans offering the standard Medicare Part D benefit. The gap is projected to grow to more than \$6,000 by 2016. (kff.org)

The donut hole is criminal by any reasonable moral standard, especially in light of the vast revenues the drug companies have managed to squeeze from the

Medicare program. The pharmaceutical industry has essentially arranged to secure for itself billions of dollars in extra monies each year through a system that leaves those most vulnerable—the sickest of the elderly and disabled—stuck with paying thousands of dollars out-of-pocket during their time of greatest need.

The three most profitable drug companies made more than \$28 billion in combined profits in 2008. Profits like these made the pharmaceutical industry the third most profitable U.S. industry in the midst of a severe recession, according to Fortune magazine. (cnmmoney.com, May 4)

Medicare Part D reveals what the ruling class and their capitalist politicians in Congress really mean by “reform.” The only wealth redistribution they are interested in is that which comes with corporate welfare. Health care reform, as it was implemented with Medicare Part D, means bolstering the coffers of the most profitable industries in the country.

Next: The impact of technology on health delivery and access.

High Tech, Low Pay

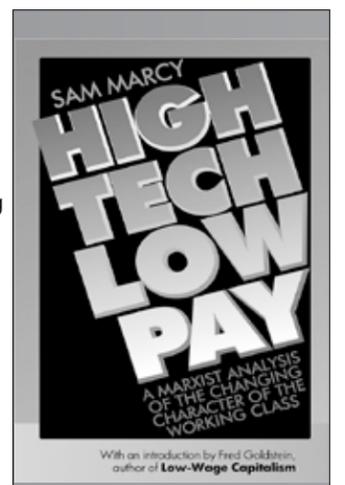
A Marxist analysis of the changing character of the working class

Twenty years ago Marcy wrote that the scientific-technological revolution is accelerating a shift to lower-paying jobs and to more women, Black, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and other nationally oppressed workers.

Using Marxism as a living tool, Marcy analyzes the trends and offers strategies for labor including the occupation of plants.

A new introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of *Low-Wage Capitalism*, explains the roots of the current economic crisis, with its disastrous unemployment, which has heightened the need for a working-class resurgence.

Books available online at Leftbooks.com and on sale at bookstores around the country.



Trial venue changed for killer cop

Demand justice for Oscar Grant

By Larry Hales

On Oct. 16, Alameda County (California) Superior Court Judge Morris Jacobson granted a change of venue for Johannes Mehserle's murder trial.

Mehserle is the former Bay Area Rapid Transit cop who, on Jan. 1, shot Oscar Grant III in his back at point-blank range. Grant was subdued and lying on his stomach when he was shot. The bullet exited out of Grant's front, ricocheted off the concrete and pierced his lung. Grant, who according to witnesses pleaded with the cops, saying he had a 4-year-old daughter, died hours later at a hospital.

The killing was captured on cell phone cameras and broadcast via the Internet, causing a national outcry, as the cold-blooded shooting of Grant looked exactly like an execution. Three young Black men were shot by police in the Bay Area within hours of one another between Dec. 31 and

Jan. 1. Two of them, Grant and Adolph Grimes, were killed.

Mehserle refused questioning and was later picked up on a fugitive warrant in Nevada, where he fled days after he killed Grant.

By granting the change of venue, the judge showed that the courts have little to no interest in there being a fair trial. While the judge ruled in favor of Mehserle and his defense attorney that Mehserle could not receive a fair trial in Alameda County because of all the publicity and protests, the reality is that the courts, and no doubt also BART police and the various police agencies in Alameda County, fear a trial there would be all too fair and that the community would be able to decide the fate of the cop who shot and killed an unarmed young Black man.

Originally scheduled to begin on Nov. 2, the trial is now expected to be delayed until a new venue is decided.

The trial of Mehserle could set a precedent that, when there is a struggle, the people can win a victory, even by way of the courts that are stacked and aligned against them.

The trial of the four cops charged with the brutal beating of Rodney King—Stacey Koon, Laurence Powell, Timothy Wind and Theodore Briseno—was granted a change of venue as well. It was moved out of Los Angeles County to the predominately white and conservative Simi Valley. Ten of the jurors were white and none of them were Black.

After the acquittal of the four cops, despite the videotaped evidence of the horrific beating of Rodney King, the South Central area of Los Angeles erupted in a full-scale rebellion.

It was a rebellion and sustained protests that won the charge of murder against Mehserle. BART officials, BART police and the city of Oakland had days

to respond to the killing of Grant but did nothing until the community began to protest and demand action be taken.

It is the community that should get to try Mehserle, but in lieu of that, at the very least the trial should remain in Alameda County, where the jury pool is comprised of oppressed people of color who have all too often seen police brutality.

The decision as to where the trial will be moved will now be made by the California Judicial Council, assisted by Judge Morris Jacobson. The outcome could be a venue with very different demographics than Alameda County. This would be favorable to the cop who shot and killed this young Black man and to the other cops and police agencies in Alameda County, who have committed and continue to commit acts of violence against oppressed and poor communities on a daily basis. It would not be justice for the oppressed. □

NYC action demands 'Stop police brutality!'



A fired-up action took place in New York City on Oct. 22 as part of the "National day of protest to stop police brutality, repression and the criminalization of a generation." It was led by oppressed and militant youth.

For the 14th year the October 22nd Coalition gave voice and strength to families of those gunned down by police, such as Juanita Young, whose entire family was brutalized and arrested in a racist police raid on their Bronx home in 2000. The New York Police Department then murdered her innocent son, Malcolm Ferguson. During the opening rally Young said: "You can't give in. They will try to make an example out of you—try to break your spirit. If you don't resist and keep on

fighting, they will be able to get away with what they're trying to do to us."

Speakers included one of the Bushwick 32, a group of Black and Latino/a high school students who were arrested and charged with unlawful assembly and other "crimes" as they walked in a funeral procession for another student in Brooklyn in 2007. Other speakers also gave support to immigrant families who are profiled, detained, abused and separated from loved ones by arrests and deportations.

Following the Washington Square rally, a militant march took over part of a prominent avenue in Manhattan and sent loud chants of defiance and inspiration to New Yorkers.

—Report and photo by Anne Pruden

POP action hits Bank of America, foreclosures

"Essex County has the highest rate of foreclosures in the entire East Coast," said Larry Hamm, chair of the People's Organization for Progress, at their first protest against foreclosures at Bank of America in downtown Newark on Oct. 24.

For two hours POP activists picketed and chanted, "Bail out the homeless! Bail out the homeowners, not the greedy!" Passersby stopped and listened intently as Hamm laid out the criminal actions of the banks and vowed to take the struggle to all the banks in Newark. Many people said they were coming to the next POP meeting.

POP issued a people's solution to the mortgage crisis, demanding that current mortgage principals be reduced to the true (lower) value of the homes, with interest payments deferred until the principal is paid off. The campaign is supported by the Newark Teachers Association. For more information call 973-801-0001.

—Gavrielle Gemma

New Jersey protest targets bank foreclosures.

PHOTO: JON LEVINE, POP



"With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein does exactly that."

—Howard Zinn, author of
A People's History of the United States

Low-Wage Capitalism

Fred Goldstein

Colossus with feet of clay:
What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

A 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 end of working-class compromise and retreat and must end up in a profound revival of the struggle against capital.

Available at www.Leftbooks.com

"*Low-Wage Capitalism* by Fred Goldstein is a most timely work, as the working class prepares for a fightback during the greatest crisis of capitalism since the Great Depression."

Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local 10 and
Co-chair, Million Worker March Movement

What is the real culprit?

Climate Action Day exposes dangers to planet

By Jennifer Waller

On Oct. 24, International Climate Action Day, activists in 181 countries around the world participated in over 5,200 events in an attempt to raise awareness about the threats of climate change.

In New Brighton, Australia, a huge drawing in the sand included text that could be read from the sky—"There is no planet B." In Mongolia men on horseback posed for a picture holding up a banner about climate change. In South Africa rock climbers hung banners on the side of a cliff reading, "[President Jacob] Zuma, climate proof our food and jobs." An action was held underwater in the Maldives to draw attention to the fact that the Maldives is seriously threatened by rising sea levels in the Indian Ocean.

International Climate Action Day was organized primarily by a U.S. organization named 350. The number 350 holds significance in the struggle against global warming because 350 parts per million of

carbon dioxide is the limit that scientists have identified as safe for our atmosphere. Presently the number is 387 ppm.

Despite the fact that this analysis is scientific, and potentially difficult to fully understand, 350.org's accessible Web site has given people all over the world a number to push for and greater understanding of the climate crisis. As a result, International Climate Action Day consisted of many groups around the world holding up 350 banners and standing in formations that from an aerial view read "350." A group in the Philippines even grew plants into the formation of 350, and in Copenhagen the 350 emblem was mowed into a meadow.

The United Nations Copenhagen Climate Conference will take place Dec. 7-18. Although President Barack Obama's administration has said that no U.S. climate bill will be passed before the conference, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will hold hearings the week of Oct. 26 to discuss a climate

change bill proposed by Sens. Barbara Boxer and John Kerry.

Capitalism is to blame

Despite the ongoing grassroots efforts to raise awareness within the political arena, as well as with voters and consumers, people in the United States seem surprisingly unconcerned about the swift and imminent obliteration of planet Earth as a place that can sustain human life. A recent poll by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found that only 57 percent of respondents believe there is real evidence that the world is getting warmer—down from 77 percent in 2006. The poll also reveals that just 35 percent of people in the U.S. regard global warming as a very serious problem. (people-press.org)

These alarming statistics come after years of grassroots and also mainstream efforts to get people to drive less, recycle more and bring reusable bags with them to the grocery store. Yet these efforts are

not attacking the real problem. Often such "green" campaigns are run or sponsored by corporations such as Wal-Mart and Shell in an effort to implicate consumers in the destruction of our planet, while the globalized capitalist system is the real culprit.

The possibility of sustaining human, animal and plant life on this planet is only possible if this system is completely overhauled or, better yet, dismantled. Though the people of the United States are sleeping on this issue, the rest of the world is much more aware of the catastrophic effects the climate crisis will bring on all of us.

Unfortunately, reducing one's carbon footprint by "buying green" will not save the planet. The people of the world must rise up against the corporate greed that has been killing the planet and its inhabitants for too long. Or we will all see the consequences far sooner than most of us can imagine.

The writer is an activist with the militant youth organization FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together.

San Francisco

Hotel workers authorize strike

By Joan Marquardt
San Francisco

On Oct. 22, over 3,000 members of UNITE-HERE Local 2 voted overwhelmingly—by 92.3 percent—to authorize a strike against 31 upscale hotels in San Francisco. The union represents 12,000 hospitality workers in San Francisco and San Mateo County whose labor contract with the hotels expired in August.

One of the major sticking points between the 125-member union negotiating committee and the owners of the hotels is funding health care benefits for the workers and their families. On Sept. 24 police arrested 92 people engaged in civil disobedience outside two hotels. Close to



2,000 workers and their supporters rallied with them, raising their demands for a fair contract.

Right now the workers plan to "remain on the job unless and until the bargaining committee calls a strike," according to an Oct. 22 union press release. Local 2 plans an informational picket line at one of the fancy hotels in the coming days. For more information visit unitehere2.org. □



www.hotelworkersrising.org/hope/

Hope for Housekeepers is a national campaign of women, founded by Hyatt housekeepers across the nation to stop the abuse of women in the hotel industry. Nearly all hotel housekeepers are women, and the work we do is difficult and sometimes dangerous. In a survey of over 600 housekeepers by UNITE HERE, 91% of housekeepers reported that they have suffered work-related pain. Of those who reported pain in the survey, two-thirds took pain medication to get through their daily quota.

Hyatt housekeepers often clean as many as 30 hotel rooms a day in just eight hours, and many forgo health insurance for their families because of the high cost.

Unions, community fight against lockout

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Bay City, Mich.

Members of United Steelworkers Local 12934-02 and their labor-community supporters walked a picket line for more than three hours and then held a rally here on Oct. 22 to protest the lockout of 70 union workers by Carquest, a chain of auto supply stores. Bay City, with 36,000 people, is about 100 miles northwest of Detroit.

The union called the rally to put Carquest on notice that the workers are in a fighting mood and have widespread labor-community support.

"The support is overwhelming. I never would have thought it," Brandon Bellinger, a driver of three years at the distribution center, told Workers World. Bellinger stood in a group of union sisters and brothers and their allies as many passing cars honked support.

Dan Kennell, president of Local 12934-02 and a shipping-receiving clerk with 30 years' seniority, said the company had refused to extend contract talks past Sept. 24. The workers had proposed extending the negotiations until Oct. 30, but the company locked them out instead on Sept. 25. After company representatives told the Steelworkers to leave the premises, workers with as much as 45 years' seniority were put on the street by the greedy company.



United Steelworkers Local 12934-02 and supporters picket on Oct. 22.

But the workers refused to bow down, so Carquest finally agreed to schedule a bargaining session with the Steelworkers on Oct. 28. Until the next contract is won, picket lines will continue at all three gates and visits to Carquest franchises will continue in an effort to stop scab parts from moving. The Bay City distribution center warehouse services Carquest franchises for most of Michigan.

Because they're locked out, the workers are not receiving unemployment benefits, and Carquest has cut off their health insurance. The Steelworkers are paying \$175 weekly to each worker and helping them with their needs. While working, the workers make on average about \$15 per hour. The union reports that they receive

daily donations of beverages, food, firewood and other supplies from labor-community supporters.

Near the picket line at the main entrance are three tents containing kitchens and supplies, two port-a-johns, and a large hand-painted sign reading, "Carquest locked out union employees—USW."

During the rally, private security hired by Carquest videotaped those on the picket line and allowed a couple of scab trucks through the line. The Steelworkers report this is happening daily. The scabs don't have it easy, as they are surrounded and followed by angry Steelworkers and their allies, in particular younger workers. According to the Steelworkers, although scab workers inside the warehouse and

scab drivers are moving some auto parts, the number is well below what it was before the lockout.

Solidarity makes us strong!

Those at the support rally included many spouses, partners and other family members of the locked-out Steelworkers. Wide-ranging union support came from the Union of Part-Time Faculty-American Federation of Teachers, the Michigan Education Association, the United Auto Workers, various Steelworkers locals, the Utility workers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Ironworkers and the Teamsters, who have refused to cross the picket line. The Bay County Labor Council AFL-CIO is also assisting the locked-out Steelworkers in many ways.

Support messages can be called into the union hall at 989-667-0660 or e-mailed to Dan Nadolski at dnadolski@usw.org. Supporters can also call Carquest's customer care line to demand the company bargain in good faith with the Steelworkers: 877-735-2233. Or call Bay City Carquest at 989-686-3114.

Supporters can join the picket line at 508 McGraw St. in Bay City from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. Supporters coming to the picket line are encouraged to bring solidarity picket signs and such provisions as water, coffee, firewood and snacks. □

Struggle heats up in the Bronx

By **Gavrielle Gemma**
New York

“Hey Goldman Sachs, we want our money back!” chanted about 60 mainly young protesters from the Bronx in front of the posh home of Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein on the morning of Oct. 25. Police guarding the rich man’s high-rise home on Central Park West threatened and cajoled the demonstrators repeatedly.

Members of Sistas & Brothas United, part of the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, shouted, “That ain’t right!” in response to hearing details about the Goldman Sachs world, like the fact that Blankfein “earns” more than \$42 million per year before bonuses and gets about \$72 million after bonuses, and that the investment bankers who “work” for the institution have a bonus fund of \$23 billion—much of it courtesy of taxpayers. (Goldman Sachs returned about \$10 billion in direct loans from the U.S. Treasury, but not the tens of billions in Treasury funds it got through the bailout of AIG or even more in give-away credit it got from the Federal Reserve.)

The demonstration was a warm-up for a larger rally of 1,200 people later that afternoon at St. Nicholas Church in the Bronx. The church’s school auditorium filled to overflowing with people of all nationalities waving little red flags with “Blueprint for the Bronx” printed on them. Coalition president Teresa Anderson led off the rally with a strong statement against bankers and developers that drew thunderous applause and chanting.

The Bronx actions in turn are part of a campaign against the banks led by the National People’s Action Network, which is targeting the American Bankers Association convention in Chicago. A thousand protesters gathered outside the ABA’s opening ceremonies on Oct. 25 while about 100 crashed the party inside.

On Oct. 26 a demonstration targeted Goldman Sachs in Chicago, demanding that the investment bank redirect its \$23 billion bonus bundle to alleviate the mortgage crisis it helped cause, a crisis which is pushing thousands of people out of their homes every day.

Unions, community fight Bronx developer

Demonstrations, rallies and mass community meetings in the Bronx have taken place for months to demand a Community Benefits Agreement from Related Companies, a developer that wants to turn the Kingsbridge Armory, a historic landmark in the Bronx, into a shopping mall. The struggle is led by KARA, the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance, a coalition of community organizations, unions, clergy and neighborhood businesses.

“This is our armory, and we will not allow it to be used solely as a profit center for Related,” said Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter,

a KARA leader with the Northwest Bronx Community Clergy Coalition. (ourarmory.org)

Activists are demanding a CBA that includes a living wage with benefits, guaranteed jobs for Bronx residents, prevailing wages in construction, space for community events, youth hiring, two schools and protection for tenants in the area. CBAs have been negotiated in other cities when companies receive taxpayer credits and abatements.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union helped form KARA. The CBA is supported by the Bronx Borough president, Reuben Diaz. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bronx is the poorest urban county in the U.S., with the highest unemployment in New York City.

Related Companies has been promised \$90 million including outright govern-

ment subsidies, tax credits and repairs to the building. Ignoring mass support for the CBA, billionaire Mayor Bloomberg’s City Planning Commission on Oct. 19 approved Related’s rezoning without the CBA. The City Council has 50 days to overturn that decision. A militant press conference and rally took place at City Hall the day of the Planning Commission vote.

Joining the thousands of community residents already involved in this struggle, the NYC Central Labor Council, the AFL-CIO and the Building Construction Trades Council, along with other major unions, have vowed to make this a city-wide fight.

For more information and to get involved in this united labor/community struggle with its mass-action orientation, visit the KARA Web site at www.ourarmory.org. □



Community rallies at St. Nicholas Church on Oct. 25.

WW PHOTO: DEE KNIGHT

Cafeteria workers win at Hunter College

By **G. Dunkel**
New York

Cafeteria workers at Hunter College in New York City won a contract with AVI Foodsystems Inc. on Oct. 23 that includes free family health benefits. Payments will be made for June, July and August, the period when AVI stopped paying because they wanted the workers to pick up the cost.

The contract was approved unanimously by the leadership committee of the workers who represent their co-workers at the negotiations. A ratification vote is scheduled for Oct. 30.

Besides free health care, the workers will get a \$500 lump sum payment this year, a 43-cents-per-hour raise next year, and a 43-cents-per-hour raise the following year. Pension payments will be made to UNITE HERE’s 401(k), rather than the company’s plan.

Student support groups; the Professional Staff Congress, American Federation of Teachers Local 2334—the union which represents the faculty and staff at Hunter; and progressive community groups organized a very powerful rally in support of the AVI workers on Oct. 5.

Based on the strength of this rally, the

PSC and the student support groups organized a boycott campaign.

Ian Mikusko of UNITE HERE said in a letter to the PSC chapter at Hunter: “The build-up to the boycott seemed to have a huge influence on the company’s eagerness to settle. When we showed them the boycott pledge sheets (with over 1,000 signatures—probably well over) several members of the AVI negotiating team got visibly rattled. ... In my opinion, the threat of an impending boycott was a huge factor in winning a good contract today.”

He ended his letter with, “It was awesome to see how much support the work-

ers had from the Hunter College and CUNY community.”

In related news, the AVI workers at Sarah Lawrence College won a card-check neutrality agreement Oct. 23.

Easton Smith, a student at Sarah Lawrence active in the movement to support the AVI workers, told Workers World: “AVI workers at Sarah Lawrence will get inspiration and a target to aim for from the settlement at Hunter. I know the Hunter AVI workers intend to concretely express their solidarity with the AVI workers at Sarah Lawrence.” He continued, “Our message has to be: If AVI doesn’t budge, boycott.” □

CANADA

Striking miners hit Wall Street

By **Gavrielle Gemma**
New York

Striking Canadian miners rallied at the New York Stock Exchange on Oct. 21. Travelling in vans for 14 hours, 30 members and staff of the United Steelworkers union came to confront Vale executives as they rang the bell at the Exchange. Vale is the second-largest mining company in the world.

The miners have been on strike for three months in Sudbury, Port Colborne and Voisey’s Bay, Canada, after Vale demanded deep wage cuts and challenged seniority provisions. Vale wants to eliminate the “nickel bonus,” a form of profit sharing the workers had under the previous owner.

The company, based in Brazil, has more than \$22 billion U.S. in cash assets and made \$13.2 billion U.S. in profits in 2008. In Ontario, Canada, alone, Vale made \$4.1 billion in profit from 2006-08. The union charges that Vale is using the global recession as an excuse to demand cuts from workers in dangerous jobs who produce all these profits. Vale executives got a 121 percent increase in pay in two years. Just six of these suits get \$33 million a year. (www.fairdealnow.ca)

The miners and the Steelworkers union are taking this fight to unions around



Strikers rally outside New York Stock Exchange.

PHOTO: OSCAR HERNANDEZ

Vale has offices/operations or transports products.

Oscar Hernandez of Bakery Workers Local 50, a Stella D’Oro worker and one of the leaders of the struggle to stop that plant in the Bronx from closing, spoke at the rally and drew the connection between all the companies that are putting profits before workers. The miners all put on Boycott Stella D’Oro buttons. Stella D’Oro products are sold in Canada as well as in the U.S.

As they leafleted the crowd that gathered around them, the miners were pleased by the sympathetic response from workers in the Wall Street area. If the strike continues, the miners will return for a major rally on Wall Street in December. Despite the coming bitterly cold Ontario winter, these miners vowed to hold out “one day more” than Vale can. □

the globe. Demonstrations took place in Buenos Aires the same day as rallies were held in New York and Canada. The union is demanding that Vale pay Brazilian miners more, rather than reducing Canadian miners’ benefits. The union’s Vale campaign is staging actions throughout Europe with other union allies, wherever

Nahr al-Bared destroyed by Lebanese Army

Palestinian, Lebanese protestors demand rebuilding

By Joyce Chediak

Some 2,000 demonstrators from all over Lebanon gathered in downtown Beirut Oct. 12 to demand that the Lebanese government rebuild the Nahr al-Bared Palestinian refugee camp destroyed by the Lebanese Army in 2007. A master plan for reconstruction was approved by the Lebanese government in 2008, but reconstruction has been postponed repeatedly.

Homeless Nahr al-Bared families wore T-shirts and caps with the names of their many different community organizations. Especially moving were the Palestinian children who carried small cardboard houses they had made.

Palestinians chanted and clapped along with their Lebanese supporters demanding a stop to the construction delays and an end to the Lebanese Army's siege of the camp. The action, called by the Monitoring Committee to Support Nahr al-Bared, was attended by all Palestinian political groups. Similar protests were held in Saida and other Lebanese cities. (Beirut Star, Oct. 13)

No regard for Palestinian rights

The U.S. government claims to search the world for human rights cases to defend. Yet it remains silent on this blatant destruction of a Palestinian community.

To get the full story, this reporter spoke to leaders of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The PFLP was appointed by the other Palestinian groups to follow the Nahr al-Bared situation.

Abu Jabad is responsible for PFLP political activities in Lebanon. A resident of Nahr al Bared, he was one of the last people to leave the camp during the three-month bombardment and siege.

"Nahr al-Bared is the most northern camp in Lebanon and the second largest," he said. "It is between Naha al Bared River and the sea—12 kilometers from the Syrian border." The camp has ten schools, a U.N. Relief and Works Agency clinic, and several small clinics.

"When the camp was created in 1949 there were 5,000 people. Before it was destroyed there were 37,400." Among them, Abu Jabad said, were Palestinians who had been living in Iraq but were forced to flee in the first Gulf War. "Palestinians



Storage container used as a school for Nahr al-Bared children.

WW PHOTO: JOYCE CHEDIAC

paid a lot when Iraq was invaded," he said. "In Nahr al-Bared they paid again" when that camp was destroyed.

Nahr al-Bared had the highest standard of living of any Palestinian camp in Lebanon. "It was the marketplace for 356 Lebanese villages north of it," Abu Jabad said. "It was the only camp like this. It had 1,500 shops." It was also the quietest camp, with excellent relations with the surrounding Lebanese community.

Why was the camp destroyed?

The camp was demolished by the Lebanese Army in a dispute with Fatah al Islam, a small non-Palestinian group which had infiltrated the camp. "Ninety percent of Fatah al Islam came from outside Lebanon, from Morocco to India," Abu Jabad said. The group was alleged to have a philosophy similar to that of al-Qaeda. At most, it had 150 to 200 members, the BBC said at the time. The group was not seen as part of or even supportive of the Palestinian cause, but had merely situated itself in a Palestinian camp.

Abu Jabad explained that "Fatah al Islam killed 17 Lebanese soldiers in Tripoli and outside the camp." The Lebanese Army response was to indiscriminately pound the entire camp with heavy artillery and air bombardments for three months, while depriving the population of food and water and forcing most of the residents to flee in any way they could.

Abu Ali Hassan, another PFLP leader, reported: "All the Palestinian parties agreed that this problem group [Fatah al Islam] was not to be dealt with from the outside." The Palestinians felt they could best resolve the situation themselves. During the siege, Hassan said, Palestinian leaders met with the Lebanese President and head of the army. But Palestinian groups were not permitted to resolve the situation in their own camp. "Palestinians were not responsible for this problem, but the people of Nahr al Bared camp paid," said Hassan.

Abu Jabad added, "Forty-seven civilians were killed and 415 injured." The camp had two parts—the old and the new camp. He said that "in the old camp, all the Palestinian homes were destroyed—5,874. In the new camp 193 homes were destroyed and 701 homes were partly destroyed."

Abu Jabad explained that the camp is still under military control. Residents who have lived there all their lives need permits to enter. People of the camp are not permitted to have contact with the Lebanese villages whose residents used to purchase goods from the camp. Camp residents have therefore lost their homes and their livelihoods too.

Living in storage containers

Today, more than half of Nahr al-Bared's residents have returned to the

camp's outskirts, mostly living in makeshift dwellings or in the ruins of their homes, as they wait for the camp to be rebuilt. Some of the camp's homeless have been forced to live in metal storage containers, putting them at risk for heat exhaustion in the summer and respiratory problems in the winter.

Another 10,000 swell the already overcrowded Beddawi camp in Tripoli. There, this reporter spoke with Imad Audeh, the PFLP leader responsible for north Lebanon, which includes the Nahr al-Bared and Beddawi camps.

Audeh explained that millions of dollars have been contributed by Arab and European governments toward rebuilding Nahr al-Bared via the refugee fund of the Lebanese government. "Where is the money?" he asked. "There's nothing on the ground yet."

Now the government is delaying construction because of the claim that the camp sits on an ancient ruin. Audeh said most Palestinians feel this is just another excuse.

"Politicians use the Nahr al-Bared situation to their own advantage," Audeh continued, "and at the end who gets hurt? The Palestinians." He pointed out that during the recent election campaign the Lebanese government repaired the homes of 200 Lebanese families who lived in the camp, while leaving Palestinian homes in ruin. Palestinians cannot vote in Lebanon.

Audeh explained that the unemployment rate at Nahr al Bared has risen from 20 to 25 percent to 70 percent. "Before millions of dollars changed hands; now the camp is closed by the military," he said.

As in Gaza and the West Bank, the Palestinians in Lebanon continue to fight for their rights. The struggle to rebuild Nahr al-Bared and to return to Palestine is far from over. Thousands of Nahr al-Bared residents have protested in front of stilled bulldozers, backed by demonstrations in Palestinian refugee camps throughout Lebanon.

And at the nearby Beddawi refugee camp, displaced families have recently taken refuge in schools. They are refusing to leave for other temporary shelter, claiming they would only be satisfied by a return to the Nahr al-Bared camp—or to their property in Palestine. □

Tijuana Dec. 4-6

Conference to strengthen bonds of solidarity

By Cheryl LaBash

Changes are shaking the world. Even with the destruction wrought by the global capitalist economic crisis, new bonds of solidarity are making improvements and enhancing the lives of millions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, these changes are uplifting women, Indigenous communities and the poorest workers previously denied access to education, health care and control over their lives. Where pro-worker changes are endangered, like in Honduras under the military coup, mass mobilizations are fighting back.

Many leaders of these movements for change will come together Dec. 4-6 at the Sixth U.S./Cuba/Venezuela/North America Labor Conference in Tijuana, Mexico, just 15 minutes from San Diego.

A special "Nothing Less than Freedom for the Cuban Five" dinner and program will greet family members of the anti-terrorist heroes unjustly imprisoned in the U.S. The Dec. 4 program will include a video of Alice Walker, noted author of "The Color Purple," speaking at a Berkeley, Calif., gallery display of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five.

Representatives from Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, El Salvador, Bolivia and the U.S., as well as activists on the front lines in Honduras and Puerto Rico, will bring updates and analyses of the situation facing workers in their respective countries. Planned discussions will focus on international relations, immigration and collective solidarity. The newest developments by Latin American labor

federations organizing themselves into Workers Uniting for a New America will be discussed.

Representatives from the member countries of ALBA—the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas—will address solutions to the urgent problems of energy and food crises, education, communications, sports and providing the necessities of life for those marginalized by colonialism and imperialist globalization.

Conference sponsors include the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange; Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas; Federación Sindical Mundial; International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five; National Network on Cuba; Venezuela Solidarity Network; International Action Center; Cuba Solidarity New York; Southwest Workers

Union, San Antonio, Texas; Convergencia de los Movimientos de los Pueblos de Las Américas; and others.

Participants are encouraged to reserve rooms right away at the conference venue, Hotel Palacio Azteca. To reserve a room call toll-free from the U.S. 1-888-901-3720, or from Mexico 01-8000266660, and ask for the "Cuba Labor Conference special rate" (\$80 for single rooms or \$114 for doubles, including a breakfast buffet).

Registration is available online at laborexchange.blogspot.com, by e-mail or postal service. Registration for the two-day conference and Friday evening dinner is \$85. For the Free the Five dinner program alone, a donation of \$30 (\$20 for residents of Mexico) is requested. For more information, e-mail laborexchange@aol.com or call 313-575-4933. □

As Washington seems ready to legitimize coup

Honduran resistance vows to keep struggling

By LeiLani Dowell

Oct. 26—After several weeks of talks brokered by the Organization of American States, democratically elected Honduran President Manuel Zelaya has withdrawn from negotiations with the illegal, right-wing coup regime of Roberto Micheletti.

In the course of the negotiations, Zelaya had conceded to several points in an agreement proposed by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, including the dropping of Zelaya's referendum to support a Constituent Assembly. The referendum had been largely supported, and even demanded, by the many people participating in the resistance to the coup.

The Micheletti regime, however, had employed a number of tactics to stall the negotiations and avoid a resolution—particularly one involving the president's reinstatement. Zelaya told reporters, "It's an insult to keep wasting time. There is not even the slightest will to fix the problem." (Reuters, Oct. 23)

In a statement Zelaya's representatives stressed: "Our delegation gives undeniable evidences of its political will to reach an agreement and solve the crisis. Micheletti is implementing dilatory maneuvers, formal statements and inadmissible proposals, which in some cases are insulting and provocative."

The right-wing golpistas (coup backers) are now intensifying their efforts to legitimize the Nov. 29 elections, even as the European Union and participating countries of the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas (ALBA) have said they will not recognize elections held under the coup government.

The U.S. government, however, appears to be supporting the effort of the golpistas. An Oct. 16 article in *Time* magazine reports: "A number of well-placed sources in Honduras and the U.S. tell *Time* that officials in the State Department and the U.S.'s OAS delegation have informed them that the Obama Administration is mulling ways to legitimize the election should talks fail to restore Zelaya in time. 'We're suddenly hearing from them that the one may no longer be a [precondition] for the other,' says a Western diplomat." A U.S. State Department official told *Time*, "The

elections are going to take place either way, and the international community needs to come to terms with that fact."

In ominous news the Honduran newspaper *El Tiempo* notes in a recent editorial that the de facto government has approved spending more than \$21 million to pay for military reservists to control the electoral process. A highly militarized electoral process would undoubtedly lead to further repression against the people of Honduras.

Several left-wing, independent candidates have said they will not participate in the electoral process without the reinstatement of President Zelaya. Such elections would only legitimize the coup d'état, according to Carlos H. Reyes, an independent candidate who met with the U.S. Delegation of Labor, Community and Clergy on Oct. 10.

Zelaya representative Mayra Mejia told the *Latin American Herald Tribune* that the concept of elections without Zelaya's reinstatement was not only unacceptable but set a dangerous precedent. "If the coup d'état can't be reversed," she explained, "no democracy in Central America and Latin America can be at ease, because [putschists] will find an ideal, simple path: stage a coup and whitewash it later with an election." (Oct. 26)

Repression, resistance increases

Meanwhile, the repression against the people of Honduras and their democratically elected president increases. At the Brazilian Embassy, where Zelaya has sought refuge since returning to Honduras on Sept. 21, the military has increased its tactics of physical and psychological torture. Huge floodlights shine into the windows at all hours of the night. This is accompanied by blaring music, horns and the sounds of screaming animals, preventing anyone inside the embassy from sleeping. Snipers continue to be trained on the building. Ruy de Lima Casaes e Silva, the Brazilian government's ambassador to the OAS, recently condemned the use of torture against those inside the embassy.

Members of Honduras' lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities marched in Tegucigalpa on Oct. 23 to denounce an increase in murders of and

assaults on LGBT people, and particularly transgender people. José Bonilla, coordinator of the *Asociación Colectivo Violeta*, reported that the Honduran police have been involved in the mistreatment of LGBT peoples, including harassment and beatings. (*La Tribuna*, Oct. 24) Nine transgender people have been killed in Honduras in the four months since the June 28 coup d'état. (*Universo Gay*, Oct. 26)

A victory was won by the resistance movement on Oct. 19 when the two main media opponents of the coup were allowed to resume broadcasting. On Sept. 28, under a decree that suspended civil liberties for the Honduran population, the military had entered the stations of *Radio Globo* and *Canal 36*, shut them down and confiscated their equipment. *Radio Globo* continued transmitting via the Internet. A decree is still in effect that allows the monitoring and control of broadcasts that "attack national security"—meaning broadcasts that are against the coup.

Resistance responds to negotiations failure

The revolutionary youth group *Los Necios* responded to the breakdown of negotiations on their blog: "The dialogue failed because it was born dead. The clear intention of the oligarchy has been to earn time in order to move closer to their aim: the elections of Nov. 29. ... The problem of legitimacy of the electoral process does not lie in the possibility of going forth with the elections. ... The true problem for the oligarchy consists of the ascendancy of the *Resistencia*, whose structuring in all of the country and whose real possibility of toppling whichever government arises from the military coup through social manifestations forces them to justify the electoral results from all fraudulent, illegal and illegitimate points of view." (www.losnecios.net)

The blog entry of Oct. 24 concludes: "The pueblo knows that it does not have until November to overcome the crisis; that after Jan. 27 [the presidential inauguration] the struggle could continue; but these dates do not worry the *Resistencia*. Transforming Honduras could take much more time and sacrifice. Before this challenge the popular determination grows

beyond all expectations."

In a six-point communiqué issued Oct. 20 to the Honduran population and the international community, the National Front of Resistance Against the Coup d'Etat in Honduras stated:

- "1. We denounce the manipulative acts and delay tactics with which the de facto regime tries to buy time and get to the electoral farce of Nov. 29 without having re-established the institutional order and without having returned to his post the legitimate President Manuel Zelaya Rosales.
 - "2. We reiterate that the Honduran people will not recognize the campaign and the results of the electoral process ... while the dictatorial regime that the oligarchy sustains through armed force continues.
 - "3. We condemn the disinformation campaign carried out by the media in service of the oligarchy through which they attempt to present the National Front of Resistance Against the Coup d'Etat as a violent organization. ...
 - "4. We denounce the economic crisis through which the de facto regime is taking us and which is provoking an increase in the levels of poverty of the population.
 - "5. We express our indignation at the continuation of the repression by the police and military bodies of the State, which is expressed in assassinations of militants of the Resistance, actions of intimidation and surrounding the marches and rallies, the illegal and immoral juridical processes which persecute and jail our sisters and brothers and, more recently, the actions of harassment and intimidation against teachers throughout the country.
 - "6. We reiterate our unbreakable will to install a democratic and popular National Constitutional Assembly with which we will refound the country and rescue it from a minority economic class that exploits the working class."
- Dowell is a leader in the revolutionary youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—and was a member of the solidarity delegation that visited Honduras Oct. 7-11.*

Honduras

Despite repression, teachers struggle against coup

By Heather Cottin

It is dangerous to be a teacher in Honduras. In an interview with members of the U.S. delegation to Honduras on Oct. 7, Berta Oliva, director of *Cofadeh*, the Committee of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees in Tegucigalpa, said that the military coup has revived the army's death squad, Battalion 3-16, the paramilitary group responsible for torture, assassination and disappearances in the 1980s. Oliva, whose spouse, professor Tomás Nativí, was disappeared in 1981, said a significant percentage of the coup's "selective assassinations" have targeted teachers who are on coup leader Roberto Micheletti's "death lists."

Cofadeh reports that Roger Abraham Vallejo Soriano, a 38-year-old teacher, was shot and killed during a protest on July 30. Mario Fidel Contreras, 50, who worked as a high school teacher and a professor at the National Pedagogical University in Tegucigalpa, died of two

gunshots to the face fired by two men on a motorcycle. Contreras was the sub-director of the night school at the *Jesús Milla Selva Institute*. The Micheletti regime murdered them, according to Oliva, "for the crime of being teachers in the Resistance Movement." Both were affiliated with the *COPEMH*, the College of Professors of Education of Honduras, which has been called a pillar of the Resistance in Honduras.

On Sept. 22, eight policewomen arrested Agustina Flores López, a 50-year-old educational management teacher. The police beat her, screaming, "You are the dogs of resistance! It's good that you should be f—ked up!" (e-mail from the Emergency Committee against the Coup in Honduras) According to *Cofadeh*, deposed President Manuel Zelaya called López "the first woman political prisoner" of the coup.

Juan Barahona, the leader of the Honduran Resistance, spoke at the funeral of Jairo Sánchez, a union leader

shot by police on Sept. 23. Barahona said that on Oct. 19 the Resistance learned of another teacher assassination, that of Eliseo Hernández Juárez, a member of the Resistance in the municipality of *Macuelizo* and candidate for vice-mayor in the Department of Santa Bárbara. (dickema24.blogspot.com)

Why are teachers in the Resistance Movement?

Dirian Beatriz Pereira, a middle school teacher and *COPEMH* member, told the Delegation of Labor, Community and Clergy to Honduras that teachers are "the spinal cord of the movement." They face an educational system which is among the most backward in Latin America and the Caribbean. (usaaid.gov) Illiteracy encompasses more than half a million people in Honduras, which is the equivalent of the entire population between 15 and 40 years old. According to the United Nations, barely 32 of every 100 students finish primary school without repeating grades.

(globalexchange.org)

Honduras continues to be the country with the lowest secondary school enrollment rate in Latin America, according to USAID. Honduras has only had public education since 1957. Many children leave school permanently to work. This was the case for their parents before them and has contributed to the intense levels of poverty for more than 80 percent of Hondurans.

There are serious inequalities between the rural and urban youth and between low and moderate income families. In many of the rural areas there are no actual schools; children attend classes under trees and lack basic educational materials such as books and paper. Only 43 percent of children enrolled in public schools complete the primary level. Some teachers have up to 80 children in one classroom. (U.S. Library of Congress, Country Studies)

Like teachers everywhere, Honduran educators want better schools for the chil-

Continued on page 11



Terrorism against Iran

What was Washington's role in the Oct. 18 bombing in Iran that killed 29 people? Among the dead were a top officer and four other senior officers of the Republican Guard who were meeting with Sunni and Shiite leaders in Sarbaz, a city in the province of Sistan and Baluchestan near Iran's southeastern border with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

An anti-government group named Jundallah, based over the Pakistan border, claimed responsibility. When Iranian officials blamed the attack on the U.S. and Britain for backing groups like Jundallah, spokespeople for these imperialist governments denied any involvement. The bulk of the imperialist media treated the Iranian claims with their usual disdain.

But a look at the record shows that Iran's accusations are perfectly reasonable.

As 2007 was ending, the U.S. Congress approved and funded a Bush administration plan to support, with logistics and money, organizations inside Iran—and those operating in border areas—that take direct action against the Iranian government. In other words, the U.S.—and one can assume the British, too—bankroll anti-Iran groups that the U.S. itself lists as “terrorists” in order to destabilize Iran.

A Seymour Hersh article in the June 8, 2008, issue of the *New Yorker* magazine cited a conversation with former CIA clandestine officer Robert Baer that made it specific: “According to Baer and to press reports, the Jundallah is among the groups in Iran that

are benefiting from U.S. support.” Other armed groups were also getting U.S. aid, and there is nothing to show that the aid has stopped under the new U.S. administration. Hersh's sources were not the only experts to have exposed U.S. contacts with such terrorist groups.

Following the Iranian election last June, the U.S. government and corporate media gave wall-to-wall support to the unsubstantiated charge that the election was fraudulent. It was another orchestrated attempt to destabilize Iran's government. Washington also made sure that Twitter didn't shut down for maintenance during the demonstrations in Tehran, as the Internet service was useful to those organizing protests. But this latest bombing is evidence that U.S. intervention doesn't stop at Twitter. It involves a constant threat of massive bombardment, joint military maneuvers with the Israeli air force, economic sanctions, continuous anti-Iranian media coverage and the funding of armed terrorist groups.

Never to be forgotten is the economic motive behind such devious and violent behavior: The imperialist drive for superprofits that would flow from control over the vast riches, especially sources of energy, in the Middle East and Central Asia. And every dollar the multibillionaire class gains abroad is used to increase their domination over the workers at home, who are forced to pay for these imperialist adventures and reap nothing but more layoffs, foreclosures and budget cuts.

That's why we say: U.S. imperialism, hands off Iran! □

Racism, Rush Limbaugh and the NFL

For anyone in U.S. capitalist society who does not see the connection between racism and mass culture, consider the recent uproar involving the white, ultra-rightist, extremely racist radio host Rush Limbaugh and his attempt to invest in the National Football League's St. Louis Rams.

In early October Limbaugh announced that he was in negotiations with Dave Checketts, who heads up a Wall Street-dominated investment group that funds the Rams, to become a part-owner. This is the same Limbaugh who in 2003 publicly demonized Donovan McNabb, the African-American quarterback with the Philadelphia Eagles, on ESPN. On a sports show, Limbaugh said that the media wanted McNabb to succeed because he is Black. This statement caused such a firestorm of controversy that ESPN was forced to terminate his contract.

This is the same Limbaugh who said that the enslavement of African peoples in the U.S. “had its merits” and that the NFL resembles a “game between the Bloods and the Crips without any weapons.” The composition of the NFL is at least 70 percent African American.

Once it was announced that the Rams were even considering making Limbaugh a part-owner, a number of African-American players immediately denounced the Rams' owners' move. The progressive sports writer, Dave Zirin, wrote an Oct. 9 column for *The Nation* entitled “Why the NFL Must Flush Rush.” In the article he quotes a number of these players. For instance, New York Giants Mathias Kiwanuka said, “I don't want anything to do with a team that he has any part of. He can do whatever he wants; it is a free country. But if it goes through, I can tell you where I am not going to play.”

New York Jets Bart Scott remarked, “I can only imagine how his players would feel. ... He could offer me whatever he wanted; I wouldn't

play for him.” McNabb stated at a press conference about Limbaugh, “If he's rewarded to buy them, congratulations to him. But I won't be in St. Louis anytime soon.” (nbc sports.msnbc.com, Oct. 8)

On Oct. 14 Checketts issued a public statement saying that Limbaugh's bid had been turned down because “it has become clear that his involvement in our group has become a complication and a distraction to our intentions; endangering our bid to keep the team in St. Louis. As such, we have decided to move forward without him and hope it will eventually lead us to a successful conclusion.” (usa-today.com)

To make it perfectly clear, Checketts did not reject Limbaugh because of his neo-fascistic views. On the contrary, most of the owners of the 32 NFL teams are not only all-white but support the most ultra-right views and are members of the Republican Party. In his article, Zirin states that most of these owners are to the right of Dick Cheney. The NFL is run like a modern-day plantation, with the Black players treated like well-paid indentured servants when it comes to the lucrative multimillion-dollar profits they make for the owners.

The real reason why Checketts and his Goldman-Sachs backers rejected Limbaugh had everything to do with the growing number of Black players who expressed such strong negative feelings about Limbaugh that it could have potentially led to a boycott of playing the Rams. And even though, unfortunately, no white NFL players reportedly showed solidarity with the Black players against Limbaugh, their outspoken protest was a positive step forward in the ongoing struggle against racism and for players' empowerment—especially with the prospects of a lockout by these greedy owners when the next collective bargaining talks begin before the start of the 2011 season. □

Grassroots migrant groups to meet in Athens

By Kathy Durkin

Athens, Greece, will be the setting Nov. 1-4 for the Second International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees. Migrants and refugees from grassroots organizations around the world will speak out on the horrific conditions facing workers who are forced to leave their homelands to work.

The IAMR is supported by a broad spectrum of migrants' rights advocates, progressive workers' groups and social movements. Their gathering will counter the government-led Global Forum on Migration and Development and the Civil Society Organizations, which are meeting the same week in Athens.

Teresa Gutierrez, an officer of the International Migrants' Alliance, a major convener of the Second IAMR, stressed, “We are coming to Greece representing the voices of millions of migrants and refugees the world over, and we will firmly argue for our rights and interests.”

While the GFMD—the state-led initiative—claims to facilitate dialogue among the countries that send and receive immigrant workers, Gutierrez explained that the richest countries dictate the agendas, themes and goals there. “They [the GFMD] impose their own self-serving concept of ‘development’ and define the modalities in ‘managing’ the flow of cross-border migration,” said Gutierrez.

The IAMR will challenge the governments' forum. It will highlight the true picture of the oppression and exploitation that underlie labor migration. At plenaries and workshops participants will debunk the notion of countries gaining economic “development” through exporting human labor. They will tell of the

horrors, struggles and tragedies of forced migration experienced by migrant workers, their families and communities.

These forums are occurring in Europe, as Gutierrez pointed out, where migrant workers, especially the millions of undocumented, face an uncertain future in an increasingly hostile environment. The ominous European Union Return Directive, which begins in 2010, will worsen conditions even more.

Passed last year by the European Parliament, this brutal, inhumane measure allows European Union member countries to imprison undocumented migrants for up to 18 months before deporting them, and then to ban them from returning for five years. Progressive forces worldwide have condemned this policy.

The IAMR gathering will include plenary sessions, workshops and street mobilizations. Major goals are to network, share experiences among migrants, refugees and their advocates—and plan actions. Workshops will take up how migrant workers are affected by the global capitalist economic crisis and by state repression, racism and discrimination. Others will discuss women migrants' issues, labor rights and social movements, political empowerment, and educational campaigns for migrants, refugees and advocates.

Conveners of the Second IAMR are the International Migrants' Alliance, Migrante International, Migrante Europe, ATIK (Confederation of Workers from Turkey in Europe), the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, the Philippine-based IBON International, and progressive Greek organizations, including the Union of Working People and Class March. □

WW journalist receives Project Censored award

By Deirdre Griswold

An article by Sara Flounders on the Palestinian people's resistance to the Israeli siege of Gaza has been recognized by Project Censored and included in its list of the year's top 25 most-censored stories.

Flounders' article, “The tunnels of Gaza: An underground economy and resistance symbol,” first appeared in the *Workers World* newspaper of Feb. 11. It brought to light what the corporate media in this country has buried or ignored.

The Web site of Project Censored explains: “Eighteen months ago, outraged when the Palestinians of Gaza voted for the leadership of Hamas in democratic elections, Israel imposed a total lockdown on the entire population of Gaza. The Palestinians, determined to continue to resist occupation, found a way to circumvent total starvation. Author Sara Flounders notes, ‘The Israeli blockade led to a new economic structure, an underground economy. The besieged Palestinians have dug more than 1,000 tunnels under the totally sealed border. Many thousands of Palestinians are now employed in digging, smuggling or transporting, and reselling essential goods.’”

Visitors to www.projectcensored.org will find the award to the *Workers World* article by following the link to “Top 25 Censored Stories – 2010.” Don't be confused—the stories listed are from 2008 and 2009. The award is given under category 11, “Private Corporations Profit from the Occupation of Palestine.”

Project Censored describes itself as a media research group that “tracks the news published in independent journals and newsletters. From these, Project Censored compiles an annual list of 25 news stories of social significance that have been overlooked, under-reported or self-censored by the country's major national news media.”

Flounders told *Workers World*, “The importance of receiving this award is that it recognizes the indomitable will of the Palestinians to survive as a people despite all obstacles put in their way.”

Flounders, in addition to being a regular contributor to *Workers World* newspaper, is co-director of the International Action Center and a leading member of *Workers World* Party. She has visited Palestine twice and witnessed the terrible conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation, especially in Gaza. □

As elections near

U.S.-backed Ethiopian regime faces food crisis

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

After months of food deficits and deepening domestic and regional political problems within the broader context of the world economic crisis, the Ethiopian government has made a request to aid agencies and foreign states for \$175 million in assistance. This Horn of Africa nation of 83 million has experienced drought for several years, along with other countries in the region such as Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Djibouti.

This crisis in Ethiopia comes at a time when the U.S.-backed government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is making preparations for upcoming 2010 elections. The government has also been involved in military operations in neighboring Somalia, which it invaded in December 2006. Ethiopian troops remained there until January of this year. Recent reports indicate that the Ethiopian military is carrying out periodic incursions into central Somalia to counter advances by Islamic resistance movements that control large areas of Somalia.

In recent months, the lack of economic resources being allocated to domestic expenditures in Ethiopia has created a grave humanitarian crisis that could threaten famine.

Ethiopia's state minister for agriculture and rural development, Mitiku Kassa, said recently that the number of people needing emergency assistance has increased to 6.2 million, from 4.9 million at the beginning of the year. The official indicated that the request included nearly 160,000 tons of food, in addition to nonfood assistance such as health and sanitation supplies and support for agricultural and livestock production.

Paul Smith-Lomas, a spokesperson for the international aid agency Oxfam, called it "the worst drought in 10 years."

Most of the aid is expected to come from the U.S., which was behind Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia. The World Bank, headquartered in Washington, announced on Oct. 24 that it is providing grants totaling \$480 million to the Ethiopian government.

Regional and global context

The current situation in Ethiopia must be viewed within the broader regional political and social dilemma facing Africa, as well as the overall world economic crisis, which has thrust hundreds of millions of people further into poverty and uncertainty.

The Ethiopian government's close relationship with successive U.S. administrations has served to place the country as a military outpost for imperialism in the Horn of Africa.

In the aftermath of Ethiopia's 2006 invasion of Somalia, the country and region were driven into a worsening humanitarian disaster. More than 4 million people have been displaced inside and outside of Somalia.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that there are 1,600 Ethiopian refugees in the breakaway

Republic of Somaliland and some 14,000 asylum seekers.

In addition to Somaliland, thousands of Ethiopians and Somalis have fled across the Red Sea to Yemen, where many are subjected to forced labor and imprisonment. A recently issued press release from the Horn of Africa League for Human Rights on Oct. 20 claims, "Hundreds of Oromos and Somalis from Ethiopia and Somalia, who fled their respective countries due to political unrest, are currently facing very harsh situations, including forced labor and extrajudicial imprisonment in Yemen."

Neighboring Djibouti, a former French colony, now has a U.S. military base that serves as the launching pad for the so-called "war on terrorism" in the Horn of Africa. The government in Djibouti has targeted the small Red Sea nation of Eritrea, accusing the country of training resistance movements throughout the region.

Djibouti, with a population of only 800,000, also hosts France's largest military base on the African continent. Djibouti is the main route to the sea for the landlocked nation of Ethiopia.

The port in Djibouti is utilized by many foreign naval vessels that travel the Gulf of Aden to purportedly fight piracy in the region. Djibouti Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssef claims that Eritrea is supporting al-Shabaab, one of the Islamic resistance movements fighting the U.S.-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) based in Mogadishu, Somalia. The U.S. government alleges that al-Shabaab and the Hizbul Islam organizations fighting the TFG are affiliated with al-Qaeda.

Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki denied that his government was supporting resistance groups in Somalia and Ethiopia. Afwerki charged that the internal problems in Somalia derive from the interference of neighboring Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya, all of which are heavily backed by the U.S.

According to Reuters, "The U.N. Security Council, the African Union and Washington have all warned Asmara [Eritrea's capital] against destabilizing Somalia, and a move to impose sanctions has gathered speed, with Britain joining a chorus of states willing to punish Eritrea." (Reuters, Oct. 25)

Long-term solutions needed

While the U.S. government has pledged to provide the overwhelming majority of assistance to Ethiopia in the current period, aid organizations have begun to question the policy of responding to crisis situations without addressing the underlying causes of food deficits and famine.

Oxfam International Aid Director, Penny Lawrence, stated in a recent report, "We cannot make the rains come, but there is much more that we can do to break the cycle of drought-driven disaster in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Food aid offers temporary relief and has kept people alive in countless situations, but does not tackle the underlying causes that continue to make people vulnerable to disaster year after year." (Band Aids and Beyond, Oct. 22)

ActionAid also issued a report on crisis driven humanitarian assistance in Africa. The report, entitled "Who's Really Fighting Hunger," questioned why over one billion people in the world today are hungry.

"Almost a third of the world's children

are growing up malnourished. This is perhaps one of the most shameful achievements of recent history, since there is no good reason for anyone to go hungry in today's world," said the report.

The report said that "hunger begins with inequality—between men and women, and between rich and poor. It grows because of perverse policies that treat food purely as a commodity, not a right. It is because of these policies that most developing countries no longer grow enough to feed themselves, and that their farmers are among the hungriest and poorest people in the world. Meanwhile, the rich world battles obesity."

An examination of the nature of agricultural production and food distribution in developing countries gives a clearer picture of why these problems recur on a periodic basis.

As a result of the legacy of colonialism and neocolonialism, agricultural production in many African countries is geared towards export to Western industrialized states. The export of crops and raw materials to the industrialized and imperialist nations is the major source of foreign exchange, or what is known as "hard currency."

With a decline in commodity prices and fluctuations in demand for exports, the developing states are dependent upon the economic conditions in the imperialist states and the terms of trade set by international organizations dominated by the West. The economic crisis in the Western industrialized states has had a severe impact on developing countries, especially because of a decline in foreign exchange earnings as well as the overall gross domestic product.

Subsistence farming is also difficult for independent producers, due to the lack of credit to acquire seeds, livestock and implements. When governments are influenced by the economic interests and foreign policy imperatives of the imperialist states, it is almost impossible for them to focus on the concrete needs of their own people, particularly the workers and farmers.

Ethiopian Revolution of 1974

Famine struck large sections of Ethiopia during 1973-74. In February 1974, mass unrest developed in the capital of Addis Ababa and spread throughout the country. Workers and students engaged in general strikes and rebellions that eventually led to the overthrow of the monarchy of

Haile Selassie. The monarchy, which had been dominant in Ethiopia for centuries, was swept away in a matter of months.

The country instituted massive and unprecedented land reform policies that empowered workers and farmers in the rural areas. The mass struggles of the 1970s were led by various leftist parties and mass organizations. However, there was no unified revolutionary front that could seize power in its own name. The socialist-oriented reforms were instituted by a provisional military council, which took control.

When the Workers Party of Ethiopia was formed in the mid-1980s, the country was engulfed with internal and regional conflicts, including an imperialist-sponsored invasion by Somalia. Changing policies within the Soviet Union—which, along with Cuba, had provided assistance to the Ethiopian Revolution—hampered the ability of the country to maintain a foreign policy independent of the U.S.

Drought and famine struck again in 1984-85 and was utilized for propaganda purposes by the U.S. and British imperialists. The Soviet Union worked with the Ethiopian government at the time to relocate thousands of people from drought-affected areas to other regions of the country. Nonetheless, by the beginning of the 1990s, the Soviet Union was in decline and the Workers Party government collapsed in 1991.

Since the early 1990s, the Ethiopian government of Meles Zenawi has been closely allied with the U.S. and Western imperialism. The federal government presides over what Alemayehu G. Mariam described in a recent article as "an extensive security and media network entirely in its own interests. Ethiopia's 2010 elections appear likely to be far from 'free and fair.'" (Pambazuka News, Oct. 22)

The experience of the last two decades in Ethiopia illustrates the failure of capitalist agricultural policies. They have not empowered the workers and farmers but instead have made the country even more dependent on assistance from U.S. imperialism.

What is needed is a break with U.S. imperialist-controlled domestic and foreign policy and the creation of a government that is committed to the interests of the workers and farmers of Ethiopia and the development of fraternal relations with the peoples throughout the Horn of Africa region. □

Honduran teachers struggle against coup

Continued from page 9

separate them from the students, and militarize the schools, placing soldiers inside of elementary, middle and high schools all over the country in preparation for the sham elections scheduled for Nov. 29. COPEMH has condemned the shutting of the schools as illegal.

The Micheletti dictatorship has cut back on the already paltry national support for education in Honduras and has deliberately stopped paying teachers since the coup began on June 28, though other public employees have received wages. In response, and sometimes joined by their students in the streets, teachers have been on strike three days each week.

The Micheletti dictatorship has indicated its intention to end school one month early, on Oct. 30, in order to remove the teachers from their centers of activity,

separate them from the students, and militarize the schools, placing soldiers inside of elementary, middle and high schools all over the country in preparation for the sham elections scheduled for Nov. 29. COPEMH has condemned the shutting of the schools as illegal.

In Honduras, teachers have been organizing for 30 years. They look to countries in ALBA—the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas—such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Cuba, which are dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth and to building excellent educational systems. That is why Honduran teachers are in the Resistance.

The writer was a member of the Delegation of Labor, Community and Clergy to Honduras, which visited the country Oct. 7-11.

Abayomi Azikiwe's article, "Julius Nyerere: Pioneer in the liberation of Africa/Reviewing the Tanzanian experience 10 years since the passing of Mwalimu," can be read online at www.workers.org.

100.000 marchan en Puerto Rico Paro laboral nacional en protesta de despidos masivos

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Las masas populares en Puerto Rico enviaron un fuerte mensaje a la administración pro-estadidad del Gobernador Luis Fortuño y su aliados capitalistas, cuando más de 100.000 personas salieron a las calles el 15 de octubre en San Juan y Hato Rey para protestar la actual política neoliberal del gobierno, incluyendo el despido de más de 20.000 personas en el sector público.

A pesar de la fuerte presencia policial, de la asistencia de la Guardia Nacional y de las amenazas del jefe de la policía de invocar el Acta Patriótica en contra de los/as manifestantes, la gente llegó desde varias partes de la ciudad a congregarse en la Plaza comercial Las Américas, la cual fue cerrada por miedo a la manifestación. El jefe de la policía es también un agente de la FBI.

Durante la marcha, un contingente de jóvenes bloqueó la intersección de la Avenida Las Américas con la Roosevelt por cinco largas horas.

Los/as organizadores/as caracterizaron El Paro Nacional como un éxito total. El cierre del centro comercial más grande de la región y la virtual parálisis del centro financiero de la nación, una sección de una milla de largo en la Avenida Ponce de León conocida como la Milla de Oro, que es sede de los principales bancos y firmas hipotecarias y financieras, simbolizó el mensaje del Paro: Paralizar a los que crearon la crisis económica. Uno de los lemas del Paro era "Que la crisis la paguen los ricos".

Un artículo de Univisión del 15 de octubre decía, "Según los economistas, el paro nacional causó pérdidas económicas de más de \$30 millones".

Antecedentes del Paro

La crisis económica mundial ha afectado a Puerto Rico severamente. Los despidos anunciados son un golpe más a las ya insostenibles condiciones de la mayoría de los/as puertorriqueños/as, quienes ya sufren de un 16 por ciento de desempleo, cifra oficial. Los nuevos impuestos sobre las ventas, junto al aumento del costo de los servicios básicos como el agua, la electricidad, teléfono, salud y transportación, más el incremento en los impuestos sobre la propiedad, han sido un peso que ya no pueden soportar.

El gobierno ha firmado dos leyes que protegen al capital a costa de la vida de millones de puertorriqueños/as. La ley Núm. 7, conocida como "Ley Especial Declarando Estado de Emergencia Fiscal y Estableciendo Plan Integral de Estabilización Fiscal para Salvar el Crédito de Puerto Rico", fue aprobada en marzo de este año. Esta ley promovió los despidos, y la prioridad número uno del Paro era revocarla. La ley Núm. 29 es la "Ley de Alianzas Público-Privadas (LAPP)", la



FOTOS: INDYMEDIA.PR.ORG

Bandera llevada por jóvenes puertorriqueños/as en la protesta del 15 de octubre que dice 'No a la privatización de las mentes del futuro'.

cual busca privatizar todo lo que no fue privatizado por la administración pro-estadidad de Pedro Roselló a finales de la década de los noventa.

Entrevista con líder del Paro Nacional, Luis Pedraza

Luis Pedraza Leduc, líder del Programa de Solidaridad del militante sindicato UTIER (PROSOL-UTIER) (sindicato de trabajadores/as de la electricidad y la industria hidroeléctrica), y vocero de la Coordinadora Sindical (CS) y el Frente Amplio de Solidaridad y Lucha (FadSyL), una de las dos organizaciones detrás del Paro, habló con Workers World/Mundo Obrero.

MO: ¿Cómo surgió el Paro?

LPL: Precipitado para hacerle presión [al gobierno] el 15 de octubre, acelerado porque se despiden 20.000 trabajadores/as el 25 de septiembre. La respuesta de unos sectores sindicales es convertir una actividad que se estaba proyectando como una protesta ante una convención de inversionistas en el Centro de Convenciones (CdC) el 15 de octubre en un Paro Nacional. Esa iniciativa comenzó a tener forma y a respaldarse por todos los sectores sindicales y sociales en P.R.

Uno de los principales logros fue que esa convención se pospuso; los inversionistas supieron lo del paro frente al CdC, cerca de 250 inversionistas a nivel mundial, representando diferentes compañías.

En P.R. en a finales de marzo se aprobó una ley para promover la privatización a través de empresas público-privadas y se ha contratado una compañía multinacional de consultores con base en Londres que representan clientes de cerca de 26 países. Está a cargo de promover a P.R. como un destino para los inversionistas.

MO: ¿Quién inició el paro?

LPL: En P.R. tenemos dos grupos que han estado manejando el tema sindical y político en torno a toda esta política neoliberal. Uno es el FAdSyL y la Coordinadora Sindical el cual yo represento y el otro es la Coalición Todo Puerto Rico con

Puerto Rico (TPRconPR) y tres sectores de uniones que coordinan bajo el nombre de Coalición Sindical. Ambos grupos coincidimos en hacer la actividad el 15. El FAdSyL y la CS acordamos que íbamos a hacer una actividad frente a Plaza Las Américas con el objetivo de cerrarla, partiendo desde la Milla de Oro y llegando a PLA como símbolo de los inversionistas y del sector financiero y principal promotor del consumo comercial en P.R.; y en ese sentido cuando se suspendió la convención, todos decidimos que PLA debía ser el final de la marcha y la movilización en protesta por esta política.

La Coalición TPRconPR surgió para una actividad del 5 de junio; se hace una marcha en protesta a la Ley 7 a la APP. Se hace una Asamblea del Pueblo en esa actividad y se aprueba el manifiesto donde se incluyen varios puntos por los que se debe luchar, que es la derogación de la Ley 7, la APP, de la ley de permisos, en defensa del ambiente.

La Coalición Sindical se compone de los grupos de la AFL-CIO (AFSCME, OPU), Change to Win (UGT, Sindicato Puertorriqueño de Trabajadores que están afiliados a la SEIU, y la Unión de Tronquistas y la Gastronómica) y de la Central Puertorriqueña de Trabajadores.

El FAdSyL surge el 12 de enero. La CS UTIER, Hermandad de Empleados de la UPR, Federación de Maestros, somos 18 uniones. [Ver coordinadorasindical.org]. El 12 de enero hicimos un llamado para constituirnos en un Frente Amplio con carácter permanente. Nosotros estamos tratando de superar la experiencia en P.R., que es que coyunturalmente nos unimos y luego que pasa un tiempo y se logren los objetivos o no, nos disolvemos. Nosotros estamos tratando de que haya un trabajo permanente porque esta lucha reconocemos que va a durar mucho tiempo y enfatizamos la creación de unos consejos regionales.

Ahora tenemos cerca de 10 consejos regionales constituidos que son grupos que aglutinan a los sindicatos, las iglesias, cooperativas regionalmente y que tienen autonomía de discutir los problemas y proponer actividades.

MO: ¿Cuál será el próximo paso?

LPL: Estamos planteando que ante la política pública del estado, la política económica del gobierno, la huelga general del pueblo es necesaria y es inevitable como forma de enfrentar la política del gobierno. Esto no va a ser hacer protestas y protestas y cabildo para hacer derogar

una ley que ellos ya aprobaron y que han sostenido de que no la van a eliminar porque esto es un proyecto que se inicia en al 1988 en P.R. con una propuesta de los principales grupos privados y la Cámara de Comercio... para privatizar toda la cosa pública en P.R., reducir el gobierno a una mínima expresión utilizando el sector privado y los municipios y en la desregulación del mercado.

Esos tres puntos que se han estado planteando desde el 88 en estos momentos en una forma acelerada y decidida el gobierno se lanza a hacerlo. Entonces tenemos que darnos cuenta de que hay poco espacio para dialogar.

Por lo tanto tenemos que reconocer que la organización del pueblo mediante una asamblea por sectores, constituyendo los consejos regionales para impulsar esta asamblea y que la gente vaya aprobando votos de huelga en forma consciente al posible desarrollo de una huelga general en P.R. Esto implicaría no un acto que se decreta para un día en particular, sino un proceso de lucha que confronta en forma efectiva la política del gobierno contra las fuerzas del pueblo organizada.

La cosa sigue creciendo porque aquí hay una reforma gubernamental que anuncia la eliminación de 40 agencias, de 134 agencias que tiene el gobierno. Esperan eliminar 40 de aquí a diciembre, eso lo ha dicho el gobernador. Entonces nosotros planteamos que vienen más despidos, ellos dicen que no pero es inevitable

MO: ¿Cuál es el nivel de la consciencia política de las masas?

LPL: Esta coyuntura afecta directamente el bolsillo de la gente y nosotros tenemos que aprovechar el momento, reconocer la oportunidad que tenemos para crearle conciencia a la gente de que el problema no es solamente del bolsillo sino que hay una propuesta del sistema donde descarta el estado benefactor, descarta el sistema de ofrecer servicios por parte del gobierno y plantea que la gente no es necesaria, que aquí lo importante es acumular riquezas y esa fórmula keynesiana que requería que la gente tuviera ingresos para que la economía se moviera, no es la propuesta.

¿Cómo se explica eso? Cómo montamos un modelo de educación popular que le permita a la gente entonces que de la defensa del empleo y de detener los despidos, la gente pase a darse cuenta de que necesitamos un sistema económico distinto, que necesitamos rescatar la demanda de justicia social, reconociendo que este sistema no nos los va a ofrecer.

Yo creo que ese punto es la gran contribución que tenemos que hacer en esta jornada de lucha para que el nivel de lucha y de conciencia de la gente trascienda.

Fortuño no es el problema. Fortuño es el que representa este sistema que es el verdadero problema.

MO: ¿Cómo podemos ayudar desde los Estados Unidos?

LPL: Internacionalizar la lucha, dar a conocer y crear lazos. Porque la unidad de los trabajadores y los diferentes sectores es importante; y dar a conocer lo que está ocurriendo para crear entonces este proceso unitario. Eso yo creo que sería lo principal. Son lugares y experiencias diferentes y nos podemos ayudar y aprender todos de las experiencias que hemos vivido. □

CONFERENCIA NACIONAL
NOV. 14-15 En el Auditorio
127 este de la calle 22 en Manhattan
EL PARTIDO DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL MUNDO
1959-2009 50 Años De Lucha

Para obtener más información vaya a (workersworld.net) 212 627-2994