

# Egypt in revolt

## Court verdicts ignite mass outrage

By Sara Flounders

June 4 — An Egyptian court's verdicts that minimize the crimes of former dictator Hosni Mubarak and freed two of his sons and six other top officials have reawakened the Egyptian masses. The efforts of the ruling military council to protect their past collaborators from prosecution have outraged millions of Egyptians.

Tens of thousands took to the streets after the announced verdicts. The outpouring in Cairo's Tahrir Square on June 2 rivaled in size the massive demonstrations of January 2011, when the revolutionary uprising began. It was these massive protests and strikes that forced Mubarak to step down almost 16 months ago.

Beyond the tens of thousands who descended on Tahrir Square within hours of the verdict, many thousands also came out in Alexandria, Suez, Mansour, Port Said, Aswan and other Egyptian cities.

Leading activists called for more protests this week, to culminate in a million-strong demonstration on Friday, June 8.

Western observers, including media outlets and human rights organizations like Amnesty International, had long expected the verdict. They initially described it in glowing terms as the first time in the history of the Arab world that a head of state had been tried, convicted and given what they termed a harsh sentence by his own people.

But the Egyptian people were not fooled by the praise. The consensus and unity generated by the sentences brought together all the strands of the revolutionary groups. They have realized that their very survival is now at stake.

Chants of "Illegitimate!" and "Down with military rule!" reflected the masses' rejection of the court's verdicts and of the ruling military council itself, called the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. The SCAF has ruled Egypt since a mass revolutionary upsurge forced out Mubarak. This military council has kept in place all the institutions of the hated Mubarak dictatorship.

The SCAF took over the reins of power in February of last year, promising a transition to democracy through a long and complicated preparation for a three-stage election process. But it has become increasingly clear to the Egyptian workers and oppressed masses that the rule of the SCAF was strictly an effort to buy time while holding in place the same

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## Transwoman CeCe McDonald sentenced Leslie Feinberg jailed in protest

By Kris Hamel

June 5 — As Pride 2012 is being celebrated this June, bigotry and oppression against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals and communities — along with virulent racism — are alive and well across the United States.

A year ago today, Chrisaun "CeCe" McDonald defended herself and survived a vicious anti-transgender, racist attack that left her injured and a swastika-tattooed racist dead. This June 4 McDonald was sentenced in Minneapolis to 41 months in prison by Judge Daniel Moreno.

McDonald's supporters, as they have throughout her ordeal, stayed inside and outside the courtroom during her sentencing. One supporter, internationally renowned author and LGBTQ leader Leslie Feinberg — who is also a managing editor of this newspaper — was arrested at the "noise" protest at the jail housing McDonald in the evening following the sentencing.

Feinberg, a transgender lesbian, spent the night in the Hennepin County "Public Safety Facility." As of today, Feinberg remains jailed and faces charges of property damage, according to Katie Burgess and Billy Navarro Jr., of the CeCe McDonald Support Committee in Minneapolis.

McDonald, 24, is an African-American transgender woman who was attacked by older, racist white bigots out-



CeCe McDonald

side a bar as she and some friends — all of them youths and queer or allied — walked to a store late in the evening. The bigots hurled racist, sexist and anti-trans epithets and taunts at the youths. McDonald had a glass smashed in her face, puncturing her cheek and salivary gland.

This May 11, McDonald's attacker, Molly Shannon Flaherty, 41, was finally charged with second-degree assault with a deadly weapon and third-degree assault causing substantial bodily harm, both felonies.

McDonald was the only one arrested after she was attacked. She was charged with two counts of felony second-degree murder. On May 2, the third day of her trial, she accepted the prosecution's plea agreement to a reduced charge of second degree manslaughter.

Every day across the U.S. thousands of oppressed people are forced to accept reduced time in prison for crimes they did not commit rather than risk a racist, sexist and/or anti-LGBTQ jury that could sentence them to decades of incarceration.

### Held in men's prison, solitary confinement

Although McDonald has been under state supervision for more than a year, the judge determined that she will only receive credit for 275 days served, excluding the time

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WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

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**MUMIA ABU-JAMAL:**

# Say 'NO' to NATO

*Mumia Abu-Jamal's speech played at the anti-NATO protests in Chicago on May 20.*

In Chicago, long known as "the Windy City," people are witnessing mega gales of wind as NATO comes to town.

NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, will doubtless blather about world peace and international security, but, in truth, it's all wind.

They speak peace, but they are a weapon of war for the imperialist nations, a weapon against the Arab, African and Asian world, a tool of the world's bankers.

They are a relic of the Cold War, and were originally designed to contain and constrain the old Soviet Union. But now, with the Soviet Union but a mere memory, they are an instrument of the West to interfere in what were once called Third World nations — like Libya.

In Libya, because of their antipathy for the remnants of Arab socialism, they launched over 100,000 airstrikes against the Jamahiriya [state of the masses] government, and tens of thousands of sorties. Thousands of Libyans were bombed and killed, all in an effort to drive out the government of Moammar Gadhafi — long seen as a thorn in the side of the West.

NATO is a tool of the bankers, the oil companies and the financiers who have long fancied the fabulous natural resources of Libya — such as oil and water.

They use the rhetoric of humanitarianism, but it's the same old greed and colonialism that fueled hundreds of years of exploitation and puppetism that has ever been at the bottom of their military intervention in the East.

For few governments have been more repressive than the Saudis, where — to this day! — it is a crime for a woman to drive a car. Where — even according to U.S. State Dept. reports — countless Saudis are subjected to government torture and brutality on the whim of princes. But the Saudi state is an ally of the oil companies; hence they are untouchable.

I say to the Peoples Summit "Say 'No!' to NATO!" Let us all move beyond this relic of the distant past, and stop supporting it as a proxy for corporate-funded wars!

Years ago, France, proud of its national independence and sovereignty, detached itself from NATO military command. This was in 1966. It took a rightist, conservative French President Nicolas Sarkozy to later reattach France to NATO adventures in Africa.

But, just days ago, the French people fired "Sarko" from power, and elected a leftist government.

It's time we-the People pulled the plug from NATO. Its time has passed.

The Cold War is long over.

There is no real need for such a dangerous instrument, and the temptation for any politician to employ NATO for brief electoral gains, to make mischief for votes, is simply

too great. Sarkozy, a cunning politician, tried to use NATO strikes against Libya to shore up his nationalist cred at home. That same tactic worked for George W. Bush (twice!)

It did not work for Monsieur le Ancient President Nicolas Sarkozy.

It's time for this tool to be returned to the tool box — and for that box to be locked — forever. So "Say 'No!' to NATO!"

Just as the United Nations was used by the so-called U.N. Security Council to wage an unjust and illegal war against Iraq for over a decade, and to wreak bloody, unholy havoc in Afghanistan, NATO has been an instrument of global capital to punish and provoke the bête noir of the month.

How many tens of thousands of men, women and children have perished in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Libya, in Somalia since the temper tantrum spawned by 9/11? Over a million?

A million people, dead, because of a lie (weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, etc.). Because the U.S. wanted to appear "strong"?

The sad truth is that the U.N. failed the international community. The U.N. failed the peoples of the world. And unlike the U.N., NATO was formed ideally, to keep peace, not to wage war.

What we are witnessing isn't the "international law" — but International Lawlessness! Wars which shatter nations, in pursuit of phantoms, on pretexts, on theories, on power — on lies.

That feature of international relations has to be tossed into the trash can of history — forever! Let us all resolve, here at the Peoples Summit, 2012, that NATO does not represent us, nor the vast majority of the People of this Earth. NATO is an impediment to peace, and an instrument of war.

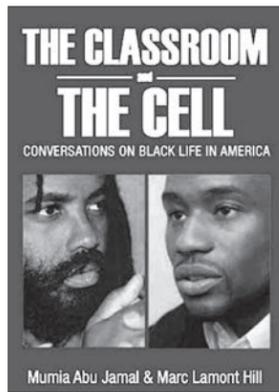
Its time has passé.

So just "Say 'No!' to NATO!"

"We are the 99%!"

"Somos el noventa-y-nueve por ciento!"

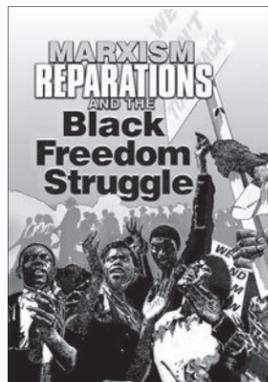
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## At June 12 court hearing

# Support the Tinley Park Five

By Monica Moorehead

The Tinley Park Five — Jason W. Sutherland, Cody L. Sutherland, Dylan J. Sutherland, Alex R. Stuck and John S. Tucker — are currently imprisoned in Cook County Jail in Chicago. The Five, white anti-racist anarchists, were arrested on May 19 for allegedly physically breaking up an “economic summit” by members of the Illinois European Heritage Association at a restaurant in Tinley Park, a Chicago suburb. The Five are facing major felony charges, including “mob action, criminal damage to property and aggravated battery.”

Two of the IEHA members were also arrested at the scene. One was charged with Internet child pornography. The other was charged with unlawful possession of a semiautomatic weapon in his car, which was parked near the restaurant. Bail for the latter charge is \$25,000. The bonds for the Five, who reportedly possessed no guns, are \$175,000, \$200,000 and \$250,000!

The IEHA is part of a worldwide network of white supremacist neofascists known as “Pioneer Little Europe,” which is connected with Storm Front. This net-

work promotes the outright extermination of people of color and Jewish people. The “summit” was one in a series called throughout the Midwest over the past several years. White supremacists have ratcheted up their racist demagogic organizing, especially in the economically hard-hit Midwest region.

The Five are being defended by the Hoosiers Anti-Racist Movement, based in Indiana. HARM has been monitoring and exposing the activities of the neofascists for many years. Thirteen other anti-racist activists allegedly took part in the breakup of the IEHA meeting and are still being pursued by the police.

When this WW reporter asked Chandra Vanvliet from HARM about the well-being of the Five, she explained, “They have a wonderful legal team representing them. They are in great spirits. They’re looking forward to their day in court and are humbled by the shows of solidarity that they’ve received, especially from people they’ve never met. They’re getting along fine without any problems whatsoever from fellow inmates and guards. Their support network has been doing all they can to make sure that they’re as comfortable as possible and have reading

materials to keep their minds occupied.”

### June 12: Pack the courtroom

The Five are scheduled to have an initial court hearing on June 12 at 9 a.m. at the Bridgeview Courthouse, which is located at 10220 S. 76th Ave. in Bridgeview, Ill.

HARM is urging supporters to pack the courtroom. Vanvliet’s message to the progressive movement, which she conveyed to WW, is the following: “At the arraignment, the mainstream media decided to take pictures and hound a few personal friends of the defendants after they made it clear they weren’t interested in talking to the press. These unaffiliated friends have since received death threats because of the recklessness of the Chicago Tribune, despite the fact that they were clearly warned about the potential consequences of releasing identities of family and friends when a member of HARM gave an interview to Stacy St Clair.”

Vanvliet went on to say: “What we’re trying to do, is to gather a large enough group of supporters at the courthouse and in the courtroom that the white supremacists will be unable to ascertain who actually has ties to the Tinley Park Five and who is simply there to support.

We wish to stress that this show of support still carries some degree of risk, but we encourage those that might come out to support not to allow themselves to be intimidated by white supremacy.

“We’re hearing stories about other groups all over the country raising funds to help their families and legal defense by having benefit shows and bake sales. The Tinley Park Five and their friends and families are so moved by the support they’ve received, especially from the anarchist community. I can’t tell you how much any show of solidarity means to both them and us.”

WW wrote in a recent editorial called, “Tinley Park Five: Fight Fascism,” which is posted on HARM’s website: “What the Tinley Park 5 did on May 19 was to carry out a preemptive strike to help expose the real danger that extremist groups pose to the movement and the masses here and worldwide. The Five heroically showed that these groups have to be crushed sooner than later. Free the Tinley Park 5!” Go to [indianaantifa.wordpress.com](http://indianaantifa.wordpress.com) for information on the case. To send letters of support to the Tinley Park Five along with reading materials, go to [tinyurl.com/88a5rkw](http://tinyurl.com/88a5rkw). □

## Court hearing for Angola 3

# Supporters rally for Albert Woodfox

By Anne Pruden and Gloria Rubac  
Baton Rouge, La.

Angola 3 supporters filled the federal courtroom in Baton Rouge, La., from May 29 through May 31 for Albert Woodfox’s evidentiary hearing on racial discrimination in the selection of the grand jury foreperson in West Feliciana Parish, where in 1993 Woodfox was reindicted for the 1972 murder of a prison guard.

Woodfox sat at the defense table with his team of attorneys, his feet shackled and with one hand chained to his waist with two prison guards sitting just a few feet behind him, yet several times he managed to acknowledge the family, friends and supporters who had taken off from work and school to be in the courtroom.

The first day of the hearing, a bus of supporters and activists from New Orleans joined others from all around Louisiana, as well as from New York City; Houston; Oakland, Calif.; Atlanta; and Memphis, Tenn. International supporters were there from Britain, Scotland and Ireland.

Sitting in the courtroom each day were Robert King, the only freed member of the Angola 3; Woodfox’s brother, Michael Mable; Black Panther historian Billy X Jennings, publisher of “It’s about Time BPP”; activist and playwright Parnell Herbert, whose play, “The Angola 3,” was recently produced in New Orleans; Gordon Roddick from Reprieve in Britain; Southern University law professor Angela A. Allen-Bell; Everette Harvey Thompson, Amnesty International’s Southern regional director in Atlanta; and Mwalimu Johnson, with the Capital Post-Communication Project in New Orleans.

Woodfox’s case began 40 years ago, deep in rural southern Louisiana, when he and two other young Black men, Herman Wallace and Robert King, were silenced for exposing racial segregation, systematic corruption and horrific abuse in the biggest prison in the U.S. at that time, an

18,000-acre, former slave plantation called Angola.

Protests such as hunger strikes and work stoppages were organized by prisoners, as were political education classes. A chapter of the Black Panther Party was formed. Prisoners called for investigations to uncover numerous unconstitutional and inhumane practices.

After a prison guard was killed in a 1972 rebellion, officials framed the three activists and threw them into solitary confinement. King was released from prison in 2001, but Woodfox and Wallace remain in solitary confinement to this day and are continuing to fight their convictions.

### Solitary confinement and racism

The matter heard in court was the issue of racial discrimination in the selection of the grand jury foreperson in 1993, when Woodfox was reindicted for the guard’s murder, after having had his conviction tossed out in 1992.

The foreperson of the grand jury that indicted Woodfox for his 1998 retrial was white. Woodfox’s lawyers presented expert testimony on the consistent underrepresentation of African Americans as grand jury forepersons compared to their numbers in the general population and pool of eligible voters.

The hearings were presided over by Judge James A. Brady, the same judge who overturned Woodfox’s conviction the second time in 2008. Brady is expected to rule before the end of 2012.

April 17 was the 40th anniversary of the Angola 3 being held in solitary confinement — held every day for 40 years in a six-by-nine-foot cell! These cruel and



PHOTO: BILLY X. JENNINGS/IT'S ABOUT TIME ARCHIVES

Banner shows Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox and Robert King; targeted, framed, isolated.

debilitating conditions are internationally considered torture. A delegation of Angola 3 supporters joined Amnesty International at a press conference at the Louisiana state Capitol on April 17. They then submitted to Gov. Bobby Jindal’s office more than 67,000 petition signatures from people in 125 countries urging that Woodfox and Wallace be removed from solitary confinement. Jindal refused to meet with the delegation.

In a statement, Thompson argued that “the 40-year isolated incarceration of these two men is scandalous. There is no legitimate penal purpose for keeping these men in solitary. Louisiana authorities must end this inhumanity.”

Thirty-three people stood in a line on

the Capitol steps, each holding a large letter to form the message: “40 YEARS OF SOLITARY” and “40 YEARS OF TORTURE!”

The story of the Angola 3 has been spotlighted by many media outlets. There are two new art exhibits focusing on the Angola 3: “The House That Herman Built” and “The Deeper They Bury Me, The Louder My Voice Becomes.” A play — “The Angola 3” — written by New Orleans native Parnell Herbert, has been produced in New Orleans and Houston.

Information on the case of the Angola 3 can be found on Facebook as well as at [Angola3Action.org](http://Angola3Action.org); [Angola3.org](http://Angola3.org) and [Angola3News.blogspot.com](http://Angola3News.blogspot.com). □

## ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

### CBTU stands with Trayvon Martin's parents

The opening session of the 41st convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists in St. Louis gave a standing ovation May 24 to the parents of Trayvon Martin, the 17-year-old African American who was gunned down vigilante style in Sanford, Fla., on Feb. 26. Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin came to "thank Black workers" and urge them to continue supporting the fight for justice for their son. Fulton, who was a member of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union in Florida, told the convention, "I know how important unions are. So keep it going." After talking about the pain of her son's death and media attempts to "blame the victim," she added, "It's been a struggle keeping up the fight. But we believe justice will be done." Martin, a native of East St. Louis, said racial profiling distressed him: "Sometimes I think the murders of our children don't matter to America." Fulton and Martin asked the CBTU to support the Justice for Trayvon Foundation ([justicetm.org](http://justicetm.org)). ([afl-cio.org](http://afl-cio.org), May 25)

### Piedmont workers win first contract

It took the 3,500 fleet and passenger service agents at Piedmont Airlines 15 months to negotiate real improvements in pay and working conditions — and defeat a demand for a 33 percent increase in workers' health care costs — in their first union contract. But the improvements in pay, job security and health care benefits announced May 31 are well worth the effort. For the first time, the agents will have a voice on the job through a grievance and arbitration system. There will also be a lump sum signing bonus, a new pay system with guaranteed 4 percent raises, and a longevity bonus each year for good attendance. ([cwa-union.org](http://cwa-union.org), May 31)

### Lockheed Martin & Caterpillar strikes continue

Striking members of International Association of Machinists Local 776 traveled all the way from Fort Worth, Texas, to the Lockheed Martin headquarters in Bethesda, Md., to protest the company's demand to reduce health care benefits and gain subcontracting rights. But the deal breaker that compelled the workers to hit the bricks was the provision to drop defined-benefit pensions for newly hired workers. As one picket sign read, "Lockheed CEO gets pension, why not workers?" ([goiamtexas.org](http://goiamtexas.org), June 1) Some 3,800 Local 776 members, including those in southern Maryland and California, have been on strike since April 23. Washington, D.C., area unions swelled the picket line on May 25 in solidarity with IAM's struggle. (Union City, Metro Washington AFL-CIO Council online newsletter, May 25)

Meanwhile, nearly 800 striking members of Machinists Local 851 in Joliet, Ill., stood firm when they voted overwhelmingly the week of May 28 to again reject a concession-packed contract from heavy-equipment maker Caterpillar. While the company made \$4.9 billion in profits last year and \$1.5 billion in the first quarter of this year, it is demanding that workers accept frozen wages, doubled health care premiums and cuts in key pension and seniority rights. The workers speculate that Caterpillar wants such outrageous cuts to pay for increased compensation for its CEO, whose salary jumped 60 percent in 2011 to nearly \$17 million. "The practice of raising executive compensation to obscene levels while making it harder for working families to pay for basic medical expenses is impossible to justify at a company as successful as Caterpillar," said IAM President Tom Buffenbarger at a recent rally for Local 851. ([goiam.org](http://goiam.org), May 31)

### Union wins contract after 10-month Sotheby's lockout

It took a hard-fought campaign, which included many Occupy Wall Street actions both inside and outside of Sotheby's, the international art auction house, to help 40 members of Teamsters Local 814 end a 10-month lockout in New York City. Thanks to OWS muscle, Sotheby's blinked in April when it dumped its anti-union law firm, Jackson Lewis, and started to negotiate in earnest. That's when George Miranda, president of Teamsters Joint Council 16, which represents more than 120,000 members in the New York area and Puerto Rico, brought that clout to the bargaining table. The contract, ratified on May 31, increases wages 1 percent each year, lifts the starting salary to \$18.50 an hour, and maintains the workers' job security and benefits, while granting the auction house more flexible scheduling and overtime provisions. Go Teamsters and OWS! ([Crain's](http://Crain's), May 31) □

## Bare bones school budget protested

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

Some 500 students, parents, teachers and school workers rallied outside Philadelphia School District headquarters on May 31 to protest the continuing massive attacks on public education. Then, they packed the hearing room and an alternate overflow area, which displayed live video coverage of the school board meeting.

Holding "Students Matter Most" and "Don't Close Our School" signs, the raucous crowd disrupted the hearing often with collective chants of "No Confidence" and "Save Our Schools."

Helen Gym of Parents United for Public Education and Dolores Solomon of the Home and School Council read a roll call of 54 parent organizations, representing 49 schools, that had signed a "No Confidence" petition against the state-appointed School Reform Commission.

Despite a cacophony of boos, school officials eventually voted for a "bare-bones" budget. This means that most schools next year will have no full-time nurse, fewer counselors and unstaffed libraries. Some sports, music, art and other extracurricular activities are being reduced or eliminated. Recent layoffs would remain in place, while many schools are in danger of being closed.

For the \$2.5 billion budget, the SRC would borrow \$200 million, adding to the \$261 million — more than 10 percent of the operating budget — on annual debt service. It also depends on \$94 million more from the city's coffers, not yet approved by Philadelphia's City Council.

The District plans to privatize maintenance and transportation services, eliminating 2,700 workers represented by Service Employees Union Local 32BJ.

Workers World Party distributed a flier calling for the abolition of the SRC, community control of education and full governmental funding of schools, not prisons and wars. □

## Indigenous peoples say 'Protect sacred sites'

By Terri Kay  
Oakland, Calif.

Indigenous leaders from northern California tribes held a series of meetings in the San Francisco Bay Area to raise awareness of and support for some of their current and upcoming struggles. Speakers included Wounded Knee De Ocampo, Corrina Gould, Chief Caleen Sisk and Morning Star Gali.



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Wounded Knee De Ocampo, Corrina Gould, Chief Caleen Sisk and Morning Star Gali.

Wounded Knee and Gould spoke of a broken agreement at Sogorea Te (Glen Cove) in Vallejo, Calif. From April through July 2011, a tremendous struggle and occupation of the land occurred to prevent the sacred gathering place and burial ground from being desecrated. The Greater Vallejo Recreation District violated an agreement with the tribes and graded a hill containing remains of Indigenous people and put in a parking lot. Vegetation has been removed as well.

Now the GVRD is planning an opening ceremony for the "park" on June 16 at 11 a.m. The tribes are calling for people to meet there at 10 a.m., wear black T-shirts and carry signs saying "No celebration for desecration." See [protectglen Cove.org](http://protectglen Cove.org).

Sisk spoke of the struggles of the Winnemem Wintu, whose name means "Middle Water People." They are intimately connected to the McCloud River, Mount Shasta and the surrounding meadows. The federal government no longer recognizes them as a tribe. They have been trying to hold a Coming of Age Ceremony for the past five

years, and need the U.S. Forest Service to close the McCloud River to traffic for four days. The tribe is calling "for all the good-hearted people to come out in kayaks, inner tubes, boats, and canoes to help close the 400 yards of river for [the] Coming of Age ceremony" from June 30 to July 3. Visit [saveourceremony.com](http://saveourceremony.com).

Gali spoke about the Elem Colony and their struggle to protect Rattlesnake Island from desecration by millionaire developer John Nady. The land was sold out from under the Elem people. The Lake County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 not to require an Environmental Impact Report, which would have called for a focused study of the archaeological and cultural resources located on Rattlesnake Island. Nady is moving forward with building a house on the island in Clearlake, Calif., which will desecrate the site. Go to [elemmodun.org](http://elemmodun.org) for more information.

Gould also spoke on how Brushy Peak in Pleasanton, Calif., was recently opened to public trails by the East Bay Regional Parks. It is the point of origin for the Ohlone people. □

## Workers win union at 'Hot & Crusty'

The following press statement was released by the NYC Laundry Workers Center United on May 24.

Workers at the 63rd Street location of Hot and Crusty restaurant voted yesterday [May 23] to certify an independent union, the Hot and Crusty Workers Association, with 20 of 22 eligible employees submitting their vote at the National Labor Relations Board.

After a 4-month-long public campaign to bring attention to injustices in the workplace, workers were overjoyed by news of their victory. Documenting widespread labor violations spanning six years, including overtime and minimum wage violations, noncompliance with health and safety codes, and sexual harassment and verbal abuse of female employees, workers began organizing their campaign after approaching the grassroots community organization, Laundry Workers Center United, to assist them in their efforts.

Following multiple attempts by the workers to reach a reasonable agreement with the company, parties came to an impasse when management refused to negotiate in good faith over terms and conditions of employment. Responding to the employers' threat that "structural changes within the workplace would not happen without a union," the workers formed an in-

dependent labor organization and filed a petition for certification with the National Labor Relations Board.

Employing provisions contained in New York State's newly enacted Wage Theft Prevention Act, championed by community organizations and State Sen. Diane Savino, a civil lawsuit was simultaneously filed for overtime and minimum wage violations, as well as liquidated damages. Gene Eisner of Eisner and Mirer, P.C., counsel to the workers, emphasized the importance of the act's "stiffened penalties, liquidated damages and critical protections for the undocumented in reclaiming what is rightfully owed to these hardworking individuals."

Applauding the workers resolve in rejecting multiple settlement offers that failed to address continued violations in the workplace, LWC founder Virgilio Aran said, "This was a struggle completely led by the workers, and the decisions were made collectively to address structural issues that many immigrant workers in this country face. We have all learned a great deal from their courage and determination to organize."

Mahoma Lopez, a leader in the campaign who has worked at Hot and Crusty for over seven years,

Continued on page 10

# Pentagon shifts war fleet to Pacific

## Recalls Reagan's 1980s anti-Soviet strategy

By Fred Goldstein

Days before the anniversary of the counterrevolutionary uprising in Tiananmen Square, U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that the Pentagon was planning to deploy 60 percent of its naval fleet to the Pacific region.

Panetta said that the current 50/50 balance of U.S. naval forces between the Pacific and the Atlantic would be "rebalanced" to a ratio of 60/40 in favor of deployment in the Pacific and East Asia. "Make no mistake — in a steady, deliberate and sustainable way — the United States military is rebalancing and brings enhanced capabilities to this vital region," Panetta said. (New York Times, June 2)

This flagrantly aggressive imperialist declaration was made in Singapore at a summit of Asian defense ministers, military officials, military contractors and imperialist analysts. Panetta's high-level delegation included the chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey; Adm. Samuel J. Locklear, head of the U.S. Pacific Command; and Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns.

Panetta outlined some details of the shift. The renewed emphasis on the Pacific will involve six aircraft carriers and a majority of the Navy's cruisers, destroyers, littoral (coastal) combat ships and submarines. These will be fortified by an increase in the number and size of military exercises in the Pacific and a greater number of port visits.

Among the specific new weapons Panetta mentioned were the advanced fifth-generation F-35 aircraft known as the Joint Strike Fighter, made by Lockheed Martin; the enhanced Virginia-class fast-attack submarine, made by General Dynamics, which can operate in shallow and deep waters; new electronic warfare and communications capabilities; and improved precision weapons.

Panetta, of course, denied emphatically that this new policy was a threat aimed at China. Yet many of the new weapons are openly described as aimed to counter the defensive weapons systems being developed by the People's Liberation Army. The new weapons specially designed for the greater distances in the Pacific include an aerial-refueling tanker, a bomber, and advanced maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare aircraft, said Panetta.

Retired Army Gen. David Barno, a senior adviser at the Center for a New American Security, put things more bluntly. Barno said that Panetta's announcement will "put real teeth" in the Obama administration's new strategy. "China should and will take note," Gen. Barno said. "The United States is and will remain a Pacific power, even more so in this century than in the last." (Wall Street Journal, June 2)

### A deliberate public confrontation

Thus Washington and the Pentagon have made a decision to publicly declare a military confrontation with the People's Republic of China. The so-called "rebalancing" is supposed to take place over a period of years, to be completed in 2020, according to Panetta. If the intention to make a drastic escalation of military pressure on China is going to be completed in eight years and is still in its earliest stages, why announce it so long in advance? Why now? Why announce it at all, for that matter?

One of the public reasons given for announcing it is to assure the governments of the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, India and others that the U.S. will "protect" them from China's growing strength. This is, of course, a complete lie, on many grounds. It is meant to cover up the aggressive designs by U.S. imperialism on the region, including the desire of Big Oil to lay hands on 213 billion barrels of oil in the South China Sea. It is also false propaganda, creating a threat that does not exist in order to fill the coffers of the military-industrial complex with endless contracts for new weaponry.

But even assuming that Washington wanted to reassure its puppets, its allies and others, this could easily be done privately and/or bilaterally. Weapons agreements can be arranged. Low-level officials could issue a mere one-page press release or say nothing. They could sign international agreements in secret or with minimal publicity, as imperialists often do.

At a moment when relations between the U.S. and China are becoming increasingly tense in a number of

specific areas, why make matters worse? But that is exactly what Panetta did.

Such a move seems counterintuitive. The U.S. financial establishment, the Treasury Department, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are trying to negotiate behind the scenes while pressuring the Chinese leadership to deepen capitalist reforms, to the point of threatening the socialist core that remains in China.

U.S. finance capital is trying to make inroads in the Chinese state banking system and to expand and invade the capital markets in China. The strategy of finance capital is designed to get rid of economic planning, undermine the state-owned enterprises, promote increased lending to private capitalists in China, widen the scope of imperialist investment and so on.

Why, at this critical moment, would they want to antagonize the Chinese leadership with military threats and subversive plots, such as the incident involving the recent removal of Chen Guangcheng to the U.S.?

### Reagan & the Soviet Union's collapse

A clue to what is behind this strategy can be found by going over aspects of the collapse of the USSR and elements of the strategy of U.S. imperialism that preceded the collapse.

Of course, China today and the USSR in the 1980s are in completely different situations. Many overall comparisons do not apply. But there are crucial common elements. And U.S. strategists, having gone through the historical experience of the collapse of the USSR, must surely be thinking of that experience as they approach the question of how to restore full-scale rule of capitalism in China.

In the early 1980s, the Reagan administration saw that the Soviet economy was in an increasing state of stagnation. Bourgeois elements — anti-communists such as Andrei Sakharov, Nathan Sharansky and other counterrevolutionaries — were growing stronger within the USSR. The Brezhnev era was coming to an end and leadership changes were in the wind that might be favorable to imperialism.

### From 'Star Wars' to Gorbachev

In 1982 Yuri Andropov, a reformer, took over the leadership in the Soviet Union after Leonid Brezhnev's 18 years at the helm. What was the Reagan administration's response to this move toward a Soviet leadership more conciliatory to imperialism? In March 1983, Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative — soon called "Star Wars." From the point of view of military strategy, it posed an enormous threat to the USSR.

The premise was that through various new weapons systems, involving lasers as well as space-based anti-missile systems, the U.S. was striving to create a system that could preemptively wipe out any Soviet military response to a U.S. attack.

Many critics said "Star Wars" was technically too complicated to succeed. Nevertheless, some pilot project preliminaries did succeed and the Soviet leadership was deeply concerned. Arms negotiations were arranged where the Soviet side urgently pressed Washington to abandon the plan. They showed how it would upset the military balance and that "Star Wars" violated prior treaties and agreements.

The Reagan administration refused to budge. It pressed ahead despite protests from the Soviet Union and also from sections of the U.S. ruling class which thought this aggressive stance was foolish, dangerous or both. After two years at the helm of the USSR, Andropov died. An older and clearly transitional leader, Konstantin Chernenko, replaced him and died in turn in 1985.

Mikhail Gorbachev then succeeded Chernenko. Gorbachev brought a generation of bourgeois reformers into the government and opened up the door to bourgeois democracy and privatization. He broke the monopoly on foreign trade and tried to come to an international accommodation with U.S. imperialism.

In the late 1980s, Gorbachev virtually gave Washington permission to overthrow the governments of Eastern Europe without any response from the USSR. There would be no Soviet resistance such as in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Washington would have a free hand to push all the levers and activate its entire underground counterrevolutionary apparatus in

Hungary, Romania, the German Democratic Republic and the other Eastern European countries.

The Gorbachev regime thought it could arrive at peaceful coexistence with U.S. imperialism and NATO by a craven accommodation at the expense of the masses of Eastern and Central Europe, who are now suffering under the nightmare of capitalism.

Margaret Thatcher publicly embraced Gorbachev during his trip to London in 1985. Reagan then embraced him publicly at a meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, and later at Geneva. But through all the negotiations on arms control, Reagan would not give one inch on abandoning SDI.

Instead, Reagan promised Gorbachev that the U.S. would never "seek superiority" over the USSR if Star Wars succeeded. He even promised to share the technology with the Soviet Union if it succeeded.

In other words, Reagan relied on the illusions and false hopes of this right-wing revisionist, bordering on counterrevolutionary. Gorbachev thought the USSR could reach an accommodation with U.S. imperialism by making gratuitous and drastic concessions.

It was not only military pressure that the Reagan administration brought to bear on the USSR. That was just one part of what was called a "full court press": to spend the USSR into bankruptcy by driving it to respond to military threats; to drain it of resources for socialist construction; and to disrupt its economic planning processes.

In an article entitled "Full court press' continues against USSR" in the Jan. 31, 1992, issue of Workers World, Pat Chin described varied aspects of the Reagan administration's campaign to destroy socialism in the USSR. She referred to information from an article by Sean Gervasi, entitled "Western Intervention in the USSR," in the Winter 1991-92 issue of Covert Action Information Bulletin. (Both articles can be found online.)

### U.S. strategy can boomerang

To be sure, the Chinese leadership, regardless of political orientation, has shown no inclination to make territorial concessions on the same scale to U.S. imperialism. China was an oppressed nation for centuries and national consciousness is extremely widespread and intense throughout Chinese society.

But Panetta's speech reveals that U.S. imperialism calculates that if there is a wing of China's leadership that is prone to compromise and deepen pro-capitalist economic and political reforms, that wing is inherently conciliatory. And the way Washington deals with conciliatory elements is to bring greater pressure to bear on them, the way Reagan did on Andropov, Chernenko and later Gorbachev.

Panetta's pronouncement, in addition to being a military threat, constitutes political intervention in the internal struggle in China.

China is now confronting an economic slowdown caused by its own internal capitalist development and the spillover from the global capitalist crisis. Pro-capitalist reformers in China are urging a policy of strengthening the private sector as part of any stimulus package to combat a slowdown. These elements seem to have the political upper hand at the top leadership level for the moment.

As happened in the USSR, this shift to the right at the top comes at a crucial time of leadership change. The elements who want to strengthen the state-owned sector have suffered a temporary defeat with the ouster of Bo Xilai. Washington is pressing its military and subversive efforts openly in order to strengthen the more conciliatory elements. That is the lesson imperialism learned from the destruction of the USSR. That is the scenario they are following.

But these threats are bound to backfire. The more aggressive the U.S. imperialists become, the more likely they are to antagonize the anti-imperialist masses of China and the People's Liberation Army. In the long run, such arrogant military threats could provoke a profound response that could open up a mass political struggle against the entire course of the capitalist roaders in China.

*To be continued.*

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# African immigrants attacked in Israel

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

In late May, animosity toward African migrants in Israel reached a boiling point. After months of anti-African speeches in the Knesset and the cabinet, mobs of racist gangs began to attack Sudanese, Ethiopians and Eritreans in south Tel Aviv.

People were beaten on the streets, and businesses were looted amid calls for the banning and deportation of Africans.

The attacks against African migrants are by no means spontaneous. Knesset members from Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud party and other Israeli politicians at a Tel Aviv rally on May 23 likened migrant workers and small business people from Africa to a "cancer" within society. (thejewishweek.com, May 29) They agitated the crowd, accusing Africans of criminal activity and taking jobs away from Israelis.

Mobs carrying sticks and stones later rampaged through areas populated by African migrants shouting "Blacks out!" and "Infiltrators get out of our homes."

Israeli Interior Minister Eli Yishai, a member of the ultra-orthodox Shas party, told Maariv in a June 1 interview, "We must put all these infiltrators behind bars in detention and holding centers, then send them home because they come and take work from Israelis."

On June 4, four people were hospitalized with burns and smoke inhalation after their home in a poor neighborhood of Jerusalem was firebombed at 3 a.m. (Alarabiya.net, June 4) Some 18 people

reportedly lived in the building. Outside the building racists had painted "Get out of the neighborhood."

## Violence given official support

It is estimated that up to 60,000 African migrants have entered Israel from Egypt since the collapse of the Hosni Mubarak regime. The migrants say they are fleeing the unstable political situations in Sudan and the Horn of Africa, where drought, food deficits and Western-backed internal conflicts have created massive dislocation.

The Israeli government on June 3 put into effect a law allowing African migrants to be detained for up to three years. Detention facilities where migrants are held prior to deportation already exist on the border with Egypt. They can house up to 5,000 people and are overflowing.

In the same interview Interior Minister Yishai said that Africans are a threat to the character of Israeli society: "The infiltrators along with the Palestinians will quickly bring us to the end of the Zionist dream. We don't need to import more problems from Africa." He was referring to burgeoning economic problems in Israel that have sparked demonstrations over the last year by the settler population.

Yishai also said of the Africans, "Most of those people arriving here are Muslims who think the country doesn't belong to us, the white man." Another right-wing politician, Aryeh Eldad, encouraged the Israeli military to shoot on sight Africans attempting to cross the border into the Zionist state. (Reuters, June 3)

Israel has been building Zionist settlements on Palestinian land, encouraging Jewish immigration by providing many with subsidized housing and social welfare. But the world capitalist economic crisis has led to a decline in the manufacturing and service sectors. Unemployment and the lack of housing have created tensions between the Jewish settlers and the Israeli government.

## Legacy of racism & forced removals

The attacks on Africans are supposedly based on the lack of "legal immigration documents" by people from Sudan and Eritrea. However, similar acts of discrimination have been carried out against Ethiopian Jews, who automatically became Israeli citizens because they were Jewish and who were airlifted into the settler state during the 1980s.

During the mob violence in Tel Aviv on May 23, Hananya Vanda, a Jewish Israeli of Ethiopian origin, was attacked by racists, who later said they "did not know he was Jewish." (Gulf Today, June 4)

The state of Israel, founded on racist and imperialist notions of Zionist entitlement to the land of Palestine, has for decades engaged in massacres, imprison-

ment and forced removal of Palestinians and other Arabs.

Millions of Palestinians are kept outside their national homeland, some in refugee camps, nearly 65 years after the establishment of the Zionist state. The U.S. government and ruling class subsidize the Israeli rulers by giving them billions of dollars every year and by transferring sophisticated military and intelligence equipment and technologies to them.

Israel serves as the most important outpost for U.S. imperialism in the Middle East.

The Palestinian enclave of Gaza is the largest open-air prison in the world. Israeli planes periodically engage in aerial strikes on the people of Gaza, killing civilians almost on a daily basis.

The elimination of racism and discrimination in the land claimed by Israel depends on the liberation of the territory from U.S.-backed Zionist rule. The entire political and economic fabric of the state is based on oppression and exploitation. But the recent racist violence directed against African migrants there provides an opportunity for developing greater unity between the Arab and African populations throughout the region. □

## SYRIA

# Drones murder of innocents highlights U.S. hypocrisy

By **Gene Clancy**

As the U.S. and its allies prepare to intervene in Syria, they have seized on the massacre that took place at Houla last week to justify a war. The State Department called the rampage "despicable" and complained about a regime that could "connive in or organize" such a thing, although who was responsible is very much in dispute. Many countries, including the U.S., have expelled Syrian diplomats, which is often a prelude to war.

The implication is that outside intervention will bring an end to such things. But these same countries have either "connived in" or had little or nothing to say about proven U.S. and NATO atrocities. Here are just a (very) few examples:

- **AUG. 10, 2011:** The Journal for Investigative Journalism reported that since 2004, 175 children had been among at least 2,347 people reported killed in CIA drone attacks in Pakistan, a country with whom the U.S. is supposedly not even at war.
- **MAY 5, 2009:** Nearly 100 civilians, including women and children, were killed by a U.S. raid against Bala Baluk, Afghanistan.
- **AUG. 22, 2008:** A U.S. bombing in Azizabad, Afghanistan, killed as many civilians as are claimed to have been killed in Syria. The dead included 60 children. A draft U.N. Security Council press statement said about the bombing that member nations "strongly deplore the fact that this is not the

first incident of this kind" and that "the killing and maiming of civilians is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law." (Counterpunch.org, May 31)

- **JULY 4, 2008:** 22 civilians were blown up when U.S. helicopters rocketed two vehicles in Afghanistan's Nuristan Province.
- **JULY 2008:** U.S. planes bombed a wedding party in Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province, leaving 47 civilians dead, including the bride.
- **JUNE 2007:** 170 civilians died in the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan's Helmand Province.
- **MAY 2007:** 21 Afghan civilians were killed in Helmand Province.
- **APRIL 2007:** A helicopter gunship mowed down over a dozen civilians in Iraq. The incident was caught on Pentagon film that was subsequently released to the Wikileaks organization. Pvt. Bradley Manning, charged with releasing the video, faces life imprisonment and has served more than two years in solitary confinement, while those who did the killing walk free.
- **OCTOBER 2004:** Human Rights Watch estimated that 100,000 Iraqis had been killed just since the U.S. bombing and invasion started on March 20, 2003.
- **OCTOBER 2001:** Security Council investigators confirmed that U.S. warplanes had destroyed a hospital in Western Afghanistan — a blatant violation of the laws of war, since hospital roofs are clearly identified. □

# Egypt in revolt

Continued from page 1

class relations and all the pillars of the old regime — the military, the banks, and the treaties and agreements with Israel and the U.S.

The setting up of elections and the staged trial of Mubarak were used to prepare for a total comeback once the revolutionary mood was exhausted.

Although the Cairo criminal court did give life sentences to Mubarak and his especially hated Minister of the Interior Habib el-Adly for "not preventing the murder of protesters" during last year's January 25 Revolution, all other defendants in the case, including Mubarak's two sons — Gamal and Alaa — and six of el-Adly's top aides, were cleared of all charges. Mubarak and his sons were also cleared of corruption charges. Furthermore, the sentences against Mubarak and el-Adly are expected to be overturned on appeal.

The trial of Mubarak and his top officials was considered a political charade from the beginning. The deposed president and his sons were indicted in April 2011 in order to quiet the massive demonstrations demanding their trial. But the charges were so weak that the trial seemed designed to end in acquittals. Presiding over the trial were three judges, all Mubarak appointees.

The official charges stemmed from the deaths of only some of the almost 900 protesters shot or beaten to death by security forces in the January 2011 demonstrations. They made no mention of the thousands killed, the billions of dollars stolen or the many traitorous crimes committed during almost 30 years of dictatorship. Under the rule of the SCAF, not a single

person has been convicted of killing a protester. All the junior officers tried in Egypt over the past year have been acquitted.

## SCAF controls the elections

After the verdict, crowds stormed the headquarters of Ahmed Shafiq, Mubarak's last prime minister, who has been declared a leading contender in planned runoff elections after a deeply flawed presidential election process. The people are already very angry about the outcome of the first round.

It has become clear to millions that the military council used its role in organizing the elections to reconsolidate its power, deciding who could run for office and under what conditions. It organized the vote and had total control over which candidates could participate; it also appointed the judges who review voting challenges. Since the results were announced, countless voting irregularities have surfaced, only to be dismissed.

The economic situation became much worse in recent months as basic goods became scarce, including bread and cooking oil, while gas prices have skyrocketed. The military council has been unable to resolve any of the enormous crises that inspired and drove the uprising.

The Mubarak verdict reveals a gross miscalculation by the rulers, who thought that the revolutionary spirit had waned and that the return of the old regime was possible.

As a consequence of the verdicts, the Egyptian masses have been reinvigorated and their unity re-established in a display not seen since Feb. 11, 2011. A new stage in the Egyptian revolutionary process is clearly unfolding. □



## GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

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## U.S.-NATO arms death squads in Syria

# Eyewitnesses blame anti-gov't fighters for Houla massacre

By Joyce Chediak

June 5 — A Russian news team was told by Syrian eyewitnesses that the May 25 massacre of civilians in Houla, universally blamed on the Assad government, was in fact committed by local criminals, mercenaries and other forces connected to the imperialist-armed “Free Syrian Army.”

All accusations against the Syrian government have made top headlines in the corporate media worldwide and continue to do so as of today. The Russian news team’s discovery of the real killers, however, remains unreported, except in the alternative and progressive media. Also, the imperialist-controlled media have dismissed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s categorical denial that the government carried out the massacre.

This one-sided presentation of anti-Syrian propaganda points to a concerted effort to invent a pretext for increased U.S.-NATO intervention against Syria.

Marat Musin, reporting for ANNA News, interviewed a dozen witnesses right after the massacre. His report concluded, “The attack was carried out by a unit of armed fighters from Rastan, in which more than 700 gunmen were involved. They brought the city under their control and began with a cleansing action against loyalist [pro-Assad] families, including elderly people, women and also children. The dead were presented to ... the U.N. and the ‘international community’ as victims of the Syrian army.” Residents knew many of the killers by name and identified them as local criminal elements now working for the so-called Free Syrian Army. (SyriaNews, May 31)

A simple thing like the truth did not stop U.S. and other NATO regimes and their corporate media from raising a frenzy blaming the Syrian government for the deaths of 108 Syrian civilians including 49 children. Nor did it stop the governments of the U.S., the Netherlands, Australia, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria and Canada from expelling Syrian diplomats in a coordinated move of contrived “international outrage.”

Without any investigation, the United Nations Security Council reacted to the massacre by unanimously condemning Syria for allegedly using tanks and artillery after agreeing to a ceasefire. The U.N. has not rebuked the FSA, which has flat-out refused to consider a ceasefire with the Assad government.

### Imperialism seeks pretext

The U.S.-led imperialist powers seek a pretext to openly carry out regime change in Syria as they did in Libya. While pointing the finger at Assad for the deaths and hardships suffered in Syria, Washington is aiding, abetting and arming the reactionary militias destabilizing the country and murdering civilians.

This so-called Free Syrian Army is a counterinsurgency, terror and death squad operation set up by imperialism to topple the Assad government in order to bring Syria, and the entire region, back into the imperialist orbit. The FSA is in the opposite political camp from any progressive Syrians who may have taken to the streets to demand needed political and economic reforms, and must not be confused with them.

Killing whole families at Houla shows that the FSA has no interest in protecting or helping the Syrian people, but only seeks to terrorize and subdue it. A seizure of power by these forces would cause grave suffering throughout Syria and the region, and imperialism would again be calling all the shots.

### What happened in Houla?

The following is excerpted from a translation of the transcript of a Russian-language video made by Marat Musin of ANNA News in Houla a few days after the massacre, which appeared in Russia News on May 31. Houla is a collection of 15 mostly Sunni Muslim villages near the Syrian city of Homs and close to the Lebanese border. Musin interviewed a dozen residents of the villages of Al Houla and Taldou.

An eyewitness from Taldou reports, “Two days earlier the terrorists’ assistants told us that the Zero Hour is coming soon. We heard this from local terrorists, always talking about how they should create a fuss. I didn’t expect it would be this way.

“Until this event, [the armed terrorists] used to attack army checkpoints every Friday after prayers. They attack for several hours; then things go back to normal. Some armed men carried cameras and taped everything; others carried [walkie talkies], and we heard their conversations from inside our houses.

“On May 25, at 2 p.m. right after Friday prayers, an army checkpoint [was attacked] and the army repelled this attack. ... When the armed men attacked the checkpoint, 25 of them were killed. ...

“When the U.N. Observers came, the armed men gathered the bodies in front of the observers and claimed that they’re civilians killed by the Syrian Arab Army. I heard that personally from them when they said it to the observers and they claimed that they found the bodies inside the houses.

“At around 3:30 p.m., they secured the elevated checkpoint. ... Shortly afterward, they secured the army checkpoint and the police station in the city.

“[Just next to] this police station are the families’ houses. The residential buildings against this police station are where all those children and families were killed. They killed all the children of Al-Sayed family; there were three families and 20 children. They also killed people from Abdulrazak family, 10 persons; they killed them because they support the authorities. Of Al-Sayed family they killed the family of the brother of Abdullah Al-Mashlab, the third person in the Syrian parliament. He was elected on May 24; the next day they killed his wife and three kids and his brother and his family as well.

“At 7 p.m., Al-Farouq Brigade, led by Abdulrazak Tlass, of the so-called ‘Free Syrian Army’ arrived. He had more than 250 armed men with him from the city of Rastan; he also had two other groups with him, one from Al-Qabo village, led by Yehya Al-Yusef, and another from Falla village.

“At the time of the attack, the leaders always instructed the armed men to intensify the fire during their calls to Al-Jazeera. At night, the shooting stopped.

“On the second day we heard them talking to each other on walkie talkies that some of the armed men should wear the Syrian Arab Army’s uniform before the



This photo was published by the BBC. Syrian anti-government forces said it showed the bodies from the Houla massacre, with a child leaping over them. It was soon discovered it was a photo from Iraq in 2003, being used for anti-government propaganda against Syria.

observers arrive so that they claim they’ve defected from the army and joined the armed men, and the others should dress like civilians and come with us to the mosque, where the bodies and the observers are.

“I only saw the observers from afar; they were surrounded by armed men who put on the Syrian Arab Army’s uniforms. A lot of people were there and saw all of that; they were from chosen families and they were calling, ‘We want to bring the regime down,’ and everybody knows they’re the armed men’s relatives. ...

“When the observers arrived, the armed men had occupied the empty houses, and the armed men who accompanied the observers started showing the observers into the houses as if the owners were inside and they provided testimonies. ...

“The majority of people [here] share the same view [of these events], but they’re scared to death. Earlier, many of them used to participate in pro-regime rallies and they used to write slogans against Daraa, the FSA and the armed men. However, the armed men took revenge against all those who wrote by killing them. ...

“Before the events started, those armed men used to be smugglers ... [and] thieves. ... They kidnapped people of other sects. ... At the beginning of the crisis, they attacked the hospital and stole blood bags and used them at the demonstrations. They poured blood on the demonstrators to show that they were dead or injured when fabricating videos for Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.”

### Death squads organized out of U.S. embassy

Both the U.N. Commission of Inquiry (Feb. 21) and Human Rights Watch (March 20) have documented the existence of death squads and counterinsurgency teams targeting the Assad government and its supporters. Where did these terror groups come from? There is every indication that they were launched out of the U.S. Embassy in Damascus.

John Stephen Ford was appointed U.S. Ambassador to Syria and served from January to October 2011. Ford is a protégé of John Negroponte, who organized death squads in the 1970s in El Salvador and later in Iraq when he was ambassador in 2004-2005. These terror squads have killed tens of thousands. Ford was right under Negroponte at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

According to Michael Chossudovsky, “Ambassador Robert S. Ford played a central role in laying the groundwork within Syria as well as establishing contacts with

opposition groups.” (Global Research, May 28) Two months after he arrived in Damascus, the armed insurgency began.

No longer in Damascus, Ford continues his work to destabilize Syria as a member of the “Syria Policy Committee” chaired by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. The State Department, in collaboration with several U.S. intelligence agencies and the Pentagon, is overseeing U.S. support to the Free Syrian Army, according to Chossudovsky.

### U.S. arms terrorists, demands Syrian army hold fire

The imperialists and their press loudly accuse the besieged Assad of violating the U.N.-brokered ceasefire. At the same time, U.S. and its NATO allies quietly ship large quantities of weapons to the FSA, which has repeatedly refused a ceasefire with the Assad government.

According to a May 15 report in the Washington Post, “Syrian rebels battling the regime of President Bashar al-Assad have begun receiving significantly more and better weapons in recent weeks, an effort paid for by Persian Gulf nations and coordinated in part by the United States, according to opposition activists and U.S. and foreign officials.”

The report continued, “‘We are increasing our nonlethal assistance to the Syrian opposition, and we continue to coordinate our efforts with friends and allies in the region and beyond in order to have the biggest impact on what we are collectively doing,’ said a senior State Department official, one of several U.S. and foreign government officials who discussed the evolving effort on the condition of anonymity.”

A May 22 posting on the Israeli online publication DEBKAFIL reveals U.S. assistance to be extremely lethal. “The Syrian rebels have received their first ‘third generation’ anti-tank weapons, 9K115-2 Metis-M and Kornet E. They are supplied by Saudi and Qatari intelligence agencies following a secret message from President Barack Obama advising them to up the military stake in the effort to oust Assad.”

In his article in Global Research published online May 9, Tony Cartalucci cites the Brookings Institution report, “Assessing Options for Regime Change. Mideast Memo # 21.” This ruling-class think tank calls for using the Kofi Annan peace plan and ceasefire to strengthen the armed opposition to Assad. It argues that the peace plan could give the imperialists a chance to establish and “protect” so-called “humanitarian” safe havens that would really be bases from which the reactionaries could operate. □

## People's victory

# March on Wall Street South wins permits

By Ben Carroll  
Charlotte, N.C.

The Coalition to March on Wall Street South announced a major victory on May 29. The city of Charlotte granted conditional approval for permits for the Sept. 2 March on Wall Street South — after more than eight months of march and parks permit requests, a national petition campaign and threats of legal action. The march will take place one day prior to the Democratic National Convention.

While coalition organizers must still meet and negotiate with officials, the march route passes the major targets in uptown Charlotte: Bank of America's world headquarters, Wells Fargo's eastern headquarters, the Bank of America Stadium and the Time Warner Cable Arena, site of the DNC.

With permits won, the stage is now set for the Sept. 2 demonstration. Thousands of activists are expected to flood the streets of Charlotte to raise a people's agenda to the big banks and Democratic Party delegates. Their program calls for jobs, human needs, workers' rights, justice and equality for Black, Latino/a and Native peoples, women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities. The Call to Action also raises the need to fight for economic and environmental justice, while opposing wars, anti-immigrant repression, racial and political

profiling, incarcerations and foreclosures.

### Mass campaign key to victory

The coalition launched a national petition campaign in May, after numerous delays and administrative runarounds, unreturned phone calls and being put through bureaucratic hoops. Petitions demanded that the city grant the permits, repeal newly passed repressive protest ordinances and immediately make public the permitting process for actions during the DNC.

More than 1,500 people across the country signed the petition, including prominent leaders from unions and community organizations. Every signature triggered emails to city, county and national officials.

Coalition organizers planned to deliver the petitions to the May 29 Charlotte City Council meeting. Just two hours before the meeting was to start, officials called coalition organizers to inform them that the permits had been granted. Even with this major victory, plans to pack the meeting and speak out moved forward. More than three dozen activists from Occupy Charlotte; Occupy Winston-Salem; United Electrical Workers Local 150; Raleigh Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; Students for a Democratic Society; and other organizations turned out.

"This is a huge victory for democracy," said Scottie Wingfield, of Occupy Charlotte.

"We want to thank the more than 1,500 people from across the country who signed the petition. The eyes of the world are on Charlotte and on how the city will treat those who do not have lobbyists to represent their interests. Our work goes on, and we will continue to call on the city of Charlotte to repeal the repressive protest ordinances they passed earlier this year that grant police extreme power and endanger people's rights to freely demonstrate."

The coalition was also preparing to take legal action to secure the permits for the right to demonstrate in Charlotte. Affidavits had been collected from nearly two dozen leaders of organizations from across the U.S., including Marilyn Levin, co-coordinator of the United National Antiwar Coalition; John Parker of the Southern California Immigration Coalition; George Friday of Move to Amend; the Rev. Cortly C.D. Witherspoon, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Baltimore chapter; Steve Gillis, vice president of Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union; and Sara Flounders, International Action Center co-director.

Alissa Elliss of Occupy Durham stressed: "This is a great success. We want to thank the legal team for the amount of work they put in, not only in preparation for the petitions, but also all the preparation that went into facing likely litigation. It was only through the legal team's hard

work and the mass support of petition signers that we were finally able to make the city and county of Charlotte recognize the power of the 99% and give us our right to protest."

### Stage set for March on Wall Street South

March organizers have issued an all-out call for this major demonstration and others during the DNC:

"We welcome all working people who have suffered during this economic crisis to come down to Charlotte on Sunday, September 2," said Matt Hickson of University of North Carolina/Chapel Hill Students for a Democratic Society. He emphasized: "Bank of America and Wells Fargo are responsible for kicking people out of their homes, plunging students and families deep into debt, funding the prison-industrial complex and destroying the environment."

"The Democrats and the Republicans have not addressed the dire situation faced by working people and families in this country. We need jobs, an end to deportations and money for housing, education, health care and people's needs, not for wars and jails. These are some of the issues we'll be raising at the March on Wall Street South on September 2 and throughout the week of actions during the DNC."

For information, see [wallstosouth.org](http://wallstosouth.org), Twitter: @wallstosouth or call 1-704-266-0362. □

## Occupy Wall Street

# Nightly marches support Quebec student strike

By Caleb T. Maupin  
New York

June 4 — Just as the occupation of Zuccotti Park by the Occupy Wall Street movement was a continuous protest, never pausing until it was finally cleared in a mess of police violence, OWS has begun another energetic action campaign.

While the U.S. corporate-owned news media have ignored the huge nightly mobilizations of striking Canadian students, Occupy Wall Street has not.

For roughly the last two weeks, each night at 8 o'clock in New York City's Washington Square Park, the air is filled with chants of "Sol! Sol! Sol! Solidarité!" and "From Canada to NYC, education must be free!" The clang of pots and pans

is heard. Several dozen OWS activists, many of them wearing bright red squares, the symbol of the Canadian student strike, are there to make noise.

After rallying in the park, the activists proceed into the streets. With no permit or permission, and in plain view of the notoriously violent New York City Police Department, they take the streets for hours. When police order them back onto the sidewalks, they are ignored. When police try to shove them back, the cops are shoved back. Tour buses are stopped and activists tell the tourists the truth, not just about the strikes in Canada, but also about the continued repression of Occupy Wall Street.

The militancy of these demonstrations is unprecedented. Garbage cans are kicked over, dumpsters are thrown in the

streets to block police vans, and banks are targeted for even more militant acts of resistance. Chants such as "This system has got to die, that is why we occupy!" and "No justice, no peace, take the streets and fuck the police!" are heard as cops with batons try to clear the streets, their faces sweaty and red with anger as they chase the militant crowds for hours late into the night.

On May 30, the march grew to a crowd of 300, with students, university faculty, community members, labor unionists and passersby joining in. As this march was ending in Times Square, a police officer violently tackled an African-American OWS activist, who was immediately defended by the crowd. The resulting scuffle involved a few punches and kicks, witnesses told Workers World. No one was arrested.

Workers World Party has had a strong presence at these mass outpourings, displaying its large banner that reads "Expand Occupy Wall Street! Shut down capitalism! Fight for socialism!" at several of the marches. Copies of Workers World newspaper are enthusiastically taken by the demonstrators, especially when news about the Canadian student strike, missing in the capitalist press, can be found in its pages.

The continued strength of youth-led resistance to capitalist austerity and a sense of global solidarity among "the generation without a future" are very apparent at OWS actions. Despite months of police repression all across the country, the rage and energy of this new movement have not subsided. □

# Protests mark 8th year of Haiti occupation

By G. Dunkel

A Haitian coalition, including the Mobilizing Collective for Reparations to the Victims of Cholera, issued an international call to protest the eighth anniversary of the United Nations' occupation of Haiti. In response, actions were held in Guadeloupe, Martinique, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. Moreover, organizations in Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, France and the United States also held demonstrations to mark this anniversary.

On June 1, there was a march from the popular neighborhood of Fort National in Haiti's capital city of Port-au-Prince to the parliament, along with a teach-in and a photo display. Demonstrators' slogans were "Down with the occupation!" "Down

with the World Bank!" "Up with the struggle of the people!" and "Let Haiti make its own choices!"

The economic motivation for the U.N.'s costly occupation was made abundantly clear with the recent announcement of gold deposits in Haiti worth more than \$20 billion. It's worth even more since mine workers in Haiti are paid at the most \$5 for an 8-hour workday with no benefits, far less than similar workers earn elsewhere in the Caribbean.

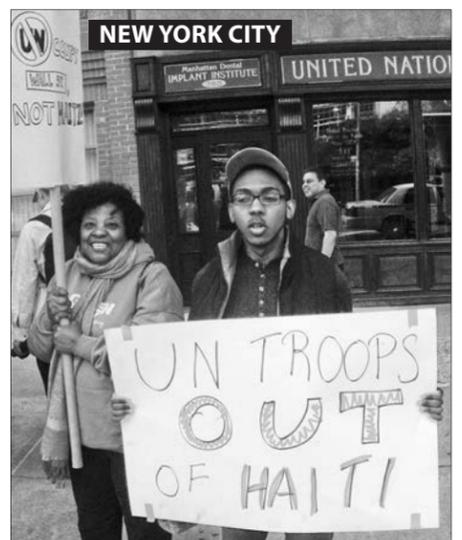
Minustah, the U.N.'s so-called Stabilization Mission in Haiti, is not a cheap operation. It currently has about 7,200 soldiers and 3,200 cops stationed there, with a budget of \$793 million for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. During the eight years it has run this operation, the U.N. has spent more than \$6 billion to ensure

that the vast gold deposits in Haiti remain available for imperialist exploitation.

The Mobilizing Collective for Reparations to the Victims of Cholera says that calling Minustah a "peacekeeping" operation is a misnomer. From the day these troops disembarked in Haiti, they have been a disruptive, violent force, attacking even members of the parliament. Besides this repression, the Collective reports that these soldiers have engaged in rape, thievery, murder, corruption and drug trafficking.

The Minustah troops have also committed the vile deed of introducing cholera into the country. More than 535,000 Haitians have been infected in this epidemic, and more than 7,000 people have died.

The U.N. has refused to pay reparations to those who have suffered from cholera



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

or to their family members, although all the evidence from several epidemiological studies points to the Minustah troops as the source of the cholera epidemic in this Caribbean nation. □

# At Rio+20 U.N. Summit, oppressed vs. oppressor

By Bill Dores

The oppressed countries of the world — where most people live — did not create the environmental crisis. They did not fill the air with greenhouse gases or the rivers and oceans with poison. However, they bear the brunt of its impact. Now the affluent countries, which grew wealthy and industrialized at their expense, want them to bear the cost of trying to solve the crisis.

That was the theme of a talk in New York City on May 31 by Dr. Rene Orellana, who leads the team from the Plurinational Republic of Bolivia to negotiations leading up to Rio+20, the United Nations conference on sustainable development to be held in Brazil on June 20-22.

Bolivia was once a center of the great Inca civilization, which was destroyed in 1532 by Spanish conquistadores who enslaved its people. It has a majority Native population and is the poorest country in South America.

Under Evo Morales' government, Bolivia is now a member of ALBA, the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas, and is playing a leading role in organizing poor countries to fight for their environmental rights.

Orellana, who is a specialist in environmental issues, spoke to a multinational group of environmental, labor and solidarity activists at the Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center, the union headquarters of United Health Care Workers East, 1199SEIU. The Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle organized the event.

Rather than a joint effort to promote the well-being of all humanity and life on earth, the Rio summit is shaping into a struggle between the wealthy imperialist states of North America and Western Europe and the Group of 77 plus China, representing the exploited countries of the world. G77 — which was founded in 1964 by 77 poor and newly independent countries — now has 143 members.

## 'We're going to Rio to fight for our rights'

The imperialist countries, which owe their vast wealth and productivity to centuries of plunder in Africa, Asia, South and Central America, the Caribbean, Oceania and Eastern Europe, are demanding that the poor countries restrict their development out of "concern" for the environment.

Orellana stressed, "We cannot accept this; 70 percent of the world's patents are in

developed countries and historically they have produced 75 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. Our people live in poverty, and we have a right to develop. We have important nonrenewable resources. If we are to restrict our carbon emissions, we must have transfers of technology and finance from the wealthy countries."

The imperialist countries, Orellana explained, "want to separate the issue of the environment from poverty and the financial crisis they have created. But the crisis has three pillars: social, financial and ecological." He pointed out that since the last Rio summit in 1992, the number of hungry people in the world has grown from 800 million to more than 1 billion and average life expectancy, 44 years, has not increased. Global unemployment has risen astronomically.

"We are going to Rio to fight for our rights," Orellana said. "Our countries have a right to sovereignty, the right to develop, the right to lift our people out of poverty, the right to help our people live well. The U.S. and West Europe are more concerned with market deregulation and their 'right' to invest and control technology. We can't agree."

The Group of 77 plus China are fighting for the conference to recognize the rights of Indigenous people and the peasantry, as well as the rights of Mother Earth and the concept of harmony with nature. Orellana stated that some of these things had been accepted in words by the wealthy countries but will have to be fought for in practice. He said that China is playing a positive role in supporting the demands of other oppressed countries.

Hundreds of peoples' organizations from around the planet are planning to take part in a People's Summit on Sustainable Development that will take place alongside the U.N. summit. Orellana emphasized that this will be an important vehicle to put pressure on the imperialist countries.

Orellana ended with a call for progressive activists — especially in the rising anticapitalist movement in the developed countries — not only to actively support the demands of the Group of 77 plus China at Rio+20 and in the global struggle for sustainable development, but also to save the planet from environmental catastrophe. □

# 48 years of revolutionary struggle in Colombia

By Miguel Urbano Rodrigues

*The author is a Portuguese author and journalist, former editor of the weekly Avante — the newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party — a former member of the European Parliament and co-founder of the Web magazine Odiario.info.*

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) commemorated its 48th anniversary on May 27.

The event was celebrated in the jungles and mountains of the country by the thousands of fighters who are fighting for an independent, democratic and progressive Colombia.

There is no precedent in the history of Latin America involving a comparable revolutionary saga. Founded nearly half a century ago, the FARC-EP's guerrillas have been fighting against the most powerful army of South America, made up of 300,000 soldiers armed and financed by U.S. imperialism.

Bowing to pressure from Washington, the United Nations and the European Union placed the FARC-EP on the list of terrorist organizations and offered rewards of millions of dollars for the capture or murder of members of the FARC-EP's leadership.

The Pentagon and CIA mounted a global campaign to stick on the FARC-EP the infamous label of "narco-guerrillas." Successive governments in Bogotá announced over the years the FARC's imminent end. But no speech or defamation by the presidents and generals serving the oligarchy can hide the obvious: the FARC-EP, which is a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla army and political party, continues the struggle on multiple fronts toward the eventual conquest of power, and every month the news releases of the Secretariat publicize combat actions that have caused casualties within the Colombian army.

The current Colombian president, Juan Manuel Santos, while speaking with a

milder tone, has fundamentally been continuing the neofascist politics of former President Álvaro Uribe. Santos' "Security" strategy continues a policy of repression and terror; the "Prosperity for All" Plan slogan is an example of sick humor, as it describes a program forged to increase social inequality by favoring the ruling class. Colombia's adherence to the Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. helps to reinforce the country's semicolonial status.

Eight new U.S. military bases were established in the country that is second to Israel, the ally that receives the most financial "aid" from Washington. Not surprisingly, the major U.S. media today define Colombia as a "model democracy," attractive to investors, and identify it as an example Latin America should follow.



Workers World reporter Teresa Gutierrez visited with FARC in Colombia during 2000.

President Barack Obama once again at the Cartagena Summit praised Juan Manuel Santos for his "pacification policy" and for "opening a dialogue." He knows he's lying. The crackdown against the participants in the March for Peace, which was attended by 100,000 people from all over the country — exposed the regime's policy of force and violence.

Deindustrialization progresses, poverty increases, the drug cartels operate with impunity, in alliance with the paramilitaries and senior members of the Armed Forces.

As expected, the image that the Portuguese government spokespeople transmit about Colombia is that of a "model

*Continued on page 10*

# Rebellion shakes Mississippi for-profit prison

By Larry Hales

May 28 — Inmates at a privately run facility in Natchez, Miss., rebelled for hours on May 20. It is alleged that more than a dozen prison guards were captured during the confrontation, and one died from injuries received in a scuffle.

The facility, one of more than 60 managed by the Corrections Corporation of America for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, holds 2,500 of the 75,000 prisoners in CCA facilities around the country. All of the inmates at the Natchez prison are undocumented immigrants.

While officials from CCA and police authorities blame so-called gang violence for the seizure of the facility, it has been well documented that CCA prisons have a higher incidence of violence due to oppressive conditions and systemic abuse of inmates by guards.

The January 2012 Corazón de Tucson report, "The Corrections Corporation of America: How CCA Abuses Prisoners, Ma-

nipulates the Public and Destroys Communities," states, "CCA has frequently been criticized for housing prisoners in inhuman conditions. Unwilling to invest the resources necessary to meet minimum standards of safety and comfort, CCA has exposed inmates to unsafe, unsanitary, overcrowded and otherwise unacceptable conditions. Once again, prisoners' well-being takes a backseat to the ethos of cost-cutting and CCA has proved unwilling 'to curtail profit considerations in order to operate prisons and ensure conditions that accord with constitutional standards.' Inmates at CCA facilities have reported being subjected to severe overcrowding, poor-quality food, poor sanitation, inadequate infection prevention and insufficient provision for exercise and recreation."

Among other things, the report documents guard-on-inmate violence, sexual abuse and medical negligence.

## 'Guards always beat us & hit us'

After the rebellion began, an inmate

was able to contact a local TV station. According to the reporter, the inmate said, "They always beat us and hit us. We just pay them back. We're trying to get better food, medical [care], programs, clothes, and we're trying to get some respect from the officers and lieutenants." (Colorlines, May 22)

Patricia Ice, the director of Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance, told Colorlines, "I got a complaint from a family member saying that a man had lung cancer and was being ignored. Three weeks earlier, he was examined by a doctor and diagnosed with lung cancer but had not received any treatment at all."

This rebellion is not a surprise to many who have been involved with the struggle for inmates rights and the fight against the exploding number of privately run facilities. One of the main selling points of private prisons is that they spend less per prisoner than publicly managed facilities.

The lower cost per inmate — a reflection of the callousness of the for-profit

company toward inmates — is due to the fact that such facilities provide meager care and constantly violate prisoners' rights. Inmates are seen as a commodity — more inmates mean more money for the company, and the less money the company spends, the higher the profit. It is obvious that in the U.S., which has 2.5 million prisoners, that the for-profit prison business is booming.

As of this writing, the 2,500 inmates at the Natchez facility are on lockdown. There hasn't been much information yet on how the rebellion was put down, but at least 20 prisoners have suffered injuries.

For many of the inmates their only "crime" was trying to reenter the country after being deported, so they could provide a better living for themselves and their families. The inmates' demands are added to calls for legalization of immigrants and the end to the criminalization of poor people and people of color — who make up the great majority of people incarcerated in the U.S. □

## When to shed tears

There must be a convenient spigot somewhere that allows the capitalist media to turn on and off the tears they can shed so copiously over human rights violations. When conditions dictate it, the tears flow like the Nile. At other times, they dry up like the Sahara.

Right now the collective heart of the imperialist media seems broken over repression in Syria. Before that, it was Libya. Before that, Iraq. Each outpouring of indignation was followed by a war that evidently must have fixed everything, since those tears are now gone.

Where is the yardstick used to measure these “violations of human rights”? Like the spigot, it must be somewhere. That place seems to be known to all the editors and producers of the major “mainstream” news media. Suddenly, they all know which stories to put at the top of the hour or on the front page.

Here’s a little story that didn’t make it to the top. It seems that in Thailand, which has a royal family, there’s a crime called “lèse majesté.” It means you can go to jail if you insult the king. Thailand is a country of 69 million people that boasts of a modern infrastructure in big cities like Bangkok. Do they really put people in jail for insulting King Rama IX, the world’s longest-reigning head of state?

Yes, they do. Actually, you can even go to jail for allowing someone else to insult the king.

That’s what Chiranuch Premchaiporn found out recently. She’s the executive director of an online news portal called Prachatai, which has a message board that is popular among young people. Almost 3,000 post messages on various topics there every day.

One year after a military coup in Thailand, the Computer Crimes Act was passed in 2007, which threatens jail terms for those who allow the distribution of “prohibited” material online. Among the many posts on Prachatai’s message board were some deemed in-

sulting to the king.

Premchaiporn faced a possible 20 years in jail because of this. On May 30, a criminal court found her guilty of failing to monitor the comments, but was “lenient” and gave her only an eight-month suspended sentence and a fine. The message was clear. It was a warning to the independent media to toe the line.

Had you seen or heard about this? Probably not, since most papers and networks here didn’t cover the case. They were obviously too busy worrying about people’s rights elsewhere, like in Iran and Syria.

Is there a connection between the U.S. and Thailand, other than the usual one of U.S. investors making money there?

The most striking connection is a military one. At the height of the Vietnam War, 80 percent of the Pentagon’s flights to drop explosive bombs, napalm and Agent Orange on that country originated from huge U.S. air bases in Thailand, of which there were seven. It was also a major destination for U.S. troops on R&R (rest and relaxation), which spawned a large sex industry.

After the U.S. lost the war but destroyed much of Vietnam, most of the bases were closed. But there are still at least 500 U.S. military personnel in Thailand, where they train soldiers of the same military that staged the coup in 2006. They pose a potential threat to other countries in the area, including China.

The Thai government is now back to being a constitutional monarchy again, sporting all the trappings of democracy like “free elections,” etc., but with all the necessary repression — like the army, the Computer Crimes Act and so on — still available if the ruling class needs them.

That’s why the World Bank and U.S. investors are quite happy with Thailand today and don’t think their media need to shed any tears for Chiranuch Premchaiporn. □

## MUNDO OBRERO

### El Pentágono tiene a Honduras en la mira

Continúa de página 12

dos, el Regimiento 2280 de Aviación, que vuela helicópteros Blackhawk y Chinook, está estacionado allí. Mientras tanto, el Escuadrón 6120 de la Base Aérea de la Fuerza Aérea estadounidense, mantiene una pista para aviones C-5A Galaxy, lista para todas las condiciones meteorológicas, día y noche, para posibles despliegues a gran escala de tropas de infantería. Recientemente se han construido una serie de bases más pequeñas en La Venta, Guanaja, Barra de Caratasca y Puerto Castilla para el uso de la DEA/FAST.

A medida en que el movimiento de liberación en Honduras se fortalece, gana experiencia y apoyo interno y solidaridad internacional, la oligarquía respaldada por EE.UU., y su títere el presidente de Honduras Porfirio Lobo, están en estado de pánico. ¡La reacción de Lobo a los asesina-

tos en el Río Patuca fue pedir más apoyo a la DEA/FAST!

La guerra contra las drogas es una guerra falsa con muchas personas inocentes atrapadas en el medio. Los bancos, que cada año lavan miles de millones de dólares en ganancias de las drogas — casi nunca son objeto de acusación. En Honduras, el blanco real del Pentágono es el movimiento de liberación, cuya fuerza principal es el Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular que lucha por una nueva Honduras basada en la justicia para todo el pueblo oprimido y trabajador, y estar libre del control imperialista. ¡Tropas estadounidenses y DEA/FAST, fuera de Honduras!

*Kramer, un miembro de Veteranos por la Paz, ha viajado a Honduras en delegaciones de solidaridad organizadas por el Centro de Acción Internacional. □*

## Leslie Feinberg speaks out for CeCe McDonald

### ‘The oppressed have the right to fight back!’

*The following statement was given by Leslie Feinberg on June 4 prior to the sentencing of CeCe McDonald. Feinberg was arrested later that night at a protest outside the county jail in downtown Minneapolis.*

My name is Leslie Feinberg. Many people across the U.S. and around the world are watching, and history will record, what happens today — June 4, 2012 — in this courtroom in South Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.

CeCe McDonald survived a fascist hate crime; now she’s being sentenced today as she struggles to survive an ongoing state hate crime. As Martin Luther King Jr. reminded: “Never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was legal.”

As a white, working-class, Jewish, transgender lesbian revolutionary, I will not be silent as this injustice continues! I know from the lessons of histories what it means when the state — in a period of capitalist economic crisis — enacts apartheid passbook laws, rounds up and deports immigrant workers, and gives a green light to white supremacist, fascist attacks on Black peoples — from Sanford, Florida, to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to this courtroom in South Minneapolis, Minnesota.

This prosecutor and judge are upholding the intent of the infamous white supremacist Dred Scott ruling in 1857.

That same year Frederick Douglass concluded: “Without struggle, there is no progress!”

CeCe McDonald is being sent to prison during the month of Juneteenth: celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation — the formal Abolition of “legal” enslavement of peoples of African

descent. The Emancipation Proclamation specifically spelled out the right of Black people to self-defense against racist violence.

Yet today, the judge, the prosecutor, the jailers are continuing the violent and bigoted hate crimes begun by the group of white supremacists who carried out a fascist attack on CeCe McDonald and her friends [on June 5, 2011].

CeCe McDonald is being sent to prison in June — the month when the Stonewall Rebellion ignited in the streets of Greenwich Village in 1969. From the Compton’s Uprising to the Stonewall Rebellion, defense against oppressions is a law of survival.

This Pride month, I will be bringing the demand “Free CeCe — now!” to the regional Pride march where I live. I believe many other individuals, groups and contingents will help thunder that demand in Pride marches and rallies all over the world — informing millions who take part, and millions more who support.

The prosecution hopes this struggle is over. But it is not over: Free CeCe — now! An injury to one is an injury to all! Come out against racist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBT/+ and sexist wars at home and abroad!

Justice for Trayvon Martin and victims of the Tulsa massacre, for Paige Clay and Brandy Martell! Free CeCe McDonald — now!

The oppressed and exploited have the right to fight back!

Overturn white supremacy & transphobia! Come out against the racist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBT/+ and anti-women wars at home and abroad! □

## 48 years of struggle in Colombia

Continued from page 9

democracy,” the great ally of the U.S. in Latin America. In mid-June, the prime minister will visit Bogotá accompanied by a delegation of entrepreneurs with hopes of doing big business.

Portuguese Prime Minister Passos Coelho and Juan Manuel Santos will certainly understand each other wonderfully; they speak the same political language and have the same contempt for the people. They are fruits of the same tree.

The Colombia I respect and admire is a different one, incompatible with that of the financial oligarchy and the landowners, funded and colonized by imperialism.

My Colombia is the dream of Bolívar, the one whose children fought in Boyacá and Ayacucho for freedom and independence, the Colombia I came to know and love in fellowship with the guerrillas of

the FARC-EP, in a camp with Raúl Reyes, located in the jungles of Caquetá.

I wrote earlier that it was my privilege to have known revolutionaries with the temper of the commanders Manuel Marulanda, Raúl Reyes (murdered in Ecuador in a pirate operation, with the complicity of the Pentagon, the CIA and the Mossad), Alfonso Cano, Jorge Briceño (killed in criminal bombing raids) and Simón Trinidad (abducted in Quito and extradited to the U.S.)

On the 48th anniversary of the FARC-EP, communists like them inspire admiration within my very being. They embody the courage, the hope, the tenacity and the fighting spirit of the peoples of Latin America, oppressed and once humiliated by U.S. imperialism, which is today the great enemy of humanity.

May 30

## Workers win union at ‘Hot & Crusty’

Continued from page 4

stressed the importance of workers coming together in their workplace to stand up against injustice, saying, “This is a victory for us all, particularly for immigrant workers. We have shown the bosses that when we organize, there is no stopping us. When we come together, we are strong.”

The company has responded to the workers’ organizing efforts with threats, intimidation and offers of monetary com-

ensation, all of which are unlawful under the National Labor Relations Act. Workers at other Hot and Crusty locations have subsequently come forward with similar allegations of wage and hour violations, which are currently being investigated. Recently, the company hired a union-busting firm and forbid workers from speaking to the press in response to the success of the organizing of the Laundry Workers Center. □

## MOTOR CITY PRIDE

# Activists spread word about CeCe McDonald

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

This was the second year in a row that Motor City Pride took place in downtown Detroit. For many years the celebration — a two-day festival with a “Parade for Equality” on the second day — had been held in suburban locations. This year as last, thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, and straight allies came to Hart Plaza on the city’s riverfront for the June 2-3 event. The location meant more LGBTQ people of color and lower income residents from Metro Detroit could attend.

People cheered when they saw the sparkling pink banner of the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice and the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs. Sporting rainbow triangles and slogans: “Stop the attacks on the LGBTQ community! Marriage equality now!” the banner was photographed by many marchers, spectators and journalists.

This was the first year the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO marched in Pride and had a ta-



MECAWI and Moratorium NOW! march proudly, June 3.

ble. The federation’s new president, Chris Michelakis — a straight ally — has taken the initiative in spearheading a Detroit area chapter of Pride@Work, the national AFL-CIO’s LGBTQ constituency group.

The union UNITE HERE, which primarily represents restaurant and hotel workers, marched with signs reading “LGBT + Labor, sleep with the right people.” This play on words is part of a

campaign to build awareness and support around the boycott of anti-union, anti-worker hotels, specifically Hyatt hotels, which are “destroying good jobs and exploiting immigrant workers.” (hotelworkersrising.org)

Many progressive causes were represented in the booths spread out along the riverfront. Hundreds lined up to sign ballot initiative petitions to recall the anti-LGBTQ and anti-union governor, Rick Snyder, and to amend the state constitution to protect collective bargaining. Others took literature from student activist groups, Pride@Work and support groups for LGBTQ people in African-American, Latino/a and Arab communities.



UNITE HERE activists at Detroit Pride march..

WWW PHOTOS: KRIS HAMEL

Members of MECAWI and Workers World Party distributed hundreds of leaflets informing people about the case of CeCe McDonald. Most people were totally unaware about McDonald’s ordeal. Some responses were highly emotional, from “Hearing about that ruined my day” to “Do they just expect us to be victims? I refuse to be a victim.”

McDonald, a young African-American transwoman in Minneapolis, will be sentenced June 4 for second-degree manslaughter after defending herself and friends from a vicious, anti-trans, racist attack in June 2011. The struggle to free McDonald continues. Visit supportcece.wordpress.com for more information. □

## LGBTQ Pride month begins

### Solidarity with CeCe McDonald, Bradley Manning, marriage equality



By Gerry Scoppettuolo  
Boston

The first Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer Pride month in the Occupy era begins this week. In Boston, New York, San Francisco, Raleigh, N.C., and elsewhere, activists will be organizing Pride march contingents emphasizing opposition to anti-LGBTQ bigotry, racism and war.

In Boston, Stonewall Warriors will be marching and raising banners and placards declaring solidarity and support for CeCe McDonald, Pvt. Bradley Manning, the family and movement seeking justice for Trayvon Martin, and Tarek Mehanna, who was wrongly convicted of terrorism in a Boston federal court. HIV activists from the newly reborn ACT UP Boston, as well as members from the Smedley Butler Brigade of Veterans for Peace, will also be joining the contingent.

UNITE HERE locals around the country will be marching with Pride in many cities as well. LGBTQ activists around the U.S. are supporting “Sleep With the Right People,” a coalition between the LGBTQ community and the union, by refusing to stay in or cross picket lines at hotels that

the union is organizing. This campaign was organized by Cleve Jones, a longtime activist, colleague of Harvey Milk and originator of the AIDS Quilt.

The LGBTQ movement’s continued power was recently reflected in the endorsement of marriage equality by President Barack Obama and in a federal court decision declaring the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional. DOMA, which was passed by Congress, declares that the only legally recognizable marriage is that between a man and a woman. Bill Clinton refused to veto this law when he was president. This struggle will likely expand this summer when the Supreme Court rules on the issue.

The struggle received an enormous boost internationally in May with the visit of Mariela Castro to the U.S. Castro is director of the National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX) in Cuba. Socialist Cuba held its third annual march for the International Day Against Homophobia on May 17 and continues to make gender reassignment surgery available for free. In Boston and New York members of Rainbow Flags for the Cuban Five will also be marching in Pride. □

## Transwoman CeCe McDonald sentenced Leslie Feinberg jailed in protest

Continued from page 1

McDonald was under in-home monitoring. According to Navarro and Burgess, “Between this time served and time off for good behavior, McDonald will likely spend less than two more years in prison. Additionally, McDonald was ordered to pay \$6,410 in restitution.

“The Department of Corrections has not determined where McDonald will spend the remainder of her sentence, but it is likely that she will go to one of Minnesota’s men’s prisons. In recently released federal standards on the elimination of sexual abuse in prisons, the Department of Justice notes that transgender people should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to place them where they will be in the least danger.

“Moreover, the DOJ guidelines seek to minimize the use of solitary confinement for the alleged protection of transgender prisoners. These standards apply to state prisons that receive federal funding. They may impact McDonald, who has been held in a men’s facility for the past year, and twice been sent to solitary confinement against her will.”

### Noisy outrage follows sentencing

On the eve of McDonald’s transfer to the state prison system on the night of June 4, hundreds gathered outside the Hennepin County Jail in downtown Minneapolis for a loud demonstration in solidarity with McDonald. They banged pots and pans and other objects, blew whistles and other instruments, and made enough noise for McDonald to hear the love and solidarity inside her cell.

Outraged supporters took to the streets, marched and blocked traffic for more than an hour to protest the injustice of McDonald’s sentencing and the abuses suffered by this sister at the hands of the racist,



PHOTO: FREECECEMCDONALD.TUMBLR.COM

Leslie Feinberg inside Hennepin County Jail immediately after arrest.

sexist, anti-LGBTQ “justice” system.

One protester wrote on Facebook: “Last night’s noise demo was awesome. I sense a new more militant spirit arising in the people. ... I think the militancy shown at the door as they arrested Leslie scared the jailers.”

Navarro reflected on the fight to free McDonald: “Our victory ... is the beautiful community of support that CeCe has brought together. We will keep fighting back against the incarceration of our loved ones and community members. This June marks the 43rd anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, which was led by trans women of color, and this year we’ll be celebrating CeCe’s courage and the struggles that women like her have led for decades.”

As McDonald begins to serve out her sentence for defending herself against racist, trans-hating thugs, the movement must grow to spread the word about this outrage and to demand freedom for CeCe McDonald.

For more information on McDonald’s case and how to organize or take part in efforts to win her freedom, visit supportcece.wordpress.com. □

## COLOMBIA:

# Nuevo grupo trae esperanza de cambio

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Los/as colombianos/as lanzaron un nuevo movimiento en abril que puede desafiar el dominio de la oligarquía. La Marcha Patriótica (MP) es fruto de diversos movimientos sociales en Colombia.

Antes de proceder a la entrevista de WW/Mundo Obrero con un portavoz de la Marcha Patriótica, una breve descripción de los recientes acontecimientos ayudará a los/as lectores/as a comprender el significado de este movimiento.

### Clima político actual de Colombia

Han pasado dos años desde que el presidente de Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, asumiera la Presidencia. Santos, un miembro de la clase dominante que fue educado en escuelas privadas en Colombia y universidades en Estados Unidos y Bretaña, muestra una sofisticación que su predecesor carecía. Santos ha dado la impresión de que de alguna manera es más justo y más democrático que el ex presidente y aliado paramilitar, Álvaro Uribe.

Incluso el acuerdo comercial, el TLC que Washington estaba presionando por tanto tiempo pero no pudo pasar bajo Uribe, ha sido aprobado. Esto, a pesar del reciente informe publicado por el Departamento de Estado que indica que “los más graves problemas de Colombia en el período fueron ‘impunidad y un deficiente sistema judicial, la corrupción y la discriminación social’”. (noticiasarcacol.com)

La represión estatal y la violencia contra las fuerzas progresistas y la insurgencia armada siguen sin cesar. Los líderes sindicales continúan siendo asesinados por las fuerzas paramilitares vinculadas al ejército colombiano. Las empresas transnacionales siguen robando los recursos del pueblo colombiano.

A pesar de estas continuas atrocidades, existe una polarización dentro del sistema establecido, entre Santos y Uribe, que fue el foco de un reciente editorial en el diario El Espectador. Uribe acusa a Santos por no seguir sus políticas de “Seguridad Democrática”, lo que significa un estado abiertamente represivo. En el artículo titulado “En contra de sí mismo”, el autor, Nicolás Uribe Rueda, expone la grave polarización y “el debilitamiento y la autodestrucción de los mecanismos institu-

cionales” que se supone que “resuelvan los problemas más complejos de nuestra sociedad”. (Elespectador.com)

En ese contexto menciona al Congreso y al sistema judicial, afirmando que “los colombianos desconfían por igual de los políticos y de los jueces”. Retrata un estado completamente disfuncional que opera en nombre de los intereses de diferentes individuos.

¿Podrían las fuerzas aliadas a Uribe tomar un paso contra el gobierno de Santos? Uribe ha estado viajando a Estados Unidos y varios países de Latinoamérica promoviendo sus puntos de vista y su odio hacia el presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez. ¿Es esto un intento por reunir apoyo? Sólo el tiempo dirá.

### David Flórez habla sobre de la Marcha Patriótica

Entretanto, las fuerzas políticas de izquierda se movilizan y cobran fuerza.

David Flórez, quien hasta hace poco era un líder del creciente movimiento estudiantil, es uno de varios portavoces de la MP. Flórez habló con WW/MO sobre los orígenes de la MP: “surge de un proceso de confluencia del movimiento social y popular colombiano de tiempo atrás. En primer lugar, se trata de la reconstrucción del movimiento campesino, de grandes movilizaciones en la década de 1990, de la reconstrucción del movimiento estudiantil, particularmente universitario en la década del 2000 y de la generación de movilizaciones conjuntas”.

Flórez habla de la primera gran movilización nacional y popular en 2007 contra el gobierno de Uribe en muchos departamentos del país que llevó a la fundación de un grupo de coordinación formado principalmente por organizaciones de campesinos/as. Más tarde se unieron indígenas, organizaciones de estudiantes y trabajadores/as. En 2009, después de una reunión internacional sobre paz y el intercambio humanitario, otras organizaciones se unieron al esfuerzo.

La base para unirse a era la de “entendimientos comunes sobre la paz y la solución política y la necesidad de aumentar un intercambio humanitario”.

En 2010, organizaciones que luchaban contra el modelo neoliberal también se unieron y una gran movilización tuvo lugar el

20 de julio, enfrentándose a la celebración oficial del Bicentenario de la independencia del país convocada por el gobierno.

“Era una fecha importante para nosotros porque era una fecha que utilizaron para decir que Colombia era un país próspero, con libertad, democracia y soberanía, pero para nosotros fue una oportunidad para decir todo lo contrario. Un país donde no hay soberanía, donde no hay una real democracia, donde no existe una real distribución de las riquezas, sino que al contrario, hay una gran concentración de las riquezas [en pocas manos].

“Entonces nos organizamos para hacer una conmemoración crítica al Bicentenario y realizamos lo que se llamó la Marcha Patriótica y Cabildo Abierto por la Independencia. El cabildo es un espacio de discusión política, de participación política. En aquel momento movilizamos alrededor de más de 60.000 personas en todo el país el 20 de julio del 2010 y desarrollamos 10 cabildos temáticos.

“Entonces desde el 2010 hasta la fecha venimos preparando esa iniciativa”, Flórez continúa. “Desde allí surge la MP, para la reconstrucción de un movimiento popular .... de la necesidad, de la convicción de hacer de una forma diferente la política en nuestro país”.

En 1985, las FARC-EP, junto con otras organizaciones, fundaron la Unión Patriótica, un exitoso partido electoral, como parte de una propuesta de paz y una política democrática en negociaciones con el entonces presidente Belisario Betancourt. Sin embargo, miles de sus líderes y miembros fueron asesinados/as por paramilitares y las fuerzas de seguridad del estado colombiano. El exterminio de esta organización, con más de 4.000 personas asesinadas, se llamó Operación Baile Rojo.

Teniendo en cuenta este genocidio, WW/MO le pidió a Flórez que comparara la UP con la MP. Él dijo, “La UP nace de un acuerdo entre el estado y la insurgencia colombiana, las FARC-EP. ... con el propósito de la participación en la escena política y para desarrollar las reformas que el país necesita... La MP surge de los movimientos sociales y populares y algunas organizaciones políticas”.

“Aquí hay una diferencia, pero también similitudes.... La MP, al igual que la UP significa la posibilidad para muchos secto-

res que no se sienten representados por los partidos políticos actuales, marginados, excluidos, ... [puedan encontrarse] en un espacio donde plantean su problemática, pero también plantean sus propuestas”.

### ¿Otro Baile Rojo en ciernes?

La MP no ha tenido garantías del Gobierno en cuanto a seguridad. De hecho, miembros del ejército colombiano y de otras fuerzas gubernamentales han acosado y retenido a miembros de la MP en diferentes partes del país. Mao Enrique Rodríguez, jefe de escoltas de Carlos Lozano, otro portavoz de la MP, líder del Partido Comunista Colombiano, fue muerto a tiros el 27 de abril. Hernán Henry Díaz, líder del Consejo Patriótico del Departamento del Putumayo, ha desaparecido en una región entre dos retenes del ejército. Grupos paramilitares hostigan a las comunidades campesinas en Antioquia.

En Colombia, la disidencia es un delito que se castiga con la muerte, la tortura, las desapariciones o con largas condenas de prisión. Eso no ha cambiado y eso es precisamente algo contra lo que la Marcha Patriótica organiza.

Una distinción importante entre la UP y la MP es que la MP no es un partido electoral. Es una tentativa de unir todas las fuerzas posibles en un movimiento social efectivo que pueda terminar con el sistema antidemocrático y excluyente que domina Colombia. Tiene una presencia significativa de afrocolombianos/as, indígenas, campesinos/as, trabajadores/as y estudiantes. Otra portavoz de la MP es la ex senadora Piedad Córdoba, una valiente mujer afrocolombiana que ha sido decisiva en el proceso de intercambio humanitario.

La MP ha desarrollado un documento explicando sus objetivos y sus métodos que ha sido ampliamente discutido alrededor del país. Flórez explicó cómo trabajan muy duro para involucrar a todos/as los miembros en la toma de decisiones, sin tener que depender de representantes o dirigentes. Como tal, es un ejemplo de democracia participativa.

Más información se puede obtener en su página Web, marchapatriotica.org. Verdaderamente es un desarrollo positivo en ese país tan lleno de sufrimiento, que puede servir como ejemplo para el mundo. □

# El Pentágono tiene a Honduras en la mira

Por Michael Kramer

Una delegación de activistas pro derechos humanos de Estados Unidos, organizada por la Acción de los Derechos y la Alianza para la Justicia Global, visitó recientemente el sitio de la masacre del 11 de mayo de indígenas Misquito en Honduras.

Cuatro personas murieron y otras fueron gravemente heridas mientras viajaban en canoas por el Río Patuca. El río es la única forma de transporte en un área donde no hay carreteras. Las víctimas — que no tenía nada que ver con el narcotráfico — fueron asesinadas por disparos de helicópteros durante una operación conjunta de interdicción de drogas entre EE.UU. y Honduras que fue planificada usando tácticas de contrainsurgencia de Irak y Afganistán.

En una conferencia de prensa del Departamento de Estado de EE.UU. el 17 de mayo, la administración Obama admitió que los miembros de una unidad del Equipo de Apoyo y Asesoramiento Desplegados en el Exterior (FAST por las siglas en inglés) de la Agencia Anti Drogas (DEA) de Estados Unidos estaban a bordo de los helicópteros, propiedad del Departamento de Estado, y que estaban piloteados por oficiales militares guatemaltecos y “pilotos contratados”.

La administración negó que la unidad FAST disparara. Sin embargo, no importa quién disparara, es inconcebible que el escuadrón de sicarios FAST no tuviera el mando y el control final de esta operación.

El 22 y 23 de mayo, la delegación de derechos humanos visitó la comunidad remota de Ahuas en la región Misquita de

Honduras ubicada en la costa caribeña. En un comunicado de prensa, la delegación informó que “presenció una atmósfera de terror engendrada entre pobreza extrema, en una zona donde los/as indígenas ahora están perdiendo el control de los recursos naturales”. (27 de mayo)

Agrega el comunicado de prensa, “tras la masacre, al menos un helicóptero aterrizó y al menos 10 hablantes de inglés altos, de piel clara y con limitado conocimiento del español, vistiendo uniformes de tipo militar, salieron de los helicópteros. ... Ellos apuntaban sus pistolas, amenazando con matar, y esposaron a los/as residentes del pueblo que habían acudido para ayudar a los heridos”.

### Ampliación del papel del Pentágono en Honduras

Esta atrocidad destaca el creciente pa-

pel del Pentágono en Honduras. Equipos FAST, acuartelados en la Base de Marines en Quantico, Virginia y en Kabul, Afganistán, son un brazo paramilitar del Pentágono. Son capaces de moverse con un perfil bajo dentro y fuera de países como Honduras.

Los miembros de las unidades FAST son principalmente veteranos militares de EE.UU. con experiencia en Operaciones Especiales. El hecho de que FAST aparezca en un organigrama del Departamento de Justicia de EE.UU. no significa nada, es un brazo semi-clandestino del Pentágono.

La principal base militar estadounidense en Honduras está ubicada en la Base Aérea de Soto Cano, a 60 kilómetros de Tegucigalpa, la ciudad capital. El 1er Batallón del Ejército de Estados Uni-

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