AIRLINE RIPOFF

After getting concessions from workers, airlines are laying off thousands while protecting their wealth through bankruptcy. With so much sweat equity, airline workers should be first in line as creditors.

BASEBALL CARTEL

There was no ‘Strrike and yer out’ this year. The players backed off after a hostile media blitz labeled them greedy and overpaid. Fans of the world, unite behind the players! Don’t let billionaire owners ruin the game.

HEROES BEHIND BARS

* A day in the life of Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, who sacrificed his freedom to stop terrorism against Cuba

* A new appeal by Mumia asks the court to do a simple thing: listen to the testimony of the confessed killer who admits to the crime that put Mumia on death row

BUILD SCHOOLS, NOT JAILS!

But the opposite is happening. A new report gives shocking statistics on the racist, lock ‘em up policies that have made the U.S. #1 in incarcerations.

EARTH SUMMIT

Bush hung Colin Powell out to dry when he sent him to Johannesburg to represent the United States. The South Africans blasted Powell for his White House war plan.

With each passing day, the Bush administration grows more isolated in its plan to launch a full-scale invasion of Iraq. Among the world leaders who have condemned Washington’s war plan is Nelson Mandela, the heroic symbol of South Africa’s anti-apartheid struggle.

But isolation is not enough to stop a new war, said members of a recent peace delegation to Iraq headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. A powerful people’s movement is needed, they declared.

Continued on page 8

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Coalition sets national protests:

STOP the war before it starts

By Greg Butterfield

“The world public opinion is decidedly against Bush’s war drive, it will take a mass people’s movement—in the streets, workplaces, communities, campuses and high schools—to stop the coming war.”

“We call for civilians and soldiers alike to exercise their political rights to speak out against an illegal war.”

Special report from ‘pre-war zone’ in Iraq

Emergency anti-war actions are also planned for Sept. 14-17 in Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and other cities. For more information, visit the Web site www.internationalanswer.org.

Nelson Mandela: ‘We are appalled’

On Sept. 2, former South African President Nelson Mandela denounced U.S. threats against Iraq, saying the White House was introducing chaos in international affairs, and we condemn that in the strongest terms.

Mandela said: “We are really appalled by any country, whether a superpower or a small country, that goes outside the United Nations and attacks independent countries.” (CNN.com, Sept. 2)

The governments of Germany, France, Russia and China have all publicly opposed the U.S. war plan. Washington’s closest ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, has not taken a position on the invasion plan, though he agreed with Bush that the Iraqi government must be “replaced.”

No members of the U.S.-led coalition that carried out the 1991 Gulf War have signed on for Bush’s adventure. All fear that a U.S. invasion of Iraq, lacking UN cover or any credible pretext, could ignite a new wave of struggle among the oppressed peoples of the Middle East and popular anti-war movements in the U.S. and Europe, like during the Vietnam War.

European leaders soon to face re-election, like Germany’s Gerhard Schroeder, are also motivated by...
Support an independent, working-class voice—now more than ever!

The Workers World Supporter Program is 23 years young. For a quarter-century WW Supporters have helped sustain an independent, working-class newspaper free to speak the truth that's censored by the Big Mac media conglomerates. Supporters have helped to put WW on the World Wide Web, giving millions of new readers the chance to get a socialist outlook on world events.

Today, as the capitalist econom-

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- $100 to become a WW Sustainer
- Please send me more information about the Supporter Program

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Emergency protest against war Sept. 14

By Nancy Mitchell
San Francisco

Anti-war activists, community groups and the labor movement in the Bay Area are working to build an emergency march and rally for Sept. 14 under the slogan: “No new war against Iraq!”

Since a call went out for national emergency actions to stop the war before it starts, San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the International ANSWER coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) has received many emails, phone calls and offers of support. Similar protests are planned in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Seattle and other cities.

The Bay Area labor movement has enthusiastically taken up Sept. 14. Longshore union ILWU Local 10 is an initiator of the protest. Several other unions and labor leaders have endorsed, and the San Francisco Labor Council endorsed the action and passed a resolution against a new war.

The Labor Council resolution recalled Bay Area labor’s role in stopping a new war against Iraq in 1998 and resolved to “reafﬁrm and join the growing movement in opposition to any U.S. war against Iraq.” (For full text of the resolution, see the Sept. 5 Workers World or http://www.workers.org/ww/2002/090505.php.)

The resolution linked the struggle against the war with the ILWU’s battle against the employers and government.

As the labor movement here gears up to help defend the ILWU in its intensifying struggle against the Pacific maritime bosses and the Bush administration’s threats of military intervention in the ports, all are acutely aware of the negative effect that a new war would have, both on the workers abroad and the struggles here at home.

Among the many other sponsors of the Sept. 14 San Francisco march and rally are American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; National Lawyers Guild-Bay Area Chapter; Rev. Dorsey Blake, California Prison Focus; Sacramento Valley Labor Committee for Peace & Justice; International Action Center; Global Exchange; Kriksi Worthington, Berkeley City Council member; Committee for a New Columbia; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer, S.F. Labor Council; Howard Wallace, organizer, Health Care Workers, Local 250; Gloria La Riva, President, Typographical Sect.; N. Calif. Mediaworkers, Local 39521; San Jose Peace Center, and many others.

In addition to opposing a new war on Iraq, the Sept. 14 protest is demanding: government hands off our unions; defend civil rights and civil liberties; stop racist scapegoating; money for jobs, health care, housing and schools, not for war.

The Sept. 14 march will gather at UN Plaza at 11 a.m. and march at 12 noon to Jefferson Square Park, Turk & Gough Sts. For more information, call 415-821-6545.

NYC police kill another unarmed Black man

By Michelle Quintus
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Police continued on August 27 when cops from the 79th Precinct in the community of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, shot and killed Ernest Prather, a 39-year-old African American man. Residents who knew him described him as an intelligent, nonviolent man who rode a bicycle around the neighborhood.

Just before the killing, Prather had been waiting at a corner that serves food to the homeless on Tuesdays, the “So Great a Salvation Ministries” located at 345 Franklin Ave. Police were called to the church after a verbal dispute over some juice.

Laura Prather had suggested to her husband that the argument was “not worth it,” she shook hands with a police officer when she called to report the argument. When Prather tried to return to the church at 2:49 p.m., he was met by four cops with their guns drawn on the corner of Franklin and Greene avenues. He lifted up his T-shirt to reveal a bright orange plastic squid gun in his waistband. Many witnesses say he never even reached for the toy. Any resident carries on hot summer days to keep cool.

A witness who identified himself as Mr. Carter has lived in the neighborhood for 38 years, said Prather kept repeating, “Look, this is not a gun; this is not a gun,” with his hands raised. Then, Carey said, the cops started shooting.

All witnesses to the shooting reported six to 10 shots to the abdomen.

When this reporter arrived at the scene just minutes before 3 p.m., Prather’s body lay motionless on the sidewalk surrounded by six police vehicles. His eyeglass case was there, but no “realistic-looking toy gun,” as cops described it, was present anywhere on the sidewalk or near Prather’s body.

Meanwhile, cops were pushing witnesses—including Laura Prather and many neighborhood children—back with loaded guns. Unarmed community members shouted, “Diallo!” and “You can’t go around killing someone.”

Witnnesses were pointing at the man they called the shooter, who had already removed his badge and the top of his uniform to be unidentifiable.

An ambulance arrived shortly after 3 p.m., late enough for Prather to bleed to death. Contrary to police reports that say he died later at Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center, Prather was taken from the scene of his murder in a body bag, as evidenced by a Daily News photo of Aug. 28 and many witnesses.

By 3:05 p.m., all witnesses had been pushed back to where they could not see the crime scene. Community residents were not allowed within two blocks of the shooting for hours, even to go home.

Prather’s killers were taken to a nearby hospital and, according to the Aug. 28 New York Times, treated for “trauma.”

Later that night, Laura Prather, along with her husband’s friends and community members, lit a single white candle in his honor on the corner of Franklin and Greene avenues where he had died.

At this spontaneous street corner memorial, one outraged resident, Zakiyah Brown, said: “We’re all tired of the police brutality against Black people. I’m tired of the cops shooting down Black men. It’s got to end. ... It’s got to end now.”

Workers World Party to meet on ‘Capitalism in Crisis’

By Deirdre Griswold

The criminal corporate ruling class has frequent strategy sessions at which its members and hired brains define and refine how they will deal with the problems of the day to obtain the desired result: keeping the workers and oppressed off balance so that exploitation can go on without unpleasant inter-ruptions.

Of course, they don’t put it this way. But that’s the essence behind all their obscure symposiums and dialogues on the economy, politics, foreign affairs and “civil society.”

Workers, on the other hand, have few opportunities to get together and discuss what is in their class interests in an envi-ronment free of pressure from bourgeois institutions of one kind or another.

The need to do this is greater than ever. The capitalist economy is in a mess, and the corrupt, big business government of George W. Bush thinks it can keep the sys-tem from tanking by launching an unend-ing, global war against the oppressed countries. What will happen to millions of people is hanging in the balance.

So Workers World Party has called an emergency conference on “Capitalism in Crisis” in New York City on Sept. 21-22. That’s where progressive people should be who want to maximize their skills and effectiveness in fighting against war, racism and the new form of repression cloaked as “homeland security.”

It will also take up the broader question of how to build revolutionary movements to change society from the bottom up, to end the scourge of war, of class division, and all the extra kinds of oppression that make life hell for so many people.

Fill out the coupon below, come to the conference, and get prepared for the struggles that lie ahead.

Conference in New York Sept. 21-22

Workers World Party
55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994 • register@wwpublish.com • www.workers.org

San Francisco

RAMSEY CLARK VISITS VICTIMS OF U.S. BOMBS AT HOSPITAL IN BASRA, IRAQ

PVN PHOTO: JOHNNIE STEVENS

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Sat., September 21

9 am Registration
9:30 am-8 pm Panels and Workshops

Sun., September 22

10 am-2 pm Panels and Workshops

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

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Owners push back baseball union

Players up against billionaire cartel

By Mike Gimbel

The billionaire "good ol' boy" cartel and the owners of professional baseball are waging a war on the waterfront, trying to impose new technology to control labor -- and with the support of government. The owners are trying to close ranks against the unions and would have, depending on whether the TV station is public or private, a monopoly on the television rights to the games. They have made noises about challenging a franchise's right to sell television contracts. This was one reason the owners have allowed some of the better minor league players, unaffiliated with major league franchises, to become "free agents" after three to five years. While some small-market owners have marched to a different tune regarding the big-market owners, they have all been united with them to get the players to sign for "paying revenue sharing." The owners' proposal of a "luxury tax" for revenue sharing is a back-door attempt to introduce a salary cap, which would reduce the players' ability to bargain for better salaries. Taxes which would financially penalize a big-market team for signing a player away from a small-market team if the total player contracts signed with a particular franchise exceeded a certain amount. The effect would chill the player's ability to negotiate a market-value contract.

In other words, the money saved by holding down player contracts would pay for "revenue sharing." The actual local television revenue would not be shared at all.

Free market versus socialism? Not! Some progressives might be confused, since the players are demanding that capitalism function in a free-market manner while the owners might seem to be proposing a socialist solution to share the wealth. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The owners of big business have always sought "socialism" for the rich with government handouts, tax breaks and other largesse. All the players are doing is attempting to maintain the bargaining power with these powerful billionaires. The owners that they won in the 1976 arbitration decision.

The negotiation just ended was the ninth since the 1976 decision. To illustrate how hard the owners have pressed the players' union for concessions, each of the eight previous negotiations resulted in a strike. In every negotiation the union has been forced to compromise in some manner and give up "free agency" in bits and pieces. In this current negotiated contract, under very difficult conditions for the players and with some owners wanting to get back the union busting, the players made concessions on the luxury tax salary cap. But they were able to

The Yankees bring in about $875 million annually from local television contracts because they play in a metropolis. Local television contracts count, supposedly they needed the money to be able to put a competitive product on the field. But there is no guarantee that money from revenue sharing wouldn't go into the owner's pocket, rather than for signing contracts with the better players.

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Workers must fight for property rights
concessions won’t stop airline bankruptcies

By Michelle Quintus
Local Council 5 Representative of Flight Attendants
New York City

It seems not a day goes by without some mention in the media about trouble in the airline industry. President George W. Bush’s attempts to prohibit airport security workers from organizing into unions, the rise in airline CEO salaries while they claim loss of profits, the mergers that neglect worker contracts, worker layoffs and bankruptcies—all have become regular topics.

“Never before about news relating to the airlines rests on a myth: that labor is the cause of ongoing financial crises in the airlines—and that the workers are to blame,” a New York Daily News article about the airlines stated. “The owners perform? The players are not.”

The players were fighting for the fans and against the owners’ ability to coerce individual cities, which you would never know if you listened to the public information available during these difficult negotiations. The owners were able to turn many against the players because the fans did not see how their interest was in any way connected to that of the players.

Look for new struggle in four years

The settlement just reached is for four years. The union certainly wanted a longer contract, but the owners want as many shots as possible to weaken the union. The owners did not get everything they wanted, but they don’t feel they have gotten enough. In four years, look for an even more difficult negotiation.

The agreement has not satisfied the owners’ thirst. One concession the players made was to not challenge the owners if they decide to “contract” franchises after the current contract ends in 2006. The owners believe that when the franchise owners will be sure to use the threat of “contraction”—which would result in fewer individual teams, causing the owners to frame the public terms of the contract as “millionaire players vs. billionaire owners.” This put the players in a very bad negotiating situation. As a result, the owners were able to use public opinion against them during the negotiations.

The players’ successful struggle to save their franchise was never used by the union. The cities involved and the millions of fans of these teams could have rallied to the players’ side had there been an issue to rally for.

Even George Steinbrenner, owner of the richest franchise in baseball, has used a bogus threat to move the New York Yankee team out of the city if he didn’t get a stadium on the West Side of Manhattan—which would have cost the public more than $1 billion.

Workers must fight for property rights

Concessions won’t stop airline bankruptcies

The current contract postpones this confrontation for four years. The owners’ strategies in gaining concessions in previous contracts will only whet their appetite for the next round. The greedy and overpaid owners will again call the players greedy and overpaid.

Who ever went to a stadium to watch the owners perform? The players are not only the performers, they are the product. Only under capitalism can this destruction exist: parasitic owners publicly exploiting that purport to represent a community be publicly owned?

That, of course, can only happen under socialism. As long as capitalism exists, the public will be subject to the owners’ greed, the owners’ threats to move if they are not allowed to reach into your pockets and financially bleed the communities they supposedly represent.

It all comes down to that old labor song, “Which side are you on?” There should be just one side for the working-class public: the players’ side.
Prison news keeps getting worse

U.S. substitutes jails for schools

By Heather Cottin

In an Aug. 28 report titled “Cellblocks or Classrooms,” the Justice Policy Institute, a think tank located in Washington, found that spending for prisons accelerated at a critical pace over the past 17 years.

Overall, state spending on “corrections” grew at six times the rate of state spending on higher education. Between 1985 and 2000, the increase in state spending on prisons was nearly double that of the increase to state colleges—$20 billion versus $10.7 billion. The total increase in spending on higher education by states was 24 percent, compared with 166 percent for prisons.

The report also highlighted the prison-industry complex, a rapidly growing business for prisons. A disproportionate number of Black youths, who would be better served by expenditures for education, health care or housing, instead locked up in penal colonies. Researchers reported recently that about 3 percent of the U.S. adult population is in the prison system.

The Electrical Workers union (UE), fighting the racist/capitalist depredations of the prison-industrial complex, notes that while African Americans make up 12 percent of the total U.S. population, they compose 51 percent of prisoners. (www.rankoffice-ue.org)

Angela Davis has written: “More than 70 percent of the imprisoned population are people of color. ... The fastest-growing group of prisoners are Black women and Native American prisoners are the largest group per capita.” (Masked Racism: Incarceration on the Prison Industrial Complex)

According to the Justice Policy report, “In 2000, there were an estimated 1,911,600 African American men in prison and jail, and 603,000 in higher education.” In some states the ratio is more appalling.

In Pennsylvania, where Mumia Abu-Jamal has been on death row for 20 years, spending on higher education has increased by 25 percent since 1985 while spending for prisons has skyrocketed by 413 percent. In New York state, spending for higher education decreased by 25 percent, while spending for prisons increased by 137 percent.

Prisons are big business

In a depressed U.S. economy, prisons are still big business. Westinghouse, AT&T, Sprint, MCI, Smith Barney, American Express, General Electric and Cor...
A day in the life of a political prisoner

By Alicia Jrapko

This article describing the prison life of one of the five Cuban political prisoners held in the United States for monitoring the terrorist activities of right-wing Cubans in Miami also appeared in Spanish in the Cuban newspaper Granma.

The living conditions of five Cuban political prisoners held in U.S. prisons is one of the greatest preoccupations of millions of Cuban people. The five are accused of espionage, among other things. They received long sentences—from 15 years to double life terms. Since they were sentenced last December, they have been in federal prisons across the United States in different federal prisons. The U.S. government obviously separated them in an attempt to break the strength and resolve they had shown throughout their trial and sentencing.

Conditions in the federal prison system vary from one facility to another. Their severity depends on several factors, including the political climate of the state and the level of security of a prisoner’s unit. Gerardo Hernández Noldelo faces the most severe sentence: two life terms plus 80 months. He is in Lompoc federal prison in California.

Lompoc is called the “New Rock” because it replaced the infamous Alcatraz prison in San Francisco Bay. Prisoners deemed to have had some type of “disciplinary” problem in other prisons are often sent to Lompoc. If after 18 months their behavior improves, they are assigned to federal prisons that are supposedly less severe.

Like all the other prisoners at Lompoc, Gerardo starts his day at 5:30 a.m. That is when the guards automatically open the bars of all the cells and the prisoners can go to the common areas of their unit. Between 6:15 and 6:30 they are called for breakfast. After breakfast the prisoners return to their cells or to the common areas, and around 7:45 are called to go to work.

In all federal prisons, all prisoners have a job. Those who do not have a job in prison production is called “Unicor.” In Unicor five factories are located, one cable joiner factory, a print shop and a sign factory. Lompoc there are three factories: one cable joiner factory, one painting factory and one sign factory. With the exception of Unicor, each prisoner makes 23 cents to $1.15 per hour. Gerardo makes approximately 350 cents per hour.

Close to the factories, all prisoners have to work. The corporation that operates all prison production is called “Unicor.” In Lompoc there are three factories: one cable joiner factory, one print shop and a sign factory. The three factories are located inside the yard. All movement of prisoners takes place under close surveillance at designated times, after being announced on loudspeakers. At 10 p.m. all the cells are closed until the next morning.

The weekends provide some break from the routine. It is then that Gerardo tries to get some rest in the yard for exercise and some sun. Sunday also means the possibility of a phone call to Cuba.

In the last two months, Gerardo has been by himself in his cell because his “celly”—cellmate—was sent to another prison. Lompoc is a very old prison and some of the cells are small, so this is a great advantage. It not only provides him a little more comfort, but he can also decorate the cell to his own taste.

Gerardo mostly works on a computer, and sometimes he helps inputting orders, keeping records, rectifying orders, passing them to production, closing orders that are sent to clients, making sales and order status reports, and responding to any requests for data.

At a very early age, Gerardo has grown used to the idea of being an artist, and he has developed a great sense of humor. Gerardo mostly works on a computer, and sometimes he helps inputting orders, keeping records, rectifying orders, passing them to production, closing orders that are sent to clients, making sales and order status reports, and responding to any requests for data.

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Mugabe applauded, Powell jeered
Mass anger breaks through at Earth Summit

By Leslie Feinberg

Hiflowery speech were edible, the world’s poor could feast on the rhetoric produced by the World Summit on Sustainable Development—dubbed the Earth Summit. Unfortunately, the conference was short on substance.

The United Nations conference drew some 65,000 delegates from close to 200 countries to Johannesburg, South Africa, Aug. 26 to Sept. 4. This was not an international convention of activists working to protect the world’s species. The real clout at this par-
lay came from behemoth transnationals like McDonald’s, Nike, Nestle and British American Tobacco, as well as the oil giants.

(Guardian Unlimited, Aug. 26)

Environmental activists, expressing anger and alarm at the final back-room deal cut by officials, denounced the summit as “a waste of time and money.” (CNN.com, Sept. 3)

The 71-page “action plan” expected to pass muster by summit delegates at the close of the conference is all gums and no teeth.

“It’s worse than we could have imagined,” Steve Sawyer, climate director for Greenpeace, told Reuters. (Sept. 3)

The U.S. team filibustered and stonewalled until this humble formula was approved. But the U.S. leadership did acquiesce on a recommendation to try to halve the number of people living without sanitation by 2015 and reduce the loss of endangered animals and plants by 2010. Today, one in four mammal species—key gauges of the ecosystem health—is at high risk of ceasing to exist in the near future. (BBC, July 15)

Of course, even with a second term in office, Bush and Co. won’t be in the Oval Office to be held accountable by them.

And the final resolutions that the con-
ference approves are not legally binding in any way, shape or form.

Actions speak louder than words

The Bush delegation dug in their heels whenever they heard two words they found particularly odious: timetables and targets. U.S. officials said they prefer consensus, voluntary partnerships with big business.

“It’s true that targets for the sake of tar-
gets has never been our objective,” Assis-
tant U.S. Secretary of State John Turner told media at the summit. “Implementa-
tion was our real focus.” (Washington Post, Sept. 3)

Did he say it with a straight face? The actions of the Clinton-Gore and Bush admin-
istrations speak louder than wordplay.

The landmark Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro a decade ago put the environmen-
tal crisis and poverty on its agenda. But many of its goals were never implemented. Some argue that Rio helped set the stage for the Kyoto protocol that aimed to di-

minish carbon dioxide emissions. Yet these gas emissions have risen by almost 10 per-
cent since then. (Guardian Unlimited)

And the number of people in the devel-
opment world scrabbling together an exist-
ence on less than a dollar a day has not changed since the Rio conference. (Washington Post, Aug. 28)

According to the Aug. 27 Washington Post, “In the 10 years since the Earth Sum-
mit in Rio de Janeiro, treaties protecting biodiversity and limiting climate change have languished. However, the United States is seeking to erase specific targets and timetables on many topics through-
out the plan, which includes 150 pages ad-
ressing biodiversity, food security, clean water and health care.”

Almost as soon as Bush went from roam-
ing his ranch to pacing the West Wing, he abrogated the international Kyoto treaty that would have reduced global greenhouse gas emissions by just 1 percent. (Guardian Unlimited, Sept. 2)

In addition, “U.S. officials have also been criticized for promoting privatiza-
tion—the sale of government-owned com-
panies to investors—and arrangements be-
tween governments and large companies to extend such basic services as health care, water and electricity to developing coun-
tries.” Privatization has resulted in “huge profits for big companies, shoddy service and skyrocketing prices that poor people cannot afford.” (Washington Post, Aug. 30)

Turning down the volume

The neo-colonial sovereigns who dom-
ninate Africa know full well that the confer-
ence is taking place smack in the middle of a terrible famine in the southern region of the continent, caused in part by climate changes that have reduced rainfall, a lack of potable water and sanitation. (Guardian Unlimited)

An estimated 18 million of South Africa’s 44 million people live without adequate sanitation. (Washington Post.com)

Almost half the population in South Africa today survives on less than $2 a day.

If the stated objectives of those who wield the greatest power at this summit— alleviating poverty and taking steps to deal with the environmental crisis—were heart-
feeling, they would have been held in the opulent suburban enclave of Sandton behind bales of barbed wire, armored vehicles and a mile-long wall. But the neo-colonial summit was a whites-only enclave during apartheid rule. Nearby Alexandra is an impoverished and densely overpopulated Black town-
ship, emblematic of the fact that capital ownership by a white minority has not really changed since the victorious politi-
cal revolution of the Black majority.

In the near future, the world’s Black leaders would have the heads of states of countries that have looted Africa for cen-
turies been able to face themselves in the mirrors of their marbled bathrooms at the plush Michaelangelo Hotel in Sandton Square, knowing their responsibility for the crumbling poverty just a stone’s throw away? Would the AIDS epidemic that is par-
ticularly ravaging Africa have been fea-
tured at the top of the agenda, not buried at the bottom?

And, most importantly, wouldn’t George W. Bush—heir of state of the wealthiest imperial empire—tear himself away from his month-long holiday at his Summer Palace in the Lone Star state to play a lead-
ing role? Instead, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell was expected to deliver a five-
minute speech. Stormy protests drowned out the Bush administration’s envoy and jeered him off the stage.

The first loud round of heckles and boos interrupted Powell when he de-
clared that Iraq had not complied with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell’s envoy. He entered with the return of sovereignty over Iraq’s whole ter-
ritori, but Bush’s closest associ-
ates have tried to build a case for invading Iraq. Their main play was to claim that Iraq was developing “weapons of mass de-
struction.”

But some UN weapons inspectors, who toured Iraqi facilities throughout the 1990s, publicly refuted these claims, say-
ing that Iraq did not have such weapons or the capacity to build them.

Former U.S. Marine Scott Ritter, who headed an inspection team, even admitted that they were little more than spy opera-
tions for Washington. Ritter said the in-
spectors fed information on politically and militarily sensitive cues to the CIA for use in building their 1998 U.S. “Desert Fox” operation.

Since the U.S. withdrew the inspectors in preparation for that assault, the Iraqi government has understandably refused to let them back in.

Grasping for another justification, Ch-
eny gave a belligerent speech Aug. 26 de-
claiming a “pre-emptive strike” was nec-

erary because Iraq might someday de-
velop a nuclear weapon. Cheney said fur-
ther that UN inspections would serve no purpose.

On Sept. 2, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said the return of UN inspec-
tors was the only way to prevent war, and could happen, but only as part of a “com-
prehensive settlement” that ends U.S.-
based sanctions, which have killed more than 1 million people since 1991, and the return of sovereignty over Iraq’s whole ter-
itory.
A trip through Iraq in blistering late-August heat makes it crystal clear that the Bush Administration is already waging a “pre-war” war that includes bombings almost on a daily basis.

To design to degrade Iraq’s potential for air defense and to monitor its military response to air assaults, these bombings are taking a toll. People are getting killed and wounded regularly, but you would never know it if your source of information is the Western mass media.

This writer went to Iraq on Aug. 25 as part of a fact-finding anti-war delegation led by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. The delegation flew into Iraq’s “no-fly zones” in the north and south of the country for five days. In those five days, the U.S. bombed Iraq on five separate occasions.

True to form, the U.S. media said almost nothing about these daily bombings. Each day after we returned from the site of the latest bombing we would check the web sites of the Western media. Nary a peep about the lawless aggression waged from the skies by U.S. warplanes. Instead, the U.S. media focused more on the killing of civilians in the area of the country near the border with Iran where the Pentagon said it was targeting military installations.

The decision to create the “no-fly zones” was not authorized by the United Nations. Rather it was the decision of the major imperialist countries— the United States, Britain and France— to refuse to allow Iraq to fly its own aircraft in the areas of the countries where almost all of its oil is located. But of course the imperialists could fly their planes in those zones. These zones were created in 1992. France later changed its policy toward Iraq and withdrew its warplanes in the mid-1990s.

While the delegations were visiting one of the wounded at the Training Hospital in Basra, U.S. warplanes struck again—attacking Mosul in the north and Al-Nukhhay, south of Baghdad.

The delegation managed to fly into Mosul about 36 hours after the strike. Mosul is a beautiful and historic city in the far north of Iraq. It borders the predominately Kurdish area and is located inside the no-fly zone.

The civilian airport had been without radar since the 1991 Gulf War. It had been largely non-functional until recently, when the government decided to defy the no-fly zone and resume daily flights into the city from Baghdad. The assumption was that U.S. aircraft would not shoot down civilian airliners.

U.S. warplanes have not yet shot down any passenger planes, but on Aug. 27 two powerful missiles took out the airport’s radar that guides the civilian airliners in their takeoff and landing and as they travel through the surrounding air space.

The delegation went through the wreckage of the totally destroyed radar, which lay in crumpled ruins not far from the runway. The radar was very old, made up of balkanized parts from earlier rudimentary radar systems. Clearly, it was not a sophisticated military-type radar.

The civilian terminal was about 200 yards from where the missiles hit. The force of the explosion shattered the windows along the waiting rooms.

**Right to air safety**

Barred from most trade and commerce for 12 years, Iraq has had to submit potential contracts for equipment to a UN sanctions committee. Iraq has had a pending request before the sanctions committee to import a modern radar for Mosul airport, but so far the U.S. has blocked the application. Iraqi technicians cobbled the old radar pieces together and installed this electronic relic on June 4. Now that U.S. missiles have taken out the radar, Iraqi civilian passengers must fly blind into Mosul—an area that has more bad weather than most parts of the country.

As we walked through the snarled rolls of metal in the airport, it was hard not to wonder what the effect would be if the shoe were on the other foot. What would be the emotional and psychological impact on the people in the United States if the radar they depended on for air safety were destroyed without provocation and without warning by fighter planes from a foreign power?

**A question, of course, answers it. But the Bush administration is hoping that the demonization and racist images of Iraq will successfully prevent people from asking this question.**

Since December 1998, the U.S. has bombed Iraq regularly without mass protest. The U.S. pulled UN weapons inspectors out of the country on Dec. 16, 1998, and began a four-day campaign that included the launching of 400 cruise missiles and dropping of 600 precision bombs on Iraq.

Iraq claims that more than 1,900 people have been killed by U.S. bombs since the Gulf War ended.

As the Bush administration prepares for a massive invasion and bombing campaign under the doctrine of preemptive war, it is clear to the people everywhere that “peace” is just fancy words for aggression.

 Ramsey Clark’s visit to Iraq included an explicit anti-war message. The mass media around the world gave coverage to the trip, and there was limited coverage in the U.S. Clark appeared live on three consecutive CNN segments on Aug. 29, where he was accused by CNN correspondent Wolf Blitzer of being “used by Saddam Hussein.”

Clark ridiculed the accusation, replying: “You can still say what you believe, you can still stand for what is right. If you don’t do that, who are you, what do you stand for, and what’s going to happen to the world?”

In his interviews in the media, Clark insisted that the decisive factor in stopping the war was the mobilization of opposition inside the United States. “We can stop the Bush administration but we must act now. People everywhere must mobilize for the Oct. 20 March on Washington. We cannot let the government speak in our name and carry out this war that aims to dominate the people of the Middle East and the natural resources of this region.”

Brian Becker is a co-director of the International Action Center. He was a member of a U.S. anti-war delegation that traveled throughout Iraq from Aug. 18 to 26. The delegation also included Ramsey Clark, Johnnie Stevens, co-director of the Peoples Video Network; and Maru Verheegen-Hilliard, attorney and co-founder of the D.C.-based public-interest law firm, Partnership for Civil Justice.
n new war against Iraq—keep the government off the docks!” The voices of longshore workers and anti-war activists, defenders of civil liberties and the environment, raised these demands in union at a protest against President George W. Bush’s visit to Stockton, Calif., on Aug. 25.

It’s a natural alliance for a movement that shows signs of growing and maturing. The struggles to stop the union round-ups and disappearances of Arabs, Muslim and South Asian people in this country, to halt Attorney General John Ashcroft’s war on civil liberties, and to put an end to Bush’s “endless war” are all organically linked with the battle of the ILWU.

Enter Tom Ridge—pit bull for the Bush administration’s Office of Homeland Security. ILWU International President James Spinosa reported that Ridge interrogated himself just a few days into the negotiations on behalf of the bosses. Ridge threatened the union president and other leaders that any disruptions following the expiration of the contract would be bad for the national interest.

This is a head-up for the labor movement. Will any union or activist who militantly defends the rights of the workers, multinational and working class be slapped with the label of “terrorists”? Is a union that’s forced to strike for workplace justice a threat to “national security”?

There’s a big catch-22 here. The U.S. has been in a perpetual state of national security alert since Harry S. Truman declared a state of emergency during the Korean War in 1950. The “emergency,” which the executive branch issues as a diklatik to give itself extraordinary powers, is periodically renewed. Wall Street wants it that way, because who knows what otherwise illegal measures might need to be taken around the world—or at home—to feed its insatiable drive for profits.

Today the Bush administration has a palette of five hues of alert levels, one of which is always in effect. According to the government and the big-business interests it champions, there’s never a good time for workers to fight back in their own class interests. Strikes will always disrupt capitalist accumulation of value, and isn’t that what life is all about?

So Tom Ridge is trying to lean on the longshore workers. Once again, the s/u tragedy is being used as an excuse to clamp down on the working class right here. The state is beefing up its powers as a weapon in class war.

The battle of the ILWU is triply important. It’s a fight for justice for dock workers. It’s a frontline struggle to defend the civil liberties of all—including Arabs, Arab, South Asian and Muslim people, and the working class as a whole. And it’s bringing the most conscious workers to the barricades against the Penta- gon’s war—really the capitalist globalizers’ war—against working people around the world.

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Haiti tense as U.S. blocks aid

By G. Dunkel

While life in Haiti grows grimmer for most people, pressure from the U.S. is growing more intense. The U.S. government, quite illegally, is blocking $500 million in loans and international aid because it doesn’t like the way Haiti counted the votes in a parliamen-
tary election two years ago. $500 million is roughly equivalent to the yearly budget of Haiti’s government.

$1.8 billion of the $500 million is a loan for the International American Develop-
ment Bank. Shockingly, Haiti has had to pay interest on this loan, which was des-
ignated for its water, education and health needs, even though the money still sits in Washington.

Working through the Organization of American States, the Bush administration is pressuring the government and Fanmi Lavalas party of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to come to an agreement with its opposition, the National Democratic Con-
vergence, over holding elections sometime this year.

The OAS has also given Haiti 60 days to arrest the leaders of the popular organiza-
tions in the slums of its major cities. These leaders, historically Aristide’s most solid base of support, have been implicated in attacks on Convergence leaders after an assassination attempt was made on Aris-
tide last December.

On Aug. 18, the Miami Herald, which exerts a lot of influence on U.S. policy in Latin America, ran a headline: “Haitians’ growing discontent with Aristide may force U.S. to act.” Certainly the Haitian government has to regard this headline as a threat, if not a prophecy.

The economic pressures on Haiti are in-
tense. Remittances from Haitians living abroad, especially in North America and Europe, who support family members at home are drying up as the worldwide re-
cession cuts into jobs and wages. Fuel prices have shot up and supply is scarce, leading to only three hours a day of electric service in many areas of the country, busi-
ness closings and layoffs of even skilled workers like welders, electricians and me-
chanics. Higher fuel prices mean higher transportation costs, which boosts the price of almost everything.

Even a little inflation causes a great deal of hardship for a country where most workers make less than one dollar a day.

Ben Dupuy, secretary general of the Na-
tional Popular Party, pointed out in a press conference Aug. 27 that the Haitian gov-
ernment has cracked down on trade unions, sold off national territory to Dominican businesses fronting for U.S. interests that intend to set up free trade zones, incorpo-
rated Macoutes, Duvalierists and other supporters of former dictatorships into the government, and adopted neo-liberal re-
forms that have opened up Haiti’s econ-
omy to more exploitation from abroad.

But even that is probably not enough to satisfy an imperial power that concerns it-
self with which political party in Haiti has a majority on the city councils of places like L’Estere, Port-de-Faix, St. Marc, Petit-
Goave and Cap-Haitien.

“We know that the United States, espe-
cially with the Bush administration, thinks it is the world’s policeman,” Dupuy said. “If they think that the OAS can’t do the job, they may act unilaterally, as they always do, and invade.”

Milosevic in The Hague: An old joke, but is it funny?

As the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia reopened its proceedings for alleged war crimes against Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic at the end of August, a fly on the wall might have uttered a joke about The Hague chamber.

It tells of a slave-rebellion leader cap-
turing the Romans. Faced with cer-
tain death from the lions at the Coliseum, he asked for a chance to fight, whatever the odds. The Roman emperor answered: “I’ll give you a chance. You’ll be buried up to your neck in the sand. If you nevertheless manage to defeat the lion, we’ll set you free.”

Deciding to die fighting, when the lion leapt at him the slave leader quickly

ducked. Then as the beast skidded past him, the leader dove into a manhole and grasped the lion’s testicles in his teeth, hanging on with all his strength. The lion bled to death. The slave leader demanded his freedom.

“Oh no,” said the Roman emperor. “That doesn’t count. You didn’t fight fair.”

Milosevic has been in court with min-
imal help against a mighty NATO-creat-
ed machine since February when he am-
senting himself and his country before a phalan of hostile witnesses backed by a hostile court. He has to cope with his own too-high blood pressure and the threat of serious illness under miserable prison conditions. He must prepare his case from his cell.

When he demolishes the lies of a wit-
ness, as he has done so far, the judge berates him for being “too aggressive.”

The Western media, which at first gave heavy coverage to what was to be the “trial of the century,” has now backed away from showing how strong Milosevic’s arguments are as he proves that NATO was the aggressor.

On Sept. 13 the prosecution is sup-
posed to finish its presentation regarding Part I of the trial: the Kosovo war.

Milosevic will then have two weeks to study the material and present his response at the end of September as the trial gets ready to move into Part II: Bosnia.

Parliament says Slovak CP still legal

When 43 of 80 voting parliamentarians supported a repressive amendment on July 10, it looked like the vote to criminalize the Communist Party of Slo-
vakia’s electoral campaign. But Slovak President Rudolf Schuster refused to sign the bill, which would have made it illegal to “propagate communism” in Slovakia.

On Aug. 19, although the amendment has the support of the Social Democrats and the Democratic Left, it got the votes of only 63 of the 150 members of parlia-

dment. The CP believes it has a good chance in the Sept. 20-21 national elections of breaking the 5-percent barrier for the first time and winning seats in parliament.

Letter from Prague

After running the article “Czech CP says: Call off NATO meeting, use funds for flood relief,” (Workers World, Aug. 20), we received the following letter from Prague:

“Thanks for your solidarity. Readers can obtain a free sample copy of the September issue of Postmark Prague (includes articles on Czech Communists

and the floods, this month’s Slovak elections and the Prague NATO summit in November) from Postmark Prague, PO Box 41, 182 00 Prague 8, Czech Republic. Email: postmarkprague@email.cz.”

U.S. out of Vieques!

Demonstrators packed the sidewalk at 42nd Street and Broadway Sept. 3 as thousands of Times Square commuters and visitors passed by. They were demanding the U.S. government stop the Navy’s bombing of Vieques.

“Vieques yes, Navy no,” they shouted in English and Spanish to the rush-hour
crowd.

The U.S. Navy has used the small island off the east coast of Puerto Rico for target practice since the 1940s, and even loaned and rented it to NATO allies, despite the protests of Vieques’ population. The Bush administration has used the so-called war on terror to break a former agreement that halted target practice on the island.

This demonstration, called by the Vieques Support Campaign and supported by many other anti-war organizations, showed that the movement to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques is strong both in New York and in Puerto Rico.

Photo and story by John Catalinotto
SEGUNDA PARTE

Discurso por Fidel Castro

Batalla tras batalla, la educación avanza

Intervención del Presidente de la República de Cuba, Fidel Castro Ruz, en el acto de entrega de 254 escuelas de la capital reconstruidas o construidas, efectuado en el teatro Astral el 13 de agosto del 2002.

Alrededor de 22 mil constructores profesionales, constituidos en su mayoría por obreros de los más prestigiosos contingentes de la capital y del experimentado movimiento de microbrigadistas, apoyados cada hora y cada mañana por miles de voluntarios —que incluyan hombres y mujeres de todos los oficios, maestros, estudiantes, niños, adscritos a las escuelas y hasta hombres y mujeres de la tercera edad—con orden y disciplina, aseguramiento de materiales, buena organización y dirección política y técnica, son los autores de la proeza de haber concluido, entre el 29 de junio y el 13 de agosto, la restauración o construcción en sólo 45 días de 254 escuelas. Faltan todavía por terminar de restaurar o construir 123 instituciones educacionales para finalizar el programa. Si fuera a buscar un nombre para esta hazaña, la llamaría como aquella novela de la literatura heroica rusa cuando el Ejército Rojo defendía Moscú de los barbudos nazis: Días y Noches, escrita por Konstantín Simónov.

Se aplicó preventivamente la táctica de la antigua Contingencia, la disciplina, la eficiencia y el espíritu de trabajo y sacrificio que prevaleció. Nada pudo empañar la proeza. En esta etapa final se avanza contando ya con una gran experiencia acumulada, acudiendo al refuerzo, en cada una de las obras pendientes de concluir, del personal más calificado de las que se van concluyendo, una productividad mucho mayor y un entusiasmo renovado.

El comportamiento del tiempo fue y aún continúa siendo la preocupación fundamental. La temporada no ha sido, fortuitamente, más favorable. Se aplicó preventivamente la táctica de favorecer con prioridad todo lo que fuese fundición de cimientos y construcción de techos para garantizar la no interrupción por lluvia en las fases finales de cada obra. Han brillado la ingeniosidad de nuestros técnicos y el interés que sin excepción prestaron los jefes de organismos y empresas, cuyos constructores y voluntarios apoyaron las restauraciones y construcciones. Un principio ha sido aplicado con el máximo de rigor: la calidad de cada objeto de obra estaba por encima de toda la vigilancia y control sistemáticos que han sido constantes. Al convertirse las escuelas de sus niños en el orgullo y el interés máximo de todos los vecinos, millones de ojos custodiaban de forma especial la calidad y la belleza de lo que se hacía.

Debe recordarse en adición a todo lo señalado que cada escuela concluida cuenta con un moderno laboratorio de computación, jóvenes profesores especialmente preparados para impartir esa enseñanza, medios audiovisuales en todas las aulas y un Canal Educativo a su disposición.

El espectáculo de nuestra capital ha sido alentador en este caluroso verano. Las noticias de las escuelas que se restauran o se están construyendo en las provincias son también excelentes. Conscientos de la inmensa obra que nos espera en todo el país para alcanzar un salto de calidad en nuestros servicios educacionales y una verdadera revolución en ese campo con un mínimo de gastos y apoyando fundamentalmente a nuestro capital humano, nuestra confianza y seguridad se fortalecen. Y como expresé hace tres días en la graduación de 741 alumnos de la Escuela Emergente de Enfermería del Cotorro, no está siendo olvidada ni lo será otra esfera de importancia magna: los servicios de salud, golpeados también por el período especial, en adición al brutal y cruello bloqueo imperialista, sin que los factores subyacentes y la incapacidad de algunos cuadros de mantenerse ocupando de un importante papel junto a dificultades objetivas.

Esta esfera será objeto de sólida y profunda atención para garantizar los grandes avances alcanzados y pasar a niveles superiores con el empleo pleno del enorme capital humano disponible que, con su ciencia y su espíritu de solidaridad y humanismo, hoy asoman al mundo con los servicios que actualmente prestan a otros numerosos países. Esta noche precisamente se graduaban miles de profesionales y técnicos de la salud. Las fuerzas de nuestro glorioso ejército de lucha por la vida, vencedor del dolor y la muerte, crecen y se multiplican. Su espíritu de combate será cada vez más fuerte; sus conocimientos, más profundos. En estrecha unión con nuestros investigadores y científicos, serán ejemplos y paladines de una nueva concepción de la noble función de los servicios de salud, que ha de ser apoyada por comple- to al víspero espiritual mercantilista sembrado por el sistema imperiалиsta, capitalista y neoliberal que hoy impera en el mundo.

No debe olvidarse que este mismo año 2002 la ciudad libró victoriosamente, durante 70 días consecutivos de inter- sante lucha, sin uno solo de reseso, la batalla contra el dengue, totalmente erradicado aquí y en el resto del país, y también que nuestro pueblo durante diez meses ha estado llevando a cabo la reparación de los daños ocasionados por el huracán más dañino y devastador de los últimos 100 años, que será concluida en menos de doce meses.

Y otras esferas vitales para la justicia, el bienestar, la libertad y la dignidad de los seres humanos avanzarán con fuerza en medio de nuestra ya histórica e impresionante batalla de ideas en el mundo convulso y desesperado que nos rodea.

El próximo mes de septiembre será inolvidable por su transcendencia para la educación en Cuba: El día 2 graduaremos más de 5 mil jóvenes como Maestros Emergentes de Enseñanza Primaria, procedentes de Ciudad de la Habana, Matanzas, Cienfuegos y Ciego de Ávila, a los que se unirán también en el mismo acto los primeros mil graduados en pleno ejercicio ya de su hermosa profesión. El día 9 será inaugurada, en las instalaciones de la “Salvador Allende”, la Escuela de Profesores Emergentes para Secundaria Básica, con 4,500 alumnos de todo el país, lo cual inicia la etapa igualmente trascendente en que será revolucionada radicalmente la enseñanza de ese nivel, hoy sumergida en una profunda crisis de carácter mundial, aparentemente insoluble.


Los niños de la capital y de todo el terri- torio nacional, por su parte, iniciarán sus clases el 9 de septiembre.

¡Felicidades, compatriotas de la capi- tal y de todo el país! Batalla tras batalla, iremos enfrentando peligros y venciendo obstá- culos.

No deseo extenderme más. Los hechos son siempre más elocuentes que las palabras. ¡Gracias por todo lo que han hecho! ¡Gracias por la profunda Revolución educacional y cultural que están llevando a cabo, la que no sólo beneficiará a nuestro pueblo sino también a muchos otros.

¡Gracias por el ejemplo que con lucha tenaz, heroica y creadora hoy ofrecen al mundo! ¡Viva el Socialismo! ¡Patria o Muerte! ¡Venceremos!

Conferencia Urgente del Partido Obrero (Workers World Party)

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El Capitalismo en Crisis

X La campaña de guerra de Wall Street
X La guerra imperialista contra Iraq
X La depresión económica
X El racismo y la represión

Ven a escuchar a maniestos revolucionarios hablar sobre opciones de lucha.

Pasa un fin de semana aprendiendo, intercambiando puntos de vista e información y a funcionar en red con otros que lucha por la paz, la igualdad y la justicia.

¡Gracias por todo lo que han hecho! ¡Gracias por la profunda Revolución educacional y cultural que están llevando a cabo, la que no sólo beneficiará a nuestro pueblo sino también a muchos otros.

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