

## MUNDO OBRERO

Testigos desde el Líbano 16

### Workers World Party Statement on crisis in Korea

Statement issued on Oct. 9

**Washington created the crisis; Washington must end it**

**Stop war threats; No sanctions against the DPRK!**

**Respect Korean sovereignty; Sign a peace treaty now!**

The present crisis arises directly out of the implacable hostility of the U.S. imperialist government to the socialist government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The DPRK has been trying for over 50 years to get Washington to end its threats and provocations, normalize relations and sign a peace treaty ending the Korean War. During that war, which ended in 1953 with a cease-fire, U.S.-led forces killed 4 million Koreans and leveled the North with saturation bombing.

Instead of moving toward peace and responding to the DPRK's numerous proposals for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, the Bush administration has branded the DPRK as part of an "axis of evil," has put it on a "terrorist" list and targeted it for "regime change." The DPRK is encircled by a naval armada of U.S. guided missile destroyers, bomber and fighter squadrons, nuclear weapons and 30,000 U.S. troops in South Korea.

*Continued to page 12*

# Nuclear crisis made in USA

## Bush threats forced North Korea to arm in self-defense

By Fred Goldstein

The Bush administration and the so-called "great powers" are hypocritically trying to create panic over the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Oct. 8 that it had successfully detonated a nuclear weapon. U.S. officials have declared it a "threat to international security."

In fact, it is the U.S. imperialist government and its ally, Japan, that have created the crisis situation and are the main threats to peace in Asia.

The DPRK, in a statement from its Foreign Ministry on Oct. 3, had announced publicly that it intended to carry out the test. It says it was forced into nuclear testing because the Bush administration "seriously threatened the DPRK's sovereignty and right to existence." It condemned threatened sanctions as an "attempt to isolate and stifle it and bring down the socialist system chosen by its people themselves."

"The U.S. extreme threat of a nuclear war and pressure compel the DPRK to conduct a nuclear test, an essential process for bolstering nuclear deterrent, as a corresponding measure for defense," the statement continued.

To the Korean people, the U.S. threat is real. Washington divided their country after World War II and has kept it divided until today through a large U.S. military presence. For decades, Washington propped up one dictatorial South Korean government after another.

The U.S. led a brutal war against the North from 1950 to 1953, dropping 800 tons of bombs a day in saturation raids. It used napalm—jellied gasoline that clings to skin and causes a horrible death. Every town, village and city was left in rubble.

Four million Koreans died. Innumerable atrocities were carried out by U.S. troops. And Washington used nuclear threats throughout the armistice negotiations.

### What can end the crisis

The crisis on the Korean peninsula and in the region could be ended if the U.S. government would do three basic things:

recognize the sovereignty of the DPRK; establish normal diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries; and guarantee the DPRK's security against a U.S. attack.

The North Korean government has been asking for this for over 50 years, since the end of the Korean War.

In addition, the DPRK has made innumerable proposals for the denuclearization of the peninsula and the surrounding region.

Above all, this kind of stability should be embodied in the signing of a peace treaty formally ending the state of war between the U.S. and the DPRK. Washington has resisted such demands for over 50 years.

The big business media and the government are treating the DPRK leaders as if they are paranoid and irrational. But the facts show a different story.

### Bush administration threats

In his State of the Union address in January 2002, President George W. Bush branded the DPRK as part of an "axis of evil," along with Iraq and Iran. In that same period, Bush ordered the Pentagon to develop "flexible" plans for the use of nuclear weapons as part of the Nuclear Posture Review. Sections of it were leaked showing that the DPRK was on the Pentagon's list of seven targeted countries.

The National Security Strategy of September 2002 put forward the doctrine of "preemptive war" and "regime change," linking it to Bush's "axis of evil" assertion. Six months later Washington launched a preemptive, unprovoked war to bring about regime change in Iraq and overthrow the Saddam Hussein government.

All these threats were being made by a superpower with 10,000 nuclear warheads, a \$10-trillion economy, a population of 300 million and highly developed weapons systems spread throughout Asia, especially in the vicinity of North Korea. In contrast, the DPRK has a population of 25 million, an economy of \$16 billion, and has been undermined economically by half a

*Continued on page 12*

## SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANTS

■ Diverse groups unite for Oct. 21 7

■ Students reject racist Minutemen 7

■ From Europe to Africa, Day of Solidarity 13

■ Senegalese decry hidden emigration 15

## Subscribe to Workers World

- 4 weeks trial subscription \$1
- One year subscription: \$25

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Workers World Newspaper

55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011

212-627-2994 www.workers.org



*This week ...*

# Focus on Foley obscures Democrats' rightward shift

By Leslie Feinberg

Foley, Foley, Foley: Who knew what, when? The story is dominating broadcast news coverage and above-the-fold front-page headlines. But the real story is that leading Democrats and Republicans—horns locked in a partisan struggle before a mid-term congressional election that determines which party of big business controls Capitol Hill—are propagating the right-wing myth that same-sex love is linked to child rape.

Mendacity gains strength whenever it is repeated, and this particular falsehood is pumped up on steroids right now as the media turned stage right to offer round-the-clock podium availability to right-wing politicians and pundits who peddle the myth that men who love men and women who love women are dangerous to children.

Tony Perkins, who heads a reactionary organization bearing the bland name "Family Research Council" (FRC), was invited on the Oct. 2 edition of CNN's "The Situation Room." Host John King opened the interview by editorializing that "pro-family voters" look to the FRC "for guidance and advice in moments like this."

King sat back and let Perkins intone that "the real issue" in the Foley scandal is "the link between homosexuality and child sexual abuse."

The following day, Chris Matthews, host of MSNBC's program "Hardball," let Perkins get away with the outrageous claim that "there's clear research that shows that homosexual men are more likely to abuse children than straight men."

Linda Harvey, president of "Mission America," which describes that mission as monitoring "homosexual activism in youth culture," wrote on WorldNewsDaily Oct. 8, "Weird sex, public displays of 'affection' and nudity, and sex with youth are built into the 'gay' sub-culture."

Ben Stein wrote in the American Spectator that "I hope it won't come as a surprise to anyone that a big part of male homosexual behavior is interest in young boys."

Jay Leno joked on air that GOP now stands for "Gay Old Pedophile."

## It's a divisive lie

The deliberate lie that same-sex love is inherently tied to pedophilia obscures the widespread plight of children suffering from sexual abuse by adults, who are referred to as pedophiles.

Pedophilia is adult sexual desire for pre-pubescent children. Those who sexually abuse children typically are not attracted to adult men or women. A 1994 study found that "a child's risk of being molested by his or her relative's heterosexual partner is 100 times greater than by someone who might be identified as a homosexual." (Carole Jenny, et al.)

A 1999 study of 93,000 sexually abused kids in the U.S. documented that half were abused by their parents and 18 percent by other family relatives.

The American Psychological Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Academy of Child Psychiatrists and the Child Welfare League of America have all issued public policy statements refuting any relationship between same-sex love and child abuse.

The Senate has been formally informed of this fact—in writing.

The June 10, 2002, Dallas Morning News reported, "When asked about this question, the American Psychiatric Association wrote to the Senate: "While we are all concerned by the issue of sexual abuse, there is

no credible evidence that lesbians and gay men are more likely to commit such offenses than others. Gay men and lesbians do not pose any particular threat to youth and should not be singled out or discriminated against in any manner."

So why is an attempt to re-forge a link in the public mind between same-sex love and child rape at the forefront of a fight between Democrats and Republicans in the amphitheater of the Senate rotunda?

What on earth does rape of pre-pubescent children have to do with the Foley scandal?

The six-term Republican Senator from Florida was forced to resign on Sept. 29, the last day of the congressional session, within hours after ABC News reported that he had sent cyber messages last year to a teenage congressional page who was legally at the age of consent at the time.

While subsequent media reports interchangeably refer to the messages as "e-mails" and "instant messages," the difference between the two forms of communication is important in what it reveals about the timing of this revelation. E-mail messages are saved on servers, easily recovered. Instant messages, however, are typed conversations between two people in real time. The sender or receiver has to save them in a "cache"—a temporary memory storage on the user's computer.

So who saved these IM's for a year? Who released them? Why now? It's been an open "secret" that Foley was gay. A Republican congressional primary opponent baited him back in 1994.

Amid a flurry of charges and denials, Republicans accuse Democrats of leaking the information to ABC News.

The central question is: Which party stands to gain from the revelations? To ask that question is to answer it.

## Democrats attack from the right

"October surprises"—political bombshells in the weeks preceding a November election—have come to be expected in capitalist politics. But rumors and scandals involving powerful, wealthy male politicians plying sexual favors from young congressional pages—female and male, willing or unwilling—is almost as old as the 177-year-old page program.

Of course, the Democrats have every partisan reason to be giddy that the Republican Party is in disarray. They are calling for a rout by beating the grass for "who knew what, when?" Reuters reported that House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi wrote a letter to the House Ethics Committee charging that it was "abhorrent" that House Republican leaders had apparently taken no action "to protect these underage children."

This particular scandal, however, is not just about "flipping" the Senate or chiseling away at a 15-seat margin in the House. It reveals how far and how fast the Democratic Party has shifted toward attacking the Republicans from the right.

According to the Nov. 3 New York Times, Democratic Party campaign advertising strategy in southern and Midwestern districts is focusing on "morality."

An Oct. 3 Wall Street Journal editorial stated, "In North Carolina, the Democratic Party released a statement asking of the incumbent Republican, "Who does Robin Hayes stand up for? Mark Foley and the Republican House leadership or underage children?"

If the Foley story drops off the front page, top Democrat strategists say they will fan the flames until it is back on.

*Continued on page 7*

## ★ In the U.S.

- WWP statement . . . . . 1
- Focus on Foley obscures Democrats' rightward shift . . . . . 2
- NY judge throws out charges against WW . . . . . 3
- Congress gives Bush more repressive law . . . . . 3
- Meatpacking workers fight for justice . . . . . 4
- Union takes charge after cement explosion . . . . . 4
- Columbus Day protest . . . . . 5
- On the picket line . . . . . 5
- Fundraiser to support choice . . . . . 5
- Broad coalition seeks to defeat anti-gay referendum . . . . . 6
- Leslie Feinberg starts Michigan tour . . . . . 6
- Immigrant groups to march Oct. 21 in NYC . . . . . 7
- Columbia students shut down Minutemen . . . . . 7
- Anti-war slate holds rallies across Michigan . . . . . 8
- Teach-in sheds light on Middle East . . . . . 8

## ★ Around the world

- Korea crisis made in USA . . . . . 1
- WWP statement on Korea . . . . . 1
- Iraq and U.S.: chain of command is breaking down . . . . . 9
- They speak their mind . . . . . 9
- Protests in Canada hit Afghan war . . . . . 9
- Interview with Leila Khaled . . . . . 10
- European anti-war movement debates intervention . . . . . 11
- Class struggle in Oaxaca raises people's power . . . . . 13
- Transnational Day of Action supports immigrants . . . . . 13
- Clandestine emigration: a tragedy . . . . . 15

## ★ Editorials

- Where your vote counts . . . . . 14
- Be there! . . . . . 14

## ★ Noticias En Español

- Testigos desde el Libano . . . . . 16

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

Vol. 48, No. 41 • Oct. 19, 2006  
Closing date: Oct. 11, 2006

Editor: Deirdre Griswold  
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk  
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson  
West Coast Editor: John Parker  
Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Maggie Vascassenno  
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas  
Internet: Janet Mayes  
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

© Copyright under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 License. You are free to copy, distribute, display the articles with full attribution for noncommercial purposes. Any other use requires permission (www.creativecommons.org).

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org. A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to WWnews-subscribe@workersworld.net. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

## JOIN US.

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office  
55 W. 17 St.,  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 627-2994;  
Fax (212) 675-7869  
www.workers.org

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

Baltimore  
426 E. 31 St.,  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(410) 235-7040  
baltimore@workers.org

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

Buffalo, N.Y.  
367 Delaware Ave.,  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
(716) 566-1115  
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago  
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138  
Chicago, IL 60606  
(773) 381-5839  
Fax (773) 761-9330  
chicago@workers.org

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

Denver  
denver@workers.org

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

Houston  
P.O. Box 130322,  
Houston, TX 77219  
(713) 861-5965  
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles  
5274 West Pico Blvd.,  
Suite 203  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
(323) 936-1416  
la@workers.org

Philadelphia  
P.O. Box 9202,  
Philadelphia, PA 19139  
(610) 453-0490  
phil@workers.org

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

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

San Diego, Calif.  
3930 Oregon St.,  
Suite 230  
San Diego, CA 92104  
(619) 692-4496

San Francisco  
2940 16th St., #207  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 561-9752  
sf@workers.org

State College, Pa.  
100 Grandview Rd.,  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 237-8695

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



## Involved articles on 'robbing' pensions

# NY judge throws out charges against WW

By Deirdre Griswold  
Editor of Workers World  
New York

We've said all along that we have the right to call the robber barons by their true name. Now a court has affirmed it.

Judge Edward H. Lehner of the Supreme Court of the State of New York has dismissed defamation charges filed by the Renco Group against Workers World Party and its weekly newspaper, Workers World.

This ruling should give encouragement to all who stand up and speak their minds about the ferocious assault on workers' rights being carried out across this country.

Renco, a powerful conglomerate owned by multi-billionaire Ira Rennert, had hired an expensive Wall Street law firm to claim that articles published by WW last February were "malicious, false and defamatory."

Judge Lehner ruled that, while the articles discussed "in an impassioned manner an area of public concern—that of alleged corporate underfunding of retirement obligations owed to workers, and how parts of corporate America are purportedly depriving workers of pension rights through bankruptcy proceedings," they were "nonactionable opinion" protected by law.

### Renco and WCI Steel pensions

The first article, published in the Feb. 23, 2006, issue of this paper, was entitled "WCI Steel bankruptcy robs workers' pensions." It described how the workers at WCI Steel, an Ohio company which at that time was wholly owned by Renco, faced the prospect of losing millions of

dollars in pension money because Renco had taken the steel company into bankruptcy at a time when its pension fund was massively underfunded. According to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., by January 2006, the pension fund was underfunded by \$117 million.

A release from the PBGC Public Affairs department, dated March 30, had explained that "Under the proposed plan of reorganization filed in federal bankruptcy court, the pension plan would have been left behind by the reorganizing steelmaker."

A second article—"You be the judge: Is Renco robbing steelworker pensions?"—appeared in this paper a week later. It reported on the Renco Group's threat to take legal action against the paper, and reaffirmed the opinions expressed in the first article.

Rennert, owner of Renco, owns a Long Island mansion valued at \$185 million, with 29 bedrooms, 39 bathrooms and a 200-car parking garage. The mansion alone is worth more than the amount that had been lacking in the WCI Steel pension fund.

On Feb. 3, the New York Times reported that the PBGC appeared "poised to lay claim to Mr. Rennert's 29-bedroom oceanfront estate, along with other assets, to make sure he delivers on hundreds of millions of dollars in pensions promised to a group of steelworkers in Ohio."

After the WW articles and the filing of a suit by the PBGC to prevent WCI's underfunded pension plan from being shifted to the federal pension insurance program, Renco finally at the end of March agreed to give up its ownership of WCI Steel and fully fund the pension plan. The PBGC then dropped its suit.

But Renco continued to press charges against Workers World for its articles on this struggle.

Workers World was able to obtain legal representation pro bono from the prominent media law firm Davis Wright Tremaine, which submitted two briefs to the court citing abundant case law upholding the right of journalists to use "rhetorical hyperbole"—like the phrase "robbing steelworker pensions"—in expressing their opinions.

Judge Lehner found that Workers World Party, "in its scathing criticism of the pension system, employed colorful rhetoric that is the hallmark of hyperbole."

Renco has until November to file an appeal.

A delegation from Workers World Party recently walked an informational picket line in Warren, Ohio, with workers of WCI Steel. They now have a new owner but are still fighting, this time against reduced work crews and a subsequent rise of in-plant accidents. The workers wore tee-shirts that said prominently, "WCI Steals."

### Bankruptcy as a way to rip off workers

Renco's attorneys based their argument on a very narrow definition of the article's use of the word "rob." They defined robbery as "forcible stealing" accompanied by the use of or imminent threat of physical force. This was the legal basis for Rennert's charge that the article was "malicious, false and defamatory."

The Workers World articles did not conjure up the ludicrous image of a multi-billionaire, armed with a pistol or a knife, waylaying workers in order to relieve them of their wallets. It put the loss of pensions

facing the WCI Steel workers in the context of the broad anti-labor assault by big business in the recent period.

Declaring bankruptcy has become a tactic of choice by the super-rich and their executives. Bankruptcy laws allow them to rip up union contracts and shed contractual obligations they agreed to long ago. This trend threatens millions of workers with severe poverty and/or lack of adequate health care in their old age, even after a lifetime of hard and often dangerous work.

Workers in many industries are holding their breath these days. As the first WW article pointed out, "This is an episode in a bigger story about the widespread campaign of corporations like United Air Lines, Delphi Automotive Systems and Bethlehem Steel to use bankruptcy to steal workers' pensions." The full articles can be found at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org).

### Spread the word!

This struggle is far from over. In the meantime, Workers World relies on its readers for support. We hope you can distribute the news of this court victory far and wide so anyone who "speaks truth to power" can take strength from it. And, whether or not Renco decides to appeal the decision, and even though our excellent lawyers are not charging for their time, we need funds to pay the thousands of dollars in court costs already incurred.

Billionaires like Rennert may think it's easy to roll over a socialist newspaper that relies on small contributions and voluntary labor to publish every week. Make a contribution to the Workers World/Pension Defense Project and help prove them wrong.

*E-mail: [dgriswold@workers.org](mailto:dgriswold@workers.org)*

# Congress gives Bush more repressive law

By Heather Cottin

George W. Bush, early in his presidency, said that things would be a lot easier if he were a dictator. With the complicity of the legislative and judicial branches of government, Bush could get much closer to his wish.

Only the efforts of the people, united to defend their rights and to oppose empire, stand in his way.

Amid little fanfare, on Sept. 27 Congress passed the Military Commissions Act of 2006 (S3930), which effectively suspends the writ of habeas corpus for those deemed "enemy combatants" by the president.

Habeas corpus has been touted as "the foundation of all human rights legislation since before the Magna Carta." The U.S. Supreme Court has said it is "the fundamental instrument for safeguarding individual freedom against arbitrary and lawless state action."

Under S3930, according to a New York Times editorial of Sept. 28, once a person is designated an "enemy combatant" he/she is subject "to arrest and indefinite detention with no hope of appeal." With the elimination of habeas corpus, the Times points out, the disappeared "would lose the basic right to challenge their imprisonment." Forever.

The act gives the Bush administration the authority to decide what does and does not constitute torture, and allows other governments, allies or puppets of

the United States, to torture and imprison these so-called "enemy combatants" at will.

### Patriot Act on crack

The Military Commissions Act subjects U.S. citizens, as well as others, to abuses that were denied to the government under the USA Patriot Act. This is accomplished by redefining an "unlawful enemy combatant" as "a person who has engaged in hostilities or who has purposefully and materially supported hostilities against the United States or its co-belligerents who is not a lawful enemy combatant."

It also says, "No court, justice, or judge shall have jurisdiction to hear or consider an application for a writ of habeas corpus filed by or on behalf of an alien detained by the United States who has been determined by the United States to have been properly detained as an enemy combatant or is awaiting such determination."

There are already an unknown number of people "awaiting" in torture cells and prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo and prisons in the United States. The U.S. is no stranger to repression and torture, as its history from the Indian Wars to the Philippines to Vietnam to Latin America has shown.

The British Magna Carta, which established habeas corpus in 1215, has for centuries been ignored when it served the state's agenda. In 1870, Karl Marx wrote of the British treatment of Irish revo-

lutionaries: "Thousands of people have been arrested ... without ever having been tried, brought before a judge or court, or even charged. Not content with depriving them of their liberty, the ... Government has had them tortured in the most savage way imaginable." (Karl Marx, "The English Government and the Fenian Prisoners," 1870)

Who is at risk?

How broad will the definition of "enemy combatant" go? In a speech on Sept. 5, George Bush declared war on the entire anti-war movement. He said there is "a media campaign to create a wedge between the American people and their government," and that anyone who would say that the war on terror is causing financial losses and casualties is acting "under the influence of Bin Laden."

Bush has only to sign this bill into law. In the crosshairs now are Arab and Muslim people, but as the case of attorney Lynne Stewart shows, and raids on immigrants indicate, it is open season on anyone the government wishes to detain, deport or prosecute.

Even establishment liberals are worried. Sen. Patrick Leahy said on Pacifica Radio's "Democracy Now" on Sept. 29 that S3930 "removes as many checks and balances as possible so that any president can basically set the law, determine what laws they'll follow and what laws they'll break and not have anybody be able to question them on it."

Marjorie Cohn, president-elect of the National Lawyers Guild, wrote that the Military Commissions Act of 2006 "provides the basis for the president to round up both aliens and U.S. citizens he determines have given material support to terrorists. Kellogg Brown & Root, a subsidiary of Cheney's Halliburton, is constructing a huge facility at an undisclosed location to hold tens of thousands of undesirables." (Counterpunch, Sept. 30)

Voting in favor of S3930 were 65 senators, 53 of them Republicans and 12 Democrats.

The New York Times worries that S3930 is "a tyrannical law that will be ranked with the low points in American democracy, our generation's version of the Alien and Sedition Acts" of 1798.

But people resisted those laws. Over 200 years ago immigrants and native-born citizens smashed those acts without intervention or protection of the Congress or the courts.

During the Korean War, the U.S. Congress declared a State of Emergency that is still on the books. The law has not been used because of peoples' resistance movements, beginning with the civil rights movement.

Laws are only as strong as the government's ability to enforce them, which means that people in motion have the right and the ability to thwart any draconian attempts to curb their rights. □

## Meatpacking workers fight for justice

# Unity is key in Smithfield organizing

By Sharon Black

Anyone who believes that sweatshop conditions and exploitation are something reserved only for poorer countries in “free economic zones,” and are a thing of the past in the United States, is badly mistaken. The brutal conditions, poverty-level wages and crippling injuries of the Smithfield packing workers in Tar Heel, N.C., quickly dispel this myth.

The United Food and Commercial Workers union and workers from the Tar Heel plant came to New York Sept. 30 to protest in front of Smithfield’s corporate offices at 49th Street and Park Avenue. Some 500 people—representing thousands of others who signed up online to be part of a “virtual march”—launched a campaign to demand that Smithfield end injustice and allow the workers to unionize.

The Smithfield Packing plant hires close to 6,000 workers and slaughters 8 million hogs per year in the tiny town of Tar Heel. It is the world’s largest hog processing plant. In 1998, North Carolina became the second-largest hog producer in the United States. Smithfield commands almost 25 percent of the nationwide hog market.

Where tobacco and sweet potatoes were once the main crops and industry, now hog growing dominates. At the Smithfield plant, workers cut, pack and ship more than 25,000 hogs a day.

The conditions in this plant are as horrendous as those described by Upton Sinclair in his 1906 novel “The Jungle.”

Anyone who has worked on an assembly line knows firsthand how a constantly speeding line destroys the body and numbs the mind. The mantra of the bosses is



WW PHOTOS: SHARON BLACK

Left, UFCW members at rally that closed the New York Smithfield office for the day. Above, Teresa Gutierrez with Agueda Arias of UFCW Local 888.

always, “Faster, faster, get the product out.”

Those who work in meatpacking and food processing plants also have to endure freezing temperatures. Cuts, amputations, skin disease and permanent arm and shoulder damage are everyday occurrences. Death is always close.

On the morning of Nov. 20, 2003, 25-year-old Glen Birdsong was working alone cleaning a holding tank near a loading dock at the Smithfield plant. The tank held a substance mixed with sodium bisulfite intended for use as a clotting medicine by-product.

The hose Birdsong was using got caught in the tank. He climbed down a ladder to free it. Co-workers later found him at the bottom of the ladder, dead.

“They didn’t tell him about the dangers and they didn’t give him a safety belt to get pulled out of there in case he fell in,” co-workers told Human Rights Watch.

Injured workers are frequently threatened with losing their jobs when they

report injuries, so many say the injury occurred at home or off the job.

### Smithfield tries to divide workers

North Carolina has seen the most dramatic increase in the number of immigrant workers of any state. In 2000, the number increased by 274 percent, from 115,000 to 430,000; it is more than 500,000 today. An estimated half of the plant’s workers are now Latin@s and 40 percent are African Americans.

The changing demographics are, of course, not lost on Smithfield’s bosses, who have been waging a campaign of racism to divide the workers. Ed Morrison, an African American worker, said: “They try to divide people by race. They threaten the immigrants and try to turn Blacks against the Mexicans. It’s all to keep people from standing together for their rights.”

Smithfield Packing, according to testimony before the National Labor Relations Board, held special one-on-one meetings with Mexican workers during an ear-

lier attempt to unionize the company. Company representatives implied that immigrant workers would be fired or deported.

The company formed its own special police agency, which under North Carolina law can make arrests both on and off company property. Black workers were threatened, beaten and arrested. A company manager told a union representative: “I want to make sure you’re there for a real ass-whipping. We’re going to beat you ... and we’ve got something special in mind for you.” (www.smithfieldjustice.com)

The UFCW and the workers at Smithfield are defying all this. A campaign is being waged to win a union and beat back much of this abuse. All workers everywhere should come to the defense of the Smithfield workers, as “an injury to one is an injury to all.”

*Sharon Black is a former food processing and packing worker. She was an elected representative of the UFCW for 26 years and was also part of the Amalgamated Meatcutters Association before it merged.*

# Union takes charge after cement explosion

By Gerry Scoppettuolo  
Boston

On Sept. 28 an industrial silo exploded near the Charlestown yard where Boston school buses are kept. It spewed out a reported 3,000 pounds of toxic slag dust, which settled on the school bus drivers and their vehicles.

The slag, a component of cement, exposed the drivers to crystalline silica and other harmful metals and chemicals, according to the company’s own report. Some 147 drivers were brought to area hospitals by emergency crews. The harm caused by the disaster is still being assessed.

Shaking off the potentially harmful effects to themselves, and without waiting for the bus company, First Student, to deal with the situation, the school bus drivers and their union sprang into action. The largely Haitian, Cape Verdean, Latin@ and African American work force and their union, United Steel Workers Local 8751, have long been known as a first line of defense for school desegregation and for the over 35,000 students who ride to school in Boston.

While the company seemed paralyzed, the drivers showed they could also deal with other areas of the people’s transportation business.

### Workers set up command center

With military-like discipline, the drivers’ union evacuated the bus yard and set up a command center in the cafeteria of nearby Charleston High School. There, while still breathing in harmful slag particles, they organized their own food and water needs and began to dispatch drivers



Hazmat workers clean area near parked school buses.

WW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS

to schools and other bus yards so the children could get home safely.

Meanwhile, union officers demanded that the bus company clean the drivers’ cars first. This process, organized by the union in a spirit of solidarity, took until 1:30 a.m. The drivers were required to be at work the next morning at 5:30 a.m. The School Department had refused union advice to cancel school so children would not be left stranded.

Union Vice President Steve Gillis arrived at the bus yard 10 minutes after the explosion. “For the safety of the drivers, monitors, mechanics and school children,” he told Workers World, “the union stopped the buses from going out with the unknown dust on them, which would otherwise have happened. The drivers rejected buses going out with dust still on them, and the union had dispatchers recall contaminated buses the company had already sent out.”

The union’s chief steward made a list of all exposed workers. Many bus monitors, who are mostly Haitian women, were among those brought to the hospital. The company made no list of its own and, according to union officers, never gave an order for the workers to evacuate the bus yard.

### Greedy companies and do-nothing authorities

While the cement disaster was unprecedented, the unfeeling response of city authorities was all too predictable. Without benefit of scientific sampling of the contaminated area, the Boston Public Health Commission issued a statement claiming that the dust was mostly confined to the Lafarge Cement Co. yard. Charged with protecting the health of its residents, the city agency made no mention of the workers who might have been exposed.

A hazardous materials clean-up company crew boss had told union officials it was nothing but “nuisance dust that we’ll have out of here in a few hours.” In fact, it took six days of round-the-clock work by mostly Latin@ hazmat workers, organized by the Laborers’ Union, to clean the area.

An Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspector took samples of the slag, promising results in “up to six weeks,” while rejecting an offer from the United Steel Workers’ Health and Safety Department to share a portion of the sample so it could conduct its own sampling and get results in 24 hours.

The Boston cement dust disaster is a per-

fect example of corporate greed in league with do-nothing government regulatory agencies. Lafarge

North America, which was responsible for the accident, is a multi-billion-dollar international corporation that extracts profits from workers in literally dozens of countries across the globe.

First Student acquired the contract to run Boston school buses three years ago when it underbid the competition by \$10 million. It then moved the Charlestown drivers from a building in Sullivan Square to a trailer on the industrial waterfront.

OSHA was created in 1970 as a concession to organized workers’ demands for health and safety protection. Since that time it has become a transparent servant of corporate capitalist interests, allowing violators lenient terms to “abate,” or remedy, the hazardous work places they control.

Only complete control of working conditions by the workers, through a system based on health and safety rather than profits, can possibly avert future disasters like this one. On Sept. 28, the Boston school bus drivers’ union, made up of 800 mostly immigrant workers, demonstrated that—without bosses, politicians or the need to make profits—the workers and schoolchildren could organize themselves to deal with a real health emergency. □

## ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

### Vermont workers protest NLRB ruling

The Vermont Workers Center sprung into action on Oct. 5, two days after the National Labor Relations Board issued a decision reclassifying nurses who supervise one or more associates as ineligible for union representation. The center held an angry and loud picket line outside the Federal Court building in Burlington to protest the anti-union ruling. "We won't stand still as the Bush labor board rolls back workers' rights," read an Oct. 4 VWC news release for the demonstration. "With the Oakwood Healthcare Inc. decision (one of three cases collectively called 'Kentucky River'), this administration is on the road to strip up to 8 million workers of their freedom to have a union on the job."

The release continued: "It is clear that management will sculpt 'supervisory' responsibilities to meet this new standard; and it is equally clear that the anti-worker board majority will look to apply that standard in other industries, as well." The VWC release quoted two dissenting members of the NLRB as estimating that "by 2012 professional workers who could be affected by this ruling might number almost 34 million, accounting for 23.3 percent of the work force." The Vermont Workers Center is affiliated with Jobs With Justice, whose Web site features a petition protesting the NLRB ruling and demanding union representation for all workers. To sign it, go to [www.jwj.org](http://www.jwj.org).

### UMass nurses vote to strike

Registered nurses at the UMass Memorial Medical Center, University Center, voted nearly unanimously to authorize a strike on Sept. 27. The hospital, which posted \$100 million in profits in the last 18 months, is demanding concessions that would cost the nurses up to \$8,000 a year in lost wages and benefits. Management wants to dramatically increase health insurance costs and eliminate the nurses' pension plan as a benefit. The Massachusetts Nurses Association estimates that will cut retirement savings by 35 percent, with a potential loss of as much as \$104,000 for many nurses.

"The [vote sends] a clear and powerful message to the hospital that our nurses are firmly committed to their positions in this negotiation and we will not allow management to take away every benefit that makes it worthwhile to work here," said Kathie Logan, chair of the MNA bargaining unit in a Sept. 29 union news release.

Negotiators for the 830 nurses at UMMC have attended more than 20 sessions since last December, with the last several including a federal mediator. Stay tuned.

### New Brunswick nurses win strike

It took a 25-day strike for 1,300 nurses at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, N.J., to win a decent three-year contract. The big issue, ironically, was health coverage, which the union says was "greatly improved." A joint worker/management committee was set up to look into continuing health-care issues. The nurses, represented by United Steel Workers Local 4-200, also won 3-percent pay raises for each year of the contract and new employee rights and safety provisions. This strike just goes to show why all nurses need collective bargaining rights to fight off the bosses' attacks.

### Detroit teachers approve contract 3 to 1

By a vote of 5,401 to 1,714, Detroit teachers approved a compromise contract after a hard-fought 16-day strike. Altogether 7,115 of 9,000 members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers voted for the three-year contract.

"This was a tough contract to negotiate," said Janna K. Garrison, president of AFT Local 231, in an Oct. 6 news release. "We managed to stave off the district's efforts to cut our pay, gut our seniority rights and do away with step increments. While we did have to make some concessions, they were nowhere near the \$90 million in concessions the district wanted. This is a contract that we can work with and build on for the future."

### Immigrants in Gulf cleanup win overtime pay

A Southern Poverty Law Center lawsuit forced Belfor USA Group, one of the biggest disaster-recovery companies in the country, to pay immigrant workers hired by its subcontractors in the Gulf Coast more than \$200,000 in overtime pay. The center brought the lawsuit on behalf of 175 workers who had worked as many as 80 hours a week cleaning up Tulane University and other projects. In the agreement worked out in September, Belfor set up a toll-free number so workers could complain about mistreatment, and agreed to monitor practices of subcontractors. □

## Columbus Day

# More protest parade than march

By Larry Hales  
Denver

The Colorado branch of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and its allies took to the streets here on Oct. 6 for the annual Four Directions march. The march has four starting points, one from each direction, and proceeds to a central point.

The four directions symbolize all the peoples of the Earth and where everything comes from.

This year's Four Directions march was again strong, with hundreds participating. The difference this year was that the Transform Columbus Day Alliance (TCDA) was calling for people to spend the night in a park across from the Colorado State Capitol.

The Transform Columbus Day Alliance has been protesting the Columbus Day holiday since 1989. Its website says that, "The Transform Columbus Day Alliance is an international coalition of over 80 social justice organizations who are committed to challenging traditional ethnocentric views of Columbus as pioneer and sole discoverer of the Americas, and that he, as well as colonial powers, should be celebrated for 512 years of invasion, cruelty, oppression, and cultural imperialism."

The alliance set up a camp called Camp Colorow, named for a chief of the White River Ute. Chief Colorow led the resistance of the Ute against white settlers.

Colorado AIM got permission from the original Indigenous inhabitants of the area to stay overnight so there could be teach-ins and an inclusive environment for people to learn, and so that the next morning the TCDA and other groups could protest the Columbus Day parade.

The parade is nothing more than a celebration of colonialism and imperialism. To challenge it is to challenge not only the colonizers' version of history but current and future imperialist endeavors.

The challenge to the racist Columbus Day parade was a success. More people protested the holiday than participated in the parade. It was so sparsely attended that organizers had to fill it out with an endless procession of SUVs, limousines, Humvees and even a petroleum tanker truck.

If there was any doubt as to who the organizers are who hold on to celebrating a slave trader and mass murderer, this year's parade made it very clear. The parade ended with billboards denouncing gay marriage and abortion rights. The petroleum truck was at the end of the parade as well.

The Catholic priest Bartolomé de Las Casas, who in 1508 visited the Caribbean island the Spanish called Hispaniola, where the Taino people had flourished before Columbus, wrote in his multivolume "History of the Indies": "There were 60,000 people living on this island [when I arrived], including the Indians; so that from 1494 to 1508, over 3 million people had perished from war, slavery and the mines. Who in future generations will believe this?"

Children are fed lies about Columbus. Many children at the parade had puzzled looks on their faces. Perhaps they were wondering, "If Columbus was a hero, why do so many protest him?" They may grow up to detest the man and the holiday.

The most vile, racist, right-wing conservatives tout Columbus as a hero. They have no issue with colonialism or imperialism but are champions of capitalist production and all the ills that come with it. Columbus—Cristóbal Colón—was interested in riches. The current robber barons are interested in profits above human life, above all else.

The celebration has nothing to do with Italian pride. In this period of increased imperialist war and plunder and neoliberal economic policies, the fight to abolish Columbus (Colonizer) Day is gaining more importance. □



PHOTO: RICHARD MYERS

Groups in town for Four Directions march stayed to protest Columbus Day parade.

## Fundraiser to support choice

By Kris Hamel  
Detroit

All eyes will be on South Dakota on Nov. 7, when voters in that state will decide on Referred Law 6, an extreme ban on abortion that was passed by the state legislature as HB1215 and signed into law by Gov. Mike Rounds in the spring of this year.

The South Dakota Campaign for Healthy Families, a pro-choice coalition that sprang up in response to the new law, has opened six offices around the sparsely populated state in an all-out effort urging voters to defeat RL6. The law bans all abortions except to save a woman's life, has no exceptions for medical complications or pregnancies caused by rape or incest, and makes it a felony to assist any woman in terminating a pregnancy. Physicians who perform abortions face steep fines and prison time for breaking the new law.

The Detroit Action Network for Reproductive Rights and Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan recently announced a "Fundraiser & Forum for Choice and Equality," set for Oct. 21 in Detroit. Short videos and talks on reproductive rights, gay and lesbian parenting and adoption struggles, and defeating Michigan's anti-affirmative-action Proposal 2 will be part of a fundraising effort for the pro-choice struggle in South Dakota. Funds are urgently needed to help defeat RL6 and delay a review of Roe vs. Wade by the U.S. Supreme Court.

To make a donation to this critical effort, please make checks payable to "SD Campaign for Healthy Families" and send them to the SDCHF at P.O. Box 1484, Sioux Falls, SD 57101-1484 or visit [www.sdhealthyfamilies.org](http://www.sdhealthyfamilies.org) and click on the "donate" button.

For more information on the Oct. 21 Detroit Fundraiser & Forum for Choice and Equality, email [danforr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:danforr@sbcglobal.net) or call 313-378-2369. □



## WISCONSIN

# Broad coalition seeks to defeat anti-gay referendum

By Bryan G. Pfeifer  
Milwaukee, Wis.

A broad base of progressive forces across Wisconsin is working around the clock to defeat a state referendum that proposes a constitutional ban on same-gender marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships.

Melissa Eder-Fowles, like many opposing the ban, thinks that Wisconsin could be the first state to defeat such a measure in the Nov. 7 election.

A student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Eder-Fowles first became aware of the referendum when a speaker from the statewide coalition FAIR Wisconsin came to her church, the Unitarian Universalist-West in Brookfield. She quickly joined Students for a FAIR Wisconsin at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee in an effort to defeat the proposed constitutional amendment. Their activities include class raps, door-to-door canvassing, leafleting, organizing meetings and tabling. ([www.fairwisconsin.com](http://www.fairwisconsin.com))

Eder-Fowles now resides in the Milwaukee Metro area with her transgender spouse, a member of the Wisconsin Sheet Metal Workers union. Speaking to WW while tabling in the Student Union Concourse Oct. 9, the first day of National

Coming Out Week (Oct. 9-13), she said she wants to defeat this referendum because it is unfair and discriminatory.

A marriage license extends over one thousand rights, benefits and responsibilities under federal law and nearly 200 more under Wisconsin law. These include being able to share health and retirement benefits and take bereavement leave in the case of a death in the family, the right to file joint tax returns, and the right to private visits in long-term care facilities.

The ban could preclude children from obtaining health care benefits and preclude parents from making emergency health care decisions for their children, according to an Oct. 9 press release issued by 19 current, future and former presidents of the State Bar of Wisconsin, who have signed a statement opposing the proposed amendment.

The text of the proposed ban that voters will consider on Nov. 7 reads:

"Marriage. Shall section 13 of article XIII of the constitution be created to provide that only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state and that a legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state?"

In Wisconsin, before a proposed ref-

erendum can be put to a public vote to make any changes or additions to the state constitution, it must pass both the State Assembly and State Senate in two consecutive sessions in each house. The referendum's language must stay the same in each session. The governor has no veto power over the referendum.

## Resistance widespread

Hundreds of individuals and organizations have officially opposed the proposed amendment. Many are listed on FAIR Wisconsin's Web site.

The United Council of UW Students, the statewide student association representing more than 125,000 students on 21 University of Wisconsin campuses, says thousands of students are working to defeat the referendum through the council itself and a number of diverse campus organizations. ([www.unitedcouncil.net](http://www.unitedcouncil.net)) Some activities include forums, debates, rallies and more.

On Oct. 6 the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents—under massive pressure from students and their allies—passed a resolution opposing the proposed constitutional ban.

On Oct. 4 various African American leaders in Milwaukee had signed a statement which reads:

"We the undersigned are opposed to

the constitutional amendment that would write discrimination into the constitution by making domestic partnerships and civil unions permanently illegal in our state. If enacted this would be the first time that the Wisconsin Constitution has been used to limit people's freedoms. It would establish a very dangerous precedent. As African American leaders who have participated in and benefited from the historic struggle for civil rights we are opposed to discrimination in any and all forms."

A majority of private- and public-sector labor unions in Wisconsin and the state AFL-CIO are on record opposing the ban.

Labor representatives like Frank Emspak of the American Federation of Teachers chapter at the UW-Madison School for Workers and Workers Independent News Service told WW that his union's opposition is based on "a basic issue of fairness. It isn't fair to exclude people from benefits who have a committed relationship."

Sheila Cochran, president of the Milwaukee County Labor Council, agrees. And, like Emspak, Cochran says that the amendments' passage could have dire consequences for organized labor in regard to collective bargaining.

Cochran emphasized that after a constitutional ban passed in Michigan, the state attorney general ruled that the new measure overturns domestic partner benefits, many of which have been in place for years in many cities. And, basing its actions on the state attorney's decision, the city administration of Kalamazoo, Mich., recently refused to offer health care coverage to domestic partners of city employees.

Cochran says a constitutional ban in Wisconsin could have similar results, especially for public-sector unions like AFSCME.

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which opposes the Wisconsin ban, points to recent decisions by Ohio judges dismissing domestic violence cases involving unmarried heterosexual couples because the victims were not married to their alleged abusers. Even though the women were in a heterosexual relationship, the judges ruled that the state's new ban prohibits legal recognition for any unmarried couples, even in cases of domestic violence.

Hundreds of faith-based, labor and community organizations are engaging in statewide actions to defeat the referendum, including activities such as community forums, door-to-door canvassing and educational house parties.

The main organization attempting to gather support for the constitutional ban is Vote Yes For Marriage.

Vote Yes is closely allied with the conservative Family Research Institute, which has an office in Madison. And on Sept. 13 Focus on the Family, a right-wing faith-based group led by reactionary James Dobson registered with the state elections board to create a referendum committee to assist Vote Yes financially and in other ways, according to [Madison.com](http://Madison.com).

Both these national organizations have helped get bans, like the one proposed in Wisconsin, passed in 19 states.

Both have received millions of dollars from conservative philanthropies, such as the Milwaukee-based Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, according to [Mediatransparency.org](http://Mediatransparency.org), an organization that tracks conservative funding and publishes material on this topic. □



Feinberg (third from right) with supporters in Detroit.

WW PHOTO: JERRY GOLDBERG

## Leslie Feinberg starts Michigan tour

By Kris Hamel  
Detroit

Leslie Feinberg, a Workers World newspaper managing editor and internationally renowned author and activist in the lesbian/gay/bi/trans movement, spoke at a Workers World Party public meeting here on Oct. 7. The meeting's theme was, "Why every worker should support LGBT liberation—building solidarity in the struggle against all forms of oppression." The meeting kicked off a four-city speaking tour by Feinberg in Michigan.

Feinberg captivated the diverse audience with her lucid depiction of capitalism and its "divide and conquer" tactics, such as LGBT oppression, racism, war and reaction. She spoke on what it means to have solidarity with all struggles against oppression, and what it means to be a revolutionary and a member of Workers World Party.

"It is the class struggle of the vast working class, who produce and run everything in society, versus the tiny handful who own and control everything, that is the objec-

tive basis for unity among all workers and the oppressed," she stressed.

On Oct. 8 Feinberg took her message to Michigan State University in East Lansing, where she addressed a large audience at a meeting hosted by several LGBT groups to mark the start of Coming Out Week on campus. Feinberg urged the audience to reject the Democrats and vote for Stop the War Slate candidates who are running on the Green Party ticket in Michigan. "You will find no other candidates who oppose war and reaction, and who support LGBT rights and liberation, like these candidates do," said Feinberg.

Lauren Spencer, an MSU student and candidate for the university's Board of Trustees, was invited on-stage to talk about her campaign. "We need to make sure the university fights to keep domestic partner benefits," she said, "despite a lawsuit after last year's statewide vote rejecting gay and lesbian marriage. We need to make sure that gender identity and gender expression are included in the anti-discrimination code here at MSU, so that no student faces discrimination and bigotry." □

Feinberg officially endorsed Spencer's candidacy. Both speakers defended affirmative action and urged a No vote on Michigan's Proposal 2, which seeks to do away with this remedy for institutionalized racism and sexism.

Many participants in the Detroit and East Lansing meetings expressed their desire to network with other progressives around the state in the various working class battles taking place, including the struggle for immigrant rights and to free the Cuban Five political prisoners. About 40 people signed up for subscriptions to Workers World newspaper at the two meetings.

Feinberg will return to Michigan for speaking engagements later this month. On Oct. 24, she will be in Ann Arbor at the U of M, Michigan League Hussey Room at 5:00 p.m.; on Oct. 25 in Kalamazoo at Kalamazoo College, Mandelle Room, 8 p.m.; and on Oct. 26 in Detroit at Wayne State University, Helende Roy Auditorium, 5203 Cass Ave., 6:30 p.m. The topic of Feinberg's remarks, as in East Lansing, will be: "Struggling for trans liberation in an era of war, racism and reaction." □

## Internationalism in action

# Immigrant groups to march Oct. 21 in NYC

By John Catalinotto  
New York

New York United for Immigrant Rights (NYUIR), which includes more than 30 groups from different communities in the New York metropolitan area, has called for a united demonstration on Oct. 21 to continue the struggle for immigrant rights, even as immigrants are coming under greater attack.

NYUIR has set a march for 1 p.m. that Saturday, starting at Union Square and going to Times Square in Manhattan. It will demand, among other things, legalization of immigrants' status now, no separation of families and equal rights for all workers.

The group's news release makes the point that the enormous demonstrations

from the immigrant community last spring succeeded in stopping the "worst immigration bill ever," the Sensenbrenner-King bill, but that the politicians, instead of resolving the problems of immigrants, "are ramming through more laws to deport more people, take away more rights, and cause more deaths at the border."

"We are asking anyone that has had a friend or family member detained, locked up, deported, or deceased at the border to bring a picture of them to remember all of our loved ones," the statement reads.

Organizers say that a total of 100 groups are now supporting the protest. At a planning meeting in early October, NYUIR named three coordinators for the Oct. 21 action: Moonani Maulik from Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM), Ariella Ghanooni from No One is Illegal and Teresa Gutierrez

from the May 1 Coalition.

### Many diverse organizations

Gutierrez told Workers World that these developments "reflect a new phase of the immigrant rights struggle in New York City. It is impressive that so many diverse organizations have come together. It shows that momentum for building unity is increasing.

"The media would like to declare the immigrant rights movement dead," she added, "but the October 21 initiative shows that this is false. Not only will the protest represent organizations from the Mexican, Central American and Latin American immigrant communities, but also the Pacific, East Asian, South Asian and we hope—by the day of the demonstration—all the immigrant communities

in this most international city."

Bernadette Ellorin of the Justice for Immigrant Filipino Coalition said, "The immigrant rights movement never went away. In fact, it just grew exponentially and the movement is building larger and larger bases. Oct. 21 is another manifestation of the groundswell from last spring. People on Capitol Hill cannot ignore the demand of so many, which is legalization for all."

Some of the organizations and coalitions in NYUIR, besides those mentioned earlier, are Asociación Tepeyac, Coalition of Immigrant Communities (Washington Heights), Immigrant Communities in Action, Families for Freedom and Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights. For more information, see [nyunit-edforimmigrantrights.blogspot.com](http://nyunit-edforimmigrantrights.blogspot.com). □

# Columbia students shut down Minutemen

By Brenda Ryan  
New York

Jim Gilchrist, founder of the Minuteman Project, had little time to spout his racist anti-immigrant message at a Columbia University event Oct. 4. As he began speaking, students jumped onto the stage and unfurled a banner proclaiming "Nobody Is Illegal" in English, Spanish and Arabic.

Members of the audience erupted, whooping, clapping and raising their fists in opposition to Gilchrist. Minuteman guards swooped onto the stage and tried to rip a banner away from the protesters.

The College Republicans at Columbia University had invited Gilchrist and fellow Minuteman Jerome Corsi to speak about their book "Minutemen: The Battle to Secure America's Borders." The vigilante group posts people along the U.S./Mexico border to capture immigrants as part of its vicious campaign against undocumented workers. But students, led by the Chicano Student Association at Columbia, would not allow the Minutemen to spread their



hateful message.

Footage of the protest by CTVnews online and Univision was posted on the Internet site YouTube. In the Univision clip a person supporting Gilchrist is shown kicking a protester.

The students who occupied the stage issued a statement explaining why they confronted the Minutemen. "As Chicanos and Latinos, alongside African Americans and progressive people of other nationalities, we took it as our responsibility to give voice to the undocumented immigrant families who live in fear at terrorist vigilante groups like the Minutemen," they wrote.

"Armed patrols by these groups force more and more people desperate for work to find even more hazardous ways into the United States. Over 3,000 people—including hundreds of children—have died in the desert. Their blood is on the hands of Gilchrist and his thugs."

Columbia University President Lee Bollinger issued a statement denouncing the students. He said they violated Gilchrist's right to free speech. The students showed they have a right to protest the violence and racism of the Minutemen, and that using the First Amendment to stop them is a sham.

"We are sure that if the Nazi party held a public meeting on campus, Jewish groups would be there to challenge them—so would we," the students wrote. "We are sure that if the Ku Klux Klan held a public meeting on campus, African American groups would be there to challenge them—so would we. The Minutemen are no different."

While the protest was going on inside Columbia's auditorium, hundreds of people gathered outside to demonstrate against the Minutemen. They chanted, "Minutemen, Nazis, KKK, racists, fascists go away."

Gilchrist turned reality on its head, claiming to be the one maligned by the students. In a statement on the Minuteman Project Web site he called the protesters "hateful elites who prove themselves to be the real bigots." His comments appear under the headline "Students: Darky, Keep Thy Place!" One doesn't need a clearer sign to see who is the racist here.

One of the protesters, Sharon Black, a volunteer for the New York May 1st Coalition for Immigrant Rights, was quoted in the Los Angeles Times as saying Gilchrist was not welcome in New York City. "We are a city of immigrants. His message is one of division, racism and hate," she said.

The May 1st Coalition sent a message of solidarity to the students and has proposed they speak at an upcoming Oct. 21 rally for immigrant rights at Union Square. □

# Foley and the Democrats

Continued from page 2

(U.S. News & World Report, Oct. 16)

Doesn't the Democratic Party—soft-cop to the Republican hard-cop—enjoy the reputation of being the party of civil rights, gay rights and women's right to abortion? Aren't those the constituents that the Democrats rely on to turn out the vote?

At a time when grass-roots anger is smoldering about the Pentagon war in Iraq, tax breaks to the rich, lower wages, and loss of jobs and social services, greater segments of the working class and oppressed have given up hope voting will bring about significant change.

The evangelical right—including the Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America and the American Family Association—are a powerful machine that has mobilized not merely voters for Republicans but foot soldiers to drum up the vote. Evangelical voters are estimated to be one-quarter of the electorate.

"Democrats see an opening in the Mark Foley scandal to make gains among the white evangelical Christians who broke for George W. Bush over John Kerry by nearly 4 to 1 in 2004," observed journal-

ist Dan Gilgoff in a U.S. News.com report posted Oct. 6.

Segments of the ruling class have grown increasingly alarmed with the Bush administration's quagmire in the Middle East, resulting in leaks and scandals.

The "generals" of the Christian right-wing army have as yet refused to break with the GOP over the Foley scandal. Instead, some are using it as leverage to push the Republican Party further to the right. ABC reported, "Conservative activists are beginning to discuss the Mark Foley scandal as indicative of a GOP that has become too tolerant of gays in their midst." (queerty.com, Oct. 6)

The Democratic Party, as part of the overall shift in the establishment, is moving to the right as well.

During the 2004 presidential election, Democratic hopeful John Kerry called for a state by state strategy to overturn same-sex marriage. Kerry was senator from the first state, Massachusetts, where lesbians and gays had won that right.

Democratic Sen. Hillary Clinton tilted her party to the right on the issue of abortion last winter when she stated, "There is no reason why government cannot do more to educate and inform and provide assistance so that the choice guaranteed

under our constitution either does not ever have to be exercised or only in very rare circumstances."

When an evangelical "mega-church" opened in Houston's former professional basketball arena last year, San Francisco Democrat Nancy Pelosi—House Minority leader—was there to celebrate.

Democratic Party Chair Howard Dean appeared on Pat Robertson's "700 Club" program on Christian Broadcasting Network May 10 and said the Democratic platform states that "marriage is between a man and a woman."

The fact that it was a lie did not belie Dean's intent. He concluded: "I'm not saying we'll agree with everything between the more conservative evangelicals and Democrats but I think there's more common ground and we're willing to work with the evangelical community."

There's one point of unity on which Democrats and Republicans recently found unanimity: The vote, 100 to 0, for a \$470 billion Pentagon budget this year.

Who will protect youth from this predatory imperialist war drive and all the bigotry used to divert attention from its toll? Not either party of big business. It will take an independent movement—one that also defends lesbian, gay, bi and trans rights. □

## Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Authors include  
Mumia  
Abu-Jamal,  
Monica  
Moorehead,  
Larry Holmes,  
Sam Marcy, Minnie  
Bruce Pratt,  
Bill Cecil,  
Consuela Lee,  
Pat Chin and  
Leslie Feinberg.



Order online from [www.Leftbooks.com](http://www.Leftbooks.com)

# Anti-war slate holds rallies across Michigan

By Jerry Goldberg and Kris Hamel  
Detroit

The campaign of David Sole for U.S. Senate on the Stop the War Slate of the Green Party of Michigan has moved into high gear. Meetings are being held throughout the state. The media are slowly beginning to pay attention to the campaign.

Demonstrations are scheduled at two Senate candidate debates to protest Sole's exclusion, which is really the exclusion of the anti-war movement.

Propelling the campaign are Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow's recent actions. Just recently, Stabenow joined her fellow Democratic and Republican senators in voting to build an apartheid-style 700-mile-long fence on the border with Mexico. She voted to continue funding the illegal wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to provide a legal basis for the Bush administration's continuing torture of detainees barred from legal recourse.

More and more progressive activists are expressing their disgust with Stabenow on the Internet, and an increasing number are coming out in support of David Sole as the anti-war Senate candidate.

For example, Elena Herrada, a leader in the immigrants' rights struggle in Detroit, posted a letter online that read in part: "I am not able to find it within myself to support Stabenow for anything. She voted to build the wall across the border, to support the bankruptcy bill, which penalizes poor people, she started the wheels in motion to dismantle public school funding before she became a Senator, and is a supporter of the war. ... David Sole is running on the anti-war slate of the Green Party ticket. He has been on every picket line with us for as long as I can recall. He is unafraid to speak truth to power."

And in a widely circulated e-mail denouncing Stabenow's vote for the Military Commissions Act—widely known as the "torture bill"—Cynthia Heenan, a leader of the Detroit chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, also expressed

her support for Sole.

## Campaign reaches cities all over state

Early in October the Sole campaign traveled to northern Michigan. The economic devastation in this part of the state is as real as in Detroit, but less widely publicized. Organizers set up an outreach table at the Harvest Festival in Boyne City. They reported a favorable response to their anti-war message. One senior citizen took a stack of leaflets to her housing project. A teacher grabbed a stack to bring back to her class.

On Oct. 8, in Sault Ste. Marie, an evening meeting featuring Sole drew a crowd at an area restaurant. One participant said he had put an announcement about Sole's appearance onto the Democratic Party e-mail list serve in the "Soo." Another described going "undercover" at a recent Tommy Dorsey concert. Inside the concert venue, he said, he passed out Sole for Senate fliers while dressed in a suit and tie and posing as an usher.

The meeting, and whole northern tour, focused particular attention on an issue that will be the subject of a public hearing on Nov. 3 in Charlevoix, Mich.: a measure that would classify 25 percent of the Great Lakes as a Department of Homeland Security zone for munitions testing. Officials have admitted this would cause "collateral damage" to surrounding areas.

Campaign meetings were also held in Ann Arbor and Flint, where the Green Party candidate for U.S. Congress is a retired UAW Delphi worker. And in East Lansing, the campaign has been invited to join a lesbian/gay/bi/trans speak-out at Michigan State University; Sole and Michigan State Board of Trustees candidate Lauren Spencer will participate.

A news conference is scheduled for Oct. 11 at the State Capitol in Lansing. Leaflets for the Sole for Senate, Kevin Carey for State Board of Education and Derek Grigsby for State Representative campaigns were handed out at the Focus



David Sole passes out leaflet urging a "Vote Against the War."

Hope march in Detroit.

The campaign also received a tremendous boost from the appearance in Michigan of Leslie Feinberg, a leading trans lesbian activist, author and Workers World editor.

Stabenow and her Republican opponent, Sheriff Michael Bouchard, have announced plans for two candidate debates. Fittingly, the first debate, on Oct. 18, will be hosted by the Detroit Economic Club, an organization composed of Michigan's corporate elite. In a letter demanding that he participate in that debate, Sole wrote, "My campaign reflects the majority position of the people on this critical issue, a position that should be heard and reflected in any true campaign debate."

When the Economic Club failed to respond to Sole's demand for inclusion in the debate, the anti-war candidate filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission. Sole's complaint cited violations of 11 CFR 110.13(c), which provides that organizations staging debates cannot use belonging to the Democrats

and Republicans as the criterion for who gets invited, and must use pre-established objective criteria to determine which candidates may participate. The complaint also cited 11 CFR 110.13(a), which provides that staging organizations cannot support or oppose political candidates or political parties.

Sole told Workers World, "A look at the corporate sponsorship for the Detroit Economic Club, which is an avowedly big-business organization, demonstrates that they clearly oppose my candidacy because I am a socialist who is against big business and their policies of profits before people, as well as their support for imperialist wars abroad."

Sole's supporters plan to demonstrate at the debates if the exclusion persists. The fundamental issue of ending the illegal U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will be addressed, as will the demand that the hundreds of billions of dollars being wasted in these wars be used instead to guarantee jobs, housing and health care for all.

The demonstrations are scheduled for Oct. 15 at Grand Valley State University near Grand Rapids, and Oct. 18 at 11 a.m. at the Marriott Hotel in the Renaissance Center in downtown Detroit.

Also on Oct. 18, Lauren Spencer will participate in a candidate forum at MSU in East Lansing, and Kristen Hamel will take on her Republican and Democratic challengers for first district state representative at a candidate forum sponsored by the Grosse Pointe League of Women Voters.

For more information on the Sole for U.S. Senate campaign and all the Stop the War Slate and Green Party candidates, visit [www.stopthewarslate.org](http://www.stopthewarslate.org), [www.migreens.org](http://www.migreens.org), or email [campaign@stopthewarslate.org](mailto:campaign@stopthewarslate.org). Donations can be made payable to Sole for Senate Campaign and sent to 5922 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48202. □

## Teach-in sheds light on Middle East

By Paul Teitelbaum  
Tucson, Ariz.

A teach-in sponsored by Middle East Justice Now! (MEJN) was held at City High School in downtown Tucson on Oct. 8. A crowd of nearly 100 people listened to a panel of speakers cover topics ranging from the difficulties of day-to-day life in the occupied Palestinian territories, the history of U.S. policy in the Middle East, the lasting environmental impact of Israel's attempt to obliterate Lebanon, and an overview of Israeli peace groups and other voices of dissent within Israel.

The panel discussion was followed by break-out sessions as panelists let participants join in talking about topics of particular interest to them. This was followed by a viewing of the film "Peace, Propaganda and the Promised Land" by Bathsheba Ratzkoff and Sut Jhally and a discussion of the U.S. corporate media and how it proliferates a pro-Israeli, anti-Arab viewpoint.

Thabet Khalidi, a Palestinian activist with MEJN and the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee of Tucson, used a series of maps to show the gradual annexation of Palestinian land by the

Israeli state, the path of the apartheid wall that is isolating Palestinian towns, and the bantustans that will result from the wall.

Rev. Nuhad Tomeh, recently returned from Lebanon, explained the hardships facing the displaced Lebanese people who are trying to return to their homes in the South of Lebanon. "Southern Lebanon is an agricultural area," he said, "and the people there depend on their olive crops to provide them with the income to live." The current olive crop is one of the best in years "but the farmers cannot harvest the olives. The fields are littered with cluster bombs. There are even cluster bombs in the branches of the trees."

Middle East Justice Now! was formed this July in response to the Israeli siege of Lebanon. The group focuses on dispelling the lies of the corporate media and combating the racism facing Arab-American people.

Arizona is a state where the people are constantly bombarded with racist, anti-immigrant propaganda, from both politicians and Minutemen alike. President George W. Bush made a point of going to Arizona to sign his racist, anti-immigrant border fence policy into law. This makes



WW PHOTO: PAUL TEITELBAUM

Rev. Nuhad Tomeh gives eyewitness testimony of hardships caused by Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

it imperative to unite all the anti-racist, anti-imperialist forces here and start to fight back.

MEJN is planning a fundraiser Oct. 28 to benefit the children of Lebanon. Those interested in attending, helping or finding out more about the group can contact MEJN at [MEJNInfo@gmail.com](mailto:MEJNInfo@gmail.com). □

Poison DUST  
Radioactive DU  
Weapons in Iraq

Veterans, anti-war organizers, environmentalists and health care providers will find this wake-up call to today's GIs invaluable.



Order at [www.Leftbooks.com](http://www.Leftbooks.com)



## In Iraq and U.S.

# Chain of command is breaking down

By Bob Dobrow

Is the U.S. occupation of Iraq reaching a tipping point?

The first week in October has seen some of the most intense resistance by Iraqis against U.S. military forces since the March 2003 invasion. Car and roadside bombing attacks are at an "all-time high." (France Press Agency, Oct. 5) Fighting by the Iraqi "insurgency," that is, by the Iraqi resistance to U.S. occupation and aggression, is at "historically high levels," according to Pentagon officials. (New York Times, Aug. 17)

A new poll done for the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes finds that most Iraqis want the U.S. to withdraw and "about six in 10 Iraqis say they approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces."

These results are remarkable as they are almost surely biased on the low side, given the state of terror that Iraqis endure. Iraqi civilian deaths have reached staggering rates at more than 100 a day—that's almost 37,000 a year!—according to the latest report from the United Nations Assistant Mission for Iraq.

On top of the military crisis, the economic situation is worsening. Inflation in Iraq is over 70 percent. The price of fuel and electricity has tripled since the start of the year. Unemployment is estimated at between 40 and 60 percent. In this oil-rich nation, gasoline is scarce and waits at the pump can last all day.

Last December, the U.S.-controlled International Monetary Fund (IMF) forced the Iraqi government to lift subsidies on oil prices. Gasoline's official price climbed from 4 cents to 67 cents a gallon. But, because of shortages, most Iraqis must buy their gas on the illegal market, where the price is over \$3 a gallon. (New York Times, Aug. 26) The average wage for an employed Iraqi is \$150 a month.

The war also impacts the U.S. economy. A new report from the Congressional Research Service states that the war is now costing U.S. taxpayers almost \$2 billion a week, twice as much as in the first year of the invasion.

That's \$2,000,000,000 every seven days!

That much money could pay for health insurance for everyone who needs it in this country, or new housing for the survivors of Katrina, or medical care and food for the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children who are malnourished and dying as a consequence of 15 years of U.S. bombings, sanctions and other atrocities.

On the U.S. side casualties are at record levels. From Oct. 2 to 4, some 13 soldiers died in Baghdad, the highest three-day total since the war began. Over 2,700 U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq and some 20,000 have been wounded in combat.

In September, "776 U.S. troops were wounded in action in Iraq, the highest number since the military assault to retake the insurgent-held city of Fallujah in November 2004." (Washington Post, Oct. 8)

### U.S. military resisters

But there is also opposition and growing resistance among U.S. soldiers. According to USA Today, over 8,000 troops are now AWOL, most living underground in the U.S. Many military personnel who applied for conscientious objector (CO) status have been denied, court-martialed and imprisoned.

Last week, the Army brought charges against Spec. Suzanne Swift. She is the U.S. soldier who was arrested and confined to base for going AWOL after her charges of sexual harassment and assault were ignored by the military.

Swift has refused to return to Iraq, where she says she was sexually harassed by a commanding officer. She says the

harassment also took place at her base in Fort Lewis, Wash., where she is currently being held.

On Sept. 12, Oregon anti-war activists, including Iraq Veterans Against the War and Veterans for Peace, sat in at the offices of Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) demanding a congressional inquiry on behalf of Swift and all women in uniform. After DeFazio's office was flooded with phone calls, emails and faxes, the representative agreed to initiate such an investigation.

Spec. Darrell Anderson has returned from Canada, where he has been living since January 2005 after refusing a second deployment to Iraq. Anderson came back from Iraq in 2005 with a Purple Heart after taking shrapnel from a roadside bomb. He described to Democracy Now! journalist Amy Goodman the point at which he decided that he couldn't fight anymore:

"I arrived in Baghdad in January 2004, and it was in April when I was ordered to open fire on a car of innocent civilians, and I refused. My superiors told me that it was military procedures, if a car comes through a traffic stop, you are ordered to open fire. And I just didn't agree with our procedures we were doing there, because if I followed them I would be killing innocent people.

"I refused. They told me if I refused again, I'd be punished. But I was still a fresh troop on the ground, so no action was taken. One day I saw a couple of my fellow soldiers get hit, and I pulled my trigger while pointing it at an innocent child. But my weapon was on safe, and then I realized what I was doing, and I just realized that no matter how good you believe you are, when you're there, that you're eventually—you know, the evil in this is going to take over, and you're going to kill

## They speak their mind

On NBC's Meet the Press aired Oct. 1, two candidates for a U.S. Senate seat in Ohio were asked to comment about recent polls on Iraqi attitudes toward the war. Surveys by independent researchers had reported that most Iraqis "favor an immediate U.S. pullout" and that "about six in 10 Iraqis say they approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces."

Host Tim Russert asked Republican Sen. Mike DeWine, "If they want us out, and they're in favor of attacking us, why are we still there?"

"I was shocked by that as well," replied DeWine. "Still it does not change that we're not in Iraq primarily for the Iraqis. We're in Iraq for us. ... It would be a total disaster for us to leave. It is in our self-

interest that we are in Iraq. That's why we're there."

Whatever happened to "democracy" and "freedom"?

DeWine's Democratic opponent, Sherrod Brown, said nothing to challenge the senator, who is considered a "moderate" among Republicans.

Of course, DeWine was speaking class truth—his class, that is. The "us" he refers to is not the Ohio voters who put him in office but the corporate, military-industrial and energy profiteers who want control of Iraq's oil wealth and who pay DeWine's tabs and pull DeWine's strings.

How refreshing to hear the truth on national television!

—BD

## Protests in Canada hit Afghan war

By G. Dunkel

The opposition to Canada's involvement in Afghanistan is growing and taking a concrete form.

The Collectif Échec à la Guerre, the Canadian Peace Alliance, the Canadian Labor Congress and the Canadian Islamic Congress are jointly calling for a country-wide day of protest on Oct. 28.

In 2003, these same forces brought 250,000 to 350,000 people into the streets of Montreal to oppose the war in Iraq just before it started. About 10 percent of the people of Quebec took part throughout the province.

In early August, they brought out 15,000 to 20,000 people to protest Israel's attack on Lebanon and Canada's involvement in Afghanistan.

Their call explicitly demands: "End Canada's occupation of Afghanistan." They point out that "This October marks the fifth anniversary of the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, and the people of that country are still suffering from the ravages of war. Reconstruction in the country is at a standstill and the needs of the Afghan people are not being met. The rule of the new Afghan state, made up largely of drug-running warlords, will not realize the democratic aspirations of the people there."

The call goes on: "We are told that the purpose of this war is to root out terrorism and protect our societies, yet the heavy-handed approach of a military occupation trying to impose a U.S.-friendly government on the Afghan people will force more Afghans to become part of the resistance movement. It will also make our societies more—not less—likely to see terrorist attacks."

The coalition ends its call: "The mission in Afghanistan has already cost Canadians more than \$4 billion. That money could have been used to fund human needs in Canada or abroad. Instead it is being used to kill civilians in Afghanistan and advance the interests of corporations.

"On October 28th, stand up and be counted. Canadian troops out of Afghanistan now!"

As pressure mounts and the date of these pan-Canadian demonstrations grows nearer, the government is beginning to squirm and maneuver. On Oct. 6,

Prime Minister Stephen Harper called up President George W. Bush to tell him Canada was going to lodge a diplomatic complaint over how the U.S. treated

Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen born in Syria.

Arar was arrested by U.S. immigration authorities, denied a lawyer or consular access and then put on a plane to Syria, where he was purportedly tortured for a year. He was released only under heavy pressure from Canada.

Harper told Bush that Canada is upset about the findings of an independent panel of inquiry that "American officials had not been candid and truthful in their dealings with Canadian officials in the case."

While Harper has admitted that Arar suffered a "grave injustice," especially since it was faulty intelligence from Canada that caused his arrest, he has clearly avoided providing a formal apology from the Canadian government.

He is willing to tweak Bush a bit in response to growing popular pressure, but not willing to admit that the Canadian government bowed to U.S. pressure in its earlier response to the treatment of Arar.

Email:  
gdunkel@workers.org



## Interview with Leila Khaled

# Imperialism's two failures: Iraq and Lebanon

Following are excerpts from an interview conducted with Palestinian resistance leader Leila Khaled by Samia Halaby of the Defend Palestine Coalition, LeiLani Dowell of Workers World newspaper, and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center during a fact-finding delegation to Lebanon Sept. 11-17.

**Samia Halaby: In Gaza during the time [of the war on Lebanon], the offensive was very heavy.**

**Leila Khaled:** It was more intense in Gaza because all the focus was on Lebanon. Israel has done three massacres, big massacres, in the north of Gaza, where they destroyed everything and it's now an isolated area.

They call the people in their houses and tell them: "We're going to bombard the house, leave it. You have half an hour to leave." So people leave. They wait and wait, but no bombardment. They go back to the house and stay there for one week, and then it is bombarded, and they are killed.

So whenever people receive such a call, they leave, but when they see that the house is still there, they go back. Again, they call them: "We told you to leave, why are you still here? You have five minutes to leave now. We gave you half an hour last time, now it's five minutes." Some did not believe that they wanted to bombard the houses, and they stayed there, and they were killed.

This is the way they deal with the Palestinians in Gaza. It's terrible. Anytime I call our comrades there, they say, "They are turning our lives into hell." Gaza is a very small area, densely populated, wherever they hit they will kill, and destroying the houses means that the people cannot find anywhere else to live. There are tents there now; this is during the last three years. The borders are closed, people cannot receive any kind of aid, even the money; if you want to send money for them, there are new laws at the banks.

In Gaza, they want the people to starve, and to be killed, and to reach to the extent that they would say, "Any solution, we accept it."

In Lebanon they distributed the pamphlets from the airplanes, saying that Hezbollah is not for you, Hezbollah is working for Iran and not for you. This is the psychological war also. But the people were not responding to them.

**Why do you think the Israelis stopped bombing Lebanon?**

This time they lost, because this is the first time they witnessed rockets going into the cities in Israel. From the first week, they were bombarding Lebanon and Hezbollah was retaliating by bombarding the cities and the villages. One and a half million Israelis left the Galilee. I called my relatives and they said this is the first time in 58 years that they are going and leaving.

**What are the dangers now? What's likely to happen next?**

This war I think is a turning point in the area, because Israel cannot again launch another war. Yesterday there were demonstrations in Tel Aviv for an investigation committee. This is the sixth war with the Arabs, but this is the first time that they



Palestinian resistance leader Leila Khaled, above, in 1972. Right, street in Lebanon after Israeli bombardments.



WW PHOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS

felt they could be hurt.

I think that although we know very well that Hezbollah is supported by Syria and Iran, I think that this is legitimate also. Why not have allies in the area? Israel has the most powerful country supporting it.

I think politically they will try to make big contradictions in Lebanon itself, on the governmental level, on the parliamentary level, but they cannot do that on the mass level, because people—even those who lost their sons or husbands—they say it's for our land, and they have this ideology that they are fighting for their land. We have seen many people on the ruins of these houses, and they say, "Okay, we can rebuild them, it's not the first time." They say, "We know the enemy, it's not the first time."

I did not mention that all the Lebanese people showed high solidarity with the displaced, in different parts of Lebanon, where there are Christians, the Druze. The majority Shia cities were all bombarded, so people fled to the other neighborhoods, and this was the first time that we have witnessed this unity among the people. There was not criticism against Hezbollah or the Shia sect during the war.

But during the war, the Palestinians came out from the camps and were asking the Lebanese to come and live with them in their houses in the camps. And Lebanese people were telling the media, this time we knew that we have brothers and sisters there. The Palestinians say this is our duty, all the time the Lebanese protected us, and it's time for us to do our duty towards them when they are in danger.

They bombarded around the camps but not in the camps. They don't want anything to unite the Lebanese and the Palestinians. They selected targets outside the camps, and not inside the camps.

**Some people have said that this was a test by the U.S. to see how the reaction would be on the ground from an attack on Syria and Iran.**

I myself don't expect that the U.S. administration could attack Iran. In Iraq, America failed to establish what they wanted from the war. They are taking the oil, but not in an easy way.

At least in the near future, I don't see that Israel is going to do the work again. But of course, such an administration,

they are crazy enough to do anything. Now what they are trying to do is to catch the Middle East from both sides, from Iraq and Sudan. They tried to hit in Lebanon, not as a test, but as a weak point in the area, but they failed.

Now in Israel there's discussion and criticism of the political level and the military institution. We know always that the military institution is the real government of Israel, and not the political level, although historically speaking the generals were always the prime ministers of Israel. This time Olmert or Peretz wanted to prove themselves as generals, but they did not, and so there's big discussion and a big split in Israel.

Some observers said that Israel played this war on the expense of the Americans, played it, but they failed. Now, these two failures, in Iraq and in Lebanon, I think won't let them think of another war. And now in Afghanistan it's coming up again.

**As a Marxist, how do you view Hezbollah?**

Hezbollah came out from the Amal movement, which was established in the 1980s. The Shia in Lebanon were always dealt with as a minority, very oppressed and the poorest people. Hezbollah came out in 1987 because they had many contradictions with the leadership of Amal. They had a new vision towards how to deal with Lebanon and with Israel. And they have this principle: that we have to resist on the popular level.

They learned the lessons from mistakes that we, as Palestinians in Lebanon, made. They didn't show their weapons, as we used to do. We had open bases in the South; they didn't do that. They did not have training camps; nobody knows where they were trained. They're very well organized people. We had people with their arms and uniforms in the South and the cities, anyone could tell that they were fighters. Now nobody knows who is a fighter.

After the cease-fire, when Nasrallah called the people to go back to the South, we were that morning in one of the schools with the displaced people. That afternoon they were carrying their things and going. We asked them, "Where are you going?" and they said, "We are going to our villages, although the roads are very dangerous, cluster bombs are still there, some of these

unexploded rockets." The people—I'm talking about the people—are very well disciplined. They went directly, and they said, "Our leadership asked us to go."

This shows that the relation between Hezbollah and the people is very strong, and people feel that it is for their benefit and for their interest, although there are some villages totally leveled, and some where even the houses that remain are not useful for living.

Hezbollah considers itself a part of the resistance in the area against the common enemy, against Israel, against America. This they declare every time, and they called for talks with different groups, and they went for the talks. There were many, many sessions before the war.

The party is very well organized and trained and to the masses they have a strong relation. Every house in the South feels that this party is as their sons, as their daughters. They have schools, medical centers, training centers. Now many of the schools are destroyed, but they're going to rebuild.

Just after the war, Nasrallah declared that they are going to compensate the people, so that they can live in dignity. I think it's a culture, for all human beings to live with dignity. And he stresses that—now we have won the war, although the country was destroyed, but we kept our dignity, we are free people. He speaks to the people, to their minds and their hearts at the same time.

There are political parties in the area, especially in Lebanon, who said why can't we live in peace with Israel? Now this war showed that it's very difficult to coexist with them, and this is very dangerous, because we, as Palestinians, from the very beginning called for a one-state solution, that Arabs, Jews, Muslims, Christians can live all together peacefully on the same land and on a democratic basis. This is our vision to the end of this conflict, but we have seen that still the Israeli society is not ready for that.

Iran has a religious ideology, which I feel is dangerous. But when it comes to resisting the imperialist projects in the area, you don't speak about ideology, you speak about resistance. Resistance is the concept, whether the origin of it is religious or not. That's why they targeted Hezbollah, because it's a resisting group. □

## As European anti-war movement debates intervention

# Thousands march in solidarity with resistance

By John Catalinotto

A protest demonstration held in Rome on Sept. 30 illustrates an important political argument that is taking place within the anti-war movement in Western Europe, and within the workers' and communist movements. This debate is also important for these movements within the United States.

At the roots of this debate are two questions: Can a NATO country make a "humanitarian" military intervention? Should the anti-war movement raise slogans and take political actions that are in solidarity with the resistance movements in the countries occupied by the imperialists?

Though these questions are being debated in many European countries, their expression in Italy illustrates the key issues most clearly. The central question there is what position the movement should take toward the "center-left" Italian government's decision to participate in the occupation of Afghanistan and in UNIFIL—the "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon"—in southern Lebanon.

One report from Rome said 10,000 people heeded the organizers' call to march through the Italian capital on Sept. 30 in solidarity with the resistance movements in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon. (Anti-imperialist Camp)

The march was 100 percent opposed to U.S. and Israeli military intervention in those countries. That position is shared by most Italian and most European anti-war organizations. Along with its open solidarity with the resistance, what distinguished this protest is that the marchers also demanded the Italian government pull its troops back from both Afghanistan and Lebanon. Washington has given the Italian government a central role in UNIFIL in policing Lebanon to prevent arms from going to Hezbollah.

The protest's organizers were a dozen left communist and anti-imperialist parties and groups. Some independent labor unions also endorsed the protest.

Much more massive anti-war demonstrations have been called by the official anti-war movement in Italy. Yet organizers rightfully called the action of 10,000 a "political success"—or at least a "turning point"—because it showed the movement could mobilize around a clear and strong anti-imperialist position without the support of the "institutional peace movement." (Communist Network)

As some of its organizers pointed out, the Rome protest directly confronted the Italian ruling class and the new "center-left" government. This government recently replaced the far-right regime of Premier Silvio Berlusconi, the pro-U.S. billionaire media magnate, whom all Italian progressives despise.

### Lenin's contribution

It is helpful to refer to the historical analysis made by V.I. Lenin, leader of the party that led the 1917 Russian Revolution. The reversal of that revolution in 1989-1991 may have made it less fashionable to read Lenin, but it has not changed his supremacy in developing revolutionary strategy for the working class. Lenin made especially strong contributions to understanding two key questions relevant to this current debate.

One is the danger to communist parties of accepting ministerial positions in a gov-

ernment that is in charge of the capitalist state and that serves the interests of the capitalist ruling class. Instead of capturing the office, the office can capture the communists.

The second is the vital importance of the working class in the imperialist countries acting in solidarity with the struggle for self-determination of the colonies or oppressed countries against imperialism, whether or not communists are leading these movements. Lenin and the Bolsheviks made this a cardinal principle of the revolution.

Regarding the "institutional peace movement," the most significant absentee at the Italian protest was the Refoundation Communist Party (PRC). The PRC, with 41 seats in Italy's 630-seat Chamber of Deputies, is an essential element in the current Italian "center-left" government led by Prime Minister Romano Prodi. The PRC holds some ministries and its leader, Fausto Bertinotti, is president of the Chamber of Deputies.

The PRC had the opportunity to take a principled stand against intervention in Afghanistan and Lebanon and allow the Prodi government to fall. But on July 28, the PRC broke with its own record in four prior votes, this time voting along with the other government parties to endorse and fund Italy's military intervention in Afghanistan. Some weeks later the PRC leaders also supported and argued for Italian participation in the UNIFIL contingent in Lebanon.

Support for UNIFIL is by no means shared by all European communist parties. Some of the parties with the greatest working-class support, like the Portuguese Communist Party and the Communist Party of Greece, have strongly opposed their governments' participation in UNIFIL.

Indeed, an extraordinary meeting of 14 communist and workers' parties from countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and Gulf region took place Aug. 19-20 in Athens. In their statement condemning the U.S.-backed Israeli attack on Lebanon, these parties "expressed their disagreement with the provisions of the 1701/2006 UN Security Council resolution as it represents a U.S. effort to give Israel what it could not achieve by its assault." ([www.solidnet.org](http://www.solidnet.org))

And even in countries where the official Communist Party supports the military participation in UNIFIL—as in France and Spain—there are tendencies in the overall communist movement that protest it, just as the groups in Italy did.

### Role of European imperialist powers

The Rome protest debunked a false argument that some sectors of the European ruling class would like people to believe and that the PRC expounded. That is, that the European powers are somehow kinder, gentler players on the international arena than the United States is, and that this means that the progressive and anti-war movement should support these countries' role in interventions like UNIFIL as a counter to U.S. intervention.

While no one on the left, and certainly no anti-imperialists in the United States, can deny the exceedingly aggressive character of U.S. imperialism, it is still true that the



PHOTO: DA INDYMEDIA

March in Rome opposed sending troops to Afghanistan and Lebanon.

Afghanistan and Lebanon under the banners of Islam will awaken broader sections of the Islamic masses across North Africa and half of Asia to struggle against imperialism.

When the liberation struggles were led by communists, the campaign of demonization was just as vicious. Indeed, Fidel Castro and Kim Jong Il are still slandered daily, but they are attacked for being godless rather than worshiping in the "wrong" way.

The truth is that the resistance movements have exposed the weaknesses of the U.S. bully that has been attempting to intimidate the whole world into submission. Anti-imperialists in the Western countries should see these movements as an important cutting edge in the current struggle to do away with oppression and exploitation on a world scale. Their struggles must be supported, regardless of ideology.

In addition, as a Pakistani progressive wrote in 2003, the mass movement in the West against the Iraq War and solidarity with the oppressed of the region create an opening for secular and Marxist movements in countries like Pakistan to more easily reach out to the masses.

### In the U.S. movement

The anti-war and especially the communist movement in the imperialist countries—and that includes the United States—should not only fight against anti-Islamic prejudices. They should do all they can to assure the withdrawal of the imperialist forces from the occupied countries with, as the Italian anti-imperialists say, "no ifs or buts."

In the United States there is no question of the Bush government being "kinder, gentler." The problem is more to avoid being deceived by those politicians, mostly Democrats, who argue that "Iraq is stretching the Army to the breaking point" or that "Iraq is making it impossible to face the U.S.'s real enemies and intervene in Iran and North Korea." They criticize the war on Iraq because it has become a disaster for U.S. imperialism, not because it is slaughtering Iraqis. And they offer no way out because, they say, "We [U.S. imperialism] can't afford to lose."

It is not the responsibility of the anti-war movement to improve the tactics of U.S. imperialism. Anyone interested in the liberation of humanity from imperialist subjugation, who wants to end the bloody occupation of Iraq, who wants to stop U.S. youths from killing and dying for the sake of big capital, has nothing to fear from the U.S. military's inability to police the world.

The movement here should fight to deny funds to the Pentagon, support resisters inside the U.S. military and those who refuse to fight, and discourage young people from joining the armed forces while fighting to offer them viable economic alternatives. In addition it should support all those progressive struggles, from the rights of immigrants to the right of return for Katrina survivors, that make it more difficult for the ruling class here to wage wars abroad. □

European NATO powers have the same class character as the United States. This character has not changed simply because these countries were driven out of their former colonies all over the world and no longer rule most of them directly. Just like U.S. capitalists, those in Europe—and Japan—exploit the resources and labor of much of the world through their investment, their banks, their control of technology and communications, and their participation in military occupations, often under the Pentagon's leadership.

Even where there were sharp conflicts of interest between the European Union and the United States, on almost all key issues the imperialists have closed ranks against colonial uprisings, socialist countries and any nations defending their independence. Think of Yugoslavia, which they bombed and now occupy, as well as the condemnations of socialist Cuba, today's hostility to Iran and especially to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It's true that some of the EU powers—France and Germany—opposed what they considered a foolish and dangerous U.S.-British assault on Iraq, but only because they could gain nothing from it. They have joined the occupations of Haiti and Congo and the fighting in Afghanistan. Despite their economic rivalry, they cooperate militarily to assure they get a share of the loot. It is completely unreasonable to argue that they could carry out a "humanitarian" or progressive occupation.

### Solidarity with the resistance

The other key question is whether the movements in the West should welcome the victory of the resistance movements over the imperialist interventions.

Except for the secular part of the resistance in Iraq, the struggles against imperialist domination in Lebanon, Afghanistan and Iraq are now being fought under the banner of Islam. There is no doubt that the European and U.S. ruling classes have stirred up and exacerbated hatred against the Islamic-led movements and even against the religion itself—from Bush's phony charge of "Islamofascism" to the slanders from Pope Benedict.

This anti-Islamic campaign comes not from the religious prejudices of the rulers—although they are prejudiced and racist to the core—but because they fear that the liberation struggles taking place in Iraq,



## Workers World Party statement on crisis in Korea

*Continued from page 1*

The Pentagon has repeatedly carried out menacing military maneuvers directed at the DPRK.

Washington has not only refused to guarantee the safety of the DPRK but has reserved the right to launch a "preemptive strike" against it and, in its Nuclear Posture Review of 2002, declared its right to use nuclear weapons against the DPRK.

The North Korean government has been branded "unpredictable" and therefore "dangerous" by the propagandists for war in the capitalist media.

This is nonsense. Given all the unrelenting U.S. military threats—plus the fact that the U.S. government has only recently overthrown the government of Iraq by unilateral, unprovoked military force—the DPRK's efforts to develop an effective deterrent against military, and possibly nuclear, attack are entirely predictable, totally defensible and a matter of national survival.

Washington has created the present crisis. The people of the United States and the world must demand that Washington end the crisis by abandon-

ing its threats and provocations, dropping its demand for sanctions, and sitting down and negotiating the normalization of relations with the DPRK, including the signing of a peace treaty to end the more than 50 years of U.S. imperialist aggression in the region.

### Workers World Party

55 West 17th Street,  
New York, NY 10011  
212-627-2994

For immediate release. Contact: Deirdre Griswold □

## Nuclear crisis made in USA

*Continued from page 1*

century of U.S.-imposed sanctions.

### DPRK ringed by U.S. military

Furthermore, the DPRK is surrounded by U.S. nuclear bombers, nuclear-armed submarines, cruise missiles, aircraft carriers and destroyer fleets. Some 30,000 U.S. troops are based in South Korea, as well as a U.S. military high command that has final authority over several hundred thousand South Korean troops. Their mission is war against the North.

As recently as June of this year, the U.S. Air Force held tests of its Minuteman III missiles near the Korean peninsula. Three U.S. Navy carrier battle groups—including 22,000 troops, dozens of fighter planes and several heavy bombers—were assembled in the western Pacific off Guam in the largest naval mobilization since the Vietnam War. The USS Curtis Wilbur and USS Fitzgerald, both guided-missile destroyers, sit off the coast of North Korea. The U.S. sent spy planes on 170 missions during this period.

### U.S. hawks block normalization

Far from causing the present crisis, the DPRK has tried repeatedly to avoid having to develop a nuclear deterrent. Each time the U.S. government or militaristic factions within it have found ways to thwart any agreement.

A year ago, in September 2005, the North Korean government signed an agreement at six-party talks with the U.S., China, Russia, Japan and South Korea. In the agreement the DPRK pledged to "abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs." In return the U.S. and North Korea agreed "to respect each other's sovereignty, exist peacefully together and take steps to normalize their relations."

Four days later, the U.S. Treasury Department imposed sweeping financial sanctions against North Korea designed to cut off the country's access to the international banking system, branding it a "criminal state" for alleged money laundering and so-called "trafficking in weapons of mass destruction." (Newsweek, Oct. 10)

In 2004, negotiators from the State Department had worked out an agreement with the DPRK "outlining steps to resolve the standoff over the country's nuclear weapons. But it lacked the tough language on disarmament that North Korea had rejected and [Vice President Dick] Cheney knew Mr. Bush wanted."

"With Colin L. Powell, then secretary of state, and his deputy, Richard L. Armitage, at a black-tie dinner where they could not easily be reached on secure telephones, Mr. Cheney 'declared this thing a loser,' said a former senior official."

Bush sent new instructions to the negotiators—through the National Security Council, rather than the State Department—"that essentially killed the deal." (New York Times, Oct. 10)

### Hostile to North-South dialog

In 1999 a new prime minister, Kim Dae-jung, was elected in South Korea. Kim declared a "sunshine policy" of building friendly relations with the North. In 2000, Kim Dae-jung had an historic summit meeting in Seoul with Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader. When Bush took office in 2001, he refused to meet with Kim Dae-jung, signaling U.S. government opposition to any relaxation of tensions on the peninsula and anything that could be favorable to North Korea.

The Clinton administration had also tried to undermine the DPRK. In 1993, after the collapse of the USSR, as part of the retargeting of U.S. nuclear weapons, Clinton let North Korea know it was being targeted by some of them. Clinton authorized Operation Team Spirit in March 1993, mobilizing bombers, cruise missiles and naval vessels against the DPRK. He went to the demilitarized zone separating North and South and threatened the DPRK with war in early 1994.

When the government in Pyongyang, North Korea, threatened to pull out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Clinton prepared for war, including the use of nuclear weapons. South Korean Prime Minister Kim Young-sam argued with Clinton for half an hour over the phone to stop the war. Faced with the prospect of a nuclear attack, Kim Il Sung, then president of the DPRK, invited former President Jimmy Carter for talks. At their conclusion, Carter announced an agreement, later called the Framework Agreement, negotiated in Geneva.

Under this agreement, the DPRK, which was trying to develop nuclear energy to supply electric power since it has no oil or gas, agreed to shut down its nuclear reactor and stop development of two others in exchange for two light-water reactors. The U.S. was supposed to organize the production of these reactors by 2003 and supply fuel oil in the meantime.

It was also supposed to lift sanctions, recognize the sovereignty of the DPRK, work towards normal political and economic relations, and guarantee against nuclear attack. The U.S. immediately backtracked on everything but supplies of

fuel oil, and those deliveries came late.

Washington sought sanctions against the DPRK in the UN, put it on the "terrorist list," refused to guarantee against an attack and did not move an inch to normalize relations. It delayed production of the light-water reactors so they would be finished at the earliest by 2010.

The DPRK was in extraordinary economic difficulties following the collapse of the USSR and was forced to delay its economic recovery under threat of war.

Furthermore, in 1998, the U.S. military conducted exercises simulating an attack on the North with 30 nuclear bombs. U.S. warplanes based at Seymour Johnson Air Base in North Carolina, carrying concrete dummy bombs in place of B61 nuclear bombs, dropped them at a base in Florida as part of operational plans drawn up by the National Command Authority. (Gregory Elich, "Strange Liberators," Llumina Press, 2006)

### Strategy of demonizing DPRK

The strategy of demonizing North Korea and constantly threatening it serves a dual purpose. It keeps military tensions in the region at a fever pitch and provides the basis for maintaining more and more military hardware in Asia. Bush has promoted a high-tech, highly expensive and highly profitable (to the military-industrial complex) missile defense system.

Administration denials notwithstanding, it is the policy and ambition of the U.S. ruling class and its military to destroy the socialist government of North Korea. It has been the policy ever since the Korean Revolution after World War II, led by Kim Il Sung. The bosses and the landlords were thrown out and the society was taken over and run for the workers and peasants. That was the first "crime" of the DPRK.

The second "crime" was the outcome of the Korean War. In spite of enormous casualties, the revolutionary armies of the North, with the assistance of the Chinese Red Army, inflicted the first military defeat on U.S. imperialism by stopping it from taking over all of Korea.

One of the long-standing goals of Washington has been to break up any solidarity between the DPRK and the People's

Republic of China (PRC). It is difficult for progressives and revolutionaries to watch the PRC lending itself to the anti-DPRK schemes of Washington and Tokyo. Hopefully, the current narrow, unjust and self-defeating policy of supporting sanctions on the DPRK will be reversed.

The implacable U.S. imperialist hostility towards the Korean revolution and the socialist government of the DPRK comes from its ambitions to conquer Asia and turn the Pacific Ocean into a U.S. lake. This policy has been a stated goal for over a century.

### Challenge to anti-war movement

The anti-war movement in the U.S. now recognizes that the Bush administration is an aggressor in Iraq and is planning aggression against Iran. It is beginning to recognize the reactionary role of the U.S.-client state in Tel Aviv as the cat's paw of the Pentagon in the Middle East. It recognizes that Washington has designs to overthrow the Cuban government and the Venezuelan government.

It is time to elevate the cause of the DPRK in the movement and fight against Washington's demonization, its sanctions and threats.

It is U.S. militarism that is the threat to peace, not the defensive measures taken by the government of the DPRK. North Korea has done everything possible to avoid having to resort to a nuclear deterrent. But it has experienced a solid wall of hostility, threats, military maneuvers, vilification, and attempts at isolation and economic sabotage.

It has seen "preventive war" against Iraq. It has witnessed the destruction of the government of Yugoslavia after a massive U.S. bombing campaign. The DPRK does not want more nuclear weapons in the area. On the contrary, it has offered many proposals to get rid of them. It has called for signing a peace treaty. It has called for a non-aggression pact. It wants peace, while Washington wants war and counter-revolution in Korea and all of Asia.

Right now a dangerous bloc exists between Washington and Tokyo. Japan annexed Korea in 1910 and ruled it as a colony until 1945. The Japanese imperialist ruling class wants to use this crisis as a springboard to build up its military. It is using the Bush administration's full court press for sanctions and the strangulation of the DPRK as its cover.

The workers and oppressed in this country can only suffer from an increase in militarism around the Korean peninsula. Either they will be dragged into war or forced to pay the price of increased military spending—or both.

Those who are exploited by the bosses, whose wages are going down, whose benefits are being cut, have nothing to gain by supporting the war drive of the billionaires' government in Washington, the military-industrial complex and Big Oil, who are behind the present crisis. □



Oct. 11 demonstration protests sanctions against North Korea.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

# Class struggle in Oaxaca raises people's power

By Teresa Gutierrez

Revolutionary or mass political and social developments in Mexico are perhaps one of the most important signs that imperialism is in crisis. A question always on the minds of the U.S. ruling class is can imperialism detain and control the class struggle there, can it keep it from bursting into revolutionary upheaval that would inevitably spill over the border, forever changing the political landscape in this country.

So it is with great interest that progressives and revolutionaries monitor the events that have been sweeping Mexico in the recent period. A massive upsurge in Mexico City after fraudulent elections and the advent of people's power in Oaxaca are two indications that Mexico is in the throes of a massive upheaval.

Which way it will go, no one knows. But the unfolding events are generating great optimism and excitement.

## People's power in Oaxaca

Some alternative media are calling the people's occupation that has been taking place in Oaxaca since May 22 "the Oaxaca Commune." They point out that the occupation in Oaxaca has lasted more than twice as long as the Paris Commune of 1871.

The movement against oppression and exploitation in this Mexican state has reached the level that some are saying there is now dual power in Oaxaca. The masses have occupied the center of government and are in control of much of the capital. The governor of the state, Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, who is the prime target of the protests, has, in the words of the Financial Times, been "forced to live out of a suitcase." The Ruiz administration has gone underground.

The Financial Times declares that Oaxaca has been in a state of "anarchy" for several months.

## Behind the crisis in Oaxaca

Oaxaca is one of the three poorest states in Mexico. The other two are Chiapas in southern Mexico and Guerrero on the Atlantic side. The population of Oaxaca is about 3.5 million. It has the largest number of people with indigenous ancestry, about two-thirds of the population. Oaxaca is Mexico's most indigenous state, home to 17 distinct Indian cultures.

According to a Mexican human rights network, the richest 10 percent of households receive 13 times the income of the poorest 10 percent.

The 70,000 teachers who opened up the struggle with their strike are by far not the poorest. In fact, they can be considered part of the so-called middle class. They are members of the National Union of Educational Workers—El Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Educativo (SNTE)—a large and powerful union but very much a company union, entrenched with the capitalist government historically.

But in Oaxaca the teachers are members of Section 22 of SNTE, which has much more of a radical and militant history. Their strike affects 14,000 schools. It was spurred on by Ruiz, who became governor in 2004 in elections that the people charge were fixed. He is accused of corruption and human rights abuses, brutally cracking down on protests, and encouraging the police to form paramilitary groups to squelch dissent and opposition.

The movement charges that Ruiz has ruled with excessively overt terror, carried out kidnappings and jailed people for no reason at all. Charges include torture, killings and impunity for those who carried

out these atrocities.

For 25 years, the teachers have gone out on strike every May. But this year was different. The demands of the strikers resonated among a wider section of the population and a movement was sparked.

According to an article by George Salzman, between May 15 and June 17 demonstrations grew from about 50,000 to 400,000. When negotiations between the union and the government stalemated, the strikers and supporters began to occupy the center of the city. (Counterpunch, Aug. 30)

The strikers and their families, including children, along with many supporters, began to camp out. Business as usual was thoroughly disrupted.

The movement gelled to the point of forming a massive, statewide people's assembly. A convention was organized. Out of it, the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO) was born.

Independent news accounts report that protesters, grouped in more than 350 different social organizations, who had been camping out in the parks and on the streets for over four months, are governing through people's assemblies. They have taken over radio stations and have expelled public officials from local government posts. Many protesters have armed themselves with sticks and slingshots. Local residents stand guard behind barriers of sandbags, rocks, scrap metal and burnt-out buses.

Buses have been commandeered—commercial, police and government vehicles—and are being used to block roads.

"Should federal troops attempt to wrest control of this southern capital from strikers, they'll face scores of avenues like Calle Almendros, now a gantlet of obstacles designed to slow an advance. Strikers have prepared a 200-yard-long segment

by stretching wires across it at neck, ankle and waist height, placing large rocks side-by-side and parking a commandeered school bus sideways to block traffic in both directions. Like many other streets, it has been fortified with small bunkers made of sandbags and stocked with dozens of bottles for Molotov cocktails. Hundreds of smaller rocks were piled up to be thrown or launched by slings." (San Antonio Express-News, Oct. 4)

In another sign of people's power, while TV Azteca was interviewing two lawmakers at a hotel, they were hustled out a back door, their departing car pelted with rocks. Unrest has scared most tourists away. Business leaders put losses at more than \$300 million.

## Crisis for the state

This incredibly untenable situation for the Mexican government takes place amid one of the biggest political scandals in decades. The July presidential elections were tainted with fraud and corruption. All indications are that popular candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador was cheated out of the presidency.

But he did not go back and hide in the corridors of government buildings. Instead, he embraced the mass movement. Since July millions of Mexicans have occupied the Zócalo square in Mexico City and have called for a parallel government headed by López Obrador, the true president of the people.

## Militarizing Oaxaca

The situation in Oaxaca is very tense. Every day the possibility that federal troops could be called in to break up the movement becomes more real. APPO refused to attend talks in Mexico City on Oct. 4, called by out-going President

*Continued on page 14*

## EUROPE, AFRICA

# Transnational Day of Action supports immigrants

By John Catalinotto

Thousands of people demonstrated in more than 30 cities across Europe and Africa on Oct. 7 in solidarity with immigrants. The activists demanded Europe-wide legalization and equal rights for all migrants, closure of all detention centers in Europe and everywhere, an unconditional end to deportations, and issuance of residency permits independent of whether the immigrant had secured a permanent job.

The protest marked the anniversary of horrible repression a year ago upon sub-Saharan workers, who had gotten as far as Morocco in their attempts to reach the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla but were either forced to return to their home countries or driven into the desert. This repression took place in the framework of agreements among the regimes heading both sub-Saharan and North African countries and the European imperialist countries to which the African workers were heading.

The forces driving Africans to emigrate to Western Europe and the situation those without papers face there have many similarities to those of Mexicans and Central

Americans migrating to the United States. There are almost no industrial jobs at all for young people in Africa. It is almost impossible for Africans on small farms to compete with European agribusiness exports, so they are driven off the land. Hundreds die trying to reach Europe in small boats, just as people crossing the Arizona desert in the United States die.

Indeed, one of the Oct. 7 demonstrations took place on the U.S.-Mexican border in California.

Eastern European migrants from formerly socialist countries also cross into Western Europe, often without legal papers. They often find only precarious jobs that are "off the books." In some places their labor is absolutely necessary for the West European economy. For example, Ukrainian farm laborers are working in Portugal—one of the poorer Western European countries—because Portuguese youths have left the farming areas for the cities and no one was left to work the land.

Immigration activists at the European Social Forum in Athens last May decided on the Oct. 7 initiative, which was the third such transnational day of action. A report on many of the 30 demonstrations can be



World Social Forum held in Bamako, Mali.

WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

found at the No Border Network site at [www.noborder.org](http://www.noborder.org).

This year demonstrations or meetings were set in four African countries for the first time: Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia and Benin.

In Europe there were protests in Moscow, Warsaw, Athens, Hamburg and

other German cities, Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Paris, London and Malaga in Spain. Most of the protests in the major cities drew between 500 and 1,000 participants, including both immigrants and West European workers in solidarity with immigrant rights.

Email: [jcat@workers.org](mailto:jcat@workers.org)



## Where your vote counts

In most campaigns for House and Senate this mid-term election, the choice is extremely narrow.

On one side is a pro-Bush Republican who attacks affirmative action, immigrant rights, same-sex marriage and the right of women to choose abortion and supports Bush's occupation of Iraq.

On the other side is an anti-Bush Democrat who keeps her/his mouth shut on affirmative action, immigrant rights, same-sex marriage and the right of women to choose abortion, and who attacks Bush's Iraq strategy but votes funds for the occupation of Iraq.

That was the lineup in Michigan—until the Green Party, having ballot status, opened access to progressive activists in the state. As a result, Greens nominated the entire "Stop the War Slate" put up by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice (MECAWI) to run for eight positions. This includes the Senate race, where union leader and political activist Dave Sole—a long-time member of Workers World Party—has joined the contest against incumbent Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow and her Republican challenger, Michael Bouchard.

Others on the slate include former Newspaper Guild activist Kristen Hamel for state representative from the First District, a founding member of the Detroit Action Network For Reproductive Rights; teachers' union activist Kevin Carey, who was also chairperson of the Southern Africa Freedom Committee and is running for the State Board of Education; and five other MECAWI activists.

## Be there!

Put the third Cuba/Venezuela/Mexico/North America Labor Conference on your calendar. It will be held Dec. 8, 9 and 10 in Tijuana, Mexico. From the dramatic to the tragic, events in the United States over the last year demonstrate how intertwined the future of workers and oppressed people throughout the Americas is becoming.

Workers from these countries will weigh critical issues, like the following:

In nine U.S. states, Venezuela has provided discounted home heating oil to ease the hardships of poor people trying to get through the winter in bitterly cold climates.

More than 1,500 Cuban doctors equipped with tons of emergency supplies to assist Katrina survivors waited vainly for a U.S. entry permit.

Immigrants have been boycotting and marching in U.S. cities, large and small, for basic rights.

General Motors, Ford and auto parts suppliers have stolen future opportunities for young workers by eliminating jobs through buyouts and early retirements, while sanitation workers and farm workers are organizing in states where the most backward anti-union laws exist.

With their energetic campaigning, Sole, Hamel, Carey and the others on the Green Party ticket in Michigan have brought the key issues of the day before the voters and before the working class in the rust-belt areas of Michigan. They have hit hard against the war in Iraq, demanding an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops, and have shown how each of the hundreds of billions of dollars spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is a dollar robbed from the run-down inner cities of the state.

They have defended immigrants' rights, campaigned against racism and joined the picket lines of those demanding the right to abortion, as well as protests against the Israeli attack on Lebanon. They have defended lesbian/gay/bi/trans rights and campaigned for the environment.

For the reasons stated above and because it will be the best way to fight against the occupation of Iraq and U.S. militarism, Workers World calls upon Michigan voters to cast their ballots in the following Michigan races for:

Dave Sole for U.S. Senate; Kristen Hamel for state representative from the First District; Kevin Carey for State Board of Education; Michigan State University second-year student Lauren Elizabeth Spencer for Michigan State University Board of Trustees; Wayne State University student Michael Merriweather for Wayne State University Board of Governors; Kyle McBee for State Senate from the 13th District in Oakland County, and Lloyd Clarke for State Senate from the 32nd District. □

This conference will discuss the growing progressive integration and cooperation that is challenging imperialist globalization and neoliberal privatization across borders. Topics include U.S./Cuba relations—the blockade and the Cuban Five; the right to universal health care and affordable medications; and immigration.

Participants will be coming from the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), including from the Cuban health care workers' union, from the UNT in Venezuela, from the Colombian union Sinaltrainal representing Coca-Cola workers, from the electrical workers in Mexico, from U.S. health care unions and more.

Organize a representative from your community, union or organization to attend. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 8, 9 and 10, at the Hotel Palacio Azteca in Tijuana, Mexico, just across the border from San Diego, Calif. Register now. Conference registration information is available at [www.internationallaborexchange.org](http://www.internationallaborexchange.org) or contact the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange, PO Box 39188, Redford, MI 48239, 313-561-8330. Or e-mail [laborexchange@aol.com](mailto:laborexchange@aol.com).

## Class struggle in Oaxaca

*Continued from page 13*

Vicente Fox. There have been three failed attempts at talks between APPO and the government in the past few months.

Fox has declared the crisis will be over before a new president is inaugurated on Dec. 1.

On Oct. 1 Prensa Latina began to report a strong concentration of troops and military equipment nearing Oaxaca city. Planes flew over Oaxaca's capital and at least 10 Puma helicopters and two Mexican Army transportation aircraft were parked at the Salina Cruz naval heliport in the international airport.

According to news broadcasts by local media, an indeterminate number of armored personnel carriers, tank commandos and four-wheel vehicles have been sighted, along with Marines. APPO considers the troop movement a prelude to federal intervention.

The troop movement takes place in a country whose history is filled with bloody repression. The people occupying Oaxaca's central square know their lives are literally on the line.

"Compañeros, we don't want anybody to die, but we're ready to accept casualties if that's the way the government wants it," said one of the movement's spokespersons on La Ley radio, which has been under the control of APPO since June.

On Radio 710 AM, a pleasant voice says keep calm, there are 3,000 people at each barricade, the troops are probably more afraid than we are, we are on our own turf and they are strangers here.

The helicopters are doing military reconnaissance and are certainly trying to terrorize. A press conference at 6:30 in the Zocalo by the APPO said pretty much the same: We're ready. Keep calm, don't give in to provocations.

When the helicopters landed, "¡Bienvenidos, cabrones!" "¡Bajen, aquí los esperamos!" were shouted at them by people carrying sticks and pipes. "Welcome, bastards! Come on down, we're here waiting for you!"

At 9:00 p.m. on Oct. 7, Saturday night, the APPO closed off the historic downtown area, telling people who were caught away from home to pass as rapidly as possible through the barricades. APPO was determined to fight off any attack, asking people to unite in support, and at the same time telling those outside the city and around the state to organize their defense.

On Oct. 3, APPO issued a communiqué on behalf of the Encampment for Dignity and Against Repression in Oaxaca. It read in part: "The undersigned social organizations and Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO) members make an urgent call to the people of Oaxaca, of Mexico, and of the world to come and form an 'Encampment for Dignity and Against Repression in Oaxaca'; to come out and defend the Oaxacan people and avoid bloodshed due to the lack of vision on the part of our politicians.

"We cannot allow repression to be the solution. Let us all participate in the encampment for dignity and against

*Continued on page 15*

### UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

1. Publication Title: Workers World
  2. Publication Number: 053-990
  3. Filing Date: October 12, 2006
  4. Issue Frequency: Weekly except first week of January
  5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 51
  6. Annual Subscription Price: \$25.00
  7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer): (Street, City, County, State, and ZIP+4) 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513; Contact Person: R. Neidenberg; Telephone: 212-255-0352
  8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513
  9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):  
Publisher (Name and Complete Mailing Address): WW Publishers, Inc., 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513; Editor (Name and Complete Mailing Address): Deirdre Griswold, 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513; Managing Editor (Name and Complete Mailing Address): Gary Wilson, 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513
  10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as that of each individual. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.): WW Publishers, Inc., 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513; Gary Wilson, 55 West 17 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5513
  11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities. If none, check box: None
  12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates.) (Check One) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: (Check one): Does not apply
  13. Publication Title: Workers World
  14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 19, 2005
  15. Extent and Nature of Circulation: Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months:  
a. Total Number Copies (Net Press Run): 5470. b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation: (1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 1772; (2) Paid In-County Subscriptions (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 138; (3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution: 176; (4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: 1716. c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation [Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3) and (4)]: 3802. d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary, and other free): (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0; (2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0; (3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: 0. e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means): 1050. f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e): 1050. g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f): 4852. h. Copies Not Distributed: 148. i. Total (Sum of 15g, 15h): 5000. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by 15g times 100): 78%.
  - No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: a. Total Number Copies (Net Press Run): 5000. b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation: (1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 1798; (2) Paid In-County Subscriptions (include advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 97; (3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution: 160; (4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: 1504. c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation [Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3) and (4)]: 3559. d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary, and other free): (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0; (2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541: 0; (3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS: 0. e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means): 1100. f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e): 1100. g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f): 4659. h. Copies Not Distributed: 341. i. Total (Sum of 15g, 15h): 5000. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by 15g times 100): 76%.
  16. Publication of Statement of Ownership. Publication required. Will be printed in the October 19, 2005, issue of this publication.
  17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner: Deirdre Griswold, Editor, October 12, 2006
- I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties.)

**Don't forget to subscribe at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)**



# Clandestine emigration: a tragedy

*Péncoo, the newspaper of the Union of African Workers of Senegal (RTA/S), published this editorial in September. It was translated from the French by G. Dunkel of Workers World.*

Today, the phenomenon of clandestine immigration in the form of "boat people" fills the news. However, this phenomenon didn't arise recently. For more than a year, young Africans, a considerable number of them Senegalese, have taken to the seas on rickety boats, canoes and other flimsy craft to reach the shores of Europe.

It's estimated that 17,000 young Africans have attempted this adventure since the beginning of the year. How many have drowned no one knows.

Regularly, on certain Senegalese beaches, lifeless bodies are thrown up by the sea. The pictures in the media are unbearable. They recall the horrible period of slavery and the slave ships that transported millions of Africans to the Americas and

Europe against their will.

Today, it is misery and despair that chase young Africans from their continent. Here is the paradox: Africa is full of natural riches—from the soil, under the soil and in the sea. But unfortunately all these riches are systematically pillaged by Western countries and their multinationals through cooperative agreements in which one side gets all the benefits. This is how rich countries exploit poor countries in a frightful fashion.

What this means is that poverty is constructed by an unequal system based on unjust relations. It is not a divine curse.

The sole objective of these youths is to leave the hell that their countries represent for them in a risky attempt to reach more hospitable locations. Their own countries have become shipwrecked. What is more legitimate, more human than to look for a safe haven, wherever it is? And emigration, for them, represents this safe haven.

Whatever measures [French Interior Minister Nicolas] Sarkozy (1) takes, whatever decisions come from the European Union in complicity with the heads of state in Africa, nothing can stop this human movement of self-preservation, which is what emigration has become.

In Senegal, [President Abdoulaye] Wade and his government push "REVA" (2) to keep the youth working the land.

Peasants have enormous problems with their production. The whole process of peanut production is undergoing progressive extinction. Peasants have difficulty in selling their grain and getting paid what they are owed. Those cultivating rice, onions or tomatoes likewise have difficulty in selling their products and are faced with the removal of tariff barriers that had kept Western products out of their markets.

Given this, how can we seriously believe that this plan, which does not help the peasants maintain themselves, can succeed in the bet to draw young people back

to the countryside?

The only long-lasting solution to the permanent tragedy in which our youth live is to tackle this basic problem at its source: stop the pillage of African countries so that the riches and resources of the continent remain in African countries, and at the same time stop the pillage of these resources by the governments in place.

*Translator's notes:*

(1) Sarkozy is notorious for helping provoke rebellions in the working-class suburbs of France's cities last fall with racist remarks about immigrants and their descendants.

(2) REVA is a plan encouraging a return to farming, but without defending the local producers. Wade signed an agreement with Sarkozy Sept. 23 allowing France to send home any Senegalese without papers and agreeing that Senegal will now accept the deportees without requiring France to obtain consular permission.

## Oaxaca

*Continued from page 14*

repression dressed in white, as a clear signal that we are in favor of a peaceful movement and of a political and dignified resolution. Let us also go out into the streets with bandanas of different colors, to send the signal that we are a movement of many diverse actors that are willing to protect our compañeras and compañeros."

Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatista National Liberation Army stated: "Oaxaca is not just an emergency, it is also an example to follow."

Leaders of López Obrador's national movement pledged to mobilize their followers around the issue and go to Oaxaca as "human shields" in the event of a military intervention.

On Oct. 10, thousands of Oaxacans streamed into Mexico City after marching for several days to take their struggle into the capital. They marched about 300 miles but were not deterred. At least five of their compatriots have been killed since the strike.

### U.S. on pins and needles

Not a single economic, political or social development occurs in Mexico without Washington not only paying close attention to it but also interfering so that each outcome is to imperialism's benefit.

And so it must be with great trepidation that the Bush administration and the entire U.S. ruling class monitor the situation in Mexico today.

All history is the history of class struggle. Right now, the Mexican people are writing a page in history that is putting in jeopardy all those complex financial, agricultural, transportation and other capitalist relations that U.S. imperialism has fine-tuned so well in Mexico.

Despite NAFTA and the U.S. ability to manipulate a constant parade of Mexican leaders who "understand the need for friendly relations," right now the workers' struggle is taking center stage.

Once again history shows that the imperialists can write up their economic plans to reap super-profits, but when the masses rise up, those agreements can be thrown into the trash can of history where they belong.

All out to support the people of Oaxaca and all of Mexico. □

## MUNDO OBRERO

# Testigos desde el Líbano La reconstrucción comienza entre las ruinas

*Continúa de página 16*

artillería aérea.

Bin Jbeil es ahora un territorio lleno de escombros y ruinas bombardeadas donde la mayoría de los edificios están inhabitables.

Visitamos el hospital en Bint Jbeil y nos reunimos con el director, Dr. Fouad Taha. Él describió el bombardeo de la sala de cirugía, los generadores y el sistema de distribución eléctrica. El equipo médico siguió trabajando a la luz de velas y sin agua corriente. Dijo que trabajó por días sin poder ducharse. Pero las enormes dificultades valieron la pena, dijo, porque últimamente la fuerza invasora fue forzada a retirarse.

El hospital, aunque todavía severamente dañado, estaba funcionando de nuevo. Los generadores ahora están ubicados en tiendas de campaña, al igual que la sala de cirugía. Frente a las tiendas yace un coheite sin estallar en un campo acordonado debido a la presencia de bombas racimo. Frente al hospital hay un tanque israelí destrozado, abandonado durante la rápida retirada de hace seis años, que ahora es un monumento a la resistencia.

En la calle principal, los pequeños comerciantes buscaban en los escombros para salvar lo que quedara de su mercancía. Una pequeña zapatería tenía el nombre de "Zapatos de Queens", porque el dueño tuvo anteriormente una zapatería en el condado de Queens en la ciudad de Nueva York.

En los escombros de cada casa la gente ha pintado los números de la dirección en la calle con códigos describiendo si hay la posibilidad de reparar la casa o por lo contrario, hay que despejar las ruinas. Esto nos recordó las zonas de casas arruinadas en Nueva Orleans. Pero aquí en Bint Jbeil, con el apoyo social de las organizaciones de resistencia, centenares de personas estuvieron laboriosamente sacando los escombros y tomando los primeros pasos hacia la reconstrucción.

En el pueblo pequeño de Aaitaroun, cerca de la frontera con Israel, una mujer describió la noche que el ejército israelí

apareció en tanques, vehículos blindados, y máquinas excavadoras blindadas para nivelar el pueblo. Ella señaló orgullosamente la cumbre de la colina donde guerrilleros locales los emboscaron, deteniéndolos antes de que pudieran llegar al pueblo. Como muchas otras, esta joven se había quedado en el pueblo para ayudar a la resistencia cuando muchas otras fueron evacuadas.

Nos dirigimos al norte, donde a veces la frontera con Israel estaba a una distancia de no más de 20 pies de donde estábamos. A lo largo de los caminos había letreros, dibujos y ofrendas a los mártires de la resistencia de 1982 - 2000.

Las plazas de cada pueblo, no importara cuánta destrucción habían padecido, estaban cubierta de las banderas y estandartes amarillos de Hizbolá y a veces de Amal, otra organización de resistencia. Las consignas políticas estaban por todos lados — en árabe y en inglés. Aún en pueblos muy pequeños, al frente de la peor destrucción, había un letrado gigante que leía: "Hecho en los Estados Unidos".

Generadores de emergencia y tanques de agua potable proveen servicios básicos a muchos pueblos en el sur.

### La reconstrucción necesita organización

A través del Líbano los trabajadores han reparado caminos, han despejado la basura de las carreteras principales y de nuevo han marcado las calles. Los desvíos alrededor de los puentes y carreteras elevadas bombardeadas hacen que el tránsito se mueva lentamente. Pero se mueve.

Al regresar, cuando pasábamos por el aeropuerto de Beirut, vimos cientos de camiones volcadores en fila llenos con escombros de concreto en camino al vertedero. El director de esa operación nos dijo que 1.000 camiones al día, más de un camión por minuto, llegaban al vertedero. El día después que se acabó la guerra, el trabajo comenzó y los camiones empezaron a llegar. Habían estado trabajando las veinticuatro horas al día por 34 días. Todo el trabajo fue organizado y pagado

por Hizbolá, dijo él.

Todos los camiones venían de una gran operación de limpieza en Dihye en la zona sureña de Beirut. Como Israel consideró que todo el barrio de Haret Hreik apoyaba totalmente a Hizbolá, su fuerza aérea bombardeó el distrito entero dejándolo en ruinas. Bloque tras bloque, los edificios de apartamentos fueron destruidos, también las escuelas, las mezquitas y las tiendas que sostenían la zona.

Regresamos de nuevo a este barrio, el cual habíamos visitado en nuestro primer día en el Líbano. Este fue el barrio donde, justo días después de nuestra partida, Hizbolá celebró una gran asamblea con la presencia de un millón de personas en el espacio de 37 acres que ya se había despejado.

En el centro de Beirut los puentes y los pasos elevados todavía no estaban reparados. Se habían abierto caminos y la reconstrucción ya está en marcha. La movilización para la reconstrucción ha engendrado un orgullo enorme y una gran determinación. En cada sitio donde preguntamos quiénes habían organizado la limpieza o la remoción de toneladas de pedazos de concreto y de vigas, la gente respondía que fue Hizbolá.

Cuando íbamos hacia el aeropuerto en nuestro último día, nuestro chofer de taxi nos indicó los principales pasos elevados en el camino al aeropuerto que habían sido destruidos. También nos expresó su miedo a que las fuerzas corruptas que han colaborado con Israel en el pasado y que quieren que los Estados Unidos ganen pie en el Líbano, puedan tratar de incitar una guerra civil.

Este hombre, un cristiano, describió cómo su familia había abierto su casa a una familia chiíta del sur de Beirut. Habló conmovedoramente del sentimiento en todo el Líbano de propulsar la unidad y de la nueva determinación de no permitir que las antiguas diferencias religiosas dividan de nuevo al Líbano.

Para más reportes y fotos, vaya a [www.PeopleJudgeBush.org](http://www.PeopleJudgeBush.org) y [www.iacenter.org](http://www.iacenter.org) □

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

## Testigos desde el Líbano La reconstrucción comienza entre las ruinas

Por Sara Flounders

*Sara Flounders, del Centro de Acción Internacional, fue parte de una delegación investigadora de los hechos sucedidos en el Líbano, organizada por la Campaña por la Responsabilidad, que viajó a ese país del 11 al 17 de septiembre. Además de Flounders la delegación incluyó a Samia Halaby, artista palestina de la organización 'Defend Palestine-New York'; y Leilani Dowell de la organización 'Fight Imperialism Stand Together (FIST)'.*

En cada pueblo del sur del Líbano se podían ver en las ventanas de las tiendas, en postes y en edificios, rótulos que ilustraban gráficamente las diferentes formas y tamaños de las bombas racimo. Cintas rojas y letreros puestos por los campos y alrededor de las casas advertían la presencia de estas bombas. Los edificios que tenían "M42 Cluster" pintado en sus paredes mantenían alejada a la gente.

En su edición del 13 de septiembre el periódico israelí Haaretz reportó los comentarios de un comandante del ejército israelita, diciendo "Lo que hicimos fue una locura y monstruosa, cubrimos villas enteras con estas bombas." Él dijo que "el ejército dejó caer más de 1,2 millones de bombas," más de 10 veces las 100.000 reportadas anteriormente.

Los 1,2 millones de bombas incluían solo aquellas tiradas por el Sistema de Lanzamiento Múltiple. El periódico Haaretz reportó que otras bombas fueron disparadas con morteros de 115mm o lanzadas desde el aire.

La ONU descubrió que Israel dejó caer el 90% de todas estas bombas que usó en el Líbano en los tres días antes del cese al fuego, o sea, después de que el cese al fuego había sido negociado.

Con los campos, los caminos y los cen-



FOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS

Habitantes de Bint Jbeil.

tros de los pueblos forrados con estas bombas, se hace mucho más difícil la intensa labor de limpieza y de reconstrucción que ya ha comenzado.

Aún los pueblos que no sufrieron daño extenso, su vida fue destruida. Una visita al pueblo de Houla, a menos de 650 pies de la frontera israelita, confirmó el amplio y sistemático daño. A Houla frecuentemente se le conoce como el Moscú del Líbano. Tiene un gobierno electo del Partido Comunista. El alcalde Qasin, explicó cómo las cenizas creadas por las bombas han cubierto las cosechas y destruido los vegetales, el tabaco, los bananos y las naranjas.

Las cosechas de Houla son muy peligrosas de recoger. La región cuenta con la

agricultura para su ingreso debido a que décadas de continua ocupación e invasiones israelitas han hecho inservible la infraestructura y limitado toda inversión industrial.

Cuando se le preguntó al alcalde Qasin, cómo la guerra ha impactado al pueblo de 15.000 habitantes, él respondió: "¿Cuál guerra? ¿Ustedes quieren decir los ataques de 1948, donde perdimos a 90 jóvenes, o los ataques de 1956 o de 1968 o de 1978 o del 1982? ¿O quizás querrán decir los ataques en 1986 o 1996 o del 2000. ¿O quieren decir solo este año?"

### La prisión es ahora un museo

Los bombardeos de Israel destruyeron casi totalmente la ciudad de Al-Khiam, que tiene una población de 30.000 habitantes, sentada en una alta cordillera que tiene una magnífica vista de toda la región. Desde la cima de las colinas uno puede ver los asentamientos israelitas en la Palestina ocupada, las granjas Shaba todavía ocupadas, y el Golán todavía ocupado y a Siria. De las 4.800 casas en Al-Khiam, 1.000 fueron totalmente destruidas y 3.000 dañadas casi irreparablemente, junto a cuatro de sus cinco escuelas, dos mezquitas y dos iglesias. Hizbolá ha prometido reconstruirlo todo.

Arriba de Al-Khiam hay un edificio que fue una vez una prisión israelita. Un centro de tortura muy conocido que fue controlado por un

ejército de colaboradores conocido como el Ejército Sureño Libanés. Este centro encerraba a héroes de la resistencia antes de que la resistencia libanesa expulsara a Israel de su territorio en el año 2000.

Después de esa liberación, Hizbolá convirtió esa prisión en museo. Artistas llegaron desde muchas partes del mundo para pintar obras en las minúsculas celdas donde los prisioneros eran detenidos en confinamiento solitario. Había exhibiciones que demostraban dónde los prisioneros habían sido torturados. En julio de 2006, uno de los primeros actos de Israel en la invasión fue destruir esa prisión convertida en museo. Entonces la Fuerza Aérea de Israel bombardeó al pueblo por días.

Un residente del lugar nos dijo que a pesar del intenso bombardeo, un pequeño grupo de combatientes de Hizbolá siguió lanzando cohetes Katyusha desde los altos de la prisión hacia blancos israelíes por más de dos semanas. Esta fue la primera vez que una fuerza de resistencia libanesa pudo contraatacar desde Al-Khiam contra blancos israelíes en la propia Israel.

### Bint Jbeil: momento crucial para la resistencia

La ciudad de Bint Jbeil es el centro urbano principal del sur de Líbano. Tenía una población de 45.000 antes de que la guerra israelita comenzara el 12 de julio. La ciudad fue escena de unos de los combates más fuertes entre el ejército israelí y los militantes de Hizbolá.

A la entrada de la ciudad hay un letrero que dice, "Bint Jbeil, Capital de la Liberación". Bint Jbeil resistió días de bombardeos aéreos y un estado de sitio que duró un mes y dejó la mayoría del pueblo en ruinas. Hizbolá luchó por 28 días en los escombros de la ciudad sin ceder ni una pulgada de terreno. La determinación de los luchadores convirtió a la invasión israelí en una contundente derrota.

En Bint Jbeil el 26 de julio, Israel sufrió las bajas más grandes ocurridas en un solo día. En una audaz emboscada a pleno día, la resistencia mató a nueve miembros de la Brigada elite Golani, hirieron a muchos más, destruyeron un tanque Merkava y un transporte militar acorazado, e impidieron el avance del ejército israelí hacia la ciudad.

Las noticias de las bajas israelíes en esta pequeña ciudad del Líbano dejaron atónito al público israelí, que esperaba reportes triunfantes del frente. El alto mando militar de Israel quedó en total confusión como resultado.

Las tácticas audaces y las armas de la milicia guerrillera, en particular los cohetes antitanques, tomaron por sorpresa a Israel. Había combates en las calles, cuadra por cuadra. Según el Semanario Janes, una revista que reporta sobre equipos y tácticas militares, la resistencia combatió mano a mano. Una docena de disciplinados combatientes de Hizbolá, mantuvo su posición a pesar de los bombardeos y la

Continúa a página 15

Hemos derrotado a Sessenbrenner y continuamos en la lucha

**NO MAS SILENCIO. ¡QUE SE UNA TODO EL MUNDO!**

**DEMANDAMOS:**  
Legalización ahora.  
Poner fin a la separación de las familias.  
Igualdad de derechos para todos los trabajadores.  
Respeto al voto de los Afro-americanos, Inmigrantes y Ancianos.  
No más políticas de inmigración discriminatorias.  
Alto a la explotación del sufrimiento de los inmigrantes.  
Alto a la inseguridad en nuestras comunidades.  
No más muertes en la frontera.

**POR LOS DERECHOS DE LOS INMIGRANTES**

**OCTUBRE 21, 2006 @ 1pm**  
**Union Square, Manhattan**

(45°50'N/74°W @ 14th St)  
**Marcha a Times Square**

Patrocinado por New York Unido por los Derechos de los Inmigrantes (NYURI) - incluye más de 30 grupos en NYC y el área metropolitana. Algunas de estas organizaciones/coaliciones son: Asociación Tepeyac de New York, Coalition of Immigrant Communities (Washington Heights), Immigrant Communities in Action, May 1st Coalition, Families for Freedom y Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant. Más información en: <http://nyunitedforimmigrantrights.blogspot.com/> o al tel 917.472.1105.