

# WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!



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50¢

## THE WAR AT HOME

# Jena 6 case ignites anti-racist outrage

By LeiLani Dowell



Sept. 17—Strengthened by a victory in the case of one of the Jena Six—Black youths facing outrageously harsh prison sentences after several months of racist attacks in Jena, La.—organizers throughout the country are continuing to mobilize for the freedom of the Six and to denounce the U.S. criminal “justice” system.

Facing a massive protest in Jena on Sept. 20—the day 17-year-old Mychal Bell was to be sentenced—the court overturned the aggravated battery conviction against Bell on Sept. 14. Nevertheless, thousands are still expected to converge in Jena, a town with a population of a few thousand, on Sept. 20 to continue pressing for the release of the other five.

Hundreds of buses have been organized, some from as far away as Los Angeles. Buses are being organized by the NAACP, the Nation of Islam, Black campus organizations and other grassroots organizations

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## How Congress could stop the war—but won't

By Sara Flounders

What if Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi refused to present Congress with a bill to fund the criminal U.S. occupation of Iraq? The possibility of a Bush veto would not be an issue.

Although billions of dollars are still in the pipeline, President George W. Bush and the Pentagon, faced with a new politi-

cal reality, would be forced to begin making plans for withdrawal.

As speaker of the House, Pelosi has full control over which pieces of legislation make it onto the floor for a vote. The Democratic Party majority in Congress could just sit on any war-spending bill and there would be no funds for the war.

Last November, when millions of people voted for Democratic Party politicians

who claimed to be anti-war, this is exactly the kind of legislative action they expected them to take.

It is important to confront the direct fraud that the Democratic leaders, who control a majority in both houses of Congress, are putting forth as they prepare to fund the war. Ever since the election they have given endless excuses

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### KATRINA AFTERMATH

Indigenous nations hit hard



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Malik Rahim  
WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

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## Virtually ignored

# Indigenous nations hit hard by hurricanes

By Larry Hales

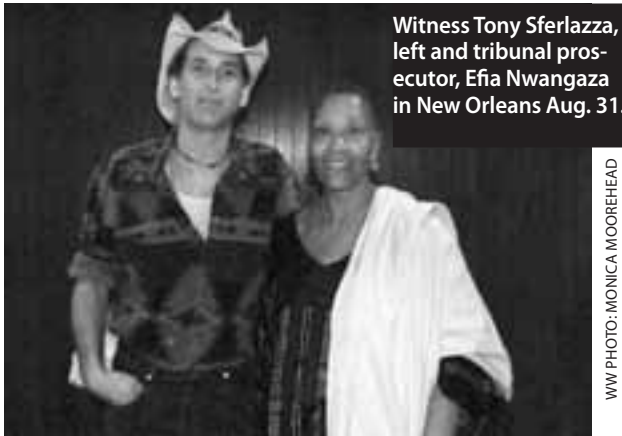
Seldom mentioned, seldom held in the conscience of most people when Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are spoken about, is the devastating effect the storms had on Indigenous peoples on the Gulf Coast. Just as was and is the case for New Orleans, the plight of the Indigenous people is a history of oppression beginning with the colonization of the Americas by Europeans and the genocide committed against Indigenous peoples.

A number of Indigenous nations—the Pointe-au-Chien Tribe, the Isle de Jean Charles Indian Band of Biloxi-Chitimasha, the Grand Caillou-Dulac Band and the Biloxi-Chitimasha Confederation of Muskogees—were in the path of the twin storms.

Tony Sferlazza, a member of the Lakota nation, testified at the International Tribunal on Hurricanes Katrina/Rita about the history of the Houma nation and the effect of the hurricanes and oppression on the Houma people.

The Houma people live in settlements in lower Plaquemines, lower St. Bernard, and lower Jefferson parishes, and the bulk of the nation lives in the lower bayou region of Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes southwest of New Orleans.

According to the Houma nation website: “On Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina swept ashore on the Louisiana coast. Among those communities devastated by her impact were the small Houma Indian settlements in lower Plaquemines, lower St. Bernard, and lower Jefferson parishes. The population of these Indian settlements, some 3,500 tribal citizens, was hit hard by the storm. Over one thousand of that number were left homeless, their homes completely destroyed by wind and water.” (unitedhoumanation.org)



Witness Tony Sferlazza, left and tribunal prosecutor, Efa Nwangaza in New Orleans Aug. 31.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

The larger population of the Houma nation in the lower bayou region was further threatened by Hurricane Rita, while the settlements in lower Plaquemines were trying to cope and deal with the devastation wrought by Katrina. The website states about Hurricane Rita: “The ‘near miss’ by Rita pushed a massive storm surge into the bayous and our more populous settlements in lower Terrebonne went underwater. The Houma communities of Dulac, Grand Caillou, Montegut, Pointe-aux-Chene, and Isle de Jean Charles were inundated with seven or eight feet of water. The tribe now had an additional four thousand of its citizens with houses devastated by the effects of this new storm.”

After the storm, the Indigenous nations were almost completely ignored. Houma nation Chief Brenda Dardar-Robichaux said in the Houma nation newspaper: “We are an Indian tribe here that is falling through the cracks. Nobody has made contact with us except the native media. Everything we are doing has been a grassroots effort, and it’s taken weeks to get this far with the help of many volunteers and private donations. We’re basically doing it on our own.”

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## A visit with Common Ground Collective

By Monica Moorehead

International Action Center activists from New York and Atlanta were part of a larger delegation that toured the lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans on Sept. 1, two years after Hurricane Katrina and the breaching of the levees here.

IAC delegates traveled here for the Aug. 29-Sept. 2 International Tribunal on Katrina and Rita. The tribunal focused on testimony from survivors of both hurricanes, along with other expert accounts, to document the racist neglect and genocidal treatment of the local, state and federal governments, especially toward the African-American population.

The tour was organized by Malik Rahim, executive director of Common Ground Collective and a witness at the tribunal.

According to its Web site: “Common Ground’s mission is to provide short term relief for victims of hurricane disasters in the gulf coast region, and long term support in rebuilding the communities affected in the New Orleans area. Common Ground is a community-initiated volunteer organization offering assistance, mutual aid and support. The work gives hope to communities by working with them, providing for their immediate needs



Free health clinic.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

and emphasizes people working together to rebuild their lives in sustainable ways.” (commongroundrelief.org)

Rahim took the delegation to a free health clinic located in the working-class Algiers neighborhood here. Algiers did not suffer from massive flooding compared to the lower Ninth Ward. This clinic not only serves Algiers but is opened to anyone who cannot afford health care in the city. The medical staff is all-volunteer. Donations are encouraged to help keep the clinic open. The delegation interviewed both the staff and some patients about

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# Los Angeles solidarity with immigrants

In response to the inhumane deportation of immigrant-rights activist Elvira Arellano, the We Are All Elvira and Saulito Unity Coalition held one of the nationally coordinated Days of Action for immigrant rights Sept. 12 in Los Angeles, with a march and vigil to McArthur Park starting with a prayer service at Echo Park Methodist Church.

The organizers urged everyone to participate in their economic boycott. The demands of the demonstration were to stop the “no match” Social Security Administration letters, an immediate moratorium on raids and deportations, and legalization now.

Participating organizations included the March 25th Coalition, CHIRLA, MIWON, Hermandad Mexicana Trans-Nacional,

We are America Coalition, UNITE HERE, SEIU 1877, Our Ladies Queen of Angels Parish, NALACC, FOMUSA, KIWA, Latinos Against the War, BAYAN-USA, UFW, FMLN, UCLA Students for a Democratic Society and the International Action Center.

The composition of this coalition was very significant in regard to building unity among various immigrant rights forces here.

At the rally Martha Rojas of the March 25th Coalition and the Troops Out Now Coalition-Los Angeles urged everyone to participate in the upcoming Sept. 22–29 Encampment and March to Stop the War.

—John Parker

Los Angeles Sept. 12 rally.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH



## ‘No work, no school, no purchases!’

# More than 10,000 march for immigrant rights

By Bryan G. Pfeifer  
Milwaukee

More than 10,000 people came out to Mitchell Park here for a noontime rally on Sept. 12 as part of a National Day of Action protesting an August Homeland Security announcement regarding “no match” Social Security letters. Similar Sept. 12 actions took place in at least 15 U.S. cities. The rally was part of a “No work, no school, no purchases” day—a boycott.

Mitchell Park is on the South Side of Milwaukee, where tens of thousands of Latin@s reside. More than 100,000 Latin@s live in the metropolitan Milwaukee area. The rally drew a wide range of participants from many progressive organizations, including unions, as well as immigrants from virtually every continent.

The main demand was that the Bush administration remove the new rule immediately and stop the repression of immigrant families.

Under the new rule, an employer would be obligated to re-verify the legal status of workers identified on the Social Security “no match” letter and fire workers who could not correct the problem within 90 days. Employers who do not follow through with these steps could face fines and criminal charges in the event of an immigration audit in the future.

The new rule, if implemented, would have a catastrophic effect on the working class, particularly those attempting to organize unions. Thus in August a legal complaint on behalf of the AFL-CIO, the ACLU, NILC and the Alameda County Labor Council in California affirmed that the new rule would lead to thousands of legal workers losing their jobs because

of inaccuracies in the Social Security database.

“We want to send the message, like other cities are doing, that we want the new rule stopped,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, founder and director of Voces de la Frontera, a worker and immigrant-rights organization in Milwaukee that sponsored the protest.

Neumann-Ortiz added that if the new “no match” Social Security rule is allowed to stand, “It would create a social and economic crisis for millions of workers, documented and undocumented.”

Due to the massive pressure on the street and in the legal arena by labor and community organizations, a federal judge

has issued a temporary order blocking the “no match” rule until an Oct. 1 hearing.

### Rapid response teams formed

There had been massive outreach for the Milwaukee rally. Thousands of leaflets and a full color eight-page bilingual Voces newspaper were distributed throughout the metro Milwaukee area for days leading up to the rally.

Neuman-Ortiz said Voces is organizing a rapid response team of volunteers to help families and workers who are attacked by Homeland Security and/or employers.

Isauro Blas volunteered for the Voces rapid response team at the rally. He took a vacation day to attend. Blas said: “We all

have to lend our support. I want to help families who are here.” (jonline.com)

“All workers must speak up with one voice and say no to Social Security match,” said Douglas Drake, organizing coordinator for the United Steel Workers union.

As part of outreach for the rally, immediately before her deportation Elvira Arellano had called for a National Day of action Sept. 12.

Days before the rally, Arellano’s 8-year-old child “Saulito,” and his guardians Emma Lozano and the Rev. Walter Coleman, participated in a news conference here. They both supported the Sept. 12 actions. Arellano took part in the news conference by phone link from Mexico. □

## Child separated from parent tells Bush:

# ‘Stop the raids!’

By Sharon Danann  
Cleveland

People came from many parts of Ohio to fill Iglesia Nueva Luz on Cleveland’s West Side on Sept. 10. They were farm workers, poultry processing workers, union organizers, community organizers, church leaders from a wide variety of denominations, and family, friends, and supporters of the immigrants who have been swept up in recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids.

The week before, 180 workers at the Koch Foods, a chicken processing plant in Fairfield, Ohio, were arrested in a coordinated sting operation by ICE agents and

Butler County sheriffs.

A United Food and Commercial Workers organizing drive had been going on in the plant for the previous eight months. The organizers were making great headway. By the evening shift after the raid, Koch bosses had hired enough new workers to get back in operation.

A Day of Action has been called for Oct. 24.

Stanley Miller, executive director of the Cleveland NAACP, said the current raids are similar to the practice of slave grabbing of former years. Miller will introduce a resolution of support for immigrant rights at the upcoming Ohio NAACP conference.

The high point of the rally was the inspirational presence of Saul “Saulito” Arellano, age 8, son of Evira Arellano, who was arrested in Los Angeles in August and deported to Mexico. Standing on a chair to reach the microphone, he told the packed church: “I want to tell all of you to tell President Bush: Stop the raids! Stop the deportations! Stop the separation of families!”

Saulito Arellano’s guardians brought powerful messages as well. Emma Lozano, executive director of Centro Sin Fronteras, reminded the crowd that no one talks about why Elvira Arellano had to move to the United States. Her parents were corn farmers. When the Mexican economy was flooded with cheap corn as a result of NAFTA, they had to leave their farm and find work in the maquiladoras. When even that work would not support



WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

Saulito Arellano, son of Elvira Arellano, and Emma Lozano, Exec. Dir. of Centro Sin Fronteras (Center Without Borders) at Sept. 10 meeting.

her, she came to Chicago and worked as a custodian at O’Hare Airport.

Saulito Arellano’s other guardian, the Rev. Walter Coleman, called the raids “ethnic cleansing.”

Veronica Isabel Dahlberg, executive director of Hispana Organizadas de Lake y Ashtabula—HOLA—of Painesville, Ohio, chaired the rally.

The immigration struggle in Painesville ratcheted up on May 18 when ICE agents arrested 45 people, mostly farm workers. Since then, Dahlberg has organized three marches and rallies, bringing ever greater numbers of organizations together to fight for justice for immigrants.

Throughout Ohio, in churches, political organizations, community organizations and unions, immigrants are fired up and are getting out their message: “We are here to stay.” □

## Common Ground Collective

Continued from page 2

the importance of having an accessible free clinic, especially in the aftermath of Katrina.

In the lower Ninth Ward, the delegation visited a center organized by CGC that provides free clothing, tools, food and other life-sustaining materials for the people struggling to rebuild and return home. Rahim also showed the delegation the efforts being made to reverse the soil erosion caused by the flooding during Katrina by planting bulrush.

He also showed the delegation how the so-called rebuilt levee in the lower Ninth Ward remains insufficient to prevent massive flooding during a natural disaster. And Rahim showed the destruction of

trees in the wetlands that could have provided a natural buffer to the flood waters during the hurricane.

The last leg of the tour was an emotional visit with Robert Green and his extended family that still lives in a FEMA trailer. Green lost his mother, Joyce Green, and his 3-year-old granddaughter, Shanai Green, during Katrina. Both drowned in the flood waters Aug. 29, waiting to be rescued.

Rahim will be speaking at the Troops Out Now Coalition Encampment at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 27, about the current situation for Katrina survivors in New Orleans. Go to [www.troopsoutnow.org](http://www.troopsoutnow.org) for more information.

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# Looming economic storm: The war comes home

By Greg Butterfield

Washington has committed upwards of a trillion dollars toward the war in Iraq. And that's not counting the billions invested by private companies flooding that devastated but resistant country with armed mercenaries and other profit-seeking vultures.

A new survey conducted by the British polling agency ORB, which asked a random selection of Iraqis how many people living in their households had died as a result of violence brought on by the war, estimates the Iraqi death toll at 1.2 million. (The Observer, Sept. 16)

Conventional wisdom says all that death and destruction abroad should mean economic boom times at home. Instead, homes are being foreclosed left and right, the stock market is falling, record numbers are without health insurance and jobs are drying up.

Today the dread "r-word" is on every economist's lips: recession.

The chickens have come home to roost.

The theories of how and why may differ. Time magazine in its Sept. 13 feature "Cracks in the economy" laid it all on the mortgage crisis, spelling out the crisis of overproduction in luxury housing, noting a 5-to-7-year surplus of condominiums in Miami. Economists quoted in the Sept. 7 New York Times article "Recession fear heightened as 4-year growth in jobs ends" paint a broader picture of economic instability.

None of them are talking directly about the war as a cause—at least, not yet.

A bit more truth could be gleaned in the fine print of an Aug. 1 Boston Globe article headlined, "Analysis says war could cost \$1 trillion." Admitted the Globe, "Some leading economists have predicted that, depending on how long troops remain in Iraq, the endeavor could reach several trillion dollars as a result of more 'hidden' costs."

But they all agree—the storm is coming.

Of course, working-class, poor and oppressed communities have been dealing with the war's economic consequences all along. Already tattered social pro-

grams have been hacked to shreds to build bombs. Real wages have continued to fall for workers providing for families while their loved ones serve as cannon fodder. And those fortunate enough to get work often find that their jobs have the lifespan of a Monarch butterfly.

## 700,000 more uninsured kids

At the end of August, the Census Bureau reported that another 2.2 million people, including 700,000 children, joined the ranks of the uninsured in 2006, raising the total without health insurance to 47 million. That's up from 44.8 million in 2006.

Grotesque though they are, these figures don't begin to tell the truth, since they exclude the millions of undocumented workers.

The inflation-adjusted median earnings of women and men employed full-time fell in 2006 for the second year straight. Median household income nudged up less than 1 percent because more household members were working full-time, multiple jobs or longer hours to make ends meet. (Bureau of Labor Statistics) Median income is the point at which half earn more and half earn less.

In 1987, the wealthiest one-fifth of the U.S. population got 46.2 percent of all income. That had risen to 50.5 percent by 2006. In contrast, the lowest-paid fifth of the population earned 3.8 percent of all income in 1987. Last year, this bottom 20 percent got just 3.4 percent of all income, according to an Economic Policy Institute analysis of Census figures.

Meanwhile, a United Nations International Labor Organization report issued in early September found that U.S. workers were the world's most productive in 2006, in part because they work more hours and more intensely than their counterparts in other industrialized countries.

Hot on the heels of this report came news from the Labor Department that the U.S. economy suffered an overall loss of 4,000 jobs between July and August. It was the first decline in employment since 2003. While the official unemployment

rate for August held steady at 4.6 percent, the percentage of adults with jobs fell. The number of "discouraged workers"—those not actively looking for work and thus not counted by the government—rose by nearly 600,000.

Many of the job losses that contributed to the overall drop were from the plummeting housing market—but the Labor Department figures covered a period before the worst cutbacks had been announced in that field.

"Since then, some large lenders like Countrywide and Lehman Brothers have continued to lay off workers," reported the New York Times. "IndyMac Bancorp, a large mortgage lender, said it would be cutting about 1,000 jobs over the next several months."

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg issued a memo to city agencies essentially calling for a hiring freeze on all but "critically necessary hires." He blamed the measures on the housing downturn, an anticipated decline in big real-estate deals, and lower-than-expected profits on Wall Street.

This is not merely a local phenomenon. According to the Times, state and local government agencies, many of them dealing with budget shortfalls connected to the housing slump, have also cut an average of 27,000 jobs per month over the last three months.

"If the economy is not headed toward recession, it is very close to one," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's. (Economy.com)

## War: a narcotic that becomes a depressant

In an article published in the aftermath of the first Gulf War in 1991, Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy wrote:

"It has been standard bourgeois economic theory, whether openly expressed or not, that a big war ends a depression and, once the war is over, a new cycle of capitalist development begins. The stagnation and stagflation of the late seventies and early eighties are attributed to the

fact that there was no really big war in that period. True, there was Grenada, the merciless bombing of Libya, the shelling and destruction in Lebanon, not to speak of U.S. mercenary activity around the globe, particularly in Latin America and Africa. But none of this amounted to a big war in bourgeois common parlance.

"This theory that a war brings prosperity and stops capitalist recession has been widely acclaimed even in sections of the labor movement, and in particular in those industries related to the military-industrial complex. Wide sections of bourgeois public opinion have been deeply affected by this, and have shown their readiness to support capitalist war precisely because they believe it either safeguards their jobs or will pull them out of a recession. ...

"Military production is supposed to inject new life into the economy, like a shot of a powerful narcotic. But after so many years of enormous borrowing to pay for an area of production which is parasitic and adds nothing to the real growth of the economy, this stimulus eventually turns into a depressant.

"Military commodities are commodities sui generis [of a peculiar kind]. They are not produced to be sold on the open market. Most of the time, their fulfillment as commodities is realized through sale by a prearranged contract where the government is the sole customer.

"The military-industrial complex has produced more weapons than can ever be used. They must be constantly updated, and the government has to pay the cost of obsolescence. This pumping up of the military budget is the product of a phase of capitalist overproduction which can't go on endlessly." ("The Relentless Economic Decline," Workers World, April 25, 1991)

But there is a solution. If workers and oppressed peoples here follow the path of resistance—ably demonstrated in great diversity by their sisters and brothers in Iraq, Palestine, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Nepal and many other countries—they can bring an end to imperialist war and ultimately to the boom-and-bust capitalist system. □

# Jena 6 case ignites anti-racist outrage

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and religious institutions. Prominent figures such as radio personality Michael Baisden, hip hop artist Mos Def and others have made statements and calls urging participation. From New York City, buses are leaving from Harlem for Jena and AFSCME District Council 37 is also organizing transportation.

Events throughout the country that week include a march and rally at CNN headquarters, organized by students from Atlanta University; an Atlanta news conference sponsored by Malcolm X Grassroots Movement; a contingent in the New York City African American Day Parade and an emergency rally for justice—"Resist the racist U.S. judicial system"—called by the December 12th Movement; and a public meeting in Detroit hosted by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice.

## White supremacy: alive and well

The attacks in Jena, La., began after a Black student at the high school asked the principal at a school assembly if he could sit under the "white tree"—a tree in the front yard of the school where white students sit during breaks. The next day, three nooses in the school colors were found hanging from the tree. The students who hung them were initially to be expelled, but the superintendent of schools intervened and

gave them a three-day suspension instead. Black students gathered under the tree to protest the decision.

Several incidents ensued. African-American student Robert Bailey Jr. was attacked with beer bottles at a party; one white student was charged with simple assault and given probation. A white man brandished a shotgun at Black students; the Black students were charged with stealing the gun after they wrested it away. Finally, white student Justin Barker was attacked by a group of Black students. He went to a hospital and was released the next day, participating in a social function that evening.

The Jena Six—Robert Bailey Jr., 17; Theo Shaw, 17; Carwin Jones, 18; Bryant Purvis, 17; and Mychal Bell, 16—were arrested for Barker's beating and charged with attempted second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. However, in response to overwhelming support for the Six, the charges were decreased to assault and battery for five of them—charges that could still lead to up to 15 years in prison.

An all-white jury convicted Bell, the first of the Six to be tried, of aggravated battery. His court-appointed attorney didn't even bother to call witnesses.

Yet as news of the case and the mass protest scheduled for Sept. 20 gathered increased attention in the media, the judicial system responded in a hasty attempt

to quell the national public outrage. Louisiana's 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Bell should not have been tried as an adult, overturning the conviction.

According to the Associated Press, prosecutors may now try Bell—who has been in jail since the arrest in December—for attempted murder as an adult or aggravated battery as a juvenile. (Sept. 15)

## Broad implications of case

While activists and community members celebrate this victory, they stress that the struggle is not over.

The response to the Jena Six case is larger than the case itself. It is a measure of the rising anger in oppressed communities over the blatant racism inherent within the capitalist system.

Nor is the case an isolated incident of excessive punishment of Black youth. According to a study by the Campaign for Youth Justice, Black youths accounted for 58 percent of young people sent to adult prisons between 2002 and 2004. (Washington Post, Aug. 4)

On June 14, four young African-American lesbians from Newark, N.J., received prison sentences ranging from 3.5 to 11 years for defending themselves against a man who held them down and choked them, ripped hair from their scalps, spat on them and threatened to sexually assault them. (Workers World, June 21)

Like the Jena Six case, the clear message coming from the courts in the Jersey Four case was, "Don't fight back."

Genarlow Wilson, a Black student and star athlete, was arrested, stood trial and was convicted of "aggravated child molestation" for having consensual oral sex with a 15-year-old classmate. He was sentenced to a mandatory 10-year prison term plus one year on probation as a felony sex offender. After national outcry, a Georgia Superior Court judge ordered his sentence reduced and Wilson released. (Workers World, Jul. 22)

Similarly, Marcus Dixon was convicted of "aggravated child molestation" for having sexual relations with an almost 16-year-old white classmate when he was 18. The Georgia Supreme Court overturned his sentence in May but not before he did significant prison time.

Sixteen-year-old Shaquanda Cotton was serving a seven-year sentence in Paris, Texas, for shoving a white teacher's aide before a special conservator ordered her release this year. The Washington Post reports, "Months earlier, the same white judge had given probation to a 14-year-old white girl who burned down her family's home." (Aug. 4)

The writer is a leader of FIST—Fight Imperialism-Stand Together—youth group.

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## ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

### Union sues to stop ICE raids

On Sept. 11 the United Food and Commercial Workers Union took the assertive step of suing the Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to stop workplace raids. The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Amarillo, Texas, characterizes sweeps at meat plants from Minnesota to Texas "excessive, illegal and unnecessary."

"It is unconscionable that our government would round up hundreds, sometimes thousands, of innocent workers in an effort to target a few select individuals," said Joe Hansen, UFCW president, in a Sept. 11 statement.

Of several thousand union members held by federal officials during the raids on six Swift & Co. plants, 1,139 were arrested and 250 were later convicted of such charges as identity theft.

Gening Liao, a union attorney, said workers at the plants were "held at gunpoint, blocked from moving around and detained even after they were cleared." Others were not allowed to contact union attorneys. One legal resident was not allowed to call his family to produce documents and was held for 12 hours until his identity was verified.

The union hopes to permanently block the federal government from making these racist, wide-sweeping, repressive raids.

### Longshore workers attacked by cops

Local 10 of the Longshore Workers Union called on allies to support two of their members at an Oct. 4 court date at 8 a.m. in Yolo County Superior Court in Woodland, Calif. On Aug. 23, the two Local 10 members were viciously attacked, maced, arrested and jailed by West Sacramento police after trying to return to their job site after lunch.

Jason Ruffin and Aaron Harrison showed their work ID but questioned the authority of private security guards to search their car. When they tried to verify the legality of the search by calling the union business agent, the guards assaulted them, dragged them from the car and handcuffed them. Police arrived and charged the men with trespassing and obstructing a police officer.

Local 10's Aug. 31 news release asked how workers can be trespassing when they showed the guards their ID cards. The union suspects racist profiling since the two workers are Black.

The release states: "Authorities citing a new maritime security regulation that permits vehicle inspection doesn't mean maritime workers can't question it. It doesn't take away a union member's right to call his union business agent. And it certainly doesn't give authorities, private or government, the right to assault and arrest you without provocation."

The union called this an example of "the ugly face of the 'war on terror' on the docks."

### Workers strike at UMinn

The Sept. 14 meeting of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents was not business as usual. More than 100 supporters of striking clerical, technical and health-care workers crashed the meeting to raise the workers' demands.

What do more than 3,500 workers at the university's five campuses and two dozen other facilities want? A 3.25-percent cost-of-living raise, equal to what other state employees have received. Because the administration offered only a 2.25 percent raise, the workers walked on Sept. 5.

While the average worker makes \$34,000 a year, the president banks about 16 times that—\$384,000, with nearly another \$150,000 in deferred wages. As an AFSCME news release noted, "That is more than the average striking worker makes in a decade."

## Grady coalition demands

# 'Healthcare is a human right'

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

The national health-care crisis has erupted in Atlanta with the threatened closing of Grady Hospital, one of the country's biggest public hospitals, because of a multi-million-dollar budget shortfall. The dire prediction is that without an immediate infusion of \$120 million, which is the cost of just a few hours of waging war in Iraq and Afghanistan, Grady will be unable to meet its payroll and pay its bills by the end of October.

The Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce sparked fierce debate when it issued a demand on July 13 that as the only solution to the downtown hospital's escalating financial instability, despite assets valued at an estimated \$1.3 billion, the taxpayer-supported facility be turned over to a private "not-for-profit" management board.

The Chamber Task Force that devised this plan drew its membership from some of the city's largest corporations, including major developers, insurance companies and banks, as well as the head of the Atlanta Housing Authority, responsible for the destruction of public housing in Atlanta.

Collectively, the members of the Chamber of Commerce have reaped huge profits from massive gentrification of inner-city neighborhoods, development tax breaks and a low-wage, largely non-union work force without health insurance benefits.

This big-business group claims that if the decision-making body changed to one more acceptable to the city's powerful elite, money would pour in from foundations and philanthropists.

Immediately after the release of the Chamber ultimatum, a coalition of patients, doctors and nurses, hospital workers who are members of AFSCME Local 1644, progressive elected officials and community activists mobilized.

Although segregated until 1956, over its 115-year history Grady Hospital has developed into a health-care network with 10 neighborhood clinics and

world-renowned specialty units in neonatal, burn, poison control and infectious disease care among others.

Grady is the only level-1 trauma center staffed 24/7 with surgeons and other highly trained staff capable of handling all kinds of emergency critical care within a 100-mile radius of Atlanta.

Victims of automobile accidents, plane crashes, shootings and industrial fires are routinely airlifted to Grady from counties throughout Georgia.

Grady is also a teaching hospital for Emory and Morehouse medical schools, training a full 25 percent of all doctors practicing in Georgia.

Those favoring privatization, in fact, list precisely these outstanding services provided by the hospital when they talk about how to "save Grady."

What they don't mention is that of the more than 900,000 patient visits last year, the great majority were by uninsured or underinsured people who sought medical attention for diabetes, high blood pressure, hypertension, lupus, sickle cell anemia, cancer, HIV-AIDS and other ongoing conditions that require consistent attention, medication and monitoring.

For tens of thousands of residents of Fulton and DeKalb counties whose taxes fund Grady, it is the hospital of choice. For millions throughout the metro area and state, Grady is the health-care safety net.

Many highly qualified Atlanta area private hospitals and other not-for-profit institutions routinely refer privately uninsured patients to Grady, preserving their own bottom line.

Sick people from the rest of the counties that contribute no funds to Grady are also provided needed health care. As of May of this year, this already totaled more than \$34 million in unreimbursed costs.

And that is the real core issue that is glossed over by the proponents of the "governance" proposal as the solution to Grady Hospital's financial crisis.

Over the recent past, the state of Georgia and the federal government have cut funds for health care by the

millions and billions of dollars.

Last year the state changed the funding formula for reimbursement for Medicaid and Medicare patients, resulting in a \$60 million cut for Grady. As is, these programs only cover about 80 percent of the cost of the care given to these needy patients.

At the same time, the costs for indigent care increased \$73 million.

The Grady Coalition is battling a wide array of powerful forces from the CEOs of Atlanta's business community to their media mouthpieces and the mayor, who all support turning the control of a public health institution to a private, unaccountable group.

Through leafleting, petition drives, interviews on radio talk shows, organizing public hearings, speaking out at the Fulton and DeKalb County Commission meetings, picket lines and other forms of direct intervention, the diverse members of the Grady Coalition are working tirelessly to mobilize a grassroots movement to win, in the short-term, increased funding at the county and state level.

Their efforts have already seen some results. The county commissions have approved additional emergency funding.

A campaign is being directed to demand that the state of Georgia, which has a \$600 million budget surplus, immediately alter the funding formula and replace the \$60 million Grady lost.

The crisis in Atlanta is one that is repeated around the country. Public hospitals are being closed or are giving diminished care to the poor and uninsured.

As workers' wages and benefits wither under a steady attack by their bosses, as young people have less and less expectation of keeping a job long-term, as the population as a whole lives longer, the obvious answer is a national health-care plan that covers everyone. An organized national movement will be the only way to achieve it.

*Mathiowetz is an active member of the Grady Coalition.*

## Indigenous nations hit hard by hurricanes

*Continued from page 2*

Because the Houma nation—though recognized by the state of Louisiana—has not been federally recognized, the situation for its members was more difficult, though they have fought on record for federal recognition since 1979.

The first petition was filed in 1979, and findings were released in 1994. The reason given by the Bureau of Indian Affairs is that the United Houma nation of today does not fulfill the criteria noted in Part 83 of Title 25 the Code of Federal Regulations, "Procedures for Establishing that an American Indian Group Exists as an Indian Tribe." Some of the criteria are:

- The petitioner has been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantial continuous basis since 1900.
- A predominant portion of the petitioning group comprises a distinct community from historical times until the present.

Neither the petitioner or its members

are the subject of congressional legislation that has expressly terminated or forbidden the Federal relationship.

Set aside the ridiculousness of an oppressed people, especially an Indigenous nation, having to qualify itself to its historical oppressor—an oppressor that committed genocide against its people and continues to deny this great historical evil and justifies it by a doctrine that is a mere cloak for white supremacy. The doctrine is that the Americas appeared before Columbus almost as an epiphany as the slave trader and mass murderer bumbled his way across the Atlantic in search of a quick route to Asia.

History attests to the claims of the Houma people, that they had settled originally the area where Angola prison is and moved to the area they now inhabit. According to the United Houma nation's website, the tribe was noted in the journal of LaSalle in 1682.

In 1706, the tribe moved southward and their population was noted from then on through various encounters

with European conquerors and other Native nations.

There are a number of issues at heart when considering why the nation is being denied federal recognition. One is the continual destruction of the coastal areas near where their tribal lands are. There is ample evidence since the hurricanes and many times before that of the oil industry's effect on the coastal region.

According to the testimony of Tony Sferlazza, while the Houma people were trying to return home and build their community, it was decided that 18 new oil rigs would be built off the coast, further devastating the area around New Orleans and leaving the people along the Gulf Coast, especially New Orleans and the Native nations, more vulnerable to hurricanes. The marsh lands that are being destroyed had been a natural buffer to weaken storms coming ashore.

*The writer attended the International Tribunal on Katrina and Rita in New Orleans.*





Sept. 15 march.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

# Marchers tell Bush & Congress: 'END THE WAR NOW'

By John Catalinotto  
Washington, D.C.

Tens of thousands of mostly youthful protesters marched from the White House to the Capitol on Sept. 15, opening up a period of weeks of demonstrations in Washington, D.C., against the U.S. occupation of Iraq, now in its fifth year. The protest was timed as a response to Gen. David Petraeus's Sept. 10 report to Congress aimed at winning support for continuing the U.S. occupation indefinitely.

The overarching umbrella theme of the protest could be summed up in the slogan of the thousands of yellow signs signed by the protest's main organizer, the ANSWER Coalition, which read, "End the war now." Another theme, less visible in the signs, was the demand that President George W. Bush be impeached.

During the pre-march rally, speakers from many progressive struggles—including the liberation of Palestine and Puerto Rico, funds for rebuilding New Orleans, and freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Cuban 5—raised their issues. Keynote speakers from the organizing groups and well-known figures like Ramsey Clark and Ralph Nader focused on ending the war and impeaching Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, and castigated the Democratic Party.

Dozens of members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, many wearing fatigues over their IVAW shirts, led the march to the Capitol. Members of Military Families Speak Out also played a featured role in the day's events.

Hundreds of the protesters sat down in the street near the Capitol to hold a "die-in," simulating the

casualties among Iraqi civilians and U.S. troops in the occupied country. At one point, some of the demonstrators tried to climb a fence to get closer to the Capitol.

Police then arrested 197 people, including 10 veterans and some of the demonstration organizers, according to an ANSWER release that also estimated the crowd's size at "nearly 100,000." Police used pepper gas or Mace against some of those present. Organizer Gloria La Riva said in a Sept. 17 radio interview that the demonstrators in custody were uninjured except for problems with handcuffs applied too tightly.

## Many from local campuses

Often past anti-war protests in Washington have been made up largely of people who live in the densely populated Northeast corridor between Boston and Washington, with as many as half coming from New York. This one, in contrast, seemed to attract fewer people from the cities of the Northeast and more from private and state universities within a few hours of Washington. A large group of students came from George Washington University, which is four blocks from the White House.

A youthful section of the march that included a contingent from the Students for a Democratic Society helped build the march's spirit with their enthusiasm. Even those from student Democratic Party clubs shared a strong hostility to the Democratic Party leadership.

People of all nationalities were on the march, but there were no large concentrated gatherings of peo-

*Continued on page 8*

## U.S. crimes against humanity in Iraq

Human-rights fighter Ramsey Clark was the keynote speaker at a Sept. 13 meeting at New York's Community Church to condemn the U.S. government for the crimes against humanity it has committed against the people of Iraq during the last two decades.

Clark, the former U.S. attorney general, said these crimes have led to "1.5 million being killed during the period of U.S. sanctions from 1990 to 2003" and to "another million deaths from the war and occupation of Iraq."

Clark, who has been to Iraq nearly every year since 1990, remarked how the quality of life has deteriorated even since the worst days of the sanctioned regime. Now, he said, everyone fears for the lives of their children and themselves, and people will no longer come out to the streets as they did even in those difficult times.

Almost one-third of the 25 million Iraqis need emergency help to survive. There are 2 million external and 2 million internal refugees.

Clark blamed the U.S. regime for these crimes and called for the impeachment of President George W. Bush.



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Sara Flounders, a co-director of the International Action Center, also spoke at the meeting. Flounders reported on the humanitarian crisis in Iraq in the Sept. 13 issue of Workers World (workers.org). At the meeting, she encouraged the activists present to participate in the Sept. 22-28 encampment and the Sept. 29 demonstration in Washington, D.C., called by the Troops Out Now Coalition.

LeiLani Dowell, a national leader of the youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—chaired the meeting.

—John Catalinotto

## Los Angeles TONC says: 'Protests will go on'

By Workers World Los Angeles bureau

The General Services Administration, in charge of issuing permits for the use of federal property, has moved to deny the Troops Out Now Coalition's Los Angeles chapter a permit to use the lawn at the Westwood Federal Building and the Downtown Federal Building for a Sept 22-28 encampment connecting the war at home with the war abroad. The excuses are that: one, tents are not allowed on federal property, and two, the federal government doesn't have the "resources" to provide security for a 24-hour encampment.

This is despite the fact that canopies and tents have been used at both the Westwood Federal Building and the Downtown Federal Building—and that the government spends over \$20,000 every

five seconds on this illegal war on Iraq yet now claims poverty.

On Sept. 15 Namibia Donadio and Fernando Suarez whose son was killed in Iraq were interviewed about the Sept. 29 demonstrations on KPFK radio program "Enfoque Latino con Ruben Tapia." Donadio, youth organizer for Troops Out Now and FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) stressed the Los Angeles encampments and march will go on as planned.

On the Web, go to [www.troopsoutnow.org/grantencampmentpermit.shtml](http://www.troopsoutnow.org/grantencampmentpermit.shtml) and send a message to President Bush, Vice President Cheney, GSA Chief of Staff Phelps, congressional leaders and the media demanding that the permits for the Sept 22-29 anti-war Encampments in front of Los Angeles Federal Buildings be granted immediately. □

## Los Angeles Tent Cities at Federal Buildings

We'll be *occupying the occupiers* from Sept. 22nd to the 29th with tent cities at the Westwood Federal Building and the Downtown Federal Building, where exciting actions, teach-ins, film showings, music and more will come together in one united voice to stop the war at home and abroad.

**SAT., SEPT. 22— 1st Tent City: Westwood Federal Bldg.**  
11000 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood, CA

### Labor/ End Occupation/ Human Needs Not War

Set up tents & booths. **Code Pink-Walk in Their Shoes** (symbolizing Iraqi civilian deaths)/AFSC placing boots representing CA soldiers killed.

**Hurricane Katrina Teach-In:** Survivor & activist **FREDDIE MONROE**, Report from the Int'l Katrina Tribunal by **LARRY HALES**

**Palestine Teach-In**

**People's Struggle in the Philippines action**

**FMLN El Salvador Teach-In**

**LA-USLAW- Iraq Moratorium Wkshp.** [www.iraqmoratorium.org](http://www.iraqmoratorium.org)

Robert Greenwald's **'Iraq For Sale'** [www.iraqforsale.org](http://www.iraqforsale.org)

**'Meeting Face To Face'** [www.meetingfacetoface.org](http://www.meetingfacetoface.org)

Screening: **'Salt of the Earth'**

### SUN., SEPT. 23— Youth/ Protest/ Immigrant Rts

**FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together):**

**Immigration, Youth & Counter-Recruitment**

**Unconventional Activism Teach-in:**

**DR. CAROLINE HELDMAN**, Katrina activist & Occidental professor

**Impeachment Teach-in:** **PETER THOTTAM**, Bush/Cheney Impeachment Center

**RON KOVIC-Vietnam & Iraq: Tactics on civil disobedience & creative non-violence, revisiting 1974 Westwood Federal Bldg Encampment & Hunger Strike**

Screening: **'Born on the Fourth of July'**

### MON., SEPT. 24— Int'l solidarity/racism & repression/women/lgbt

**Program on case of Jena 6**

**Cuba Teach-in FIST: Free the Cuban Five**

**Venezuela Teach-In**

**LGBT Rights Wkshp.**

**SDS-UCLA contingent marches to encampment & joins forces to march to Occidental Petroleum**

Screening: **'The Fire This Time-The LA Uprising'**

### TUES., SEPT. 25— Break camp & March/Caravan to Second Tent City: Downtown Federal Bldg. 310 N. Los Angeles St.

**Protest at Israeli Consulate on the way**

**Protest at El Salvador Consulate on the way**

Set up camp at Downtown Federal Bldg.

### WED., SEPT. 26— Race & Repression/LGBT/Women's Rts/Int'l Solidarity

**Venezuela Wkshp.**

**Jena 6 Teach-in Racism/Prison industrial complex/ Police Brutality Wkshp.**

**Free Mumia, Leonard Peltier, SF8, Cuban Five & all political prisoners**

**Colombia Teach-In (March 25 Coalition)**

Screening: **'Close to Home'** **AMMAR MAHMOUD**

talks about filming his own family's struggle in Iraq

### THURS., SEPT. 27— Labor Rights/Immigrant Rights

**National Security & Immigrant Rights**

Teach-in w/ **HAMID KAHN** of the South Asian Network

**Bienestar vigil for Victoria Arellano**

David Bacon Photo Exhibit **Iraqi Workers in Basra & Baghdad**

<http://dbacon.igc.org>

**US Labor Against the War- Iraq Oil Law Wkshp.**

**"Meeting Face to Face"** on Iraqi workers

The Garment Workers Center- presentation & film, labor & immigrant rights

### FRI., SEPT 28— Youth/End Occupation, Human Needs, Not War

City Council Protest & Protest March to LA Times

**People's Struggle in the Philippines action**

**FMLN El Salvador Wkshp.**

**Eyewitness Palestine-Photo Presentation Teach-in**

Journal of Ascetics & Protest Theater

### SAT., SEPT. 29, Noon gather at Broadway & Olympic

## Mass March & Rally to Bring the Troops Home

Encampment schedule, time and updates available at

[www.TroopsOutNowLA.org](http://www.TroopsOutNowLA.org) 323.936.7266



# How a revolution stopped a war

**WW BOOK  
REVIEW**

*"The Bolsheviks and War"*  
by Sam Marcy; 165 pp.  
from [leftbooks.com](http://leftbooks.com)

By Deirdre Griswold

What gives a political work lasting significance? Surely it must be because it addresses questions that take on even greater relevance and urgency as time goes by.

By this criterion, Sam Marcy's "The Bolsheviks and War: Lessons for Today's Anti-war Movement" is a work that has gained greatly in importance since he wrote it in 1985. It deserves the attention of the progressive movement more than ever.

The book is essentially a historical and ideological review of how the first imperialist world war affected the international socialist movement and the working class, especially in the imperialist countries themselves.

That war now seems like ancient history. It was followed by many others—not only a second worldwide conflagration costing more tens of millions of lives, but countless colonial interventions by the industrially developed capitalist powers to first conquer and then try to hold on to countries subjugated for their raw materials and labor.

The war that began in 1914 for the first time sucked a huge section of the globe into an enormously bloody inter-imperialist conflict that seemed to have no end. However, it also created the conditions for the first successful revolution by armed and organized workers and peasants and the establishment of a socialist government.

When Marcy wrote this book, the Soviet Union, the product of that great revolution, was in bad shape. Decades of intense Cold War pressures, including threats of nuclear annihilation from Washington, had reinforced reformist elements in the leadership who thought that conciliating with imperialism would give them breathing space. That had eroded their solidarity with People's China and with the rising national liberation movements around the world and had given encouragement internally to the most opportunistic social elements.

Eventually, the bloc of workers' states headed by the USSR was broken up, a new class of entrepreneurs with ties to the imperialist West took over, and the floodgates were opened for a rush of imperialist corporations that have grabbed hold of everything they could as former state property was privatized and the workers' quality of life plummeted.

World imperialism, especially the U.S., trumpeted the "end of communism." Capitalism was the "natural" order of things and would lead the world to a better place now that the immense cost of the Cold War was over.

It hasn't taken long for these illusions to be dispelled. A ferocious anti-worker offensive by the bosses everywhere, capitalist globalization that is forcing down wages, the unfolding economic crisis spurred by unpayable debts and the looming devastation of climate change have put capitalism in a very different light.

More than anything else, however, the prospect of unending war is roiling the world. The U.S. is seen as a rogue elephant and no one knows who it might trample next.

Today's apprehension that imperialist rivalries and instability can lead to even greater carnage is remarkably similar to the worries of the Socialist International in the period before the outbreak of World War I.

The first section of Marcy's book examines concretely what the workers' organizations were saying and doing at that time. One big difference from today is that the Socialist International at that time incorporated many revolutionaries and had enormous influence in the labor movements in Europe and Japan, where there had been a huge growth in the industrial working class. Today, by contrast, some of the fiercest class struggles are taking place in the formerly colonized countries, which now have huge concentrations of workers and the largest socialist and communist organizations.

As the war approached, the Social Democratic parties of that day met in international congresses and denounced in stirring resolutions the war plans of the imperialists. They called on the workers not to submit to "chauvinism," meaning patriotism to the rulers of their separate countries, but instead to fight against any war and refuse to slaughter each other for the profits of the bosses.

But the war came, and it was even more terrible than the International had predicted. In the trench warfare that turned Europe into a vast killing field, tens of thousands of young workers, now in uniform, were mowed down by machine guns as their commanders ordered

them in waves against the enemy. For example, on July 1, 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, nearly 20,000 British soldiers were killed in this way—five times the current U.S. death toll in Iraq, and all in one day! And that battle continued for months.

The war unraveled the Socialist International, which had seemed to be making progress as socialist deputies were elected to the various parliaments in Europe. But most of them had caved in to the capitalist war machine and voted for war credits—or the war budget, as we call it today.

There were notable exceptions. In Germany, Karl Lieb-

knecht was one of the very few who voted in the Reichstag against the war. Marcy's book describes a handful of others who held to their principles. But the most organized group in the International to fight for an anti-war program based on revolutionary struggle against their own ruling classes was Lenin and the Bolsheviks in Russia.

After the war the Socialist International reconstituted itself as a thoroughly reformist and opportunist body. Its members today include many parties that are socialist in name only. One such is the British Labor Party. Its former leader, Tony Blair, became hated by the people as Bush's

*Continued on page 8*

## A week-long encampment directly in front of Congress

A giant billboard and round the clock political challenge to Congress to stop funding the war.

Actions every day and resistance music and culture every evening. We are open to many displays and actions. Just contact: [www.TroopsOutNow.org](http://www.TroopsOutNow.org)

### Actions all week

People from around the country will start arriving on Sat., Sept. 22 and Sun., Sept. 23. The encampment will expand to major actions on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. It will culminate in a mass march on Sat., Sept. 29.

#### SCHEDULE

##### SAT., SEPT. 22 & SUN., SEPT. 23-

Help erect scaffolding for a giant billboard demanding:

**'Congress: Stop Funding the War—Fund Peoples' Needs'**

Music and work at the site on tents, canopies and displays. Crews reaching out in neighborhoods throughout the D.C./Baltimore area with sound cars and leafleting brigades.

##### MON., SEPT. 24 & TUES., SEPT. 25-

Actions demanding:

- **Impeachment of Bush and Cheney for War Crimes**
- **Stop War on Iran Action** and a strategy meeting on Emergency Network to focus on the growing threat of a U.S. attack on Iran.

##### WED., SEPT. 26 — Turn up the heat —

Actions TBA in the halls and offices of Congress to confront their political complicity in the war—funding the war is a war crime.

##### THURS., SEPT. 27- Stop the War at Home Day

Program at 5:30 p.m. in the big tent:

#### KATRINA/RITA SURVIVORS—

**The struggle to rebuild New Orleans continues**

Special showing: "Welcome to New Orleans" one hour documentary on the racist, military occupation of New Orleans  
SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

- MALIK RAHIM, Exec. Dir., Common Ground Collective, New Orleans
  - BRENDA STOKELY, NY Solidarity Coalition for Katrina/Rita Survivors
  - TERESA GUTIERREZ, May 1st Immigrant Rights Coalition
- Discussion to follow

##### FRI., SEPT. 28-

- Cuba solidarity and anti-war activists will present a **Rainbow Solidarity** letter with thousands of signatures to the Acting Attorney General demanding **Freedom for the Cuban Five Political Prisoners**.

Videos about the Cuba such as **'Mission Against Terror; 'Salud'** will be shown non-stop during the encampment.

- Youth actions challenge military recruiters, war funding & police repression. **'\$ for Education NOT War.'**  
<http://youthantiwarweek.wordpress.com>

- **Join an Evening Vigil with SICKO film members at the Lincoln Memorial to remember those who died because they were denied health care.**

- **A concert of hip-hop and spoken word at the encampment with BAYAN Philippine Alliance to oppose U.S. military in the Philippines.**

Other actions & meetings TBA. Set up, banner & sign making all day.

## STOP THE WAR at home & abroad!

Let's UNITE to demand:

- ✓ **Troops Out Now!**
- ✓ **Impeach Bush & Cheney for War Crimes!**

**End All Occupations—from Iraq to Palestine to Haiti to the Philippines!**

Let's act in unity with many movements and struggles raising demands including:

- ✓ **No war against Iran**
- ✓ **The Right to Return— from Palestine to New Orleans**
- ✓ **No to U.S. intervention— Hands off Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Zimbabwe & Sudan**
- ✓ **Stop the raids against immigrant workers—Full rights for undocumented workers**
- ✓ **Justice for Katrina survivors— End racist police terror— Stop the war against Muslims**
- ✓ **Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, the Cuban Five, Jose Maria (Joma) Sison and all political prisoners**
- ✓ **\$\$\$ for health care, jobs & education, Not endless war**

## 'ROCK THE RULERS!'

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**Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row:**

## 'The politics of war'

From an Aug. 19 audio message prepared for September anti-war mobilizations.

We live in an era when war is all but a machine for profit and a mechanism for hyping up nationalism to attract votes. That's because when you listen to the so-called presidential debates, all you hear is an appeal for more and more war. As if the Iraq war isn't enough, you now have political candidates of both parties trying to ramp up word wars against Iran.



First come the word wars; then you have the bullets and bombs. Don't think for a minute that it really matters whether a Republican or Democrat gets elected, for the paymasters behind them both are the same.

The argument between Republicans and Democrats is one of management. Who will manage this madness of imperial war better? When was the last time you voted for an invasion? When was the last time you voted for regime change? When was the last time you voted for bombing?

Yet, mark my words; millions of us are doing exactly that when going into the voting booths in November 2008 and vote for someone who stands for nothing but the status quo.

The status quo is imperialism. And imperialism is naught but unbridled violence and exploitation of the world for corporate profit. In 2004, Sen. John Kerry was poised to crush George W. Bush in the presidential elections.

What happened? Two things. First, Bush and his cronies stole the election by blocking votes in Ohio.

And second, Kerry, by announcing in a debate that he would call for 40,000 more troops for Iraq, squandered what portion of anti-war voters he had attracted. Those many who were opposed to Bush couldn't bring themselves to vote against him if it meant more troops, more war and more death, so they stayed home.

What will you do in 2008? You can't get change by voting for the very same thing. You can't get peace by voting for war. Only the people united can change the direction of this monstrous war machine.

If you wait for politicians, it will be 10 more years and thousands more dead and maimed. If you want change, you have to make it happen. On the move!! Long live John Africa!! And down with imperialist war!! From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. □

## Home by Christmas!

# 1945: GIs act to stop the war machine

By Dustin Langley

In the months following the end of World War II, some in Washington wanted to use the 12 million men and women in uniform against the Soviet Union and the growing anti-colonial movements throughout the world. Some even favored immediate military action against the Soviet Union, which had been a U.S. ally and played a decisive role in the war against Nazi Germany and a major role against Imperial Japan.

But the Soviet Union was a socialist country and thus a class enemy of the big capitalists that the Washington government represented.

Also, with the defeat of the Japanese military, movements for independence surfaced in Indonesia, Indochina, and the Philippines, where the Anti-Japanese National Liberation Army, known as the Huks, had already liberated several provinces. U.S. imperialism faced a threat to its Asian holdings and wanted the military to secure these spoils of war.

Washington's plans were thwarted by a massive uprising of troops in both the European and Asian Theaters. Large demonstrations took place in the Philippines, Hawaii, France, Germany, Guam, Japan, Korea, India, Burma, Austria, Great Britain, and in the United States.

More than 60 percent of U.S. military personnel were draftees. Many others had volunteered in the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Almost all wanted to return home after the end of the wars against Germany and Japan.

Soldiers who had been stationed in the European Theater were the first to protest. They returned to the United States to discover that they were going to be shipped to the Asian Theater for occupation duty. On Aug. 21, 1945, some 580 GIs from the 95th Division signed a protest telegram to President Harry Truman.

When Gen. Harry Lewis Twaddle tried to assemble the 95th to issue orders to deploy for occupation duty, the Washington Post reported, "the boos from the soldiers were so prolonged and frequent that it took [Twaddle] 40 minutes to deliver a 15-minute speech."

Members of the 97th Division hung banners from their train, which was tak-

ing them to California to be shipped out to Asia, reading, "We're being sold down the river while Congress vacations."

### Families give support

At home, military families added their support to the growing resistance. Congress was flooded with letters and telegrams demanding that the troops be brought home. As Christmas drew near, some sent baby booties to their representatives in Congress with a note that read, "Be a good Santa Claus and release the fathers."

Sen. Elbert D. Thomas, who headed the Military Affairs Committee, said: "Constituents are on their necks day and night. The pressure is unbelievable. Mail from wives, mothers and sweethearts demanding that their men be brought home is running to almost 100,000 letters daily."

From October through December 1945, the "Bring the Boys Home by Christmas" movement grew among rank-and-file GIs and their supporters at home. The unrest increased in January, when it was revealed that Truman had decided to reverse the policy of releasing all troops with two years of service by March 20, 1946. This disclosure sparked spontaneous demonstrations.

On Jan. 8, 1946, thousands of soldiers in Paris marched down the Champs Elysees to a rally in front of the U.S. Embassy with the demand: "Get us home!"

On Jan. 9, the New York Times reported that 4,000 GIs had tried to rush the headquarters of the United States Forces in the European Theater to present their demand to be sent home to Gen. Joseph T. McNarney. Speakers at the demonstration sent a telegraph to Congress that asked, "Are the brass-hats to be permitted to build empires?"

Protests continued and two days later the GIs won a meeting with general staff officers. On Jan. 11, the Times headline read, "GIs in Frankfurt Deride McNarney As They Fail to Get Sailing Date." The story reported that there were also demonstrations by rank-and-file soldiers in London and Vienna.

Five hundred soldiers rallied in the Trocadero in Paris to demand the firing of Secretary of War Robert Patterson. They also elected a committee to meet with a

group of senators about to visit the area.

This meeting issued what the New York Times called "an enlisted man's Magna Carta," with the following demands:

1. Abolition of officers' messes, with all rations to be served in a common mess on a first-come-first-served basis
2. The opening of all officers' clubs at all posts, camps and stations to officers and enlisted men alike
3. Abolition of reserved sections for officers at recreational events
4. Abolition of all special officers' quarters and the requirement of all officers to serve at least one year as enlisted men except in time of war
5. Reform of army court-martial boards to include enlisted men

### GIs have 'strike fever'

On Jan. 13, the Times reported: "The fact is the GIs have strike fever. Almost every soldier you talk to is full of resentment, humiliation and anger. He acts exactly as workers have acted and by doing so drew the GI's criticism in the past. ... But now the shoe is on the other foot. The GIs now feel they have a legitimate gripe against their employers."

In response to the GI protests and their growing support at home, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower announced a new schedule of demobilization on Jan. 15. This schedule, however, did not meet the GIs' demand for the release of all soldiers with two years' service by March 20, 1946; instead, it provided for the release of those with 30 months' service by April 30.

While the movement fell short of winning all its demands, it was successful in forcing Washington to demobilize the army. This gave enormous space for the Soviet Union to recover from the bloody war and for the liberation struggles in China, Indonesia, Indochina and elsewhere.

The movement also revealed the great potential for military members' resistance to the imperial ambitions of Washington. One of the ruling class's greatest weaknesses is that it is forced to rely on working people as soldiers in its wars of conquest, and these working people have interests that are directly opposed to those of Washington and Wall Street.

As the criminal occupation of Iraq continues, revolutionaries and progressives have an obligation to support and encourage organizing and resistance by the rank and file.

**Resources:**  
*Iraq Veterans Against the War:* [www.ivaw.org](http://www.ivaw.org)  
*GI Special:* [www.militaryproject.org](http://www.militaryproject.org)  
*Appeal for Redress:* [www.appealforredress.org](http://www.appealforredress.org)  
*Different Drummer:* [www.differentdrummercafe.org](http://www.differentdrummercafe.org)  
*Courage to Resist:* [www.couragetoresist.org](http://www.couragetoresist.org)  
*War Resisters Support Campaign:* [www.resisters.ca](http://www.resisters.ca)  
*Next in the series: Massive GI protests in Manila, Guam, Delhi.*  
*Dustin Langley is a Navy veteran and military discharge counselor.*

## How a revolution stopped a war

Continued from page 7

"puppy" after he sent troops to Iraq.

In 1917, a year in which the war seemed destined to drag on forever and millions were dying not only of wounds but of starvation and disease, the impetus for socialist revolution came from Russia, where a moth-eaten monarchy had poured millions of peasants and workers into the fray hoping to pick up new territories and bounty.

The credibility of the Bolsheviks grew as it became clear they were the only party that would end the senseless slaughter: they called on the soldiers to turn their guns around and overthrow the ruling class. Once a government of Soviets—councils of workers, peasants and soldiers—took power, it published all the secret treaties between the czar and the Western imperialists that laid out who would get what territory after the war. It renounced these treaties and pulled Russia out of the war, while calling on the workers in the other belligerent countries to do the same.

The Russian Revolution sparked

workers' uprisings in a number of other European countries. It was fear of the revolution spreading that finally led the prime ministers and kings of Europe to call a halt to the carnage.

Marcy's book is, more than anything else, an examination of the political struggles in the socialist movement at that time and a reaffirmation of the importance of building a truly revolutionary party that is not afraid of isolation when the tide moves rapidly to the right, as at the outbreak of an imperialist war. Marcy founded Workers World Party in 1959.

His book also sheds light on the early anti-war movement in the United States, which was largely led by socialists, was working class and "was often militant in character, resorting to direct action and armed resistance." The chapter on "The Green Corn Rebellion and the struggle for socialism" will be an eye-opener for many on how a multinational, multiracial alliance of impoverished workers and farmers in Oklahoma and Arkansas in August 1917 went beyond mere protest and took up arms against the military recruiters.

Many progressive people today, frustrated by the complicity of both capitalist parties in supporting the imperialist war machine, are asking where the forces will come from to finally put an end to this terrible period in human history.

Marcy had optimism that the conditions that produced "a genuine revolutionary coalition of the most downtrodden workers and oppressed," as seen "in an early and premature form" in the Green Corn Rebellion, are being generated once again "on the soil of the world's greatest imperial power." □

## Marchers tell Bush and Congress:

Continued from page 6

stickers and leaflets advertising its upcoming encampment Sept. 22-28 and mass demonstration Sept. 29 at the Capitol. TONC will emphasize "the war abroad and the war at home" and will likely have more focus on combating racism, fighting for jobs and health care, and defending immigrant rights.

The World Can't Wait organization had a contingent, which promoted the call to impeach Bush and Cheney.

Members of the Troops Out Now Coalition passed out protest signs and

stickers and leaflets advertising its upcoming encampment Sept. 22-28 and mass demonstration Sept. 29 at the Capitol. TONC will emphasize "the war abroad and the war at home" and will likely have more focus on combating racism, fighting for jobs and health care, and defending immigrant rights.

Speakers at the anti-war rally included Cindy Sheehan; Malik Rahim, co-founder of



# Filipino progressive leader released from Dutch prison

By Brenda Ryan

In a major victory for progressive people around the world, a Dutch court has released Filipino leader Prof. Jose Maria Sison from prison. The court found no evidence to back charges that Sison had ordered the murder of two men in the Philippines. Dutch police had arrested him in the Netherlands on Aug. 27.

Sison, who has been exiled in the Netherlands for 20 years, has played an historic role in the Filipino people's movement. The founding chairperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), he is now chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. His arrest came as Philippines President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has waged a campaign of repression against the Filipino people's movement.

"This is a big slap in Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's face," BAYAN USA, an alliance of more than 12 social justice Filipino-American organizations in the U.S. declared in a Sept. 13 statement. "The counterinsurgency scheme of the Arroyo administration was behind the fabricated charges against Sison from the beginning."

In 2001, the U.S. State Department declared that Sison, the CPP and the New Peoples Army were terrorists and that the Philippines were "the second front of the war on terror." Arroyo was one of the first national leaders to join the Bush administration in its so-called "war on terror."

Last year Arroyo began a crackdown on the leadership of the people's movement. She declared a nationwide state of emergency and ordered the arrest of Crispin Beltran, a legendary labor leader and member of the Philippines Parliament, and five other elected parliamentarians, on charges of rebellion against the government.

The Arroyo regime targeted Sison at that time. An article in Inside PCIJ (Philippine Center of Investigative Journalism) noted that Sison was on a list of communist leaders and members, congressmen and others that the Philippine National Police Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management had forwarded to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales.

But the Filipino movement has successfully fought back. Crispin was released in July. And after a worldwide mobilization to free Sison, the Dutch court backed down. This is the second victory for Sison.



PHOTO: NEW COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE NETHERLANDS

Filipino leader Prof. Jose Maria Sison

In July a European court ruled that he could access his funds, which had been frozen since December 2001.

BAYAN warned, however, that the fight is not over. Sison is still on the terrorist lists of the U.S. government and the European Union, and the Filipino people are living under state terror as a result of Arroyo's undeclared martial law.

"We must remain vigilant," BAYAN stated. "The terror tactics of the U.S.-Arroyo regime know no state boundaries. As governments act in collusion to stifle legitimate and just dissent anywhere, the Arroyo administration will go after Filipino progressives abroad. Our movement must not cease to take action in their defense." □

## How Congress could stop the war—but won't

Continued from page 1

about how they lack the votes to do what they promised to do.

The Democrats claim that, because they do not have a two-thirds majority, they are powerless to overrule an expected Bush veto on a war-funding bill that would set a deadline for withdrawal. So they must pass a bill that Bush would approve.

But they could simply refuse to present a bill for ANY war funding.

They clearly have the constitutional authority, the legislative power and the political mandate.

One of Pelosi's first acts as speaker of the House was to declare that impeachment proceedings against Bush were "off the table." She would refuse to allow this burning issue to come to the floor of the House. Why not declare instead that war funding is "off the table"?

But it will take a massive, determined, angry and independent movement to force the conciliatory Democratic majority in Congress to put impeachment on the table and take war funding off.

### Media complicity in the war

The Democrats, with endless help from the corporate media, have presented a hand-wringing theatrical fraud about lacking sufficient votes to take any action against the war.

Every major media outlet has spent considerable time and space describing how Democrats need to compromise with

Bush and the Republicans. We are told that in order to pass any legislation the Democrats must remove binding dates for withdrawal and give Bush all the money he is demanding to continue the war—all in order to win bipartisan support. All these pundits say the Constitution makes it impossible for Congress to stop the war.

But the opposite is true.

The corporate media are totally interlinked with the oil and military corporations. Five years ago these media provided endless coverage of nonexistent Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction." They continue to give nonstop coverage about the Pentagon's concern for peace and stability in Iraq. Now they argue that there is no choice except to continue to spend hundreds of billions more on the war.

In May the Democrat-controlled Congress gave Bush even more money for the war than he had asked for. That funding cycle ends on Oct. 1. Congress is set to repeat its collaboration in the war by again voting the funds, while claiming it is helpless to do otherwise.

The Sept. 13 newsletter of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting gives examples of this constant deception practiced by the New York Times, the Washington Post, Associated Press, MSNBC and NBC's Chris Matthews Show.

### Sitting on a bill to kill it

Left out of all this coverage are facts

harass the demonstrators and provide the corporate media with a pro-war opinion. Many in this rightist gang are retired military officers or other professional soldiers.

Last March, this same group had physically harassed some of the anti-war crowd, with the obvious cooperation of the police. This time a security squad was organized to defend the marchers, and police changed their own tactics and set up barricades between the demonstration and the fascist-like GoE. □

that are well-known to all Washington politicians, lobbyists, commentators and journalists on how funding for the war in Iraq could be stopped at any number of points in either the House or Senate.

According to the U.S. Constitution, spending bills have to originate in the House of Representatives. Congress has decisive control over funds for war.

Not only does the speaker of the House, now a Democrat, control what legislation goes to the floor for a vote, but Democrats, as the majority party, currently chair all committees in both houses of Congress.

Spending bills originate in the House Appropriations Committee. Dave Obey, a Democrat from Wisconsin who chairs that committee, could simply refuse to move funding for the war out of committee. This is the fate of many hundreds of bills introduced into Congress each year. Most bills "die in committee."

The Appropriations Committee has a subcommittee on defense chaired by John Murtha, a Democrat from Pennsylvania. Murtha says he wants to bring the troops home. He could do this by refusing to bring forward a bill funding the war.

After a funding bill is approved in the House, it moves to the Senate. Sen. Robert Byrd of Virginia, head of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has eloquently opposed the war. He could refuse to move the bill through his committee. Harry Reid, Senate Majority leader, could refuse to bring the bill to the Senate floor. Any of these measures would kill the multi-billion-dollar war-funding bill.

There would be no need for a 60 percent majority to stop a Republican filibuster nor a two-thirds majority to overcome a presidential veto.

### Justifying collaboration

To further justify their collaboration with Bush on the war, members of Congress use their supposed concern for U.S. troops as a human shield. They are hiding behind soldiers and the threat that U.S. soldiers could wake up tomor-

row with no food, water or even funds to pull out.

This is also a fraud. The Pentagon does not live paycheck to paycheck as workers do. The budget and supply process is decided months and years in advance.

The Pentagon is using funds allocated for the Iraq war to plan and prepare a new war against Iran. Half the U.S. Navy has moved to within striking range of Iran. Pentagon planners have targeted more than 10,000 bombing sites.

So why won't the congressional Democrats do what they promised to do? Why are they totally complicit in the war?

Every capitalist politician, Republican or Democrat, needs tens of millions of dollars to run for national office. They either have the deep pockets of a multi-million-dollar family fortune behind them or they need large corporate donations. They need hours of favorable coverage in the corporate media.

The entire U.S. ruling class has an enormous stake in the desperate effort to secure continued domination and control of the largest oil reserves on the planet. The super profits that drive the U.S. capitalist economy are drawn from a world empire.

Politicians may wring their hands over the deaths of U.S. soldiers and the spiraling costs that are gutting every desperately needed social program. But political parties are loyal to the capitalist system.

Congress and media know the determination of corporate America is to stay in Iraq for a generation or more.

As the Oct. 1 deadline for funding the war nears, a political challenge is being prepared by the Troops Out Now Coalition. The greatest contribution of the Encampment scheduled to take place directly in front of Congress from Sept. 22 to 29 is to show that independent mass action is needed to really end the war. Learning through bitter experience about the role of both capitalist parties is an essential part of the struggle to end the war. □

## 'End the war now'

Common Ground Collective, New Orleans; the Rev. Lennox Yearwood, CEO of Hip Hop Caucus; Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; Brian Becker of ANSWER and many others.

A pro-war, pro-Bush group calling itself a "Gathering of Eagles" set up a counter-demonstration between 7th and 10th Streets along Pennsylvania Avenue to



## Today's financial alchemy

Centuries ago, kings and their royal entourages lived far beyond their means and, to compensate, conducted never-ending military campaigns, looting resources and land. War was expensive and failures soon led to empty treasuries.

Among the royal elite arose the idea that wealth could be created by transforming base metals into gold. Throughout the Middle Ages, armies of alchemists labored tirelessly to achieve this goal, but in vain.

Today's alchemists have been assigned an impossible task: convert trillions in IOUs and debt into complex financial instruments to create wealth and profits for Wall Street masters. Economists, mathematicians and physicists from prestigious universities create incomprehensible computer models and concoct cocktails of financial instruments. Financial markets and the rating agencies can't measure their value or estimate a dependable price.

The lack of transparency has confused and panicked the stock market. Billions have been lost in recent months. Hordes of investors, bankers and brokers have run for the sidelines clutching their paper wealth to shelter it from the roiling financial markets.

The crisis began with sub-prime loans packaged by mortgage lenders, bought by banks and other financial institutions and sold to investors. These collateralized debt obligations, split into smaller denominations called tranches, were distributed widely in the U.S. and abroad. They provided lenders with double-digit interest rates and exorbitant fees. Ten thousand hedge funds bought into these computer models—"quant funds"—with borrowed money.

Now the sub-prime mortgage collapse has sent these financial investors into retreat with heavy losses.

On Sept. 18, the Federal Reserve Board gave the stock market what it wanted—a whopping half-point cut in the prime interest rate, from 5.25 to 4.75. This unleashed a flood of cheap dollars to provide liquidity and

free up credit—and the stock market responded immediately by shooting up at the fastest rate in four years. The frenzy and fear that had gripped the financial institutions was eased, even though many analysts remain uncertain whether the Fed's response was too little, too late. They are those who believe that a collapse of the financial institutions is still in the making.

The Federal Reserve Board, the bankers' bank, acted as the money spigot of last resort. This government bank is an integral sector of the stock market and works with the heads of the largest banks, the leaders of other exchanges, and government agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission. It is the main catalyst to protect the stock market—the generalizer and barometer intimately connected to the pension funds, banks, credit unions, insurance companies and mortgage brokers. Wall Street rests easier, for the moment.

The stock market bailout by the Fed will lead to an inflationary tide, which will dilute the living standards of the workers and the oppressed. The value of their labor power expressed in cheap dollars will make it more difficult for them to buy back what they produce, at a time when they are plagued by the rising cost of food, energy, shelter, education and health care and are drowning in credit-card debt and foreclosures.

Unemployment is on the rise.

Workers and oppressed face inflation and stagnation. We have what appears to be a rerun of the conditions that led to the stock market crash of October 1987, but more profound and global. The plunge of the dollar will destabilize global commodities markets, intensify the tensions among trading partners, and even unravel trade agreements.

The Iraq and Afghanistan occupations are leaving a trail of death, destruction and huge deficits. Regardless of its dimensions, the crisis of capitalism will heighten the struggle of the working class and oppressed and change the character of the international situation. □

## an evolving impact

# HIP HOP & THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

By Larry Hales

ww  
commentary  
PART 1

Hip Hop culture is again being attacked by the major news outlets, which of late began with Don Imus, when his virulent racism was spotlighted after his hateful remarks against a college basketball team made up mostly of Black women. However, some capitalist news outlets appear to have embraced Hip Hop in revolutionary Cuba.

It's not that this should be a confusing turn, not for those who've been in solidarity with the Cuban revolution. Nor should it be for people struggling against racism and oppression in the U.S.

When FIST, a revolutionary youth group, visited Cuba this July, the youth had an opportunity to meet with the head of the Cuban Rap Agency and several Cuban rap artists. The artists explained what the music means to them, how they first came in contact with Hip Hop culture, and how it is viewed by the revolution.

A New York Times article written last December entitled, "Cuba's Rap Vanguard Reaches Beyond the Party Line," attempts to assert that youth in Cuba are at odds with the revolutionary leadership and that these tensions are evident in the burgeoning Hip Hop culture there.

The writer claims that "many" of the five million people under the age of 30 question the system. It is not to suggest that Cubans are not critical. Perhaps the greatest criticism comes from Fidel, but criticism itself is not a bad thing. In an ever changing world there are always new questions and problems and healthy criticisms are part of deepening socialism, especially with the contradictions of a global capitalist market.

While many of the emerging leaders on the island were not alive during the revolutionary armed struggle, they came of age during one of the most difficult and challenging periods of the Cuban revolution. That period is known on the island as the Special Period, and the Cuban economy is just recovering from the effects.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba lost its largest trading partner. Eighty percent of Cuban trade was with the Soviet Union and the socialist camp in Eastern Europe.

While perhaps some can look at the counterrevolutionary reforms of Perestroika under Gorbachev as a warning sign, it was not expected that trade would stop immediately, but it did.

The U.S. and many in the imperialist West

expected that the Cuban revolution would fail, but history and the resolve of the Cuban people were the best weapons to ensure that this did not happen.

The Cuban people experienced a significant reduction in caloric intake. Food had to be rationed. Temporary market reforms were put in place. Cuba promoted tourism on the island as its primary way of securing hard currency with which to trade on the international market.

Only a person who lived through it can truly attest to the difficulties, but regardless of the hardship, not one hospital or school closed. But neither did antagonism from the U.S. government cease.

It was during this period that Cubans began to really get exposed to Hip Hop culture. While rap music started being broadcast from Southern Florida in the late 1980s, it was in the 1990s—during the Special Period—when this culture and music began to take hold with youth on the island.

If one were to listen to this music from the late 1980s and early 1990s, known as the "Golden Age of Hip Hop," what is clear is that the music was the pulse of oppressed Black and Latin@ youth, that the rhythms and the lyrics expressed the frustration and anger of youth living under the reactionary Reagan regime.

If the musical explosion that emanated from the South Bronx in the late 1970s was a manifestation of "a dream deferred," then the evolution of the music to what it became in the late 1980s and early 1990s can best be described as the chain reaction in urban centers across the U.S.

Though Cuban youth may not have fully understood each and every word, the angry sentiment towards oppression is easily translated.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was felt hardest by underdeveloped nations. The Soviet Union, even with its many internal contradictions, was the buffer that held U.S. imperialism at bay and was supportive of liberation movements around the world.

The fact that Cuba was undergoing such a crisis as the Special Period, and that Hip Hop culture, rap music and its energy and break dancing, caught on during this time symbolizes the difficulty of the times and the draw of the culture.

*The writer is a leader of FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—youth group and was a member of its delegation that traveled to Cuba in July.*

## New York unionists meet to mobilize against Iraq war

Brenda Stokely made a strong appeal to unionists gathered at the AFSCME District Council 37 building in downtown Manhattan on Sept. 18 to go to their unions and community organizations and mobilize against the continued occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan to end the horrors inflicted on the peoples of those countries. Stokely is a former president of DC 1707 in New York and currently a leader of NYC Solidarity Committee for Katrina/Rita Evacuees.

Speakers included Walter Sinche, a leader of the May 1st Immigrant Rights Coalition in New York representatives of the Troops Out Now Coalition, and other trade unionists from the region. Former Local 375 Labor and Political Activities Chair Mike Gimbel organized and chaired the meeting, which pledged support for the Sept. 29 mobilization in Washington.

—Report and photos by John Catalinotto



Walter Sinche, Mike Gimbel and Brenda Stokely.





# Anti-gay, anti-trans laws rooted in class rule

By Leslie Feinberg

In today's capitalist citadels, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans mass political movements have overturned many oppressive laws against same-sexuality and cross-dressing. The imperialist ruling classes would be relieved if these movements would now redirect their collective ire against laws still on the books in today's former colonies and neocolonies.

What the official imperial histories have all but obscured, however, is that these same colonial and imperialist powers were the ones that imposed laws against same-sexuality and narrowed gender/sex expression all over the world.

The policing of sexuality and gender expression—and the very existence of police as a repressive force—are rooted in the development of class society.

Reactionary laws that narrowly defined the sexes, degraded the economic and social status of women, and justified state repression and harsh penalties for same-sex love and gender diversity were instituted around the world wherever patriarchal class rule overturned matrilineal pre-class societies.

In some societies the change was slow and gradual. Labor technique over centuries became more productive, leading to the accumulation of surplus. The struggle that ensued over control of this surplus resulted in the overturning of cooperative economic and social relations.

In other cases, pre-class communal societies were conquered by the armies of patriarchal ruling classes. In those instances, matrilineal kinship lines were severed abruptly.

In both instances, the new world order served the dictates of patriarchal private ownership of the new social wealth.

Lex Scantia—one of the earliest known laws against same-sex love—was written during the early Roman Empire in the third century B.C.E. East Roman Emperor Justinian blamed homosexuality for floods and earthquakes—not unlike today's U.S. theo-cons who claim AIDS and Hurricane Katrina are the wrath of an avenging Jehovah against gay men and lesbians.

The East Roman Code of Theodosius in 390 C.E. is an example of the historical intertwining of anti-homosexuality laws with gender/sex enforcement. The edict stated that "All of those who are accustomed to condemn their own manly body, transformed into a womanly one, to

undergo sexual practices reserved for the other sex, and who have nothing different from women, will pay for this crime among the avenging flames, in front of the people."

The feudal ruling classes of Europe also developed harsh domestic laws as part of their conquest of communal peasants and consolidation of overall class rule.

Spain enforced its "Seven-Part Code" during the rule of Alfonso X of Castile from 1252-1284 C.E. The code was one of the first on the continent to call for castration and then stoning to death for "sins against nature," which included "sodomy."

France instituted a legal code in 1260 that made same-sexual acts punishable by amputation of clitoris or testicles for the first "offense," penis or breasts for the second conviction, and death by burning at the stake for the third. A decade later, under Louis IX, anal intercourse was proclaimed a capital crime mandating the sentence of burning at the stake.

In what is today Belgium, the first execution in Western Europe for a same-sex act between two men was carried out in 1292.

In one example of how the charges of "sodomy" and "heresy" were used as political weapons in an economic war, Philip IV of France called for the roundup arrests of all Knights Templar in 1308. The charges were a cover to appropriate the considerable wealth of the knights.

Queer Heritage's online timeline notes that in 1432: "Florence becomes the first European city to set up a special authority to prosecute crimes of sodomy. Called the Uffiziali di Notte (Officers of the Night), this special court prosecutes more than 10,000 men and boys over the next 70 years. About 2,000 are believed to have been convicted. Most avoid further punishment by paying fines."

In 1451 Pope Nicholas V empowered the Inquisition to hunt down and punish male sodomy. In 1476, Leonardo Da Vinci was twice anonymously reported to Florentine authorities on the charge of "sodomy," but was acquitted both times because no witnesses came forward.

King Henry VIII's government codified the "buggery" civil law in 1533 that called for death by hanging as punishment for anal intercourse. The slur "buggery" derived from the old French term "bougre" for heretic, and the Latin word "bulgaris" for Bulgaria—a country rumored to be full of heretics. By the 13th century the word

"buggery" had become synonymous with sodomy in English.

Historian Douglas Sanders explains that the legislation "cannot be understood apart from the break of the English church from Rome and the confiscation of monastic properties. It was a first step in justifying the dissolution of the monasteries and the seizure of their endowments." (fridae.com)

While charges of "sodomy" were often political in nature, these and other laws restructured sexuality and sex/gender to facilitate the new patriarchal class economic relations.

## Laboring class resistance

Persecution of same-sex love sparked some forms of resistance. For example, in the late 15th century, the campaign led by Florentine monk Savonarola against "sodomy" as an "abominable vice" was met with rebellious anger by the Compagnacci, a group of young men led by those who had been convicted of such charges.

Queer Heritage reports that in 1497: "The youths jeer and harass the preacher's followers in the streets and squares of [Florence]." In the same city 15 years later, "A large group of young men converge on the government palace to protest the current crackdown on sodomy and to demand the release of men recently arrested."

Overall, state repression and the dominance of the patriarchal family and marriage drove same-sex love underground.

However, from the Middle Ages to the 16th century, masking and cross-dressing as another sex continued to be woven into urban carnivals. These festivals had ancient pagan (pre-class rural) roots and were organized by all-male semisecret societies. Some of these enduring, defiant customs from pre-class societies in Europe can still be seen today in Halloween, Mardi Gras and Mummer traditions.

Sometimes the days of festival "misrule" authorized by the ruling feudal institutions as a social safety valve exploded into actual rebellions. In those instances, cross-gendered leaders of the festivals led the charge.

In France, for example, male-bodied "Mère Folle and her children" publicly humiliated the King's Grand Master of Streams and Forests in Burgundy in Dijon in 1576 because the latter beat his wife and destroyed the local forests. In Lyon in the 1580s, the "Lord of Misprint" used



the cover of the festival license to protest war and the high cost of bread. In 1630, another "Mère

Folle" and her infantry led an uprising against royal tax officers in Dijon.

Cross-dressed males who called themselves "Lady Skimmington" fought back against the king's enclosure of their forests in Wiltshire, England, in 1631.

Also in England, "To cite but four examples, toll gates were demolished by bands of armed men dressed in women's clothing and wigs in Somerset in 1731 and 1749, in Gloucester in 1728 and in Herefordshire in 1735."

"General Ludd's wives"—two male-bodied weavers dressed as women—led an enraged crowd of hundreds of workers to destroy the owner's looms and burn down the factory in Stockton, England, in 1812.

And when in 1725 repressive campaigners raided a Covent Garden "molly house" in an attack against "effeminate sodomites among the London poor," those inside, "many of them in drag, met the raid with determined and violent resistance."

In other historical reports, cross-dressed female leaders described as "masculine" were on the front line of rebellions.

An account from England in 1531 noted an unruly crowd of cross-dressed females, together with cross-dressed males.

In Essex, England, female-bodied "Captain" Alice Clark led a group of women and cross-dressed male weavers in an uprising over grain shortage in Essex in 1629.

A report from France stated, "The tax revolt at Montpellier in 1645 was started by women and led down the streets by a virago [masculine woman] named La Branlaire, who shouted for death for the tax collectors that were taking the bread from their children's mouths."

As the ruling classes of Europe expanded beyond their borders to colonize peoples around the world, they brought these same laws against same-sex love and gender variation with them, and enforced them even more viciously. And then, as now, the colonialists and imperialists met with fierce resistance.

*Next: European colonialism and U.S. imperialism impose laws against same-sex love in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Middle East.*

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*Un sourced accounts can be found in Feinberg's "Transgender Warriors" (Beacon).*

# 10,000 in Berlin say: German troops out of Afghanistan

By John Catalinotto

Some 10,000 people marched on Sept. 15 through downtown Berlin to the Brandenburg Gate, where they demanded that German Parliament members vote against extending the deployment of the country's troops and military aircraft to Afghanistan.

The U.S. Congress is debating the conditions for funding the U.S. occupation of Iraq. At this same time, the German Parliament is scheduled to debate renewing that country's military role in Afghanistan.

The German peace movement chose Sept. 15 as the day to hold a national protest. In the U.S., anti-war forces have been protesting in Washington since Sept. 12, in actions that will culminate in the Sept. 29 Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC) march.

The newly formed Left Party, which holds a small block of seats in the German Parliament, was among those participating in the Berlin march and rally. Their contingent held banners

demanding "No foreign intervention by the German Federal Armed Forces [Bundeswehr]" and demanding "Bundeswehr out of Afghanistan."

Attac-Germany, the German Communist Party (DKP), various pacifist and religious groups and anti-imperialist groups all supported the demonstration. There was sizable participation by people of Turkish, Kurdish and Middle Eastern origin, according to an article in the Sept. 16 edition of Junge Welt, a daily newspaper.

While the German government, led by the Social Democrats under Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder, dissented from the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2002-2003, Berlin still allowed the U.S. to use all the many Pentagon military bases in Germany to support the war and occupation. Under the chancellorship of Christian Democrat Angela Merkel, Germany now cooperates even more closely with U.S. foreign policy, playing a leading role in the NATO intervention in Afghanistan.

The German ruling class considers the military intervention the price Germany must pay to be a charter member of the imperialist powers that dominate the world. Of course it is the German working-class youth who pay that price, along with the Afghan people.

One interesting sign at the protest had two slogans: a German military helmet with the slogan, "Germany out of Afghanistan," and a U.S. Army helmet with the slogan, "U.S. out of Germany." There are still many military bases and 80,000 U.S. troops in Germany, 62 years after World War II.

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PHOTO: GABI SENFT

Berlin, Sept. 15. Sign means "Germany out of Afghanistan, USA out of Germany."



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EDITORIAL

## Recordemos a Sabra y Shatila

Hace un cuarto de siglo, el reconocido criminal de guerra israelí Ariel Sharon, comandante de las tropas israelíes que ocupaban el sur del Líbano, permitió a los fascistas libaneses masacrar cerca de 3.000 palestinos civiles de todas las edades en los campamentos de refugiados Sabra y Shatila.

Tel Aviv había llevado a cabo una invasión del Líbano en junio del 1982 con el pleno respaldo del gobierno de Ronald Reagan de los Estados Unidos. Israel continuó su guerra de agresión contra palestinos y libaneses con el respaldo del imperialismo estadounidense y los intereses del capital financiero que lo impulsaba para lograr el dominio del estratégico y rico en petróleo Oriente Medio.

Durante el verano del 1982, el ejército israelí bombardeó a Beirut sin piedad, matando a más de 20.000 personas, la mayoría civiles. En septiembre del 1982, un acuerdo de cese al fuego fue impuesto a los libaneses y palestinos que habían resistido los ataques, lo que resultó en forzar a la mayoría de las fuerzas palestinas que habían estado luchando en el Líbano a salir del país.

Las fuerzas militares de Israel rodearon los campamentos de refugiados palestinos de Sabra y Shatila en el Líbano. Bajo órdenes de Sharon, las fuerzas israelíes respaldaron la entrada de las tropas libanesas fascistas ese 15 de septiembre. Estas tropas cometieron una masacre — en realidad fue un linchamiento masivo — de civiles palestinos en los campamentos. Los asesinos eran fascistas libaneses; su apoyo físico fue suministrado por los israelíes; sus balas eran de los Estados Unidos.

El ataque de Sabra y Shatila tuvo el propósito de infundir terror. Y a pesar de eso la lucha del pueblo palestino sigue hoy en día, al igual que sigue la represión brutal del estado israelí equipado con armas nucleares.

Actualmente el activismo antiguerra se ha enfocado en el hipócrita “debate” entre Demócratas y Republicanos en el Congreso sobre un plan indefinido que gradualmente vaya a reducir el número de tropas en Irak. Pero ambos partidos en el Congreso han financiado esa guerra brutal al igual que la ocupación de Palestina.

Miles de millones de dólares para el apoyo militar y financiero, sin los cuales la ocupación de Palestina por Tel Aviv no podría durar ni un día, han sido aprobados calladamente por Demócratas y Republicanos — no importa cuál sea el partido político que representa los intereses de las grandes empresas y corporaciones en la Casa Blanca.

La lucha del pueblo palestino merece el apoyo de todo el movimiento contra la guerra, el cual puede alzarse en una sola voz clara y fuertemente — apoyo al derecho de autodeterminación de los palestinos, soberanía y el derecho a regresar a su histórica patria.

El pueblo palestino ha luchado por estos derechos por más de medio siglo, y ahora, mientras se conmemora Sabra y Shatila, ese pueblo continúa esa lucha. ¡Que viva Palestina! □

## Lo que hay detrás de la crisis de los servicios de salud: hambre por ganancias

Por G. Dunkel

La mayoría de los reportes en la prensa sobre la crisis que sufre el sistema de seguros de salud en Estados Unidos y la lucha por expandir el Programa Estatal de Seguros para la Salud de los Niños, (SCHIP por sus siglas en inglés), ignoran el costo humano. Según el departamento del censo, unas 47 millones de personas no tienen seguro de salud y por lo tanto se enferman más, sufren más y algunas veces mueren innecesariamente por no tener acceso al sistema de salud.

Aún para muchos que tiene seguro, los co-pagos—el pago compartido—pueden ser tan altos que muchos se ven forzados a abandonar el servicio. Las compañías de seguro también usan cientos de razones o excusas para negar una petición, desde denominando tal condición como “previa” o designando un tratamiento como algo “experimental” o “fuera de la red.” Las compañías muchas veces han negado peticiones legítimas de manera rutinaria, en espera a que la persona asegurada no insista en su petición.

Aquellas con problemas de salud no son los únicos que sufren por falta de seguro de salud. Sus familiares y la sociedad entera pierde lo que estos individuos podrían contribuir.

Sin seguros para la salud, alguien cuya condición podría ser tratada a bajo costo en la oficina del médico, muchas veces tienen que acudir a una sala de emergencia donde el costo es mucho mayor. Un derrame cerebral—causado por no haberse tratado la presión alta—se pudo haber evitado si la persona hubiese tenido acceso a un medicamento relativamente barato para la presión alta. Sin embargo, el costo del cuidado de las personas que han sufrido un derrame puede ser de cientos de miles de dólares, un gasto que tendrá que ser absorbido por una beneficencia.

El seguro de salud fue ofrecido en Estados Unidos durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial como beneficio para atraer trabajadores, cuando los

empresarios no podían ofrecer salarios más altos. El seguro de salud se convirtió en beneficio de muchos trabajos cuando el Departamento del Tesoro (IRA, siglas en inglés), denominó a comienzos de los años cincuenta, que el costo no podría ser contado como ingreso y por lo tanto no se le cargaría ningún impuesto.

Más de \$2 millones de millones de dólares se gastan en el cuidado de la salud anualmente en los Estados Unidos o el 16% del Producto Interno Bruto de los Estados Unidos. El Commonwealth Fund dice que, “El sistema de salud de los Estados Unidos es el más caro del mundo, pero análisis comparativos muestran una y otra vez que en Estados Unidos su funcionamiento no es tan bueno como en otros países.”

El reporte estudió seis países—Australia, Canadá, Alemania, Nueva Zelanda, el Reino Unido y Estados Unidos, y afirma que Estados Unidos está en el último lugar. Y continúa, “lo más perturbador es que Estados Unidos no logra tener mejores resultados que los otros países y... que Estados Unidos es el peor en relación al acceso, seguridad de pacientes, eficiencia e igualdad.”

El reporte del Fondo Commonwealth del 2007 se puede encontrar en [commonwealthfund.org](http://commonwealthfund.org) poniendo en el buscador “Mirror, Mirror”.

La población de los EEUU gasta \$6.100 al año por persona en el cuidado de la salud. En Canadá, el país con el segundo sistema más costoso de los seis estudiados, la cifra es de \$3.100. La gente de EEUU, sin embargo, obtiene resultados miserables. La pregunta es, entonces, ¿por qué EEUU mantiene ese sistema?

El debate sobre el programa SCHIP da una pista sobre la respuesta a esta pregunta. SCHIP proporciona seguro médico a los niños de familias cuyos ingresos son demasiado altos para calificar para Medicaid, pero demasiado bajos para poder comprar un seguro de salud o cobertura familiar de su empleo, la cual puede costar hasta \$350 al mes. Medicaid sólo cubre a las familias extremadamente pobres.

La cifra de niños sin seguro

médico está aumentando. El Senado y la Cámara de Representantes aprobaron propuestas de ley extendiendo la cobertura de SCHIP y permitiendo a los estados incluir a familias cuyos ingresos son hasta más de un 450 por ciento que el nivel de pobreza; es decir, que familias con ingresos anuales de \$82.000 y menos, califican.

La reacción de la Casa Blanca fue brutalmente franca y a la vez hostil a la clase trabajadora: “Esta propuesta de ley esencialmente extiende un beneficio de asistencia social a los hogares de la clase media”, declaró la Oficina de Manejo y Presupuesto de la Casa Blanca. (Washington Times, el 4 de septiembre) El Presidente George W. Bush ha expresado repetidamente su intención de vetar cualquier propuesta de ley SCHIP basada en las provisiones de la Cámara de Representantes o del Senado porque “claramente favorece el cuidado de la salud gubernamental sobre los seguros de salud privados”.

Cuando estuvo claro que el Congreso iba a superar tal veto, la Casa Blanca intentó otra senda. Bush estableció reglas que tendrían el efecto de imposibilitar a los estados expandir su cobertura.

Básicamente lo que la Casa Blanca ha hecho es preservar las ganancias que fluyen a las empresas privadas de seguro médico. La administración de Bush ignoró incluso el malgasto de fondos gubernamentales por estas compañías que proporcionan seguros de salud. Según un reporte congressional, a las “empresas privadas de seguro que participan en Medicare les ha sido permitido quedarse con decenas de millones de dólares que debían haber devuelto a los consumidores; y la administración de Bush no hizo una auditoría debida a las compañías, ni el intento de recuperar los pagos hechos erróneamente”. (New York Times, 9 de septiembre.)

Es la ambición capitalista por ganancias, ganancias enormes producto de los \$2 millones de millones gastados anualmente en el cuidado de la salud, que mantiene al sistema del cuidado de salud en los EEUU costoso e inadecuado. □

## Marcha en Washington, D.C. y Los Angeles

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