

Add climate havoc to war crimes Pentagon's role in global catastrophe

By Sara Flounders

In evaluating the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen — with more than 15,000 participants from 192 countries, including more than 100 heads of state, as well as 100,000 demonstrators in the streets — it is important to ask: How is it possible that the worst polluter of carbon dioxide and other toxic emissions on the planet is not a focus of any conference discussion or proposed restrictions?

By every measure, the Pentagon is the largest institutional user of petroleum products and energy in general. Yet the Pentagon has a blanket exemption in all international climate agreements.

The Pentagon wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; its secret operations in Pakistan; its equipment on more than 1,000 U.S. bases around the world; its 6,000 facilities in the U.S.; all NATO operations; its aircraft carriers, jet aircraft, weapons testing, training and sales will not be counted against U.S. greenhouse gas limits or included in any count.

The Feb. 17, 2007, Energy Bulletin detailed the oil consumption just for the Pentagon's aircraft, ships, ground vehicles and facilities that made it the single-largest oil consumer in the world. At the time, the U.S. Navy had 285 combat and support ships and around 4,000 operational aircraft. The U.S. Army had 28,000 armored vehicles, 140,000 High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles, more than 4,000 combat helicopters, several hundred fixed-wing aircraft and 187,493 fleet vehicles. Except for 80 nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers, which spread radioactive pollution, all their other vehicles run on oil.

Even according to rankings in the 2006 CIA World Factbook, only 35 countries (out of 210 in the world) consume more oil per day than the Pentagon.

The U.S. military officially uses 320,000 barrels of oil a day. However, this total does not include fuel consumed by contractors or fuel consumed in leased and privatized facilities. Nor does it in-



COP 15 PHOTOS: KIT AASTRUP

clude the enormous energy and resources used to produce and maintain their death-dealing equipment or the bombs, grenades or missiles they fire.

Steve Kretzmann, director of Oil Change International, reports: "The Iraq war was responsible for at least 141 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMT-CO₂e) from March 2003 through December 2007. ... The war emits more than 60 percent of all countries. ... This information is not readily available ... because military emissions abroad are exempt from national reporting requirements under U.S. law and the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change." (www.naomiklein.org, Dec. 10) Most scientists blame carbon dioxide emissions for greenhouse gases and climate change.

Bryan Farrell in his new book, "The Green Zone: The Environmental Costs of Militarism," says that "the greatest single assault on the environment, on all of us around the globe, comes from one agency ... the Armed Forces of the United States."

Just how did the Pentagon come to be exempt from climate agreements? At the time of the Kyoto Accords negotiations, the U.S. demanded as a provision of signing that all of its military operations worldwide and all operations it participates in with the U.N. and/or NATO be completely exempted from measurement

or reductions.

After securing this gigantic concession, the Bush administration then refused to sign the accords.

In a May 18, 1998, article entitled "National security and military policy issues involved in the Kyoto treaty," Dr. Jeffrey Salmon described the Pentagon's position. He quotes then-Secretary of Defense William Cohen's 1997 annual report to Congress: "DoD strongly recommends that the United States insist on a national security provision in the climate change Protocol now being negotiated." (www.marshall.org)

According to Salmon, this national security provision was put forth in a draft calling for "complete military exemption from greenhouse gas emissions limits. The draft includes multilateral operations such as NATO- and U.N.-sanctioned activities, but it also includes actions related very broadly to national security, which would appear to comprehend all forms of unilateral military actions and training for such actions."

Continued on page 6



The Copenhagen climate change summit attracted social activists from all over.

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Grand theft auto

'Bosses ran away with our jobs, wages'

Excerpts from a talk given by Martha Grevatt of Cleveland at the WWP National Conference, Nov. 14. View this entire talk at www.workers.tv.

Last spring union workers at Ford, General Motors and Chrysler were asked — in the middle of a contract — to make major concessions. What took decades of struggle to win — supplemental unemployment benefits, cost of living allowance, lifetime health benefits, and even the eight-hour day — were lost or compromised. But, we were told, the survival of the industry was at stake.

The concessions, first demanded by the Treasury under Bush as a condition of Troubled Asset Relief Program loans, were accepted at Ford. When GM and Chrysler sought additional federal aid, the Treasury — directed to do so by the vampire banks — demanded even more blood: more job cuts, a six-year, \$14-an-hour wage freeze for new hires, and a six-year no-strike pledge.

On April 29 Chrysler workers reluctantly agreed. The only alternative, we were told, would be even worse — bankruptcy. That was the first double-cross. But nothing was said about plant closings. We were told that specific language in the contract modifications would keep our plant in Twinsburg, Ohio, open.

On May 1 Chrysler announced in bankruptcy court that they would close eight plants, including ours. Double-cross number two! We held militant rallies, but by August it was clear that the new company, led by Fiat, was going ahead with the closing. So for months my union sisters and brothers have wrestled with tough choices: to retire early with a greatly reduced pension, to take a lump sum and quit a good job in the middle of an economic catastrophe, or to follow their work to Detroit — uprooting their families or moving away from loved ones to hold onto that scarce and prized possession: a job with UAW wages and benefits.

The transfers from closed plants to plants facing their own layoff crises are inherently divisive and have led to fist fights and vandalized cars. Now this week we were informed that our transfer numbers have been cut. Over 100 skilled tradeswomen and tradesmen thought they had a job waiting for them in Michigan, but those jobs will go to laid-off workers in Detroit.

In factory slang, they're SOL — "shit outta luck." The UAW International was in the unenviable position of deciding who would get the jobs. But shouldn't they be asking the obvious question: Why can't everyone have a job? Thirty of the jobs in contention are for robotics technicians.

Wasn't the promise of high tech that if you just got the right skills, you'd get a good job, you'd be set for life?

Marxism has a way of explaining the unexplainable. In "Wage-Labor and Capital," Marx wrote: "The growth, accumulation, and concentration of capital bring in their train an ever more detailed subdivision of labor, an ever greater improvement of old machines, and a constant application of new machines. ... The greater division of labor enables one laborer to accomplish the work of five, 10, or 20 laborers; it therefore increases competition among the laborers fivefold, tenfold, or twentyfold. ... The special skill of the laborer

becomes worthless.

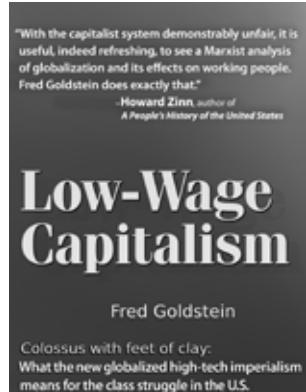
"An exception to the law has been adduced, namely, the workers who are employed in the manufacture of machinery itself ... and the workers employed in this branch of industry are skilled, even educated, workers. ...

Since the year 1840, this assertion, which even before that date was only half-true, has lost all semblance of truth; for the most diverse machines are now applied to the manufacture of the machines themselves." And then unemployment rises among all sectors of the working class.

Sam Marcy in "High Tech, Low Pay" and Fred Goldstein in "Low-Wage Capitalism" brought Marx's insight up to date showing how the role of new technology in capitalist production is still to displace workers, regardless of skill.

The labor officialdom has misled the working class too long. Labor-management cooperation was flawed from the start. Now, as the predatory attacks from the ruling class continue relentlessly, the "team" concept has no material basis whatsoever. Yet its ideological residue dictates the strategy of the labor bureaucracy. When Ford wanted more concessions, along the lines of GM and Chrysler, the UAW International leaders were their chief advocates. But this time, the rank and file rejected the givebacks almost three-to-one! They said, "We're keeping the right to strike," and they're discussing a possible strike at a truck plant in Claycomo, Mich., over job cuts and abusive discipline. It's a start!

It's past time to revive the class struggle. The Marxists who led the UAW in the 1930s understood the irreconcilable contradiction between labor and capital. They knew that the only way forward was through class solidarity. They reached out to the workers — to Black workers, women and immigrants. And in 1936 in Flint, Mich., a meeting was held at the Bulgarian Hall to form a united front of all the working class parties to take on GM. On Dec. 30 the workers in the plants sat down, and they held the plants for 44 days and brought General Motors to its knees. □



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WORKERS WORLD

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Activists arrested in Baltimore

Movement mobilizes to reverse political frameups

By John Catalinotto

Support arrived quickly for long-time Baltimore community activists Sharon Black-Ceci and Steven Ceci, who were arrested and dragged from their home by cops on Dec. 9. As of Dec. 14 more than 1,000 people had sent in messages or signed a petition demanding their release from all charges, an inquiry into police surveillance of Baltimore progressives and that police stop all attacks on movement activists.

Nevertheless, the false charges remain in force and police have continued to harass the activists, entering their home Dec. 11 for a third time and handcuffing Steven Ceci while attempting to interrogate him.

Starting in mid-November, the Baltimore police, notorious for their abuse of power in Baltimore's large African-American community, began their intense harassment of the activists.

On Nov. 14, while Sharon Black-Ceci and her son Steven Ceci were attending a conference in New York City, Baltimore police broke down the door of their Baltimore home. The cops' excuse was an alleged report — rather mysterious and without basis — that heroin was being sold from their residence. A roommate, Patrick Allen — who was present at the time of the police break-in — was arrested. The police damaged the home without apparent reason outside of harassment.

Then on Dec. 9, the cops came again in the morning and dragged the two from their home. They were charged with possession of marijuana with intent to distribute, a felony, and possession of marijuana, a misdemeanor, and are scheduled to appear in court Jan. 8.

The two are long-time leaders in the an-

ti-racist and poor people's rights struggle. A year ago, the Baltimore ACLU revealed that the Baltimore All-Peoples Congress, the organization that Black-Ceci has led for more than a quarter of a century, was named as one of four political groups in Baltimore that the Maryland State Police had been spying on.

Steven Ceci has been active recently supporting the struggles of Baltimore high school students for a better education and participating in their demonstrations.

What makes the arrests even more suspicious is that the two were planning to hold a public event that very night, Dec. 9, as a political response to the police attack on their home in mid-November. Their supporters turned that event into a news conference and emergency rally to free the activists.

Sharon Black-Ceci told Workers World that all the charges against them were baseless. "This is a serious attack on the rights of people to organize. And it is taking place after people have lost jobs, lost their homes, and need to organize more than ever. We don't consider this just an attack on us but on all activists and organizations that are fighting for a society based on social and economic justice and peace."

She pointed out the record of the Baltimore police. "This attack was a horrible abuse of police power. But people should know that it is standard operating procedure for the Baltimore police to abuse their powers as they carry out a virtual war against the African-American community. They break into homes, getting warrants on the basis of mysterious informants. They arrest people from the community and hold them for investigation, usually for 72 hours, even when they don't bring any charges.

"The only reason we were released without bail Dec. 10, after a day, is that we had supporters who started mobilizing publicity and legal work," she added. "But, as absurd and false as the charges are, we have to take them seriously, especially as the police have kept up the harassment. They again invaded our home on Dec. 11."

Black-Ceci wouldn't speculate as to why the police chose this time to make the attack. "That's what we could find out if we win the demand for an inquiry," she said. "All I can do is think over what I've been working on recently. I was the labor coordinator for the Bail Out the People Movement (BOPM) Jobs March in Pittsburgh protesting at the G-20 last September. We certainly think this is a vitally necessary movement with tremendous potential to mobilize the 30 million unemployed and underemployed people."

She said she wanted to thank BOPM and all the people who have signed the petition or sent emails supporting her

and the others charged in the case.

"Clarence Thomas of the ILWU in California, Brenda Stokely of the Million Worker March, New York Teamster Chris Silvera, Charles Jenkins of the Transport Workers Union in New York, SEIU activist Rosie Martinez in Los Angeles — these are a few of the many unionists and others I want to thank for signing and spreading the petition demanding all charges be dropped against me, Steven and Patrick Allen. We have worked together fighting for jobs and workers' rights and they understand the need for solidarity. Our support is also from community and immigrant groups and it has come in internationally and I want to thank them all."

"We promise to not only carry out a fight to keep our freedom and to stop repression of political activists, but to expose the police abuse of power in the oppressed communities and to strengthen the struggle against that abuse."

Look for the petition at bailoutpeople.org.

'Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!'



PHOTO: KELLY VALDEZ

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

On Dec. 9, supporters of political journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal marked the 28th year of his incarceration on Pennsylvania's death row, more determined than ever to fight for his exoneration.

At 4 p.m. a demonstration was held in front of the regional governor's office on South Broad Street. Protesters held "Honk for Mumia" signs and blew whistles on the state's protracted campaign to deny justice to an innocent man. The demonstration and whistle blowing then moved to District Attorney Lynne Abraham's office near the Philadelphia City Hall.

Later in the evening, an organizing meeting scheduled at the American Friends Center was expanded to include a special tribute to Veronica Jones, who died on Dec. 8.

On Dec. 15, 1981, Jones, a sex worker who was in the area where Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner was shot in the early morning hours of Dec. 9, 1981, told police she had seen two men running away from the crime scene before police arrived. Later, facing charges that could have meant 10 years in prison and the loss of her children, Jones was pressured

into recanting her eyewitness account, even denying making the original statement, after police visited her in jail.

But called to testify at Abu-Jamal's Post Conviction Relief Act hearing before Judge Albert Sabo in 1996, Jones made a courageous decision. She took the stand and explained how she had been coerced by police threats to lie about what she had seen that fateful night 15 years earlier. Whatever the consequences, she had come to the hearing to set the record straight. Her testimony was not welcomed by the racist judge. It further discredited the 1982 testimony of the District Attorney's star witness Cynthia White. The DA responded by announcing that Jones would be arrested on an outstanding warrant for writing a bad check. Jones refused to back down, declaring, "This is not going to change my testimony!"

The organizing meeting also took up plans to expand a campaign to demand an investigation into violations of Abu-Jamal's civil rights during his 28-year legal ordeal, and to gather more signers on petitions to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder for a Justice Department investigation. Plans for a special Black History Month tribute to Abu-Jamal in February 2010 were also announced. □

NYC tribute to Fred Hampton



Clockwise above:
Nana Soul, Larry Holmes,
Naomi Cohen and Larry
Hales.



New York — Workers World Party and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) held a public forum Dec. 11 at the Solidarity Center here in a tribute to martyred Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton. Hampton, along with BPP member Mark Clark, was brutally assassinated on Dec. 4, 1969, by Chicago police in collaboration with the FBI's counter intelligence program, known as COINTELPRO.

At the time Hampton was killed in his bed in a hail of police bullets, he was only 21 while Clark was 22. Hampton personified the heroism of the BPP, which defended the right of all oppressed peoples to armed self-defense against capitalist state repression at home and abroad.

— Monica Moorehead

Youth lead marches for jobs, not war

RALEIGH

Youth demand jobs program

By Dante Strobino
Raleigh, N.C.

Several dozen unemployed youth rallied here on Dec. 4 at the Employment Security Commission headquarters, demanding "A jobs program at a living wage, not war and prisons!"

Organized by Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) and Black Workers for Justice youth, the protest was calling for the state government to put pressure on Washington to create a comprehensive jobs program that would directly employ youth. The demand centered around jobs that could help young workers acquire new skills, rather than prepare them for dead-end jobs at fast-food restaurants or elsewhere in the service industry. For many of the youth, it was their first time at any political rally.

"Many youth in the area have a great deal of unused potential, but due to a lack of resources the great potential becomes internalized and unleashed in other ways — not so productive ways," stated Alicia Sydney, a single mother living in Walnut Terrace public housing in Raleigh. "This is why I am so grateful for the FIST organization, because it allowed me to be a part of something positive that brings hope for the future. There is no doubt that our youth are advancing beyond the foundations laid out so many years ago and the time has come for our society to make accommodations to nurture our growing potential."

Angelica Horton, who graduated from Athens High School last year and is currently working less than 10 hours per

week at Dairy Queen for minimum wage, said, "It was my first rally and I think it is important for young people to stand up and fight for our futures, for better jobs, because protesting shows and tells the truth."

Earlier that morning the latest unemployment statistics were released indicating that jobs continue to be lost. Jobs have been lost for 22 months in a row, the longest streak since the government started keeping these statistics in 1939. In North Carolina, the county-by-county unemployment figures show that the number of people out of work has gone up in every county, with some rural counties topping 15 percent. For youth of color, the numbers can be three times higher and an alarming number end up in prison.

Outrage at the rally also focused on the recent troop surge in Afghanistan, which will cost an additional \$50 billion, at the same time that the quality of education is declining.

"Young people we've talked to are excited to organize and fight for jobs, to fight for their futures, for a real jobs program which gives us opportunities to grow and develop," stated FIST organizer Vidya Sankar. "We definitely made it very clear that we won't allow the bosses and warmongers to destroy our generation and that we will fight." □



WW PHOTO: RALEIGH FIST

LOS ANGELES

Taking it to the banks

Demanding relief from the jobs crisis and record foreclosures, activists in Los Angeles led a militant trail of protest on Saturday, Dec. 12, from a state park to the streets to inside Bank of America. They

chanted, "Stop foreclosing on the jobless" and "Bankers of America, shame on you — People need jobs and housing too."

Pouring rain did not discourage the noontime demonstration at Pershing Square Park, initiated by the Bail Out the People Movement. At least 20 protesters remained after the heaviest showers came down. They were determined to make their messages heard by documented and undocumented workers and residents passing through this downtown park, which is surrounded by tall buildings.

"We are in a state of emergency, and whether that emergency is natural or economic, the state and local governments of this country are required by law to make sure that people are safe and that children and families have a roof over their heads. With one out of five people in California either unemployed or underemployed, the government must create a real jobs program now," said BOPM organizer Maggie Vascassenno.

The march ended up at Bank of America Plaza, where the corporate offices of Mellon Bank, Citibank, Wells Fargo and Chase are located. Speakers at the rally asserted that jobs and housing are human rights, which require that the government provide not only jobs or income now but also the education needed to get a job.

Participants and organizations at the rally included an organizer for Katrina survivors, Peace Action West, Al-Awda Right to Return Coalition, International Action Center, Bail Out the People Movement and Workers World Party. Channel 5 television news interviewed one of the activists there.

— John Parker



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH



WW PHOTO: CALEB T. MAUPIN

rassment spoke out; and outside a post office slated for closing. Speakers, signs and the lead banner also addressed the demand for "Money for jobs, not wars and bank bailouts."

The march had a great deal of community support. Endorsers included the local chapter of the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense; Family Connection Center; Black on Black Crime, Inc.;

Oppressed Peoples Nation; Survivors/Victims of Tragedy, Inc.; Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, Division 3, Local 436; Northeast Ohio Anti-War Coalition; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; Lucasville Uprising Freedom Network; Stop Targeting Ohio's Poor; and the local chapter of the Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign.

— Martha Grevatt

CLEVELAND

'Jobs, not jails!'

The Cleveland Bail Out the People Movement chapter held its first March for Jobs on Dec. 12. The multinational march made its way through the Collinwood neighborhood in the city's predominantly African-American east side, drawing honks and cheers with chants such as "J-O-B — Not the penitentiary!" BOPM marched in Collinwood because its numerous boarded-up houses and abandoned factories symbolize the jobs crisis. Marchers stopped at Collinwood High School, where they emphasized that youth have a right to an education and a job; at the Fifth District police station, where victims of police brutality and ha-

rrassment spoke out; and outside a post office slated for closing. Speakers, signs and the lead banner also addressed the demand for "Money for jobs, not wars and bank bailouts."

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A student at Stony Brook SUNY recently told this writer: "I am working part time — well, 37 and a half hours a week. I have no time to do the reading. I had hoped to cut my hours, but my dad is in the construction industry, so he couldn't help out," she added. "I am thinking of dropping out. Stony Brook's tuition went up a thousand dollars this year."

Students face unemployment, debt

College students are leaving because it is just too hard to support themselves and go to school at the same time. Sixty-two percent of students are entirely responsible for paying for their college educations. (publicagenda.org)

Unemployment among youth is 19.1 percent, while joblessness for 16- to

24-year-old Black men has reached Great Depression-like proportions — 34.5 percent in October, more than three times the rate for the general U.S. population. (Washington Post, Nov. 23)

College costs have increased by more than 400 percent in the last 25 years, while the median family income has increased less than 150 percent. (National Center for Public Policy and Education)

Today, two-thirds of college students borrow to pay for college. Their average debt load is \$23,186 by the time they finish. College graduates are delaying marriage, children and home buying because of their debts. (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 4) Those who drop out with debt face low wages or unemployment but must still make loan payments.

Budget cuts hurt public education

Youth cannot look to federal, state or local government to solve this crisis. As of a year ago, at least 16 states had cut funding for kindergarten to 12th grade and early education; reduced access to child care and early education; and over 21 states had implemented or proposed cuts to public colleges and universities. Since then, it has only gotten worse.

Public colleges teach 70 percent of college students in the U.S. Student enrollment has increased during the current recession, but states have responded by canceling classes, raising tuition, crowding courses, ending extracurricular activities and firing staff.

Since July the states have lost \$4 billion
Continued on page 11

By Heather Cottin
Freeport, N.Y.

The myth of upward mobility through education is the basis of the so-called "American Dream." But college education has become a financial Mount Everest that the majority of the working class cannot climb.

A recent report indicates that more than 45 percent of four-year college students are working more than 20 hours per week. In community colleges 60 percent work more than 20 hours a week, with one-quarter of these full-time students actually working more than 35 hours a week. (U.S. Department of Education, 2007-2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study)

Students resist rising costs and cutbacks

Activists say, 'No fracking way!'

By Betsey Piette

Across New York state and Pennsylvania dozens of environmental activist groups are working to ban or limit the practice of hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking."

Fracking involves injecting millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals at high pressure down and across horizontally drilled wells as far as 10,000 feet below the surface. The pressure causes the release of natural gas. Millions of gallons of chemical-laden wastewater are created in the process.

Since 2008, more than 4,000 gas wells that use fracking have been drilled in Pennsylvania. There are more than 13,680 in New York state. The industry has grown by paying impoverished, rural northern Appalachian landowners for access to their land.

Many of the 260 chemicals suspected to be in the mix are known carcinogens and endocrine disrupters. Chemicals have been shown to spread 30 miles underground.

In Dimrock, Pa., 30 people filed a lawsuit against Cabot Oil & Gas in November after water wells exploded and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection cited the company for several spills of fuel and drilling fluids. The spills are suspected to have caused a major fish kill.

In October the New York Department of Environmental Conservation's first public review of natural gas drilling drew more than 300 people in rural Sullivan County. Speakers at a raucous hearing in New York City on Nov. 10 called for a statewide ban of drilling in the city's upstate watershed, which supplies drinking water to 9 million city residents.

Green Guerrillas' Youth Media Tech Collective consists of youth of color ages 15 through 19, who plan to create an online movie to expose the issues of natural gas exploitation. They participated in the DEC's last public hearing in Corning, N.Y., as well as a local government hearing in Ithaca. Workers World spoke with members of the collective about their activities.

WW: Who are the Green Guerrillas?

GG: Our collective is an intergenerational crew of media makers which values young people's creative insights and capacities to transform their reality as leaders and participants for change. As low-income youth of color, Green Guerrillas redefine sustainability in terms that make sense to us.

We make our own media, from posters to movies; do outreach at community events; and analyze important social, political, economic and environmental issues that affect our lives. We connect the dots between the same ideological approaches that criminalize immigrant communities and pollute the air, water and soil.

WW: How did you become aware of fracking?

GG: Adult members of Green Guerrillas first encountered the landmen who have been scouring the Southern Tier region of New York state, offering landowners money in exchange for the mineral rights to the gas beneath their land. As we spent the summer of 2009 exploring our natural environment, in anticipation of making our fourth film, we couldn't ignore this issue.

At the end of September, the New York state government announced that its Department of Environmental Conservation had completed a draft study to regulate unconventional gas drilling and would begin issuing drilling permits once the draft was finalized after a 60-day public comment period. We joined with other



Members of Ithaca's Green Guerrilla collective.

concerned activists nationwide to raise awareness of the problems associated with hydrofracking.

WW: What kind of problems have people confronted and how extensive are they?

GG: Problems include contaminated well water; methane contamination, causing water to become flammable; and drilling rigs erected within 200 feet of peoples' homes. Property values have plummeted, with people unable to stay on their land yet unable to sell because it was too toxic.

Health problems, including skin rashes and neurological disorders, and unmanageable medical bills associated with treatment for illnesses likely to have been caused by exposure to hydrofracking chemicals are also problems. Because of the 2005 energy bill, chemicals in hydrofracking fluids need not be disclosed.

There has been no accountability for gas leaks or chemical spills and no plan for waste water treatment. There is a continued denial by gas companies that their operations are negatively impacting the areas.

WW: What was your experience at the public hearings?

GG: We traveled to Corning for the last DEC public hearing in our veggie-diesel bus. When we arrived, 98 speakers were ahead of us. There were around 500 people in attendance. We joined in a protest outside the building.

Green Guerrillas were first in line for the hearing in Ithaca the following day, where nearly 1,000 people gathered after a community rally. We offered a short skit to document the accounts of those who have been negatively impacted by fracking. All of the comments were recorded and forwarded to the DEC.

WW: Where do efforts stand now?

GG: Initially the DEC offered four public hearings, with a public comment period that was to end on Nov. 30. After a large public push for a six-month comment period, the DEC later extended it to Dec. 31.

There are multiple calls for Gov. Patterson to ban drilling statewide. Ithaca-based Toxics Targeting has issued a letter

requesting that Patterson withdraw approval of any additional permits based on 270 documented oil and gas spills in New York that have yet to be cleaned up. More than 6,500 organizations and concerned people have signed the letter. (www.toxicstargeting.com)

WW: What's next?

GG: We have been working with our local action network through our online presence: www.changents.com/green-guerrillas and www.guerrillagriots.wordpress.com. We created a new poster board on what the Marcellus Shale is, how hydraulic fracturing works and what people have experienced, plus why natural gas exploitation is not a transition from coal to a renewable future.

We recently became finalists in Free Range Studio's Youtopia contest to get technical assistance with creating an online movie to expose the hydrofracking that affects 31 states. We plan to continue to raise awareness at a prisoner justice conference in Albany in March, and at the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit in June. □

Working people's blood for sale—Prices lower than ever!

By Caleb T. Maupin

The United States is one of a small number of countries that allow the sale of human blood plasma for profits. Across the country, countless workers are selling the yellowish substance found in their blood to the pharmaceutical giants of Wall Street.

Just as automobile capitalists seek to drive down the wages of U.S. autoworkers by forcing them to compete with workers in other parts of the world, now the blood profiteers of the pharmaceutical industry have moved their area of exploitation to near the Mexico-U.S. border, where workers are transported from Mexico to sell their plasma.

Esmeralda Delgado is one of these workers. She makes a mere \$60 a week for having large amounts of her blood removed, then stripped of plasma and pumped back into her veins. It returns to her body chilled from having been filtered. (New York Times, Dec. 6)

As Delgado sits on a bed at a plasma collection facility in Eagle Pass, Texas, letting her blood slowly fill up a bag, she and her fellow workers/donors can look up at a banner that reads, "Save Lives. Earn Money. Feel Good."

To Delgado and her fellow immigrant workers, "feeling good" probably means not starving to death, not being evicted

from their homes, not seeing their children go to work as child laborers, and the rest of the "perks" derived from selling a natural human substance for the profit of corporate capitalists.

And the corporations get to "feel good" with the profits they make as part of a \$12 billion business. The compensation that the workers/donors receive, officially for their "time" and not their blood plasma, is often a mere 10 percent of the value of the products manufactured from this essential part of human anatomy.

It is doubtful that workers like Delgado can afford to receive health care from the medical corporations that happily suck out their blood on a weekly basis. However, corporations that buy human plasma from desperate workers also have other means of making profits. Baxter International, for example, was recently prosecuted for jacking up prices for intravenous solutions. Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway said the company "published inflated average prices for its IV solutions, at times exceeding 1,300 percent more than the real price, which caused Kentucky Medicaid to pay substantially more than it should have." The company reached a \$2 million settlement with the state in July. (Business First of Louisville, July 2)

The plasma center in Eagle Pass, near the Mexican border, owned by Talecris

Biotherapeutics — a wing of Cerberus and employer of former Vice President Dan Quayle — recently cut the compensation for its worker/donors from \$80 to \$60. More working people are desperate for money, so, like "the reserve army of labor" that forces down wages, a reserve army of plasma donors is created as jobs fade away, homelessness soars and desperation becomes part of everyday life in the age of crumbling capitalism.

At least 15 plasma centers are located in border cities in Texas and Arizona. Talecris' four newest plasma centers have also been built along the U.S./Mexico border, where workers are willing to sell their blood plasma at much lower costs.

Karl Marx long ago identified the proletariat, or working class, as a group of people with "nothing to sell but their labor power." It seems now that jobs are fading away and workers are suffering horribly, the capitalists can still pull more profits out of the misery and toil of those they oppress. It seems that human blood, like all else within the capitalist system, is not only a commodity, but one that can cheapen and diminish in value, as the profits of the rich soar ever higher.

The Black revolutionary Malcolm X seems to have been literally correct when he said, "Show me a capitalist. I'll show you a bloodsucker." □

Imperialism, climate change

Africa bloc leads walkout over suppression

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

African countries at the COP-15 climate change summit in Copenhagen led a walkout for several hours on Dec. 14 to protest the efforts of the United States, Britain and other imperialist countries and their allies to sidestep responsibility for the worsening impact of carbon dioxide emissions. The increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has caused climate change that threatens the total collapse of agricultural production on the African continent.

The walkout could have derailed the entire conference. Heads of state from 120 countries were scheduled to arrive in Copenhagen within a few days.

Developing nations in Asia and Latin America, along with the People's Republic of China, joined the African states in accusing the summit's Danish president of refusing to allow discussion on the major issues that affect the overwhelming majority of people on the planet.

Developing countries refused to participate in the working groups scheduled to begin on Dec. 14, the second week of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The African bloc, along with the Group of 77 developing countries, is demanding universal adherence to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which sets goals for emission standards to be reduced beyond 2012.

These emissions result from the burning of oil, gas and coal. Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere traps solar heat, causing a rise in the earth's temperature. Atmospheric scientists have predicted that, if no serious actions are taken over the next decade, the planet will warm significantly and there will be an escalation of drought, floods and storms, along with rising sea

levels, that will bring famine to billions of people throughout the world.

A new United Nations environmental report has indicated that approximately 60 million people have suffered the effects of 245 natural disasters this year alone. More than 90 percent of these serious weather-related events have been amplified by climate change.

African states have made the case that their region is the hardest hit by pollutants generated by the industrialized states, whose governments refuse to agree on limits to emissions. At the same time, these governments are unwilling to provide compensation to developing countries for the damage caused to the environment.

The U.S. has not even signed the Kyoto Protocol, which set modest goals and timelines for curbing pollutants.

World Wildlife Fund director Kim Carstensen told the BBC, "The point is being made very loudly that African countries and the wider G77 bloc will not accept non-action on the Kyoto Protocol, and they're really afraid that a deal has been stitched up behind their backs." (BBC, Dec. 14)

China vs. U.S.

The dispute escalated between the developing states, allied with China, and the imperialist countries when the Danish government made an attempt to place another draft agreement on the agenda and consequently ignore the Kyoto Protocol.

During the first week of consultations in Copenhagen, tensions arose between the People's Republic of China and the U.S. over setting goals for the curbing of emissions. China accused the U.S. and the West of trickery for their attempts to shift the focus of discussion from the con-



Drought killed the livestock of this farmer in Zambia.

cerns of the developing states to broader, undefined talks. Such a vague approach would absolve the capitalist countries from taking any action to address the worsening food crisis in Africa and other parts of the world.

African states and other developing countries demanded that conference president Connie Hedegaard of Denmark place the question of curbing emission standards for the industrialized states at the top of the agenda prior to the arrival of world leaders in Copenhagen. These countries, along with China, believe that the Danish government is working to destroy the Kyoto Protocol.

G77 chief negotiator Lumumba Dia Ping stated in relationship to the stalled talks, "It has become clear that the Danish presidency — in the most undemocratic fashion — is advancing the interests of the developed countries at the expense of the balance of obligations between developed and developing countries." (BBC Radio 4's "The World at One," Dec. 14)

"We are seeing the death of the Kyoto Protocol," said Djemouai Kamel of Algeria, who is leading the 53-nation Africa

group. (AP, Dec. 14)

One Western negotiator, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that discussions involving 50 environmental ministers on Dec. 13 were contentious as a result of the "growing disputes between the Americans and the Chinese."

"At the back of everyone's mind is the fear of a repeat of the awful scenario in The Hague," when another climate change conference held in 2000 that was designed to set up definite guidelines related to the Kyoto Protocol broke up without an agreement. (AFP, Dec. 14)

During the previous week of consultations in Copenhagen, the Pacific island nation of Tuvalu had created a crisis with the simple demand that efforts to amend the U.N. climate convention and the Kyoto Protocol be debated fully at the summit.

African states demand compensation

African countries, including even the pro-Western Ethiopian regime, planned to demand \$50 billion in compensation for the damage done by industrialized states to the continent's environment over the last several years.

According to the News Agency of Nigeria, "Africa is the worst hit when it comes to global emission. We are going to Copenhagen with one voice and our position is that the developed countries should pay us \$50 billion in the short term. Our requisition also is that in 2015, the compensation should be increased to \$250 billion." (Xinhua, Dec. 11)

The African Union's Presidential Commission has agreed on this position unanimously, saying that the continent, which generates only 4 percent of the world's car-

Pentagon pollution ignored at climate change conference

Continued from page 1

Salmon also quoted Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat, who headed the U.S. delegation in Kyoto. Eizenstat reported that "every requirement the Defense Department and uniformed military who were at Kyoto by my side said they wanted, they got. This is self-defense, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief."

Although the U.S. had already received these assurances in the negotiations, the U.S. Congress passed an explicit provision guaranteeing U.S. military exemption. Inter Press Service reported on May 21, 1998: "U.S. law makers, in the latest blow to international efforts to halt global warming, today exempted U.S. military operations from the Kyoto agreement which lays out binding commitments to reduce 'greenhouse gas' emissions. The House of Representatives passed an amendment to next year's military authorization bill that prohibits the restriction of armed forces under the Kyoto Protocol."

Today in Copenhagen the same agreements and guidelines on greenhouse gases still hold. Yet it is extremely difficult to find even a mention of this glaring omission.

According to environmental journalist Johanna Peace, military activities will continue to be exempt from an executive order signed by President Barack Obama that calls for federal agencies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Peace states, "The military accounts for a full 80 percent of the federal government's energy



demand." (solveclimate.com, Sept. 1)

The blanket exclusion of the Pentagon's global operations makes U.S. carbon dioxide emissions appear far less than they in fact are. Yet even without counting the Pentagon, the U.S. still has the world's largest carbon dioxide emissions.

More than emissions

Besides emitting carbon dioxide, U.S. military operations release other highly toxic and radioactive materials into the air, water and soil.

U.S. weapons made with depleted uranium have spread tens of thousands of pounds of microparticles of radioactive and highly toxic waste throughout the Middle East, Central Asia and the Balkans.

The U.S. sells land mines and cluster

bombs that are a major cause of delayed explosions, maiming and disabling especially peasant farmers and rural peoples in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For example, Israel dropped more than 1 million U.S.-provided cluster bombs on Lebanon during its 2006 invasion.

The U.S. war in Vietnam left large areas so contaminated with the Agent Orange herbicide that today, more than 35 years later, dioxin contamination is 300 to 400 times higher than "safe" levels. Severe birth defects and high rates of cancer resulting from environmental contamination are continuing into a third generation.

The 1991 U.S. war in Iraq, followed by 13 years of starvation sanctions, the 2003 U.S. invasion and continuing occupation, has transformed the region — which has a 5,000-year history as a Middle East breadbasket — into an environmental catastrophe. Iraq's arable and fertile land has become a desert wasteland where the slightest wind whips up a dust storm. A former food exporter, Iraq now imports 80 percent of its food. The Iraqi Agriculture Ministry estimates that 90 percent of the land has severe desertification.

Environmental war at home

Moreover, the Defense Department has routinely resisted orders from the Environmental Protection Agency to clean up contaminated U.S. bases. (Washington Post, June 30, 2008) Pentagon military bases top the Superfund list of the most polluted places, as contaminants seep

into drinking water aquifers and soil.

The Pentagon has also fought EPA efforts to set new pollution standards on two toxic chemicals widely found on military sites: perchlorate, found in propellant for rockets and missiles; and trichloroethylene, a degreaser for metal parts.

Trichloroethylene is the most widespread water contaminant in the country, seeping into aquifers across California, New York, Texas, Florida and elsewhere. More than 1,000 military sites in the U.S. are contaminated with the chemical. The poorest communities, especially communities of color, are the most severely impacted by this poisoning.

U.S. testing of nuclear weapons in the U.S. Southwest and on South Pacific islands has contaminated millions of areas of land and water with radiation. Mountains of radioactive and toxic uranium tailings have been left on Indigenous land in the Southwest. More than 1,000 uranium mines have been abandoned on Navajo reservations in Arizona and New Mexico.

Around the world, on past and still operating bases in Puerto Rico, the Philippines, South Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama and the former Yugoslavia, rusting barrels of chemicals and solvents and millions of rounds of ammunition are criminally abandoned by the Pentagon.

The best way to dramatically clean up the environment is to shut down the Pentagon. What is needed to combat climate change is a thoroughgoing system change. □

and the Copenhagen summit

n of debate

would foster the replacement of outmoded machinery.

In making its case for compensation from the Western industrialized countries, the Monitor newspaper published in Uganda wrote in an editorial on Dec. 14, "The entire Eastern Africa region has, for example, this year witnessed extensive drought with crop failure and livestock deaths commonplace in semiarid areas. Secondly, Africa is home to a big percentage of the world's natural rain forests, which help stabilize climate by sucking carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases — methane, nitrous oxide, perfluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride."

The Monitor editorial continues by stressing, "We must be compensated for each tree standing. Modalities of compensation should be a key item on the agenda in Copenhagen. The USA, the principal culprit, must be at the forefront of efforts to both save the environment and to pay reparations."

Demonstrations outside the UNFCCC have drawn tens of thousands of people. At

a vigil held outside the City Hall building in Copenhagen, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa handed over a petition signed by more than 500,000 people demanding immediate action to curb the threat posed by rising greenhouse gases.

Tutu told the crowd, "This is a problem. If we don't resolve it, no one is going to survive." (South African Mail & Guardian, Dec. 14)

A pre-conference article in the Irish Weekly An Phoblacht states, "An alliance between the developing countries, progressive forces in the industrialized states and the growing global climate change justice movement is facing hugely powerful governments and business interests at the Copenhagen summit that are determined to prioritize short-term profit over the survival of the planet. Public opinion, pressure and mobilization are the keys to changing this balance of forces and ensuring action is taken." (anphoblact.com, Dec. 10) □



What China is doing about climate change

By Deirdre Griswold

After a barrage of propaganda emanating from Washington and the big business media, most people in the U.S. have been led to believe that any failure to reach an agreement at the Copenhagen summit on climate change will be China's fault.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

First of all, it is the U.S. and other industrialized capitalist countries, where industry is tied to making profits, that are responsible for the lion's share of the pollution and greenhouse gases that are changing the world's climate. China and other developing countries have contributed only a minute part of the emissions now affecting our weather.

China has four times as many people as the U.S., yet it has only in the past year drawn even with the U.S. in terms of overall greenhouse gas emissions. This reflects China's rapid industrial development at a time when U.S. industry has been shutting down, moving to other countries, and leaving workers in what was the industrial heartland to suffer in a decaying "Rust Belt."

China is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, which mandated all industrialized countries to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by 2012 — cutbacks that were to average about 5 percent below those nations' 1990 emission levels. While it participated in the negotiations and got many concessions, the U.S. refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol. According to a U.N. report issued Oct. 21, the U.S. now emits 17 percent more greenhouse gases than it did in 1990.

Most important, China has a planned economy, albeit one in which there is also



PHOTO: CHINA.ORG.CN
China has built the world's largest solar office building.

a private sector. Over the past three years, the government's five-year plans for economic development have been integrated with very comprehensive and detailed goals on reducing consumption of energy, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

No other country has made such a strong commitment to the future.

World's biggest solar office building

China's scientists and engineers have been mobilized to find new ways to conserve energy and get energy from renewable sources. In fact, just weeks before the Copenhagen summit began, the world's largest solar energy office building opened in Dezhou, Shandong Province, in northwest China. The huge building features exhibition centers, scientific research facilities, meeting and training facilities, and a hotel.

According to china.org.cn: "Green ideas have been applied throughout the construction. The external structure of the building used only 1 percent of the steel used to construct the Bird's Nest. Advanced roof and wall insulation mean energy savings 30 percent higher than the national energy saving standard."

The technological advances developed for this building will now be available for other projects.

China has become the world's largest producer of solar panels, outstripping

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At largest climate protest ever

Copenhagen police make 1,000 'preventive arrests'

By Kit Aastrup
Copenhagen, Denmark

It was a great feeling to be one of the 100,000 people from all corners of the world at the Palace Square in front of the Danish Parliament on Dec. 12, the fifth day of the climate negotiations in Copenhagen.

It was reported that 57 nations were represented by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), groups like Greenpeace and Vegans, and political parties like the Anti-Capitalist Party from France and the Danish Communist Party.

When I reached the square it was already crowded and people were filling the adjacent streets. I walked around to see to see the huge variation of signs and people. Some of the signs said we need to take steps now to stop polluting and save the planet. Some raised slogans demanding a system change, that only a socialist system would be able to provide real change and cut carbon emissions sufficiently. Some signs told us you can save the planet by becoming a vegan. What a sight! The whole world is here.

At 2 p.m. the crowd began to march the four miles to the Bella Center, site of the official COP-15 [15th United Nations Climate Change Conference] negotiations. On this cold December day flooded with

bright sunshine, the most powerful, tranquil and colorful demonstration ever in Copenhagen began almost like a parade.

A few weeks earlier the Danish Parliament had passed a new law allowing the police to detain people up to 12 hours without charges. A temporary detention center with cages for 10 people each had been shown on national television. It failed to frighten people away from the gathering. Organizers from different groups had negotiated with the police in an attempt to avoid clashes.

When the march ended two-and-a-half hours later in a field near the Bella Center, it was already dark. My feet were sore from the long march. With no further activities at the end, people headed for the nearest metro station.

I was still high on the event. It had been such a beautiful and peaceful message to send to the politicians. So I thought. But on the train back I heard that the rear of the demonstration had been isolated by the police and 200 had been arrested.

On television that evening I saw how the arrested demonstrators were forced to sit in lines on the cold ground for five hours before they were taken away by buses.

A few of the demonstrators were interviewed on television. Stopped by the police from getting up, some peed in their

pants. One told how embarrassing it was to be forced to sit there in the cold with wet pants. One had suffered disabling cramps and was taken away in an ambulance on a stretcher. They were all freezing terribly in the cold weather.

The next day the chief of police apologized on Danish television and said it was a mistake to let them sit there for such a long time.

At the Peoples Climate Forum the next day I heard that not 200 but 1,000 had been arrested. The police called them all "preventive arrests." They were released the next day, with only four people actually charged with anything. But the 1,000 who were arrested are all liable to be listed in the Schengen register as "troublemakers," which can restrict their travel in the European Union.

The following day, it was reported on the radio that a minor demonstration had ended even before it started and another 250 people had been arrested.

Local and international groups have been warming up for the COP-15 for weeks. There had been local demonstrations regarding climate

change in the major cities of Denmark before Dec. 12. Buses and trains then brought hundreds more activists to Copenhagen.

For two weeks an alternative Peoples' Climate Forum for activists and NGOs has been taking place in the center of Copenhagen. Workshops and presentations have been going on nonstop. The atmosphere is very international and you hear many different languages in the streets.

Will this end with an historic agreement in the Bella Center to seriously reduce carbon emissions and reduce rich countries' exploitation of poor countries? Or will it be business as usual?

Aastrup is a Danish journalist and activist.



PHOTO: DANISH COMMUNIST PARTY

Labor activists of many countries meet to discuss economic crisis

By Bob McCubbin
Tijuana, Mexico

The Sixth Cuba/Venezuela/Mexico/North America Labor Conference opened here on Dec. 4 with an evening of solidarity with the Cuban Five, defenders of Cuba who are serving long sentences in U.S. jails.

The weekend conference, which brought together union militants and social justice activists from Latin America, the Philippines, Canada and the U.S., focused on how the international capitalist crisis is affecting workers, including those forced to migrate to imperialist countries for survival after their local economies are destroyed.

Ignacio Meneses from the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange opened the Saturday morning session with a reflection on revolutionary Cuba's success, even during the darkest hours of the "special period" following the collapse of the Soviet Union, in maintaining its cordial relations with workers' organizations all over the world and refusing to reduce the many beneficial social programs enjoyed by its people.

U.S., Puerto Rico

There was great interest in the challenges facing workers in the U.S. The first speaker on the morning panel was Larry Holmes, a leader of the Bail Out the People Movement, which is mobilizing unions and social activists to demand a real jobs or income program.

Holmes stressed the contributions of revolutionary Cuba to people of African descent in the U.S. and around the world. "No other people have played a stronger role in supporting Black people in the U.S.," he noted. Holmes emphasized the seriousness of the economic crisis in the U.S. and stressed the need to be in the streets, to push the unions into action and to embrace the unemployed, immigrant workers and the poor.

José Rivera of the Frente Amplio de Solidaridad y Lucha of Puerto Rico reported with pride that Puerto Rican workers had expressed their solidarity with the Mexican electrical workers recently fired by Mexican President Vicente Calderón by holding a huge protest at the Mexican consulate in San Juan.

He also described attempts by Puerto Rican Gov. Luis Fortuño to impose neo-liberal solutions for the economic crisis that include firing 30,000 workers. Some 50 organizations, including 18 unions, have responded to the call to fight back. Dramatic mass actions have included marches and the mass takeover of the

San Juan banking district. "We are being called terrorists and they are threatening to use the Patriot Act against us," Rivera said. The workers' response, he suggested, must be a general strike.

Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia

Raymundo Navarro, director of foreign relations of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), estimated that the U.S.-imposed blockade has cost Cuba \$96 billion. Fierce hurricanes have caused \$10 billion in damages. A third difficulty is the world economic crisis. Navarro said that Cubans appreciate the difference in tone of the new U.S. administration, but it still demands concessions on Cuba's part. "We reject that," he emphasized.

He enumerated six Cuban demands: the U.S. must lift the blockade, free the Cuban Five, eliminate Radio and TV Martí, stop financing internal subversion, return Guantánamo to Cuban control and repeal the Cuban Adjustment Act.

World market prices for nickel and sugar, important Cuban exports, are way down, while the prices of foods that Cuba must import are up. Nevertheless, "We graduated 186,000 students this year. We openly invite the imperialists and their bootlickers to find one student who didn't get a job," he concluded. Unemployment in Cuba is 1.8 percent despite the world economic crisis.

Representing the Venezuelan workers' movement was union leader Rolando Semprún. He presented five Venezuelan baseball caps to Alicia Jrapko, director of the International Committee to Free the Five, asking that she pass them on to the five imprisoned Cuban heroes.

Semprún spoke of Venezuela's countrywide literacy program undertaken with Cuba's assistance, the national health program, also undertaken with Cuban help, the national agenda in favor of women, and the strong solidarity between the people and the military. He reminded the audience that the overriding U.S. goal is seizure of Venezuelan oil and other natural resources. He cited the U.S. military presence in neighboring Colombia and internal subversion financed by the U.S. as major threats.

A further problem is the continuing capitalist control of the major media. To get around this, there is strong government support for local, community-based media, mass use of inexpensive cell phones and a government-supported mass organization called Madres del Barrio of women in the working-class communities who do security and other community-based work.



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

Panel on Freedom for the Cuban Five: Ignacio Meneses, Ramiro Hernandez, Alicia Jrapko, Silvia Garcia, Carmen Godinez, Judge Claudia Morcom.

Two Colombian labor leaders with the country's national telephone union, Óscar Penagos Ortiz and Segundo Hernández Cañón, opened the next session. More than 3,800 union leaders and labor activists have been assassinated in Colombia since the mid 1980s.

Penagos explained how Colombian society is presently ruled by criminals. President Álvaro Uribe has been an open promoter of paramilitarism. The former chief of intelligence, now in prison, provided the paramilitaries with lists of progressives to kill. Drug trafficking and money laundering continue to be big business.

The present U.S./Colombia military treaty is an agreement between the world's biggest drug producer and its biggest drug consumer. In addition to the use of seven new military bases, the treaty gives the U.S. control of Colombia's telecommunications network. The Colombian military has, in fact, become an appendage of the Pentagon. One of the new airbases under the control of the U.S. is so huge that three aircraft can lift off at the same time.

Penagos proposed a May Day solidarity action by Venezuela and Ecuador on the border with Colombia where the imperialist puppets killed comandante Raúl Reyes. He asked for a conference resolution rejecting the new military bases.

Mexico, Honduras, Philippines

Representing the Frente Amplio de Izquierda Social de México, Gabriela Santos Romero stressed the need for national and international unity in support of the fired Mexican electrical workers.

The moderator for the third session on Saturday was Cheryl LaBash, a key organizer with the U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange.

Carlos Mejía of the Frente Resistencia Hondureña pointed out that a mere 21 percent of Honduran voters participated in the recent sham election on Nov. 29. At least 661 people had been murdered before the election, and four of his com-

rades were seized and disappeared on election day. Mejía called for unity of all the anti-coup forces.

Celina Benítez of the Coalición por la Paz en Honduras witnessed the Honduran election at first hand. "We were in Honduras, in part, to report human rights violations. I was also there to speak with the people. My life and the lives of my comrades were threatened." Benítez continued: "In the '80s I heard stories about El Salvador. Now I've seen it in Honduras."

Kuusela Hilo, just returned from the Philippines, represented BAYAN-USA. She said that a Katrina-like situation exists there due to recent terrible natural disasters that have displaced more than 1 million people. Increased repression is being funded by U.S. imperialism, which views the Philippines, just as it does Colombia, as a strategic area and has poured in over \$1 billion in military aid in the last 10 years. It also has troops permanently based there, in direct violation of Philippine sovereignty.

Hilo also spoke of a recent massacre in Maguindanao, in the south of the country, where 64 civilians including 30 journalists were killed, and urged organizations present at the conference to send statements to the Arroyo government demanding justice for the victims.

Clarence Thomas, speaking on behalf of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 and the Million Worker March Movement, urged that special attention be paid to the most oppressed workers, people of color and immigrants. He pointed out that support for May Day in the U.S. was reawakened by the most exploited sector of the working class, the immigrant workers. Labor, he insisted, must look beyond the scope of business unionism. The way forward for the working class, he emphasized, is for labor to become part of the vanguard for social justice.

Service Employees International Union Local 721 activist Luz Díaz noted that a Tijuana union leader had been kidnapped that very morning.

Cristina Vázquez of Workers United, which affiliated this year with SEIU, gave special acknowledgment to the unionists who had come to the conference from other countries at great expense and sacrifice and often danger.

Carmen Godínez of the CTC offered a short lesson on the history of ALBA, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, which aims to increase the independence



Some of the international participants gather for a group picture.

WW PHOTO

of its member countries from the imperialist financial system. Created through the initiative of Hugo Chávez and Fidel Castro, it now counts nine nations of Latin America and the Caribbean as members.

The Mexican labor-community front FAIS submitted two resolutions that were signed by attendees, one supporting electrical workers expelled from the utility by the current government so it could privatize electrical generation, and another protesting the abduction of a member of the health care union affiliated with FAIS that was mentioned earlier by Luz Díaz.

Immigrant workers

The conference's Sunday session focused on issues pertaining to immigrant workers and their struggles. Ben Prado, a leader of Unión del Barrio, asserted the right of Indigenous people, in particular the Mexican people, to retake the land now known as the U.S. Southwest. He denounced the racist U.S. policy of Manifest Destiny that was used to wrest total control of the North American continent from its former inhabitants.

Prado denounced the Democratic/Republican consensus in Washington, D.C., for super-exploitation of the most vulnerable workers. Migrating workers do the hardest work for the lowest pay.

Prado described the horrific character of Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids, where families are broken up and children become wards of the state. "This is state terrorism," he emphasized. "The change that's happening in Latin America will be our guide. The re-election of Evo Morales in Bolivia is cause for great optimism."

Gloria Salcedo of Hermandad Mexicana Nacional paid tribute to Bert Corona, a great labor leader and organizer of immigrant workers, as someone who taught workers how to struggle. She asserted the urgent need for legalization of undocumented workers and urged organizing for May 1.

Teresa Gutierrez, representing the New York May 1 Coalition and the International Migrants' Alliance, noted the worldwide character of the migration nightmare: an estimated 350,000,000 working class people have been forced to leave their homes, due both to economic pressures and the environmental changes that are producing what is coming to be known as "climate migration."

"The only thing we can count on is mobilizing in the streets. We need to organize in a new way because there is a crisis and they are trying to divide us, get us to fight each other. We have to raise the war and the sham election in Honduras. Threats against Cuba and Venezuela must be raised as well as the potential destruction of the planet. One day May Day will be a worldwide strike!"

Joy de Guzman, representing the Global Council for International Migrants and the International League of Peoples Struggle, observed that, in common with all the peoples of Latin America, the Filipino people have a terrible historic legacy of colonization. "But really, it's imperialism," she noted. Filipino immigrant workers are scattered in 196 other countries and the remittances they send home constitute a very important part of the Filipino economy. "These workers face long hours, low wages, sexual abuse and all the other common features of super-exploitation. They need our help to challenge their exploitation."

Martín López Ortiz, speaking for the Frente Amplio de Izquierda Social, announced an ambitious project, already underway, for a Latin American sanctuary for workers in the Mexican state of Michoacán. The sanctuary will run on an economy based on sharing rather than private profit. The workers of Michoacán

SUCESSES & DANGERS IN LATIN AMERICA

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

BOLIVIA

Morales triumphs

The Dec. 6 presidential elections marked an historic development in Bolivia. President Evo Morales was re-elected for a second term with more than 63 percent of the vote, a clear mandate to continue developing the country on behalf of the people instead of the transnational corporations and the elite, a tradition which for too long had impoverished the nation. In an interview with TeleSUR, Vice President Álvaro García Linera said that there was an outstanding participation of 93 percent of the voters, showing that Bolivia has a solid democracy. This election comes on the heels of one last January that approved the new constitution by 62 percent and a recall referendum in August 2008 that ratified Morales' presidency with 67 percent of the people voting no to any recall.

Although the final numbers are yet to be published, the initial results show that Morales' Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) won two-thirds of the National Assembly seats, making it easier now to pass progressive legislation as this majority removes the roadblock of the right-wing opposition legislators. Morales won for the first time in Tarija, one of the four departments of Bolivia's "Half Moon" (Media Luna), a part of the country where the elite opposition had always dominated. In the other three Media Luna provinces Morales finished in second place.

The elections were peaceful and transparent. For the first time Bolivia used a biometric system of identification, previously approved by Congress, to prevent any fraud. It required collecting fingerprints, digital photos and signatures along with the usual data for every person eligible to vote. This was also the first time that Bolivians outside the country could vote. Elections were held in Argentina, Spain, Brazil and the United States. A total of 170,000 expatriate Bolivians voted, overwhelmingly for Morales.

Morales' tremendous success is due to the progressive social reforms his administration put into practice and to the recovery of the country's natural resources, particularly the nationalization of its natural gas, which has improved the economy. Exports have increased 131 percent since Morales' first term began. Even the IMF, according to

will no longer have to cross borders to survive and the sanctuary will welcome all migrant workers as an alternative to forced immigration.

John Parker, Los Angeles organizer of the Bail Out the People Movement, spoke on the pressing issue of Black/Brown unity. "Superexploitation is an important basis for unity. Most immigrant workers maintain ties with family and friends in their home countries. Suppose the Spanish plans of colonial conquest had been revealed in advance to the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. With modern communication, the situation for cooperation among workers of different nationalities is much more favorable today."

"Right now, U.S. imperialism has its eyes on Africa, in particular the newly discovered oil deposits off the coast of Ghana and around the Horn of Africa. Already under Obama there is more U.S. military activity in Africa, sometimes involving 30 nations at a time. So we need unity with Native, Asian, Latino/a and white workers."

Exterior Minister David Choquehuanca, was forced to admit that Bolivia will be the country with the most growth in the region this year.

Among the advances that have won over the majority of the people to Morales and the MAS are the eradication of illiteracy, access to health care, education and a reduction of poverty. The tremendous improvement of the economy has also attracted sympathizers from the middle class to the MAS.

URUGUAY

The same day that Honduras held fraudulent elections, Nov. 29, the people of Uruguay voted with a 52.39 percent majority to elect José (Pepe) Mujica of the ruling Frente Amplio (Broad Front) as president. Mujica, who was part of the guerrilla Movement for National Liberation in the 1960s and 1970s and was imprisoned for 14 years, had support from many left forces in Uruguay. His victory is seen as a furthering of the progressive wave in Latin America. He had been minister of agriculture under the current government of Tabaré Vázquez.

VENEZUELA

Controlling the banks

Four months after the Venezuelan government made its first payment to buy 96 percent of the shares of the Banco de Venezuela, shares that had been in the hands of the Spanish Santander Group, the Bolivarian government moved to take control of eight more banking institutions, seven private and one belonging to the state. The government had discovered several instances of illegal bank activities, including the holding of illicit money and failure to comply with state guidelines in lending.

The Venezuelan government liquidated some of the banks. It plans to merge and reopen the others. Bolívar Banco will be nationalized and will form part of the public finance system; the holdings of Banco Canarias and Banpro will go to the Banco de Venezuela; and the Central Banco Universal, Banco Real, and the state's Bancoandes will on Dec. 21 form part of the Banco Bicentenario Universal. In a public statement, Chávez stated that the Bicentenario Universal will be the "second most solid entity and will be used to propel the social productive development of the nation together with the recently recovered Banco de Venezu-

José González, representing the Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations, observed, "I am a stranger in my own land." He came to the U.S. from Oaxaca, Mexico, out of necessity and was a farm worker for seven years. He recounted how hard crossing the border was. Referring to his co-panelist Ben Prado, he said, "I took Ben last month to meet my brothers living in a canyon." He observed that what goes on in the agricultural fields is modern slavery. "We have a common enemy," he concluded. "Capitalism!"

Sabrina Green of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal spoke on the very dangerous legal situation facing this globally recognized political prisoner.

It was a politically intense weekend. These profoundly serious deliberations set in many ways a minimum standard for the development of international workers' councils, which are needed more with every day that global capitalism wreaks its havoc. □

ela." (TeleSUR, Dec. 7)

The savings of the people have been guaranteed by the government. Thirty former bank officials have detention orders but nine have escaped, three of them to the U.S.

Chávez's declaration exposes the problems inherent in a state where important economic sectors are still in the hands of the bourgeoisie and not the workers. "We have to be alert. We have to turn on the radars of the government and the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and not allow this to happen. We must act quickly; we cannot wait until tomorrow. We need a state ever sharper because these bankers are very skilled and seek ways to get into government and create networks within the institutions," he said. (TeleSUR, Dec. 14)

HONDURAS

Human rights abused

After U.S.-endorsed illegal and fraudulent elections on Nov. 29, the criminal de facto government of Roberto Micheletti has targeted the resistance movement for extermination. Human rights abuses have been increasing and leaders have been harassed, persecuted and even killed. Organizations advocating human rights are overwhelmed because the appropriate governmental institutions now under police and military control no longer respond.

Just in December, the following took place: A woman resistance coordinator in her neighborhood called expressing great anguish to the Human Rights Committee (CODEH) to let it know that she felt threatened because the police had visited her home several times. She was constantly being followed. The youth organization Los Necios (The Stubborn) was able to film a suspect who had been videotaping their office. On Dec. 4, Walter Trochez, a respected young leader from the LGBT community and the Resistance, was savagely assassinated after being followed for days.

Up to Dec. 15, the legal president of Honduras, José Manuel Zelaya, has remained confined in the Brazilian Embassy, surrounded by Honduran police and military. The de facto government has repeatedly refused to allow him to go to Mexico or the Dominican Republic to try to establish negotiations that will allow some relief to the severe crisis in his country.

ALBA

ALBA meets in Havana

While Secretary of State Hillary Clinton threatens Latin America, particularly Venezuela and Nicaragua, representatives of the nine countries of ALBA-TCP (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Trade Treaty of the People) met in Havana for the organization's eighth summit to celebrate its fifth anniversary and establish new treaties. They reviewed the many successes accomplished in just five years of existence, but also alerted the hemisphere to the new danger U.S. imperialism poses as it tries to regain control of what it considers its Latin American "backyard." The final declaration included a statement to Washington rejecting Clinton's threats. The U.S. secretary of state had said that if Latin American countries continued friendly relations with Iran, they would suffer consequences. The ALBA-TCP reaffirmed the principle of sovereignty, that is, that no outside state can dictate who their allies or friends are. □

WORKERS WORLD
editorial

OSLO & THE EMPIRE

It was an historic moment: a Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech that was an apology for an imperialist war of occupation. More than that, it preemptively laid out the justification for U.S. imperialist wars.

Even without hearing the speech, you could measure it by the reactions it evoked. Reactionaries Newt Gingrich and Sarah Palin, who have otherwise attacked everything President Barack Obama does and says, applauded and praised the speech, as did much of the U.S.-based corporate media. Others more skeptical of U.S. military adventures were either surprised or appalled. One common commentary in the media was that "Obama sounded like Bush," or at least "like a better educated Bush."

The Oslo speech provides an opportunity to step back from individuals and look at the forces that drive U.S. imperialism. The same political and repressive mechanisms remain in play whatever party has its hands on the reins and whatever president is in the White House.

The George W. Bush years tended to obscure this reality. Bush himself was always so arrogant, always so obviously a product of a lifetime of unearned privilege and always so crass and enthusiastic in his promotion of Washington's narrow interests that anyone not looking closely might miss the fact that he and his policies had the full support of the great majority of the U.S. ruling class — until his wars started to crumble.

Vice President Dick Cheney so epitomized the evil figure behind the throne that you might ignore his central role in the capitalist establishment. The rest of the Bush gang, what were called the "neo-cons," used whatever managerial or intellectual talents they had to plan aggressive wars and transfer wealth from the poor to the rich. They always made sure to put some in their own pockets — with an obvious attitude that they were entitled to their privileges.

Many saw the problem with the U.S. role as rooted in Bush and Company, or the Republican right, or the Republican Party, and missed the central role of the imperialist system that engendered this particular set of war criminals.

But now there is a Democratic Party administration, and a large Democratic Party majority in Congress. The president is a much more sympathetic figure. He makes intelligent speeches that show a broader world perspective. Yet the Oslo

speech dissolves the differences.

U.S. foreign policy, U.S. aggressive war policy, as explained in Oslo, remains the same: the U.S. will invade where it wants to. To Washington, the opponents of the U.S. are "evil," while U.S. interests are "good." In Washington's ideological model, the Taliban and whatever al-Qaeda forces remain in Afghanistan — 100 according to U.S. intelligence — take the place of Saddam Hussein and "weapons of mass destruction." A slightly new set of lies will be used to justify war in Afghanistan, war on Pakistan, and whatever other war is seen as useful to U.S. banks and industry or strategic position.

Behind this policy is the crisis of capitalism worldwide, the U.S. drive to continually expand its access to raw materials, especially energy resources, its access to markets and new areas of investment, the competition with imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan, the growing contradictions and anticipated conflicts with Russia and China. These make U.S. military aggression almost inevitable.

The Pentagon designed Washington's policy for Iraq and now for Afghanistan. Driven by that same impulse to expand — while the capitalist economy is contracting — the ruling class here has reached a consensus behind that aggressive strategy. Regarding the Afghanistan escalation and the Oslo speech, this is apparent from the broad support from the corporate media, including not only the militarist hacks at Fox News but the capitalist mainstream semi-official media like the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal.

The Democratic Party goes along with this — whatever the tactical misgivings of Vice President Joe Biden or the opposition of a senator or two. And whether the president is enthusiastic, neutral or reluctant hardly seems to matter. The Oslo speech shows that he accepts the role of the U.S. president — chief executive for U.S. imperialism — and will argue its case.

No matter how dangerous the war, how high the suffering of the occupied population or the sacrifices of U.S. workers and youth, neither the generals, the class they serve nor the two capitalist political parties will accept defeat and withdrawal. That is, unless there is a resistance army fighting them blow for blow in the occupied country and a powerful workers' movement challenging them at home. □

Labor delegates vote for withdrawal from Iraq, Afghanistan

By Kris Hamel

At a national assembly of U.S. Labor Against the War held in Chicago Dec. 4-6, a resolution was passed unanimously that called for "an immediate end to the wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan and military attacks in Pakistan." The resolution also declared that "USLAW calls for the immediate and complete withdrawal of all U.S. military forces and contractors from Iraq and Afghanistan and the closing of all U.S. military bases in both countries."

Another resolution was passed that gave USLAW's endorsement to the anti-war demonstrations planned for March 20, 2010, the seventh anniversary of the

U.S. war and occupation in Iraq. Donna Dewitt, president of the South Carolina AFL-CIO, and Alan Benjamin of the San Francisco Labor Council's Executive Committee were among the USLAW members submitting the resolution to the national gathering.

The resolution noted a declaration by the Wisconsin AFL-CIO on the "need to stop the war in Afghanistan and focus the nation's attention on the fight for jobs, education, health care and pensions."

USLAW is urging unionists and labor contingents to march in the national anti-war demonstrations on March 20 in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco. □

What China is doing about climate change

Continued from page 7

Germany. It also makes the vast majority of low-energy fluorescent bulbs sold around the world.

One of China's biggest problems in re-gearing for green development is its historical dependence on coal. According to MBendi Information Services, China is the largest producer and consumer of coal in the world, and many of China's large coal reserves are not yet developed. It has coal reserves of more than 114 billion tons, 13.51 percent of the world total. It is coal that has fueled China's industrial development.

Northern China, especially Shanxi Province, contains most of China's easily accessible coal and virtually all of its large state-owned mines. Many of the smaller mines are privately owned and have a terrible safety record. The government is now in the process of closing many of them down.

How can China continue to develop while tackling the problem of greenhouse gases? Deborah Seligsohn, a Beijing-based energy expert with the World Resources Institute, says China is now "an emerging leader in clean-coal technologies. It has built more high-efficiency coal-fired power plants than any country," she said. (AFP, Dec. 15)

More such plants are planned to replace old and dirty furnaces in Shanxi. It's an example of how countries whose development was impeded by imperialist control need to break that tie and acquire a basic industrial infrastructure before they can move to higher, cleaner technologies.

Although U.S. politicians are bent on China-bashing to cover up the responsibility of imperialism in bogging down a meaningful emissions agreement, the world's scientists are more and more disputing this assessment.

Scientists impressed by China's actions

Science News, a weekly U.S. science magazine, in its Dec. 5 issue said, "In diagnosing why the Kyoto Protocol fell short of its primary aim — catalyzing serious emissions reductions by all major industrial powers — most analysts

point to the United States. The treaty, which went into force on Feb. 16, 2005, has been ratified, accepted or agreed to by 189 countries. The lone holdout among nations that negotiated this accord: the United States."

It adds that while U.S. negotiators are free to agree to an international accord, that wouldn't commit this country, since the Senate can nix the deal. And Senate leaders in the past refused to ratify any agreement that didn't impose emissions cuts on developing countries like China, India and Brazil.

However, China has not waited for another agreement but has acted on its own. Science News interviewed Rob Bradley, of the World Resources Institute's International Climate Policy Initiative in Washington, D.C., who was very impressed by China's efforts.

"Three years ago, China committed itself to reducing its energy intensity, or energy use per unit of gross domestic product, 20 percent below 2005 levels — by 2010, Bradley notes. Compared with the United States, he adds, China also has considerably more ambitious renewable-energy goals and fuel-efficiency standards for its vehicles. And China has also mandated major emissions improvements by its 1,000 largest industrial operations, he says. Together, these enterprises account for one-third of China's primary energy use."

Bradley told the magazine, "If the U.S. said: 'We'll match what China's going to do,' I'd be fairly happy with that."

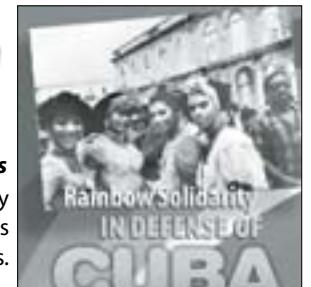
Bradley thinks the reason China has been able to implement such a profound change in its economic plans is that "unlike American climate policy makers, who are usually lawyers, most of those in China were trained as engineers or scientists."

This begs the question, however, of why most U.S. climate policy makers are lawyers, instead of scientists. Isn't it because they are trained to promote and defend the interests of the transnational corporations and banks that own the U.S. economy lock, stock and barrel? In People's China, even though it now allows capitalists, this exploiting class does not have the social weight to dictate government policy. □

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*

This groundbreaking book documents revolutionary Cuba's inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.



Available at Leftbooks.com or in bookstores around the country

Top TEN / Lou Dobbs' thoughts after leaving CNN

by Paul Wilcox

1. The Senate desperately needs another racist multimillionaire in its ranks. If I run for office, I can fill that need.
 2. I had this nightmarish dream about Pancho Villa, John Brown, Harriet Tubman ... and me.
 3. I'll try reading a copy of "Mein Kampf" to relax.
 4. I must do more about the annoying "strong winds of change," such as the voters choosing an African-American president.
 5. I need to work on new, more creative ways to promote hatred for immigrants, such as finding the missing link between Mexico and the end of the world in 2012.
 6. Since my ratings have gone down, maybe I should find just one Big Lie and keep repeating that.
 7. If I blame immigrants for global warming, maybe that will work. Mexico is way warmer than the U.S.
 8. I must reassure the Pentagon that when I said the U.S. should get out of Iraq and Afghanistan, I was only kidding.
 9. In a rare moment of self-awareness, instead of dumping on immigrants, I drove myself to the dump ...
 10. ... except that snotty-faced worker at the dump said I was "the wrong type of garbage."
- E-mail: pwilcox@workers.org

Vale strike in fifth month

Workers unite against global exploiter

By Mike Eilenfeldt
New York

Inside the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on Dec. 3, a Goldman Sachs investors' conference was presenting Roger Agnelli, CEO of the giant mining transnational Vale SA, with a "Dwight D. Eisenhower Global Citizenship" award. Outside, miners from several countries were holding a noisy and militant demonstration protesting Vale's brutal anti-labor practices.

Canadian and U.S. miners in the United Steel Workers union were joined by more than 200 other unionists from UNITE HERE Local 6, which bused in 100 fired Hyatt housekeepers from Boston.

Mineworker Fabio Bosco, who flew all the way from Brazil to support his striking Canadian sisters and brothers, attacked Wall Street and the banks as the main instigators behind Vale's attempt to crush the union and lower the living standards of Canadian mine workers to the level of Brazilian miners. USW is con-

ducting an international counteroffensive against Vale.

Miners from Sudbury and Voisey Bay, Ontario, Canada, work in vast mine networks 8,000 feet underground. They have invested their very lives in producing nickel. Vale took the Ontario mines over in 2006 and has tried to impose draconian cuts on the workers. A conglomerate with global operations, Vale SA raked in profits of \$13 billion in 2008.

The five-month Canadian strike is blocking production of 10 percent of the world's nickel. Some 3,300 workers and their families, with growing support from the world labor movement, are engaged in a heroic struggle to save their livelihoods and their communities. [See WW articles on Oct. 30 and Nov. 25 for detailed information on the history of this strike and its importance to labor here and worldwide.]

Eilenfeldt is a delegate to the NYC Central Labor Council and member of the Bail Out the People Movement.



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

UNITE HERE sign reads 'union' in 100 languages.

Britain and climate change

Workers at wind turbine plant fight to keep jobs

By Martha Grevatt

While a group of workers held an 18-day occupation at Vestas wind turbine plant on Great Britain's Isle of Wight in July, other Vestas workers and their supporters erected an encampment outside the plant. On Nov. 27 this tent community — which after four months included such comforts as a kitchen, showers, furniture and a solar-powered laptop/cell phone charging station! — was disbanded when Vestas obtained a court eviction order. Campers, however, were hardly demoralized.

"You might think," wrote activist Vicki Morris on the Save Vestas Web page on Nov. 29 (savevestas.wordpress.com), "that the eviction ... would be a somber occasion," but "it was anything but. We have a lot to celebrate, even if the owners have got a court order to have the camp removed. The camp has been a mainstay of the campaign by Vestas workers for their jobs, and a place where valuable lessons in campaigning, politics and camaraderie have been gained. ..."



"2009 was a year of occupations of workplaces by workers, often protesting against job losses and the way they lost them, and of public amenities by those who rely on them. Not all of these happened in the UK, but all were on our radar throughout the year," she noted in a separate posting on Nov. 29. Other occupations included Republic Windows and Doors that began in Chicago in 2008;

Waterford Crystal in Ireland; Prisme packaging in Dundee, Scotland; Visteon car parts in Basildon, Belfast and Enfield, Ireland; Glasgow schools in Scotland; Lewisham Bridge School in southeast London; Ssangyong car factory in South Korea; and Thomas Cook in Dublin.

"The groups of people who took part in these occupations were clearly inspired by each other and these occupations

could inspire more struggles. For many of us who took part in or supported these occupations, they are what give us hope that whatever transpires at [the international climate change conference in] Copenhagen we can meet the challenge of climate change. A common theme of these battles was a refusal to accept that the market should dictate what gets made, when and where, and whether or not people who have no other means to survive will have a job or not.

"With regard to the Vestas campaign, they remind us that the planet needs renewable energy now, not when 'green energy' companies such as Vestas can be satisfied that their share dividend will be high enough!"

The laid-off Vestas workers marched in a national climate change demonstration in London on Dec. 5. They continue to demand, among other issues, that the firings of 11 sit-downers be reversed and those workers be allowed to collect the severance benefits owed them. □

Students resist rising costs and cutbacks

Continued from page 4

in appropriations for higher education. Facing depression-level unemployment, foreclosures and bankruptcies, state tax revenues have fallen. California, Nevada and Oregon have seen double-digit reductions in educational subsidies. California community college leaders fear they could end up turning away as many as 250,000 students in the coming months. (Newsweek, Dec. 13)

The state of Washington has reduced its expenditure for public education by 14 percent. Arizona public universities have laid off thousands of employees and canceled scores of classes and programs in the past year. This is the pattern across the country. The language program at the University of Idaho has been gutted. Thousands of science, language, music, math and theater programs have been

terminated in public colleges across the country. Newsweek notes that colleges are packing more students into fewer courses.

Students resist higher costs, cuts

FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) organizer Larry Hales said the March 4th Mobilization movement, spearheaded by University of California students who have been carrying out mass protests, is an attempt to link issues affecting youth. "We saw [recently] that New York's MTA [Metropolitan Transit Authority] proposed the cancellation of student metro passes. Communities are resisting profit-making charter schools," said Hales, who sees "a direct correlation between the declining number of jobs and the rise in numbers of youth going into prison and the military."

"California students have led the way in militancy but there is a rising student

movement in Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin. The call for a day of protest on March 4th is resonating," Hales says, "because of budget cuts and rising tuition rates. And most of the students who are activists are anti-imperialist and anti-war.

There is a real potential for a militant national student movement come spring."

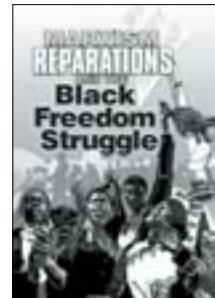
FIST says youth have a right to "free public education and job training with stipend" and says spending for war, jails and prisons, and corporate welfare is "criminal."

Cottin teaches at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, N.Y.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS and the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from *Workers World* newspaper.

Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes: **Racism, National Oppression and Self-Determination** Larry Holmes **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights and Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker **Racism and Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead **Causes of Turmoil in Jamaica** Pat Chin



Available at Leftbooks.com

Detrás del aumento de tropas El Pentágono fija curso hacia una guerra más amplia en Asia

Por John Catalinotto

Washington ya ha comenzado a enviar más tropas para ocupar a Afganistán luego del discurso del Presidente Barack Obama el 1 de diciembre en West Point. En Afganistán como en Irak, la ocupación por Estados Unidos traerá la muerte de más afganos civiles y más soldados estadounidenses. Amenaza con comenzar una guerra civil en Pakistán, mientras continúa la ocupación de Irak.

Como la guerra en Irak, esta guerra también tiene el apoyo de banqueros, ejecutivos corporativos y generales estadounidenses. Nace de la motivación por asegurar los recursos de energía y otras materias primas y mercados, para rodear a Rusia y a China con bases militares y para evitar exponer las debilidades del Pentágono. La dirigencia de los Estados Unidos depende del poder militar de este país para superar las debilidades económicas que se están agudizando durante el bajón económico capitalista.

La opinión de la clase dominante se vio reflejada en el editorial y la sección de opinión publicados en el periódico The New York Times y el Washington Post, los más influyentes de la prensa corporativa estadounidense. Según un reporte de la agencia Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (Rectitud y Precisión en los Media), los artículos de opinión en el New York Times, favorecían 5 a 1 a la guerra y en el Washington Post 10 a 1. (fair.org, diciembre)

El Partido Republicano también ha felicitado a Obama por optar por el aumento de tropas. Las cadenas noticieras más chauvinistas como la Fox y los políticos más militaristas como Dick Cheney han estado presionando agresivamente por una guerra más amplia. Ellos han expresado desaprobación hacia Obama por cada señal de vacilación.

El mismo Obama resaltó el problema de pagar por la guerra cuando invitó a Peter Orszag, el encargado del presupuesto, para que asistiera a la reunión del consejo ministerial de guerra antes del discurso del primero de diciembre. Durante esta severa crisis económica el aumento en los costos para la guerra saldrá directamente de los fondos que podrían ser utilizados para proveer empleos y servicios para los/as trabajadores/as desempleados/as del país. Esta es una razón más para que los/as organizadores/as se unan con quienes se oponen a la guerra y los/as que luchan por empleos, derechos de los/as trabajadores/as y por la justicia económica.

El costo de la guerra — con otros \$50 mil millones para el aumento el próximo año — reducirá el apoyo a la administración al limitar los fondos disponibles para proveer empleos y servicios sociales para los/as trabajadores/as y el pueblo oprimido quienes fueron los partidarios más fuertes de Obama.

Ahora es la guerra de los Demócratas

La nueva administración ha tomado la responsabilidad de la guerra en Afganistán, la cual fue lanzada por la adminis-

tración de George W. Bush en octubre del 2001 luego del 11 de septiembre antes de tornar la atención del Pentágono hacia el país rico en petróleo, Irak. La política unilateral de la pandilla de Bush fracasó en Irak y Afganistán y debilitó el imperialismo estadounidense en el resto del mundo.

Ahora la clase gobernante espera de un gobierno que combina a Demócratas con Republicanos "moderados" como el Secretario de Defensa Robert Gates, que dirija la próxima fase del intento de Washington para reconquistar el que fuera mundo colonial. La prensa ha comenzado a llamar la ocupación de Afganistán la "guerra de Obama."

La ejecución de esta guerra sin embargo, sigue muy de cerca los planes establecidos el verano pasado por el General Stanley McChrystal. El Pentágono manda.

El Presidente, la Secretaría de Estado Hillary Clinton y Gates tienen ahora la tarea de cómo vender esta guerra criminal a la población de Estados Unidos y al mundo. Esta tarea requiere la propagación pública de mentiras sobre el carácter de la resistencia afgana, el forzar a los aliados de la OTAN a que den más de sus tropas para la guerra, y el forzar a Pakistán a que utilice su ejército en contra de la población de la región que limita con Afganistán.

Las dos presentaciones públicas de la Secretaría después del 1 de diciembre redujeron una declaración en el discurso de Obama que difería con la propuesta del Pentágono: que el compromiso de las tropas no era un compromiso sin fin y que las tropas estadounidenses comenzarían a retirarse de Afganistán en julio del 2011.

Gates rápidamente enterró ese mito. "Tendremos 100.000 soldados allá", dijo Gates durante una entrevista en Meet the Press, de la NBC, "y ellos no se retirarán en julio del 2011. Algunos o un pequeño número, o lo que las condiciones permitan, entonces comenzaremos a salir".

En otras palabras, no será fácil para la Casa Blanca ordenar el retiro en el 2011 como fue ordenar el escalamiento en el 2009, no importa cuántos afganos sean masacrados, o cuántas tropas estadounidenses mueran o sean heridas, cuán corrupto sea el régimen títere afgano o cuánto la guerra reduzca las arcas del Departamento del Tesoro de Estados Unidos.

No debemos olvidar que todavía hay tropas estadounidenses ocupando bases en Irak y Kosovo después de una década, y en Corea luego de 56 años, después de guerras dirigidas tanto por administraciones Demócratas como Republicanas.

Poniendo presión en Bruselas e Islamabad

Clinton estuvo en Bruselas el 4 de diciembre para explicar los planes de Obama mientras pedía 10.000 tropas más a otros países de la OTAN. Es este aspecto de la política estadounidense de guerra que se diferencia la administración nueva Demócrata de la última ad-

ministración Republicana: la nueva administración trata de incluir a sus aliados imperialistas en sus aventuras militares y como recompensa compartir una parte del saqueo.

Clinton dijo que se sentía alentada por las promesas de la OTAN de contribuir con 7.000 tropas. La OTAN se negó a publicar una lista de los países que han prometido tropas. Una lista completa hubiera podido revelar las debilidades.

El socio imperialista menor de Washington en Londres ha prometido más tropas; Italia prometió otras 1.000; y Francia y Alemania dicen que esperarán hasta una reunión sobre Afganistán el 28 de enero en Londres antes de comprometerse a enviar más tropas. Canadá y los Países Bajos han estado planeando retirar los contingentes substanciales que tienen en Afganistán.

Georgia, la ex república soviética que ahora es un estado cliente débil de los Estados Unidos con un régimen impopular, ha prometido 900 tropas. ¿Cuántas de las 7.000 tropas vendrán de esos países que antes eran socialistas y cuyos regímenes dependen de Washington y temen a sus propias poblaciones?

En casi cada país europeo de la OTAN y también en los Estados Unidos, la ya intensa oposición a la aventura afgana crecerá al aumentar las bajas en Asia Central. La ocupación de Afganistán es ahora mucho más una ocupación estadounidense que la que fue bajo Bush.

¿Guerra civil en Pakistán?

La situación es aún más dramática con respecto a Pakistán. El 8 de diciembre el New York Times reportó: "La administración de Obama está poniendo más presión a Pakistán para que luche contra el Talibán que está dentro de sus fronteras, amenazando que si no se actúa más agresivamente, Estados Unidos usará considerablemente más fuerza dentro de Pakistán para terminar los ataques del Talibán contra las tropas [estadounidenses] en Afganistán".

Eso es fácil para Washington de exigir, pero difícil para Islamabad de obedecer. Washington está confrontando al frágil gobierno civil de Pakistán con un dilema. O empieza una guerra civil contra una parte de su población o Estados Unidos utilizará ataques bombardeando desde aviones sin pilotos que matarán a muchas personas civiles en las llamadas Zonas Tribales y en Beluchistán.

La enorme ofensiva pakistaní que acaba de tener lugar en las provincias de la frontera ya ha resultado en bombardeos diarios en ciudades importantes de Pakistán, algunos dirigidos contra instalaciones militares y policiales, por las fuerzas anti-Estados Unidos y anti-gubernamentales. Otros bombardeos caen sobre la población civil, y es difícil saber quiénes son los responsables.

Las exigencias de los Estados Unidos en Pakistán están complicadas por el apoyo anterior del Ejército Pakistaní al Talibán que ayudó a llevarlos al poder en Afganistán en 1996 con el objetivo de es-

tablecer un régimen estable. Algunos en el ejército y la policía secreta de Pakistán preferirían un régimen del Talibán en Afganistán a muchas otras posibilidades. Así, la intensificación estadounidense en Afganistán, y la presión sobre Pakistán, podrían resultar en una guerra civil en un país de 170 millones personas y que tiene armas nucleares.

El Talibán hace una propuesta

La propaganda estadounidense sobre Afganistán, incluyendo el discurso de Obama el primero de diciembre, agrupa juntos el Talibán, al-Qaeda, las fuerzas insurgentes pakistaníes, y toda la resistencia de Afganistán. La verdad es más complicada.

La resistencia afgana está compuesta por el Talibán, de grupos locales armados que tienen lealtades tribales, y de afganos laicos cuya política tiene su raíz en el gobierno revolucionario de 1978-1991. Aparentemente al-Qaeda también participa aunque tiene menos de 100 miembros según los cálculos de Washington.

Al-Qaeda no tiene ningún miembro afgano y consiste en la mayor parte de sauditas y egipcios. Se ha responsabilizado de los ataques del 11 de septiembre contra Estados Unidos. Al-Qaeda y su líder Osama bin-Laden, quien fue satanizado como el mayor enemigo de los Estados Unidos después del 11 de septiembre pero al cual casi ni se oye nombrar, estaban apoyados al principio por los Estados Unidos. En aquellos días al-Qaeda suministró luchadores voluntarios contra las tropas soviéticas que habían estado ayudando al gobierno progresista afgano en los años 80. Al-Qaeda se volvió en contra de los Estados Unidos después de que tropas estadounidenses ocuparan bases en Arabia Saudita.

El Talibán, que se desarrolló de un grupo juvenil de fundamentalistas religiosos, dirigió el gobierno afgano desde 1996 con un programa reaccionario muy opresivo contra las mujeres, semejante a la mayoría de los grupos que hoy en día respaldan al títere régimen afgano. El Talibán fue derrocado por la invasión estadounidense en octubre del 2001. Aunque en esa época el Talibán era muy poco sofisticado, en los ocho años de ocupación el Talibán se ha convertido en el grupo más importante de la resistencia afgana, la cual controla 11 de las 34 provincias de Afganistán.

La primera respuesta del Talibán al discurso de Obama fue decir: "El aumento de tropas estadounidenses no tendrá ningún impacto (sobre la guerra), sino que dará a los muyahidines más posibilidades de multiplicar sus ataques contra ellos y por otra parte sacudirá la ya frágil economía estadounidense". (South Asia News, 2 de diciembre)

El Talibán también prometió no "entrar en el Oeste" si los Estados Unidos y la OTAN se retiran de Afganistán. (Wall Street Journal, 5 de diciembre)

Por lo visto, no es el Talibán cuya política ha traído caos y muerte al Asia Central y del Sur, sino el imperialismo estadounidense. □