

CHURCH CHILD ABUSE SCANDAL

Catholics have stood up and exposed institutional, widespread abuse and cover-ups by the church hierarchy. But right-wingers are trying to turn it into an anti-gay crusade.

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UNION-BUSTING TERRORISM

Bosses have upped the ante. Taking their cue from George W. Bush, they proclaim, "You're either with corporate policy or a terrorist." Boston school bus driver Marcus Jean is a victim.

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'ATTENTION SHOPPERS!'

Kmart's announcement of mass layoffs and store closings hit thousands of working-class families. But the workers could turn it around with a struggle for their right to what they built.

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'Stop war on Iraq before it starts'

Coalition says all out for April 20 protests

On March 19 the International ANSWER coalition released the following statement on the grave danger of a U.S. attack on Iraq. Many organizations came together to form ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War and End Racism—after the Sept. 11 events when the Bush administration launched a wave of anti-immigrant, pro-war measures. The coalition organized the first national protests against the U.S. military threats, drawing a total of 50,000 demonstrators to Washington, D.C., and San Francisco on Sept. 29, 2001. ANSWER also held protests in 75 cities across the U.S. on Oct. 27 demanding an end to the Pentagon bombing of Afghanistan. Since then the administration has gone even further in threatening countries around the world with nuclear weapons and laying out the scenario for an invasion of Iraq.

This statement of the coalition explains the urgent necessity of organizing to build mass demonstrations in front of the White House and in San Francisco on April 20 to repudiate Bush's current war plans.

The Washington Post front-page headline of March 14 couldn't be clearer: "U.S. will take action against Iraq, Bush says." Bush made it a central point in his March 13 press conference that the U.S. will do whatever it takes to overthrow the government in Iraq. The U.S. seeks to replace it with a regime that will function as a proxy for U.S. interests in the region.

When Vice President Dick Cheney traveled to England this week he requested a commitment of 25,000 British troops to be part of a larger 250,000

invasion force for war in Iraq (The Independent, March 8). Some in Blair's cabinet may split on the issue. The British and European press are ridiculing Bush's war plan and more and more public sentiment is crystallizing into anti-war protests.

A new war in Iraq seems like madness to most of the world. It is madness! Will we sit by and let hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and thousands of young GIs perish so that super hawks in the administration can fulfill their right-wing Rambo-like fantasies?

The people of the United States must act now! The clock is ticking. In the coming months the Bush administration plans to launch the largest U.S. ground and air war since Vietnam unless they are stopped by the mobilization of popular power.

We can expect worldwide protest against the coming war but the whole world will be looking to see if the people of the United States are capable of mounting mass mobilization and resistance to a government that speaks in their name and is preparing to send their young people to kill and be killed in large numbers.

Bush's cynical use of anti-terrorism

Iraq had nothing to do with the Sept. 11 attack. Endless searching by the CIA turned up nothing. When U.S. workers were killed by anthrax attacks last fall the Bush administration spent months in an "intense effort" to link the attacks to Iraq so that the administration would have an excuse to launch a new war against Iraq, even after they

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'A DECLARATION OF WAR'

The Korean ambassador says that's how his country interprets Bush's infamous 'Axis of Evil' speech and subsequent nuclear threats. And it is preparing counter-measures.

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VIETNAM: WHAT COURAGE LOOKS LIKE

It was a struggle for liberation that inspired the world. Now everyone can see it through the lens of Vietnamese photographers who risked their lives taking exquisite and powerful photographs.

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Church child-abuse scandal

Where is it leading?

By Leslie Feinberg

"In the worst scandal ever to hit the American Catholic Church, as many as 500 priests, by some estimates, have been accused of sexually molesting children. Already, the church has paid tens of millions of dollars to victims, most of whom were abused decades ago, and it still faces dozens of unsettled lawsuits. Worse, the bishops themselves have been accused by critics of coddling known offenders and hushing up victims who complain."

Sounds like today's news? It was published in Newsweek—July 12, 1993.

A year earlier, then-Boston Archbishop Bernard Law had called down "God's power onto the media" for their reports that priest James Porter stood accused of multiple child rapes.

Law also proclaimed in 1992 "that tough new policies would prevent the archdiocese from ever again turning a blind eye to priests who abuse parishioners. What's more, he pledged a thorough review of past accusations to root out any pedophile priests who remained in their posts." (USA Today, March 18, 2002)

How many children—boys and girls—have been raped since Law made that promise? The church hierarchy, behind its strategy of secrecy and silence, has the best guesstimate. Its undemocratic, centralized institutional structure—particularly through the confidential conduit of confession—gives those at the apex of authority knowledge of psychological disturbance in the clerical ranks.

But "The bishops have resisted attempts to do studies on this, and the Vatican is death on any empirical, scientific study on the celibacy or sexuality of the priesthood," notes the Rev. Thomas Doyle, priest and canonical lawyer. (Washington Post, March 16) Doyle helped author a 1985 internal report on the magnitude of child sexual abuse by clergy, known succinctly as "The Manual."

A March 18 Boston Phoenix online report states that as far back as the early 1970s the Vatican was warned about potential problems with child-abusing priests. Yet although the highest ranks of the Vatican were cognizant of the crisis, no significant changes were ordered.

Today, "conservative estimates put the number of victims at more than 10,000; in the meantime, an estimated 3,000 priests have been indicted for sexually assaulting minors, according to victim-support groups." (phoenix.com)

Serial sexual abuse of children by priests has been reported in Dallas; Santa Fe, N.M.; Fall River, Mass.; Santa Rosa, Calif.; Philadelphia; Manchester, N.H.; Fargo, N.D.; St. Louis, Mo.; Los Angeles; Long Island and New York City.

How have church higher-ups dealt with this dire circumstance? For nearly two decades the Roman Catholic Church officialdom has blamed the victims, sued them for slander, hired investigators to incriminate the abused, intimidated witnesses, put the burden of proof on the children and their families, concealed evidence, stonewalled court proceedings and denied any knowledge. (phoenix.com)

Equally shocking is the charge that those in the upper echelons of the church quietly spirited known child rapists from parish to parish to keep the abuse under wraps.

Priest John Geoghan is now serving a 10-year sentence for indecent assault on a 10-year-old child—one of 120 children he is accused of abusing. Law, who admits he was notified about Geoghan's child abuse in September 1984, is reportedly named in 25 lawsuits charging that he covered up this serial child assault. (phoenix.com)

Law, an official in the upper ranks of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is now one of eight cardinals in the United States and heads the fourth-largest diocese here.

"He is a senior member of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), a canonical body that makes high-level recommendations for the American Catholic hierarchy on pastoral practices, inter-religious affairs, and government policy. One Boston attorney who handles clergy sexual-abuse cases says that 'suing Law is almost like suing the pope.'" (phoenix.com)

Vatican sounds tocsin for anti-gay crusade

It is the sheer bravery of the victims and their loved ones that has elevated societal awareness about the scope of this child rape. They are coming forward knowing they face ostracism because they are perceived as "attacking a divine institution."

Church authorities are attempting to shield scandal's glare by imposing gag orders as part of out-of-court settlements. But it's costly.

The Boston Herald and Boston Globe reported in early March that the city's archdiocese might have already

paid \$100 million in settlements. The Globe estimates that the national cost could be approaching \$1 billion.

As a result, the immense wealth of the Roman Catholic Church is being tapped at a time when, like every moneyed institution with vast capital holdings in transnational banks and corporations, it is already feeling the impact of the worldwide economic recession.

And in a recent Boston Globe opinion piece, Mary Jo Bane—professor of public policy and management at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and one of Cardinal Law's parishioners—called on congregations to withhold "contributions to the archdiocese until the church becomes more open and participatory."

In early March the Boston archdiocese was obliged to announce a six-month extension of its \$300-million capital campaign because of a slow-down in contributions.

This is a coast-to-coast problem for the church. In Los Angeles, an angry Catholic schoolteacher asks, if the Archdiocese has millions to pay out in settlements, "why can't they pay me a decent salary?" (Los Angeles Times, March 15)

A March 14 Boston Phoenix editorial concludes, "Rank-and-file members of the Church are clamoring for change. The reactionary hierarchy that leads them opposes that change. Just as the civil-rights movement slowly but surely battled the forces of segregation in the 1950s and 1960s, and, in the years that followed, the women's-rights crusade and the movement for gay and lesbian rights forced societal change, so too could a grass-roots movement of Catholics force much-needed change on an unresponsive institution."

But the top leadership of the church and its most reactionary secular support are trying to deflect and divert this rage and revulsion in a rightward direction.

The pope's chief spokesperson, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, stunned and angered progressive people everywhere when he told the New York Times in early March that the answer to child rape by priests is that gay men "just cannot be ordained. ... You cannot be in this field."

The church had avowed "homosexuality" was the problem, not "homosexuals": Hate the sin, love the sinner. But "Navarro-Valls aligned himself and the Vatican

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WW CALENDAR

NEW YORK

Sat., March 23

Evening in Solidarity with Political Prisoners in the U.S. Free the Five Cuban Patriots, the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition, the PROLIBERTAD Puerto Rican Prisoners Committee, the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee and the Jericho Movement, as well as others, will come together at this event. 4-7 p.m. At the Martin Luther King Center, 310 W. 43rd St., Manhattan. For info (917) 318-1161 or (212) 926-5757.

Sun., March 24

Book signing for "Hidden Agenda: U.S./NATO Takeover of Yugoslavia." Meet the authors and editors. Short program including remarks by Ramsey Clark and a report from the trial at The Hague. Refreshments. At the law offices of Ramsey Clark, 36

E. 12th St., 6th Floor, Manhattan. For info (212) 633-6646.

SAN FRANCISCO

Sat., April 20

Protest the REAL Axis of Evil: War, Racism, Poverty. 11 a.m. gather Dolores Park. Noon march. 1 p.m. rally Civic Center. For info (415) 821-6545 or www.InternationalANSWER.org.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sat., April 20

March on Washington Against War & Racism. For info (212) 633-6646 or www.InternationalANSWER.org.

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Meetings support five Cubans held in U.S.

Not spies but anti-terrorist heroes

By Bill Massey
Chicago

A broad-based campaign to release the five U.S.-held Cuban political prisoners was kicked off on the weekend of March 15-17 with three impressive and well-attended meetings. In a whirlwind tour, Florentino Batista of the Cuban Interests Section and Gloria La Riva of the National Committee to Free the Five spoke in Chicago, Milwaukee and Detroit demanding the freedom of Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández and René González. The five were wrongfully convicted and maliciously sentenced to long terms ranging from 15 years to life.

Batista and La Riva showed how the five Cuban heroes had sacrificed years away from their country, family and friends to halt death-dealing attacks from U.S.-based terrorist groups. Since the 1959 Cuban Revolution, terrorists based in Miami have taken more than 3,000 Cuban lives with the knowledge and complicity of U.S. government officials. Countless thousands of others have been wounded and injured in these sustained and well-planned violent attacks.

It was only after U.S. officials refused to act and showed their support for the attacks that the five Cubans left their country on the extremely dangerous mission of infiltrating violent anti-Cuban organizations in the U.S. They were charged with obtaining information that would prevent the further loss of lives at the hands of the brutal murderers.

Florentino Batista said, "If anyone had known before the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, wouldn't we have wanted them to warn of the impending disaster and to have prevented the loss of so many lives? The people of the U.S. and the world would have seen them as heroes. They would not have been thrown into prison. Only the accomplices of such terrorism would imprison them, and that is just what has happened to Ramón, Fernando, Antonio, Gerardo and René."



WW PHOTO: GLORIA LA RIVA

Participants at Detroit meeting to Free the Five.

La Riva announced legal appeals and the gathering of a massive number of petitions to George Bush demanding their release. The petitions cite injustice that is the stock in trade shown to African American and other oppressed groups in this country every day, and that is now being visited upon thousands of immigrants from the Middle East, South Asia and many other parts of the world.

La Riva called upon the audiences to take petitions to meetings, rallies and other gathering places. She called for the formation of groups to gather petitions at the April 19 through 22 anti-war events in Washington, D.C., and at the demonstrations in San Francisco.

Those wishing petitions can go to the web page www.actionsf.org. For more information call (415) 821-6545 or e-mail freethethefive@actionsf.org. At each meeting cards were distributed and messages to the prisoners were written and signed by those in attendance. Each prisoner will receive cards from each of the meetings.

A broad range of progressive groups sponsored the three meetings. The Milwaukee



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

Gloria La Riva and Episcopal Church representatives discuss ways to support the Five.

waukee Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba, the Justice for Cuba Coalition in Detroit and the Chicago Chapter of the International Action Center were the initiating organizations.

Local chapters of the Free the Five Committee are in formation. Speakers participated from the Palestine Aid Society, the African American Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and Aaron Patterson, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, the Angela Davis Copwatch and Campaign Against Racial Profiling, the Greater Milwaukee Green Party, Voces de la Frontera and the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange.

Victory for La Peña center

By Rebecca Hannah Finkel
Bronx, N.Y.

A New York Supreme Court judge on March 15 ordered the reopening of *Vamos a La Peña* of the Bronx and dismissed all charges against the community center.

The Bronx courtroom was filled with supporters of *La Peña*—including African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, the group *Daughters of Rebellion*, and International Action Center delegates—who had earlier picketed outside.

The police had alleged that *La Peña* was operating in an unsafe manner and participating in illegal activity. This is only the latest development in a 15-year struggle with the police department. *La Peña* has struggled to remain open so it could offer the South Bronx immigrant

community a space for activities ranging from progressive political meetings to craft workshops and literacy classes.

History of police raids

For 15 years, the police have attacked *La Peña*, carrying out 34 raids and issuing 30 tickets, three of them since 9/11 as police repression has increased all over the city. Carlos Moreno, the lawyer representing *La Peña*, stated that, "Common sense would say that if the police continue to issue tickets and the judge continues to dismiss them time and time again, due to absolute lack of evidence, the motive behind these tickets is only harassment."

In order to conjure up false pretexts for raids, the police have accused *La Peña* of operating as a nightclub because dancing was taking place. *La Peña* not

only offers space to this community not available anywhere else, but it offers programs such as *Food for the Homeless* and helps people fighting against police brutality and for human rights.

This ruling does not mean that the battle to keep *La Peña's* doors open is over. The judge ordered Moreno to provide proof of an existing law that says organizations such as *La Peña* are allowed to operate as they have been. "It is only a matter of time before another raid occurs," says Moreno. "The police harass *La Peña* due solely to the political work *La Peña* participates in, including fighting against police brutality."

Because *La Peña* was shut down on March 1, an International Women's Day event was postponed to March 24 at 2 p.m.

MUMIA from death row Of cops and courts

Several of the cops convicted in connection with the vicious, brutal, terrorist assault on Abner Louima in a Brooklyn police precinct have been graciously granted their freedom by a U.S. appeals court recently. Citing insufficient evidence, and the ineffectiveness of trial counsel, the state's highest federal tribunal reversed the convictions of Charles Schwarz, Thomas Bruder and Thomas Wiese on conspiracy and civil rights charges.

The Abner Louima case, as many are aware, was a case of unmitigated savagery, when police wrongfully arrested a young Black man outside a night club—allegedly for assaulting a cop—rushed him, manacled, to a police station in Brooklyn and there pulled him down and rammed a broomstick up his backside, and then took the bloody, feces-covered stick and plunged it down his throat, shattering his teeth along the way.

That such a devilish act of torture, twisted hatred, and violence took place at all in modern-day America is telling of the state of police-community relations in New York. That it happened in a well-traveled police station house and no one, to this date, has ever come forward as a witness is an indictment that even this high august court cannot withdraw.

No one heard his scream. No one saw his attackers beat, pummel, or brutalize him.

No one. Not one cop. In a place swarming with cops. Far be it from this writer to suggest that the cops should somehow have less constitutional rights than the average Joe. The point is, however, that they have considerably more!

When cops get busted, it often happens only after a grand jury has charged them. Average folks have a bill of information filed against them.

When they do go to trial, they are represented by the best legal talent that money can buy, often paid by their local lodge. Average folks must scrape the money together to pay for a lawyer, or accept the services of a public defender.

If they are convicted—which is exceedingly rare—it is usually on lesser offenses. Far rarer still are they charged with the more serious crimes. If sentenced, they get moderate terms. Average folks are deluged with charges, and receive heavy sentences.

And even in the unlikely event that they are harshly sentenced, there are a plethora of cases where cops who have stolen, lied on the stand, been corrupt or brutal, have had their sentences cut by judges who are not known for their leniency towards the average accused.

From the barbaric LAPD brutes, to the thieves of the infamous 39th District in Philadelphia, to those who aided or abetted the sick and depraved terrorist attack on a Black Haitian in Brooklyn's police precinct, judges have been openly solicitous of their every right, for, truth be told, they are ever brothers, under the robe/uniform, who look out for each other.

Retail giant kills 22,000 jobs

Who should own Kmart's assets?

By Greg Butterfield

Kmart's announcement of mass layoffs and store closings struck thousands of working-class families and hundreds of communities like a hard punch in the gut. But the retail giant's bankruptcy could also give Kmart workers the opportunity to assert their rights to ownership and control of the company. The damaging job cuts could be reversed.

Layoffs have loomed for Kmart workers since Jan. 22, when the country's second-largest discount retailer declared bankruptcy after losing out to rivals Wal-Mart and Target during their cutthroat holiday season competition.

On March 8, Kmart announced it would close 284 stores and lay off 22,000 workers—almost 10 percent of its workforce. Cities and towns in 40 states and Puerto Rico will be affected. Industry experts said more layoffs would come.

Laid-off Kmart workers won't get any severance pay. Some reports say Kmart may stop contributing to employees' 401k retirement plans.

But not everyone is suffering.

On March 6, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Susan Pierson Sonderby approved \$150 million in bonuses for 9,000 top Kmart officials and managers. Sonderby also authorized Kmart to draw on a \$2 billion loan for its corporate restructuring. The loan—engineered by JP Morgan Chase, GE Capital Corp., and other giant banks—is the biggest ever granted to a bankrupt company.

Chuck Conway resigned as Kmart CEO March 15, clearing the way for a tough-nosed "restructuring" team with a reputation for killing jobs. Conway floats into the

sunset on a golden parachute worth at least \$9 million.

Conway still faces two class-action lawsuits by Kmart investors. Investors say he misled them about the company's financial health. Still, the stock market appreciates a jobs bloodbath. Kmart stock rose 4 percent March 8.

Union objects to bonuses

UNITE—the Union of Needle Trades, Industrial and Textile Employees—represents 3,000 Kmart workers at regional distribution centers. The union objected to management's bonus plan, saying the money should be used to preserve jobs. UNITE's lawyer was rebuffed by the court.

In February, the Detroit News and Free Press reported that Kmart's political contributions and lobbying had grown as its business headed south.

"During the two-year 2000 campaign cycle, Kmart wrote checks for \$555,000 to political party causes, mostly favoring Republicans," the paper noted. "In 2000, Kmart reported a \$244 million loss."

Last October—less than three months before declaring bankruptcy—Kmart sent a \$15,000 check to the Republican National Committee.

After these large political contributions, the Kmart bosses got kid-glove treatment from the federal bankruptcy court.

Cutthroat competition

The economic crisis slamming workers is the result of capitalist overproduction. Businesses in every field have stockpiled more goods than they can sell at a profit.

For decades Kmart was known as the workers' department store. But the chain fell victim to aggressive competitors like

Wal-Mart.

While workers have been spending less due to layoffs and lower-paying jobs, sales at Wal-Mart have increased as people try to stretch their dollars.

Wal-Mart won the battle by consistently undercutting Kmart's prices. Its sales increased 8 percent during the holidays, while Kmart's continued to drop.

There is not only overproduction of products; there is overproduction of discount stores. Many small and medium-sized towns have two, three or even more big discount stores. In areas ravaged by loss of heavy industry, these discount stores are often among the biggest employers left.

Do Kmart workers—including many women, people of color, seniors and young people—have to accept these layoffs?

Do their communities—where government officials often gave big tax breaks and other incentives to attract chain stores in the first place—have to accept the loss of jobs and revenue?

Who owns Kmart?

In his 1986 book "High Tech, Low Pay," Workers World Party Chair Sam Marcy discussed strategies for workers to fight back against mass layoffs.

Bankruptcy, the veteran union strategist said, "is an ideal opportunity for the workers to intervene on the basis that they are the principal creditor, on two grounds.

"One," Marcy wrote, "they are indispensable to production.

"And second, they are truly the most important creditors to the employers because they alone advance something of real value—their labor power—before getting paid. Few if any employers ever pay workers before they submit to exploitation,



PHOTO: UNITE!

Greensboro Kmart workers celebrate union victory in 1996.

whether that is for a day, a week or a month.

"By comparison," explained Marcy, "if a bank advances an individual a loan for a thousand dollars, the bank collects its interest before any of the principal is considered paid back.

"It is otherwise with the workers. They advance credit to the employers by virtue of the fact that they advance their labor power for a period of time prior to getting paid. No other creditors do that, only the workers."

Kmart workers can't expect any help from the bankruptcy court. But if they assert their ownership of the stores, they can force the courts and government to pay attention. This might include seizing and occupying stores slated to close.

A bold offensive by workers in one or two cities could spark a broad national movement, like the sit-down strikes of the 1930s in steel and auto.

Kmart is uniquely suited to this. Because of the vast number of stores and communities affected, there is potential for powerful solidarity.

To succeed, Kmart workers would have to reach out to their co-workers in other cities and make common cause with labor, community and student groups, and workers caught in similar straits—like those at LTV Steel and Enron.

They could also reach out to their sisters and brothers at Wal-Mart, Target and other discount stores. Together these workers could mount an industry-wide struggle for union rights and workers' control over the distribution of goods.

When workers are parents

UMichigan union wins childcare

By Jane Cutter
Ann Arbor, Mich.

"We did it!" Members of the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) of the American Federation of Teachers at the University of Michigan cheered and hugged one another at a mass membership meeting March 17, one day after a new contract was signed by negotiators. The university was forced to give in to union demands on all the major issues, including an historic victory on childcare.

Members of the union, which represents Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSAs), had been engaged in negotiations for four and a half months. The university had essentially refused to bargain on any economic issues, especially childcare.

An indefinite strike had been authorized to begin March 19. But on March 11, GSIs and GSSAs walked out in a one-day job action that closed the doors on hundreds of courses taught by graduate students. It also shut down a major construction site, as building trades workers honored the picket lines.

On March 12, the university came to the table, suddenly willing to talk about the union's major issues, including childcare.

Ten percent of GEO members have children. The average cost for full-time childcare in Ann Arbor is about \$800 a month—about half what many GSIs take home. Space in the high-quality centers run by the university is limited and waiting lists are long. There are no university facilities for infants younger than 18 months.

GEO members ranked childcare their number two priority after wages. After the March 11 walkout, hundreds of GSIs signed a pledge to go on indefinite strike if the childcare issue were not addressed.

Rachel Meyers of the GEO Childcare Committee said, "The university team kept saying that the childcare issue was 'bigger than we are.' But we proved them wrong with our strike and our commitment to this issue."

What was won regarding childcare? The university already has a childcare subsidy program. It is doled out to students based on "need" as determined by the Federal Financial Aid formula. Under this formula, some student families with two wage earners struggling to get by have been turned down for making "too much" money. Others qualify but apply after the funds have run out for the term.

GEO won a substantial increase in the per-child subsidy amount, from \$1,000 to

\$1,700 per semester for the first child, and from \$500 to \$850 for each additional child, up to three children. Eligible GSIs and GSSAs are now guaranteed the subsidy amount.

Three GEO members will be on a Student-Parent Implementation Task Force to oversee the spending of \$450,000 over the next three years to make quality childcare more available. This committee will also have input into the eligibility guidelines for the childcare subsidy program.

The union won important gains for GSIs working less than one-quarter time, who currently don't have a full tuition waiver and don't get health benefits. These instructors now will have to pay 20 percent less toward their tuition. They will also have the option of buying into the health insurance program and will receive a lump-sum payment to assist in that. GEO becomes the first graduate student union to win access to health benefits for all members.

A discriminatory "language testing and training" program for international GSIs has been eliminated. The new contract stipulates that if ANY prospective employees are to have their communication skills tested, than ALL prospective employees should be so tested. Furthermore, all new GSIs are now guaranteed four hours of

compensated training.

In making hiring decisions for GSI positions, departments can no longer take into consideration the cost of a student's tuition, which is higher for out-of-state and international students.

The level of solidarity and organization during these negotiations was inspiring. Hundreds of union members walked the lines during the March 11 job action, joined by some 400 undergraduate students and other supporters from the community. GEO members sat in the conference room during all negotiations. During the childcare negotiating sessions, GEO parents packed the conference room, which was decorated with life-size self-portraits of GEO children. Dozens of other members were at the GEO office phone banking and signing members up for picket duty.

At a party after the contract was signed, members were tired but elated. Some were already turning their attention to enforcing the new gains. GEO bargaining team member Irfan Nooruddin said, "It's not about fighting for what you think you can win—it's about fighting for what you think is right."

Jane Cutter is a graduate student at the University of Michigan and a parent.

When boss plays 'terrorism' card

Unionists rally behind Haitian worker

By Boston Labor's ANSWER

West Roxbury Court reverberated with chants of "Drop the racist frame-up charges," "Stop union busting" and "Marcus is innocent, Laidlaw is the crime" on March 15.

Over 50 unionists and their supporters had packed the court and picketed outside to defend Marcus Jean, a Haitian long-time school bus driver and union militant in Steel Workers Local 8751. He had been fired from his job and accused of threatening to blow up the building of his employer—a charge he vigorously denies.

Despite an extraordinary police presence of squad cars, motorcycles, riot gear and a video "intelligence" crew, all designed to further orchestrate the charade that Jean is a dangerous man and to intimidate his supporters, the protesters stood their ground. Anti-war and Palestinian activists plus members of Community Church of Boston joined with rank-and-file members and officers of Hotel and Restaurant union Local 26, AFSCME Local 3650, Auto Workers and a strong delegation from Local 8751 representing all four school bus yards.

Laidlaw Inc. is a mammoth, transnational transportation corporation. Since filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy last June, it has pursued every avenue to maximize profits by cutting wages, benefits, jobs and union rights. In this climate those workers who resist union busting are targeted for attack.

In the wake of Sept. 11 corporations have been given the green light to dramatically up the ante in their union busting. They have a new tool: bogus claims of "terrorism."

'Terrorism': management's new tool

Taking their cue from anti-union bigot George W. Bush, they proclaim, "You're either with Laidlaw corporate policy or with the terrorists." Marcus Jean was Local 8751's first victim.

On Jan. 30 Jean was involved in a minor disagreement with another driver over a blocked bus parking space. It was no big deal. Assistant Terminal Manager Diane Kelly talked to him about it and the matter was closed—no warning, no discipline. The next day Terminal Manager Rick McLaughlin, in a provocative and harassing manner, tried to again interrogate Jean about this incident.

This is a gross violation of his union rights. The matter had been closed. Jean objected. He called McLaughlin on this racist discrimination and refused to submit to unjust management harassment, which was in clear violation of his contract rights.

Jean stood his ground and argued his point, but never threatened McLaughlin



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Marcus Jean (center) at courthouse.

or anybody else. Laidlaw management then went to the police, cynically exploiting the post-Sept. 11 climate. The company claimed that Jean repeatedly threatened to blow up the building and that he posed a serious "terrorist" threat to the property and employees.

Witnesses are prepared to testify for the Haitian worker. Laidlaw's star witness, Diane Kelly, is "no longer with the company." Word is that McLaughlin fired her for an alleged assault against him.

Laidlaw workers say this case takes place in the context of literally dozens of instances involving harassment, intimidation and threats by McLaughlin against drivers at the Readville bus yard. They say he has made it a standard practice to falsely accuse drivers of threatening him, and that last month management met with the union local and international in Readville to hear some of the many complaints.

While Laidlaw's wild charges are a racist disgrace, it is even more appalling that the police and courts are seriously prosecuting this case. Laidlaw appeared before the Clerk Magistrate with not one witness to back up McLaughlin's story. The company's "labor relations" chief John Martis told the clerk that McLaughlin had been given his "marching orders" from corporate bosses to prosecute this case.

Corporation-directed government attacks on unions are nothing new. The Teamsters, AFSCME, Service Employees and Local 8751 have all had to fight against this management tool. Years ago, the cor-

porations hired armed goon squads, the infamous Pinkertons, to attack unions. Now they get the government to do their dirty work free of charge. Bush's "homeland security" only makes matters worse.

National anti-immigrant frenzy

A national wave of government-directed anti-immigrant hysteria is sweeping the country. Racist violence, racist profiling and denial of civil liberties have become the law of the land, whether it's Arab people detained without charges, immigrant workers arrested and facing federal charges at Boston's Logan airport, or victims of racist violence. The government has sent a clear message by releasing the sadistic police in the Abner Louima case while at the same time prosecuting an innocent Haitian worker like Marcus Jean.

Labor activists within the coalition Act Now to Stop War and End Racism recently formed Boston Labor's ANSWER. They have joined with Local 8751 Rank and File United to establish the Marcus Jean Defense Committee. The committee has secured the top criminal attorney in the region, people's lawyer Barry Wilson. It is launching a full-scale, all-out defense campaign to mobilize support.

It is organizing to pack the court at every appearance, get endorsers, have picket lines, press conferences and letter campaigns to the district attorney to drop the charges. It plans to spread the word in union halls, community meetings, churches and on the Internet.

Rachel Nasca of AFSCME 3650 states, "Workers throughout the country must rally to Marcus Jean's defense. This case concretely exposes the fact that the U.S. war has a domestic front—workers, their unions and the poor. This criminal corporate behavior is a threat to every union in the country. Union busting and racism under the guise of 'protecting homeland security' must be stopped."

For more information and to support this campaign, contact the Marcus Jean Defense Committee, c/o Boston Labor's ANSWER, (617) 522-6626, or visit the web site www.iacoston.org/LaborsAnswer.

New York

Contract helps low-paid workers

By a PSC member
New York

The contract reached March 7 by the Professional Staff Congress, a local of the American Federation of Teachers, and the City University of New York follows the city pattern of a 9-percent wage increase over 27 months. This increase, however, is going to be distributed to increase equality.

Such provisions are so unusual, management claims, that it is having trouble figuring out what they will cost. Twelve days after the agreement was initialed, details still have not been officially released.

But two major areas have been discussed in "The Chief," a New York newspaper that specializes in municipal labor news. They

are: How much will the new contract narrow the gap between full-time faculty members and the 7,000 adjunct, part-time professors, who teach a majority of CUNY's courses? And will the lowest-paid staff categories get a special boost?

These two issues were very important in the campaign that brought the current leadership into office in the spring of 2000. They were a major focus in the protests, picket lines and letter-writing campaign that the union organized.

Since a major thrust in higher education right now is to use part-time, low-paid, teachers, any gains in equity made by the PSC would have an impact far beyond the 17,000 people it represents.

MICHIGAN

Rally for higher jobless pay

Some 2,000 workers took a break from a morning of intense, mass lobbying in Lansing, Mich., on March 13 to rally at noon on the State Capitol steps. Efforts to increase unemployment benefits, frozen for the past seven years, have been subverted by the reactionary majority in the Michigan State Legislature. Instead of raising weekly benefits to \$415, as sought by the unions, Senate Bill 1126 would offer only about \$350.

The lawmakers also are trying to institute a penalty-waiting week—the first week of being laid off—when the unemployed

would get no benefits. This "waiting week" was taken out of the law over 30 years ago. The bill would put a \$12 tax on all workers to pay for any increase in the weekly benefit for the unemployed.

Speaking in front of a giant banner proclaiming "Jobless workers can't wait a week to eat," leaders from many unions, community leaders and religious figures blasted the mean-spiritedness of the Lansing state officials. Workers had come from around the state to try to stop passage of this bill.

—David Sole

Chicago fires school counselors

Hundreds rally to save their jobs

By a member of Local 1600, AFT
Chicago

Hundreds of students, faculty and community members marched in a huge multinational demonstration outside the board meeting of Chicago City Colleges on March 7 to try to stop the firing of the city college system's entire counseling service.

Native students drummed. Spanish-speaking students led chants in their language. People cheered as buses arrived from every neighborhood, filling two blocks of sidewalk.

Everyone understood this was an attack on workers, students and the community. The board plans to hire untrained, part-time, non-union "registration specialists" to replace tenured counselors with masters and Ph.D. degrees who have been union workers enjoying full-time benefits.

This attack on union workers began last year, when the board "privatized" the business offices of the CCC. It is threatening to do the same with the janitorial staff. Librarians are also being

threatened with job cuts.

CCC provides affordable—but not necessarily free—higher education to working class students of Chicago. Many of these students struggle as underpaid workers and single parents, with all the problems of living in a society where profit comes before human needs. In addition to conducting classes that help orient students to college—many are the first in their families to go beyond high school—the counselors assist needy students in finding emotional and other resources.

This is one more demonstration of this society's complete lack of commitment to public education. With rising unemployment, the government would rather invest in prisons than provide skills and education for youth and others trying to improve their lives.

A press conference was held at Operation Push last Saturday to build awareness and public support for the counselors and students. As one staff member put it, "The war is on."

Korean ambassador on Bush's speech

'We consider it to be a declaration of war'

By Deirdre Griswold

When President George W. Bush took the advice of his far-right counselors and used his State of the Union speech to slander North Korea, Iran and Iraq as an "Axis of Evil," his intent was to intimidate these countries, which are struggling to defend their sovereignty.

The reaction to the speech, not just from these three but from the whole world, was quite the opposite. Stung by Bush's extreme language and its hostile implications, governments and peoples alike condemned his words and the growing belligerence of the U.S. regime.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has lived with the threat of U.S. military attack for over half a century. It lost an estimated 3 million people when the U.S. tried to destroy socialist North Korea during the 1950-53 war on the Korean peninsula. It has many times over the years had to respond to saber rattling, military exercises on its borders, spy ships in its waters, attacks on its fishing boats, and other incidents emanating from the massive Pentagon presence surrounding this small country. The Koreans have refused to buckle under to U.S. pressure, and they have also exercised great restraint in these trying circumstances.

However, Bush's words were so extreme, so bellicose, that they have provoked an unprecedented response from the DPRK.

"We consider Bush's State of the Union address to be a de facto declaration of war on the DPRK," Pak Gil Yon told Workers World on March 15. Ambassador Pak is the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations. Since the U.S. has no diplomatic relations with North Korea, he is the highest-ranking official from that country stationed in the United States. He visited WW's editorial offices to be interviewed.



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD
DPRK Ambassador Pak Gil Yon

Ever since Bush's State of the Union address, said Ambassador Pak, there have been "shocking policy statements by the president, the secretary of state and the secretary of defense on the Korean issue."

Again, when Bush embarked on an Asian tour last month that took him to Japan and South Korea, the U.S. president "openly slandered the DPRK and its Supreme Headquarters, denying our political system," he added.

U.S. nullifies agreements

The ambassador drew attention to the recently aired Nuclear Policy Review of the U.S. Department of Defense that projects plans to use nuclear weapons against seven countries, including the DPRK. "This is a very serious development," underlined the ambassador, saying that it cancels earlier agreements between the two countries.

In a joint statement on June 11, 1993,

and again in an agreed-on framework for further discussion toward easing tension on the Korean peninsula signed on Oct. 21, 1994, the U.S. government under the Clinton administration had agreed not to threaten or use nuclear weapons against the DPRK. Bush's recent statements are a "nullification" of these agreements, said the ambassador.

"If this nuclear posture is confirmed, the DPRK will be forced to review the framework," he said. "This is the position of my country."

This is not just a war of words. The Pentagon has announced that the U.S. and South Korea will carry out joint military exercises on March 21-27 that will involve many U.S. forces and more than 500,000 troops from South Korea in combined exercises. "This is very, very dangerous and adventurous and will create a very serious situation on the Korean peninsula," said Pak. He added that there had not been such menacing exercises since the last "Team Spirit" war rehearsals took place in 1993.

"We consider Bush's announcement a declaration of war against my country," he reiterated, "and all counter-measures will be taken to defend the sovereignty of the country. We shall closely watch what the adventurous military brass do."

Ambassador Pak described relations between the U.S. and the DPRK as getting "worse and worse," and added that the inter-Korean dialogue between the north and south is now also very difficult. "South Korea is a close ally of the United States," said the ambassador, "and the Bush administration is making the situation worse."

Two years ago there seemed to be a great breakthrough in the hostility that has characterized relations between the north and the U.S.-occupied south. On June 14, 2000, a historic agreement was signed by DPRK leader Kim Jong Il and South Korean President Kim Dae Jung after a summit meeting in Pyongyang, capital of the DPRK.

Exclusive
WW interview

It was followed by several highly charged trips to the opposite side by family members in both countries who had been separated from close relatives for 50 years by the division of Korea. Since Bush's intensified belligerence against the north, however, the long-awaited moves toward normalization of relations and some degree of reunification have been quashed.

Instead, the DPRK must now be "in a state of high vigilance to defend our sovereignty," said Pak.

The economy of the DPRK has been strained for a decade by weather catastrophes exacerbated by the collapse of a major economic partner, the Soviet Union. In 1994, the Korean revolutionary leader Kim Il Sung, who had organized the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle since the days of Japanese rule, died. There was speculation in the imperialist media and press that the DPRK would have to abandon its socialist path and accommodate to U.S. demands in order to survive.

Instead, under the new leadership of Kim Jong Il, the Korean people and the Workers' Party of Korea rallied against their difficulties.

Referring to what Kim Jong Il has called his "army first policy," Ambassador Pak said that in light of the present threats from Washington, "We're very proud of our party policy, led by Comrade Kim Jong Il, which has given priority to defense issues so we could defend ourselves against aggression by the U.S."

These are serious but sober words from the representative of a country that knows from its own experience what war is, but also knows what it means to be a colony and is determined to resist with all its might.

Poverty in California

Children hungry in richest state

By Adrian Garcia
Los Angeles

Why is there never a shortfall in funds when the government promulgates war ventures?

The Bush administration is currently proclaiming to the U.S. public and the world that "we" are facing years of war. This shocking revelation garners little or no criticism from the major, so-called democratic media. Considering that the U.S. economy has been in decline, how is the Bush administration planning to pay for these years of war?

While this juggernaut war drive steamrolls forward, poverty continues to affect children throughout the country. The Bush administration's war against terrorism is simultaneously a war against the working class of the U.S. Nowhere is this more evident than in the richest state in the union, California.

The Los Angeles Times reported on

March 8 that the number of California children living in poverty rose by 430,000 during the go-go years of the 1990s. According to a study conducted by Kids Count, a project that monitors children throughout the U.S., 20 percent of California's children—nearly 1.8 million—live below the poverty level.

The response from Sacramento has been to move forward with budget cuts that will undoubtedly hurt those who are poorest, mainly immigrants and people of color.

In January Gov. Gray Davis proposed cutting \$2.6 billion in spending in the 2002-2003 budget. According to a Jan. 13 article in the Los Angeles Times, Davis is proposing to cut two elements of the state's "welfare-to-work" program, CalWORKS. The cuts will also freeze a cost-of-living increase in welfare benefits and aid to the disabled. Adding to the constraints on California's poor, the Bush administration announced it is proceeding with plans to place welfare recipients in jobs that pay less than

minimum wage.

Don't expect a stimulus package from Washington to provide aid in this dire situation. Congress is too busy granting \$100 billion in tax breaks to the ruling class. While the poor in California and the rest of the country face a gloomy and uncertain future, the Pentagon has been granted an additional \$48 billion for its war drive.

The attack on the working-class people of California does not stop here. The Los Angeles school board voted on March 5 to cut spending for this fiscal year by \$51 million. The Los Angeles Times reported on March 6 that the cuts will take money from accounts that had been earmarked for low-income schools. Board President Caprice Young, in defense of the budget cuts, had the audacity to claim: "These cuts today are not affecting people." What Young actually meant was that the cuts won't affect people who matter to the capitalists.

Los Angeles School Board Superintendent Roy Romer said the cuts were the least

disruptive choice. Unfortunately for the poor, they are always on the wrong side of these choices. It does not appear that the working-class people of Los Angeles were consulted about the cuts that will be affecting their children's education.

These decisions made at the expense of the poor expose the moral bankruptcy of the capitalist system. The fact that children are suffering is secondary. Cuban President Fidel Castro made this poignantly clear during a 1997 Food Summit in Rome, Italy. When delegates from countries around the world proposed that the number of the world's malnourished children be cut in half to 400 million, Castro protested by stating, "The very modesty of these goals is shameful. The world has enough food to feed everyone."

This nation certainly has enough wealth to care for its children. Yet the ruling class moves ahead with budget cuts while it funds wars that cause suffering around the world.

Israeli offensive fails

Intifada derails Cheney trip

By Richard Becker

Vice President Richard Cheney's much-ballyhooed trip through the Middle East didn't work out exactly as planned. It was knocked off track by the Palestinian struggle.

It was to be a grand tour highlighted by compliant Arab leaders embracing—or at least acquiescing to—the Bush administration's plans for a new, all-out war against Iraq.

Instead, Cheney was confronted at every stop in the Arab world—Egypt, Jordan and the oil-rich Gulf states—by opposition to such a new war, at least at the present time, and calls for Washington to do something about the escalating struggle between Israel and the Palestinians.

Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Abdullah, and the royal rulers of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were not making their demands on Cheney based upon real sympathy for the Palestinian people and their just cause. No, something different motivated their protestations to the VP: fear. Fear of their own peoples.

For nearly 18 months, the Palestinian Intifada, or uprising, has fought the Israeli occupation. Despite overwhelming military odds, the Palestinians have continued and escalated the struggle.

The Palestinians have suffered the overwhelming majority of casualties, contrary to the impression created by corporate media coverage here, which focuses on Israeli casualties.

At least 1,083 Palestinians have been killed, compared to 353 Israelis. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been wounded, more than 2,500 of them suffering permanent severe disabilities. Thousands more have been arrested and systematically tortured, and countless Palestinian homes destroyed by the Israeli army.

The Israeli military has increasingly used U.S.-supplied F-16 fighter-bombers, missile-firing helicopters and tanks against Palestinian population centers.

In late February, in response to a U.S.-inspired "new peace initiative" floated by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdallah, Israel launched its biggest military offensive since the 1982 Lebanon war.

Israel: colonial occupiers

Israeli battle tanks and infantry, supported by F-16s and Apache helicopters, invaded densely populated Palestinian

refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. The impoverished camps suffered heavy casualties and destruction. In the attacks on the Balata and Jenin camps, at least 30 Palestinians were killed and more than 200 wounded. Hundreds of homes were destroyed.

In the attack on Jabaliya camp in Gaza, the most populous camp and one of the poorest, 19 died in one day, with scores more wounded.

As the Israeli offensive grew to include 20,000 ground troops and hundreds of tanks, all the major cities and towns in the West Bank and Gaza were invaded.

The deliberate targeting of ambulances and hospitals highlighted the extreme brutality of the attack. Several health care workers were killed when clearly marked Red Crescent/Red Cross ambulances they were riding in were hit by Israeli tank fire as they attempted to bring wounded patients to hospitals.

Inside the cities and camps, the Israeli troops behaved in typical colonial occupier fashion. There were numerous reports, including in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, of Israeli soldiers engaging in widespread vandalism, destruction and theft of Palestinians' personal property.

In addition, the occupying army inflicted deliberate and extensive destruction on the Palestinian infrastructure, including water mains, power supplies and roads.

Thousands of Palestinian men and boys between the ages of 13 and 55 were rounded up and marched off blindfolded and bound. Many were beaten and some executed on the spot. The detainees were held

outside without food or water for many hours before being either officially arrested or released. Those taken into custody faced extended interrogation accompanied by the routine torture to which Palestinian political detainees are subjected.

The massive Israeli offensive in the West Bank and Gaza became the top news story all over the world. Throughout the Middle East, satellite television networks extensively covered the story, inspiring burning anger toward Israel and its main sponsor, the U.S., along with intensified solidarity with the Palestinians.

Images of a racist occupation army brutalizing the Palestinian civilian population—images seldom shown in the U.S.—are seen continually in the Arab countries.

Palestinians outgunned, but not defeated

Other images, just as important, were seen as well: those of poorly armed but extremely determined Palestinian fighters continuing to resist, of children throwing rocks at Israeli tanks rumbling through Palestinian towns. Even as the Israeli tanks withdrew from Ramallah, the lightly armed guerrillas continued to fire at them.

Combined, these images can create the most dangerous mix of popular sentiments from the point of view of the ruling elites: outrage at the occupiers and their collaborators; proud admiration for the resistance fighters.

Inflamed public opinion against the U.S. and Israel is viewed as menacing to their own interests by the pro-U.S. regimes in the Arab world. The nervousness of the Jordanian monarchy, which has been under the U.S. thumb for many decades, has been apparent in the regime's heavy-handed repression of any signs of popular protest. Palestinians comprise at least 60 percent of Jordan's population.

In early March, Jordanian security forces brutally repressed a spontaneous march of junior high school students in Amman, the country's capital. The students left their school and attempted to march to the U.S. Embassy in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. Security police severely beat the students, breaking bones and inflicting other serious injuries. A number of well-known activists also have been arrested and jailed.

But the regime is deeply worried that repression alone will not be enough if the struggle inside Palestine continues to intensify. King Abdullah and his ministers



WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL

Union Square, New York.

fear a social explosion.

That is reason why such a subordinate government, highly dependent on Washington for assistance and support, could speak so forthrightly when a top-ranking U.S. official paid his visit.

"Now is not the time to discuss a new war against Iraq," the king told the vice president, in so many words, "now is the time to put out the raging fire next door, before it consumes us as well."

Cheney heard variations on the same theme in every Arab capital he visited. As all the corporate media noted, the focus of the Cheney tour had to shift from Iraq to Palestine.

Calming the Israeli-Palestinian conflict became the new priority. Re-starting negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, on U.S. terms, was the immediate objective.

Washington shifts gears

The Bush administration, which had fully supported all the repressive measures taken by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, had to shift gears. On March 12, in a surprise move at the UN Security Council, the U.S. pushed through a resolution

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'Stop occupation of Palestine'

Protesters marched to the Israeli Consulate in Chicago on March 9 to demand an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The protest came at the end of a bloody week in the struggle there that left over 100 Palestinians dead and hundreds more wounded. Chicago's Palestinian and Pakistani communities turned out in large numbers for the action, which was endorsed by more than a dozen groups from the Arab, Muslim and progressive communities. The demonstration of over 250 people also demanded an end to U.S. military and economic aid to Israel and freedom for the Palestinian people.

Some community leaders have been reluctant to stage protests at the Israeli Consulate in the wake of 9/11, but Monday's marchers—particularly Palestinians and Muslims—said the community could no longer be silent about the brutality of the



CHICAGO

PHOTO: CHICAGO INDYMEDIA

occupation. Many speakers urged marchers to support a national call to protest Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's planned visit to Washington, D.C., on April 22.

—Beth Semmer

BOSTON

'End Israeli terror'

Speaker after speaker denounced U.S.-backed Israeli terror against the Palestinians and demanded an immediate end to Israeli occupation at a spirited rally and march here on March 16.

The demonstration of more than 150 Palestinians and their supporters was co-sponsored by Al-Awda Palestinian Right of Return Coalition and the International ANSWER coalition. The Women's Fightback Network, Palestinian youth, students and many trade unionists participated in this action of solidarity with the people of Palestine.

Demonstrators then set off on a militant march to the Israeli Consulate chanting "Long live the intifada!" Once there, Amer Jubran of Al-Awda led the crowd in Arabic chants.

Protesters dispersed with the promise that they would be in Washington for the national march against war and racism on April 20 and stay there to confront Ariel Sharon on April 22.

—Elijah Crane

ANSWER coalition says:

'Stop war on Iraq before it starts'

Continued from page 1

knew the source of the anthrax was from the U.S., diverting the investigation from this domestic-sponsored terrorism. (New York Times, Dec. 22, 2001) Unsuccessful in every effort to find a plausible pretext to attack Iraq, Bush has now conveniently re-defined terrorism, and thus his next target, by alleging that selected nations produce "weapons of mass destruction."

By taking the war to Iraq, Bush inadvertently reveals that the war on terrorism is not about "protecting Americans" but is an extension of pre-existing imperialist strategies and objectives in the oil-rich Middle East.

George Bush's Big Lie on Iraq

Iraq is a weakened country. The image painted by Bush of Iraq as a threatening "evil power" is ludicrous, a total fabrication. Economic sanctions have taken the lives of 1.5 million civilians, mainly children under the age of five, in the past decade. Sanctions have proved to be a weapon of truly mass destruction for Iraqi babies, 5,000 of whom die each month from malnutrition and hunger-related illness, according to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization.

Iraq has been severely weakened militarily. The U.S.-led UN weapons inspectors conducted 9,000 weapons inspections between 1991 and 1998. Iraq was largely disarmed by 1995. The weapons inspectors left Iraq not because they were expelled by Iraq but because they were ordered out by the U.S.-dominated UN in December 1998 so that the U.S. and Britain could begin the massive bombing campaign of Dec. 16-19, 1998. Since then U.S. and British warplanes have bombed Iraq several times a week—for more than three years. Iraq is

not bombing the United States; it is the victim of routine state-sponsored terrorism.

War as high-tech genocide ... but with certain limits

During the last war in 1991, more than 100,000 Iraqis perished from relentless bombing. The combined number of soldiers and civilians may be double that. The Wall Street Journal of March 20, 1991, reported that Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and his aides provided information to Congress that more than 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed—not counting civilians—from the 88,500 tons of explosives that were dropped on Iraq during the 42-day air campaign. Only 148 U.S. military personnel died during the war—37 from friendly fire accidents—making the conflict one of the most one-sided massacres in human history.

George Bush's father made the decision not to press the war further into a massive ground invasion of Iraq to topple the government because he knew that scenario would likely lead to thousands and perhaps tens of thousands of U.S. casualties.

George Bush Sr. was concerned that the people in the U.S. would turn against the war in the event of huge U.S. casualties. Most of the high government officials feared a repeat of what they called the Vietnam Syndrome, meaning a massive and militant anti-war movement at home. That's the real reason they didn't "finish the job"—in the words of the war-mongers—with a full invasion of Baghdad and the overthrow of the Iraqi government.

The administration's ultra-hawks—most notably Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Cheney, Condoleezza Rice and Paul Wolfowitz—believe that in the post-Sept. 11 political environment of frenzied hyper-patriotism they can send thousands of young

The whole world opposes a U.S. attack on Iraq. But they are looking to the movement in the U.S. to stop it. The April 20th anti-war protests will be a powerful voice against the warmakers.

GIs in a new war of aggression and the people will not rise up as they did during Vietnam. The demonstration on April 20th must send a clear, loud, unmistakable message that a new anti-war movement is taking shape and that it, too, like the worldwide movement in the 1960s and 1970s, will prove to be a potent and decisive factor in the politics of war and peace.

Weapons of mass destruction

While vowing to wage new war to destroy Iraq because it may have a nuclear capability some day, the Los Angeles Times has revealed that the Pentagon, under Bush, has secretly re-oriented U.S. nuclear doctrine to prepare for the actual use of first strike nuclear weapons against a host of countries including Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya, China, Russia and Syria.

Even the New York Times in its lead editorial of March 12, entitled "America as

Nuclear Rogue," pilloried the reckless new orientation. "If another country were planning to develop a new nuclear weapon and contemplating preemptive strikes against a list of non-nuclear powers, Washington would rightly label the nation a dangerous rogue state. Yet such is the course recommended to President Bush by a new Pentagon planning paper ..."

George Bush vs. whole world

The Bush administration has now locked into its war course. Since day one of this crisis, this "unelected" president has chosen a path of extreme cynical manipulation of the raw emotion and horror experienced by people in the U.S. on Sept. 11. With barely a whimper of protest from the other party of Big Business, Bush and the Pentagon have sought to use the attack as a pretext to use U.S. military domination as the prime vehicle in an unabashed quest for world domination.

The whopping \$48-billion increase in the war budget this year is a first step to even more gargantuan budget requests. By 2007, the annual "defense" budget will be nearly \$500 billion. The U.S. will soon spend more on the military than all the other countries in the world combined. World public opinion currently opposes a new, massive war against Iraq. U.S. allies in Europe and puppets in the Gulf region consider it lunacy.

But Bush made it crystal clear in his speech on the six-month anniversary of Sept. 11 that the administration is now to embark on the "second stage of the war."

Cheney has been dispatched to Europe and the Middle East to tell allies and puppets alike that they must decide "Are you with us or them?" The European imperialist powers chafe—of course, with the exception of Tony Blair, lap dog to the Pentagon and its demands—at the unbridled arrogance of U.S. politicians acting like the masters of the universe. The puppets, like the regimes in Saudi Arabia, fear popular revolutions. But all governments are being confronted by Cheney as Bush's envoy with one of two options that will simplify their choice: support the U.S. war effort or support Iraq and face the consequences.

March on White House April 20!

On April 20, thousands of people will be taking part in a united front of organizations that oppose war, racism and poverty—the real "axis of evil." The time to join this historic organizing effort is now! Become an organizer or a volunteer with the ANSWER Coalition (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism), distribute leaflets and flyers, help organize transportation from your area to Washington, D.C., make a financial contribution at www.internationalanswer.org/donate.html, get involved in some way and be a person who decides to make a difference. A simultaneous protest will take place on the West Coast in San Francisco.

Intifada derails Cheney trip

Continued from page 7

calling for a "vision" of a Palestinian state and an Israeli state living side by side. The late-night session lasted only 18 minutes.

The U.S. criticized Israel's occupation of Palestinian cities and camps, and, on cue, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan issued a much harsher reproach.

While the U.S. pushed for Israel to withdraw its troops and armor to the outskirts of the Palestinian cities, it also kept up its attacks on the PA leader, Yasir Arafat, demanding an end to all "violence." In Washington's dictionary, "violence" means Palestinian resistance, not Israeli repression.

What the U.S. leaders want is not any kind of just peace, but instead pacification, a calming of the struggle, so that they can get on with their larger agenda.

Once in Israel, Cheney repeatedly and arrogantly demanded that the besieged Palestinians "stop all violence." Cheney held three smiling public meetings with Sharon within 18 hours, but refused to meet with PA President Arafat before flying off to Kuwait.

At their joint closing press conference, Cheney and Sharon—who both have ample credentials as war criminals—presented a unified front, blaming Arafat and the Palestinians for the "violence."

Sharon underlined the colonial charac-

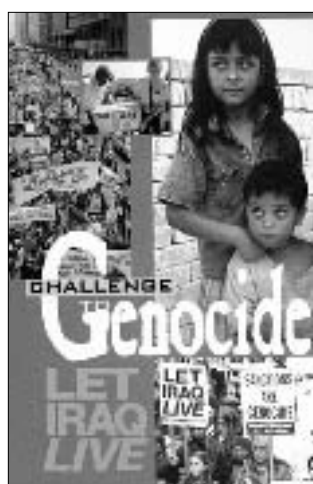
ter of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship when he stated that he might "allow" Arafat to attend the Arab League summit in Lebanon on March 22, but might not let the PA leader return if Sharon judged his speech at the summit to include "incitement," or if there was "violence" while Arafat was out of the country.

What derailed Cheney's tour was the one factor which the rulers almost always leave out of their calculations: the intervention of the people—in this case the Palestinian people—in the historical process. By their heroic struggle, the Palestinians are not only advancing their own cause, but the cause of liberation throughout the Middle East and the world.

The failure of Cheney's mission does not

mean, of course, that the Bush administration has abandoned its determination to launch another war on the Iraqi people. The militarist and racist cabal who have seized the reins of government are determined to carry out a new war against Iraq. Conquering Iraq and securing U.S. hegemony in the oil-rich Gulf region is at the very top of their agenda.

What is needed to stop a new war against Iraq, to win freedom for the Palestinians and turn back the U.S. war drive is a broader intervention of the people, especially the people inside the U.S. The national marches in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco on April 20 can be an important step in building the movement to stop U.S. aggression around the world.



Challenge to Genocide: Let Iraq Live

Read the truth about the devastating effect of U.S.-led economic sanctions on Iraq since the Gulf War. It features "Fire and Ice," a chapter by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark.

the children are dying

Report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and supporting articles and documents by Ramsey Clark, Ahmed Ben Bella, Tony Benn, Margarita Papandreou and others.

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Biggest convergence since Seattle

Barcelona: 500,000 say 'No war!'

By John Catalinotto

In the largest anti-globalization protest since Seattle in 1999, some 500,000 demonstrators marched in Barcelona March 16 at the summit of the European Union to say "No to a United Europe of Capital and of War."

Workers, members of radical left-wing groups and communist parties, anti-globalization groups, high-school and university students, supporters of Basque liberation, and farmers made up the diverse coalition that marched together against big capital, despite ideological differences.

The vast crowd was proof that the European anti-globalization movement, which first showed its great strength in Genoa last summer, is forging ahead. No longer was there reluctance to take to the streets, as seemed to happen in the first weeks after Sept. 11.

Trade unionists had held their own demonstration two days earlier, as the summit was about to open. Under the leadership of the major union confederations, they were demanding that a united Europe maintain the social benefits won by workers since World War II.

After that war, West European workers were able to force significant concessions from the capitalists there. It helped that their rulers were in competition with the socialist system established next door in Eastern Europe. They won many social benefits, such as years of unemployment insur-

ance, full medical insurance—at least in the northern European countries, job guarantees, free education and significant retirement benefits.

Now, with the attempt to form a united economy in Europe, the capitalists have kept up pressure to reduce these benefits to the lowest levels on the continent. Significant cuts in government benefits and job guarantees would make the system more like that in the United States. This is what the workers and even the reformist trade union leaders were fighting on March 14.

At many anti-globalization protests in the past, the unions have brought out larger forces than the general, political demonstrations. Not this time. The political demonstration on March 16 was even larger than the trade union one on March 14. Observers said that when the lead banner reached the final plaza, tens of thousands of people were still waiting to start.

This action also opposed the war against Afghanistan and raised questions such as solidarity with Palestine liberation. It opposed European participation in the U.S.-led "war on terrorism."

The police were aggressive toward demonstrators on March 15 and 16, arresting 100.

The Spanish border police prevented many activists from other parts of Europe from entering the country, including a bus convoy from Belgium. Unable to reach Barcelona, 1,500 of these demonstrators

Barcelona, March 16.

PHOTO: CONFEDERACIÓN GENERAL DEL TRABAJO

gathered in nearby Perpignan, France, to protest at the Spanish consulate.

The irony is that the architects of the European Union have made many agreements to allow capital, commerce, the labor force and tourists flow freely among the member countries. But they have now erected a wall against people traveling within the EU to fight for their rights.

In Rome on the same weekend, 20,000 people demonstrated to protest police attacks on Independent Media centers in a number of Italian cities on Feb. 20. These raids had been aimed at those who took photographs and videos of police violence against demonstrators last summer in Genoa. One young protester was shot to death.

Italy has a right-wing government headed by Silvio Berlusconi, himself a media billionaire. It is currently under massive pressure from the organized workers, who are preparing general strikes in April.



What's in a name?

By John Catalinotto

Walter Rockler, the prosecutor at the post-World War II Nuremberg trial of Nazis, died this March 8. In a commentary in the Chicago Tribune in 1999, Rockler had written the following about the U.S. war on Yugoslavia, which started on March 24 of that year and lasted 78 days:

"The attack on Yugoslavia constitutes the most brazen international aggression since the Nazis attacked Poland to prevent 'Polish atrocities' against Germans." He added, "The United States has discarded pretensions to international legality and decency and embarked on a course of raw imperialism run amok."

This March 14, European Union head Javier Solana imposed a ruling on Serbia and Montenegro, the two remaining republics in the former Yugoslavia, which would eliminate the very name Yugoslavia, keeping only a very loose union. This name represented the idea that a union of the many oppressed nations and people making up the southern Slavs could prevent them becoming colonies of the imperialist West.

No sooner was the name eliminated, however, than the remaining elements of the Yugoslav workers' state raised their head. Yugoslav army intelligence arrested U.S. agent John Neighbor and Yugoslav ex-general and Serbian vice-premier Momcilo Perisic for espionage. A military newspaper, Vecernje Novosti, said "Neighbor presented himself as the head of the CIA in the Balkans" from the first moments of his interrogation.

In an embarrassment to the pro-Western Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic, Perisic had to resign on March 19.

Meanwhile, the Socialist Party of Serbia and other forces will hold an anti-NATO demonstration March 24. It will be the first mass action since former president and SPS leader Slobodan Milosevic began waging a determined battle against NATO's kangaroo court in The Hague. His spirited exposé of NATO's aggression has awakened broad support back in Yugoslavia.

ARGENTINA

Mass rally hits deepening economic crisis

By Bill Hackwell and Alicia Jrapko
Cordoba, Argentina

Argentina is a cauldron of social protest as poverty and economic chaos deepen.

As International Monetary Fund representatives met with members of the government of Eduardo Duhalde on March 15, tens of thousands of trade unionists and "piqueteros" converged on Buenos Aires to protest the current economic crisis and demand jobs.

Unemployment in Argentina is more than 20 percent by government statistics, but the people say it is much higher. Organizers of the protest included the Confederation of Argentinean Workers—a large, militant umbrella group of trade unions with popular support because of its commitment to the current struggle. The movement of "piqueteros," who since December have blocked highways in militant sit-down actions all over the country, was also highly visible in this large demonstration.

The exchange value of the peso continues to fall. Representatives of the Duhalde government have been pleading with IMF officials for help, only to be told that they need to impose further austerity measures and stop issuing local bonds and currencies in the provinces where they have no control. The only reason the Duhalde government has not caved in to all the IMF demands is because of mass pressure.

The wholesale privatization taking place here is immediately apparent. U.S. corporations like McDonald's, Ford Motor, Wal-Mart and Blockbuster are everywhere. The banks continue to be guarded by shotgun-

Buenos Aires, March 15.

toting police. Over 50 percent of the people are unable to get the most basic food and housing, while a very few corrupt politicians and the rich with dollar bank accounts overseas remain unaffected by the crisis.

These few rich are so hated they cannot be seen in public. If a government official is recognized in a restaurant or other public place, it is common practice for them to be booed and force to leave. In some instances they have been physically attacked.

On March 19, a march of over 1,000 people, primarily youth, descended on the provincial government house in Cordoba in a strong signal that the anti-corruption, anti-IMF movement remains strong. This action was part of a series of protests called "es-craches." This one was against the Mediterranean Foundation, an organization that facilitates the penetration of U.S. capital into Argentina.

The protest began to converge at 11 a.m. in front of a hated McDonald's restaurant. The first to arrive were members of HIJOS, whose core is made up of children of those "disappeared" after the 1976 military coup. Later, the youth of the Confederation of Argentinean Workers (CTA) came and were joined by the power and light union, Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, students from the Information Science University



PHOTO: INDYMEDIA

and a large contingent from the CTA itself.

A spirited march began with large drums and chants of "All politicians should go" and "We want justice and jobs." When it reached an intersection, a line of police in riot gear and shotguns blocked the march. Undaunted, the protesters spray-painted the streets, calling for indictments of all corrupt politicians, and drew arrows toward the police, calling them assassins.

At one point dozens of eggs were thrown at the police, splattering on their shields. The marchers then left to prepare for a planned mass march on March 22 to commemorate the 26th anniversary of the fascist military takeover.



Zimbabwe wins

Zimbabwe has weathered a full-court press by former colonial ruler Britain, the U.S. and the European Union. These imperialist gangs had hoped that their open political and financial support for the political opposition, coupled with economic pressures from the IMF and World Bank, would wear down the government of Robert Mugabe and prevent him from carrying out his promises to the landless poor.

The mechanism for this was to be the election for president. The media around the world were lined up to declare it fraudulent before the first ballot was even printed. A bunch of "observers" were sent from Europe—where were they when Bush stole the Florida election?—to put a stamp of disapproval on the process.

When one was sent packing, a howl of accusations went up. By the way, he was the Norwegian Kare Vollan, who according to the March 18 Guardian of Britain had earlier given his blessing to the election of a Western-backed candidate in Ukraine after a process marked, in his own words, by "violence, intimidation and harassment."

The Guardian wrote that "... election observing has become little more than a tool for powerful states to interfere in the internal affairs of weak ones. Monitors delegitimize elections which elect a candidate the West does not like, while turning a blind eye to the deficiencies of polls that produce the desired outcome."

So many people turned out for the hot election in Zimbabwe that a judge agreed to the opposition's request to extend the election to a third day—and the Mugabe government went along with that. When the opposition, sensing defeat, asked for yet another extension, it was turned down.

Tony Blair said Britain wouldn't accept a Mugabe victory—infuriating many African states. When Mugabe won by a very comfortable margin that showed solid support from Zimbabwe's big rural majority, Britain threatened the country

with sanctions. It then managed to push through a one-year suspension of the country from the Commonwealth it dominates. Ironically, the person who, at Britain's bidding, read out the Commonwealth's condemnation of Mugabe was Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar of Nigeria, who had himself taken power in 1993 in a Western-supported military coup.

The Organization of African Unity observer team in Zimbabwe declared that "in general, the elections were transparent, credible, free and fair." In South Africa, where the government has been critical of Mugabe, the National Assembly approved a report from its observers who found that the election "substantially" reflected the popular will.

Other African heads of state stood with Zimbabwe, even though they were themselves subject to pressure for doing so. The Australian of March 18 wrote that the presidents of South Africa and Nigeria were "flying to Harare to meet Mr. Mugabe knowing their own standing with Western aid donors and investors would suffer if they stood by their early recognition of the Zimbabwe elections as a legitimate exercise in democracy."

Even though Mugabe won this election, the pressures against him will intensify as he tries to carry out land reform. Some 6,000 white commercial farmers control half the country's 81 million acres of arable land while 850,000 Black farmers are crammed into the rest. The election was about letting these poor farmers, some of whom are veterans of the national liberation war, take over the land that had been stolen from their ancestors by colonial armies.

The political opposition, which pretends to have a trade union base, supports free market policies and the return of expropriated lands to white farmers.

There should be no doubt in the minds of progressives on this question. Land to the oppressed! Support Zimbabwe against the imperialist exploiters!

Justice and freedom

An oft-told lie by those who hold power in the United States is that there are no political prisoners in this country.

What about the untold numbers of secretly detained Muslims and Arabs swept up in racist mass arrests since Sept. 11 solely on the basis of their religion and/or nationality?

What about Mumia Abu-Jamal and Native warrior Leonard Peltier? Millions around the world charge they are behind bars in the U.S. for political reasons. Now Imam Jamil Al-Amin, formerly H. Rap Brown, has joined their ranks. Despite glaring inconsistencies in the prosecution's case, and decades of frame-up attempts by the government, an Atlanta court sentenced Al-Amin to life in prison without possibility of parole on charges he shot two deputies.

Five Cubans are languishing in Yankee prisons because they tried to defend their own island against terrorist attacks, funded, planned and trained for in the United States. The criminalizing and jailing of freedom fighters for national liberation has birthed the PROLIBERTAD Puerto Rican Prisoners Committee, the Jericho Movement, and the MOVE 9 Committee—to battle for the release of those who have

carried out struggles against national oppression and imperialism.

And what about those who are prisoners of the capitalist war against the oppressed? There are now over 2 million people, disproportionately people of color and overwhelmingly poor, imprisoned in the United States. They represent 25 percent of the world's prison population, drawn from a U.S. population that is 5 percent of the world's total.

The disproportionate number of Black and Latino prisoners on death row. The widespread use of racist profiling to feed the growing exploitation of captive labor in the prison-industrial complex by Fortune 500 corporations. Oppression has filled the jailhouses with women, youths, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and disabled prisoners, including the mentally ill.

What about those who are jobless, homeless, hungry, strung out, impoverished—struggling to survive in a society that locks up opulent wealth and those who try to take a cent of it? Aren't they prisoners of this class war, too?

The struggle for a better society must incorporate a fight against the unjust U.S. "justice" system and a mass movement to shut down capitalism's dungeons.

Church child abuse

Continued from page 2

with conservatives in the church." (New York Blade, March 8)

This official new statement opens up a modern witch-hunt against gay men—and lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people—inside and outside the church.

Dignity/USA, an advocacy group for lesbian and gay Catholics, accused the church "of targeting gays to deflect attention from its own wrong-doing." (Associated Press, March 14)

Bigotry is never good coin

The Boston Archdiocese publication "The Pilot" issued its response to the roiling crisis. An editorial in a special March 15 supplement asked, "If celibacy were optional, would there be fewer scandals of this nature in the priesthood? Does priesthood ... attract a disproportionate number of men with homosexual orientation?"

The real question is: Does celibacy create child abusers or does it attract them?

Victims, psychologists and academic researchers, according to the March 16 Washington Post, "argue that celibacy attracts people with troubled sexuality and that the church's structure allows abusers to move around and avoid exposure."

The March 16 Washington Post quoted researchers who argue that it is wrong "to believe that celibacy turns psychologically healthy men into child abusers or that pedophiles go to the priesthood to gain access to children." It's more nuanced, explained psychiatrist Frederick Berlin, who founded the sexual disorders clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital. "I have seen men ... experiencing troubling sexual attractions, perhaps to children, who thought that, by going into a life involving celibacy, it would become a non-issue."

Gregory M. Herek, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of California at Davis, emphasized, "The empirical research does *not* show that gay or bisexual men are any more likely than heterosexual men to molest children." He said that "many child molesters cannot be characterized as having an adult sexual orientation at all; they are fixated on children."

Jesuit priest and psychiatrist the Rev. James T. Gill explained in the Feb. 25 Philadelphia Inquirer, "Most pedophiles don't find adult partners the least bit attractive sexually. ... It isn't celibacy that creates pedophiles. Think of the tens of thousands of American children damaged in incestuous situations in which parents are responsible for the sexual exploitation of their own children."

Eugene Kennedy, a psychologist and former priest, authored "The Unhealed Wound: The Church and Human Sexuality." He emphasized, "The church uses sexuality to control people in a punitive atmosphere. If flesh is evil, you cannot teach celibacy in a healthy way."

In a March 11 USA Today online chat, A.W. Richard Sipe—psychotherapist and former Benedictine monk—pointed out, "The universal requirement for priests to be celibate was [begun] in 1139, and the reason was power and control of church finances." Sipe, author of "Sex, Priests, and Power: Anatomy of a Crisis," stated, "Married priesthood would probably not in itself prevent this abuse; however, it would be a monumental shift toward a solution to all the sexual problems in the Catholic priesthood."

He added, "There have been a great number of priests abusing girls and women. Unfortunately, it hasn't gotten

the kind of publicity it deserves." Reports of sexual assaults on girls by Catholic clergy in Haverhill, Mass.; Mesa, Ariz.; Indiana and New Mexico have been reported in the media in recent weeks. (uspolitics.about.com)

The Vatican had to officially acknowledge a report in the Rome daily newspaper la Repubblica last March about prevalent rape of nuns by priests and missionaries in 23 countries, including the United States.

Generations of children also tell horror stories about non-sexual abuse, including beatings by nuns and priests in orphanages, schools and churches.

A call to consciousness

Exposure of this institutional crisis could mark a crucial turning point in the battle against child abuse in every sector of society.

It's not just a Catholic Church problem. A former Episcopal priest in Maryland was convicted in February of abusing a 14-year-old boy; a New Jersey Orthodox rabbi is about to go to trial on charges of sexually groping two teenage girls; and a South Carolina Baptist minister has begun a 60-year sentence for the sexual assault of 23 children. (Washington Post, March 16)

And incest of girls by their married fathers is widespread.

Yet the slur "child molesters" has always been hurled at gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. That is the basis on which the right wing argues that gay people shouldn't be allowed to adopt children, share child custody, coach sports, teach in schools or serve as Boy Scout troop leaders.

Efforts to redirect the Catholic Church crisis into an anti-gay crusade take place in a climate of political reaction in the United States, heated by an expanding Rambo war drive that wraps itself in the flag and divine blessing.

President George Bush said he believes the church "will clean up its business." He added, "I know many in the hierarchy in the Catholic Church. I know them to be men of decency." Whether Law should resign? "That's up to the church," Bush diplomatically dodged. "I know Cardinal Law to be a man of integrity. I respect him a lot."

The March 14 AP report added that Bush "has assiduously courted Catholic support since becoming president."

Archdiocese spokesperson Donna M. Morrissey said the church is "encouraged by the president's comments." Indeed. Church officials are working hand-in-glove with this administration to secure their chunk of tax dollars for "faith-based" orphanages, schools and other youth facilities.

And big capital investors—like former mutual fund manager Peter Lynch, vice chair of Fidelity Management—are publicly vowing to donate tens of millions of dollars to replenish the church's coffers in its hour of need.

Courageous revelations are rocking the church's powerful prelates. So did the exposures in 1993, 1992 and 1985. But the right wing of the ruling establishment—religious and secular—is determined to deepen oppression in order to derail any real change.

Catholics are standing up against the church hierarchy. Those outside the church should also stand up to keep this struggle from turning into an inquisition against gays.

'Another Vietnam' photo exhibit

Seeing why the Vietnamese won

By Paddy Colligan

"Obstacles make you clever," said Ho Chi Minh to Dinh Dang Dinh, the photographer charged with taking pictures of the Vietnamese leader.

Ho was referring to Dinh's immediate difficulties in finding photographic supplies and the rest of the stuff he would need to do his job in a Vietnam immersed in the French phase of its long national liberation struggle. This observation might as well have been a metaphor for the entire war effort.

Images of that effort are now available in "Another Vietnam: Pictures from the Other Side," a photo exhibit and catalog of photos by Vietnamese photographers.

The photographers worked throughout the U.S. war with the mandate to document the Herculean efforts of the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese struggle became the inspiration for the oppressed throughout the world struggling for their freedom in the second half of the bloody 20th century. Vietnamese photographers took these pictures to inspire their people conducting the war.

This is what courage looks like

Their assignment was carried out under particularly difficult circumstances. They traveled and lived the life of the people whose lives and deaths they documented. They themselves often fell victim to the bombs and disease.

They usually had only one camera and lens, necessitating great risks, since without telephotos they had to be in the thick of the action to get good shots. They often had to process their own film in underground tunnels or outdoors at night, washing film and prints in streams and hanging them on trees to dry.

The photos in this exhibit could illustrate a manual on People's War. As much as photographs can, this collection captures what it was that enabled the Vietnamese to defeat the enormous, better armed, endlessly financed U.S. war machine.

After seeing the pictures, you know why the Vietnamese won.

Their victory over the U.S. invasion was neither accidental nor enigmatic. It was to be expected from a people who obstinately devoted themselves to the war effort, continuing on in the face of millions of dead, injured or missing, focusing their considerable energy, strength, cleverness, righteousness, enthusiasm and will to achieving victory.

Their determination was given focus and organization by their political leaders, shown in a few frames in a huge open-air meeting with village militias and soldiers.

Photos tell powerful story

The photos are grouped into five sections to give a rough continuity to the narrative, and are accompanied by informative captions. The first and last sections, "The Waning Days of French Indochina" and "Birth of a Nation," are overshadowed by the middle three sections, which contain the main story.

"The Home Front: A House Divided" refers both to the division of Vietnam

into North and South after its victory over French colonial rule in 1954 and to the fact that the war was conducted in the midst of the villages and paddies of the countryside.

"The Trail" is a look at the incredible and vital effort embodied in the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The equally enlightening "Quyet Thang: Resolve to Win" shows the many civilian fronts of the war effort.

There is necessarily considerable overlap among these sections, but it is not distracting—nothing can take away the power of the story told by these photographs.

If this exhibit contains one formal lesson, it is that a photographer exercises judgment when taking a photograph, selecting from many possible images and perspectives to tell a story. As much as equipment and location, this choice shapes the work and its message.

The photos of the Vietnam War available in the U.S. during and since the war have almost entirely been limited to the work of photographers who were showing the U.S. war, including its horrific effects on the Vietnamese. These photos helped fuel the massive antiwar movement in the U.S. But something different was needed in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese photographers documented their tumultuous revolutionary struggle to help their own people understand and be encouraged by their role in achieving victory. We in the U.S. sometimes caught a glimpse of this inspiring perspective when Vietnamese photographers' work was reprinted in progressive antiwar publications—like *Workers World*.

Seeing these inspiring photographs—large, powerful and well-printed—displayed on the wall of a museum in New York is an experience that moves you through a range of emotions. Our movement in the U.S. owes so much to the Vietnamese, and here we can at last see them at the very moments when they were doing the ordinary and the extraordinary things that comprised their struggle. There is no question about the heroism of those pictured—and those taking the pictures—but it is the joy, comradeship and determination in going on with life in the midst of incredible effort and mortal danger that makes the pictures so striking.

Some observations from seeing the photographs:

- ♦ This was a war that could not have been won without the youth. A teenaged girl is shown pensively playing a guitar, one of a unit of young girls whose job was to deactivate the criminal, delayed-fuse bombs the U.S. dropped on the Vietnamese countryside. The caption states that she and her entire unit were killed the following day; only bits of their clothing were left. There is the astonishing picture of elated young men who have just learned that their applications to go into the military to fight the U.S. have been accepted. North Vietnam had no draft until late in the war.
- ♦ It was a war with a role for everyone. A very old man fans a young truck driver resting in a hammock on break from the arduous trek on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. A puppet troupe is shown in the jungle on tour to play for the troops. Women haul heavy fishing nets on the Mekong, work



PHOTO: VO ANH KHANH

Above, an improvised operating room in a mangrove swamp on the Ca Mau Peninsula, 1970. Right, camouflaging a bridge in North Vietnam to hide it from U.S. bombers.



PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

traditionally done by men.

- ♦ The Ho Chi Minh Trail was an amazing undertaking. It was begun in 1959 to solve the problem of supplying the forces operating inside South Vietnam. An early picture shows people laden with heavy packs laboring up a narrow, rocky path. Later pictures from the 1970s show trucks traveling in daylight along the trail, six lanes wide at places, with gas stations, underground fuel and telegraph lines, and rest stops.
- ♦ The battle scenes are very dramatic and were obviously captured at great risk. There are forests blazing with napalm. One shot shows soldiers from both sides exchanging fire. The ARVN unit—the U.S.-backed puppet army of South Vietnam—was wiped out a short time after the picture was taken. A shot shows troops moving through a row of houses using pas-

sageways punched through interior walls of adjacent buildings. This enabled them to move through neighborhoods with minimum exposure. There are many photos of armed women militia patrolling, practicing anti-aircraft fire, and with a captured U.S. pilot.

The exhibit will be shown from April 17 to July 7 at the National Geographic Explorers Hall in Washington, D.C. A high-quality catalog has been published which includes all the pictures and captions plus some additional text: "Another Vietnam: Pictures of the War from the Other Side" by Tim Page (National Geographic, 2002, \$50.00). The exhibit appeared earlier at New York's International Center for Photography.

Correction

The article "Boston aids Turkish prisoners" in the *Workers World* of March 21 should have said that the prisoners' hunger strike started on Oct. 20, 2000, some 17 months ago.

Respuesta al 'Plan Colombia'

Conferencia en México demanda el retiro de E. U.

Por Teresa Gutiérrez
Ciudad México

Más de 600 participantes representando a docena de países en todo el mundo el 4 y 5 de marzo tomaron parte aquí en el Segundo Encuentro Internacional en Solidaridad y por la Paz en Colombia en América Latina.

Esta histórica conferencia refleja el creciente movimiento mundial contra la intervención de los Estados Unidos en Colombia, específicamente contra el amenazante "Plan Colombia" del Pentágono. Esta conferencia también refleja la aún más aferrante solidaridad de los movimientos progresivos y revolucionarios en la América Latina y el Caribe que cada día crece aún más fuerte y prominente.

El Segundo Encuentro tuvo un apoyo significativo tanto del extranjero como del sector prominente de los elementos progresistas, anti guerra y pro paz. Los convocantes incluyeron al ganador del Premio Nobel de la Paz, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel; Ahmed Ben Bella, ex presidente de Algeria; el argentino Arzobispo Federico Pagura, presidente del Consejo Mundial de la Iglesia; el Profesor James Petras, de E.U.; el Profesor Heinz Dietrich de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de la Ciudad de México; el ex Procurador General de los Estados Unidos, Ramsey Clark; el Profesor Henry Veltmeyer, de la Universidad St. Mary en Halifax Canadá; y en su ausencia el prisionero político estadounidense Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Un sin número de organizaciones, activistas y líderes prominentes de la América Latina y el Caribe endosaron el Encuentro y enviaron delegaciones. El FMLN y otras organizaciones de las masas populares en El Salvador organizaron un autobús de más de 30 estudiantes y otros activistas para la conferencia. El autobús se esperaba el 3 de marzo, pero fue detenido en la frontera por varias horas en lo que parece haber sido un hostigamiento por las autoridades mexicanas.

Otras delegaciones llegaron desde Venezuela, Perú, Argentina, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Nicaragua y la República Dominicana. También hubieron representantes del país Basco en España, Grecia, Canadá y Australia. La Federación de Mujeres Cubanas de la Cuba Revolucionaria hicieron un llamada en el Encuentro a dedicar el Día Internacional de la Mujer a las mujeres de Colombia.

Los movimientos progresistas y revolucionarios de México fueron muy bien representados. Entre los grupos que asistieron estaban, el Partido de los Trabajadores de México, el Partido Comunista de México, el Partido Popular Socialista, y muchas organizaciones laborales y de masas populares.

Los estudiantes del área incluyendo los de la UNAM, dieron un sentir revolucionario al evento.

Estos estudiantes, junto con los jóvenes de Colombia, El Salvador y de otras partes, organizaron el Campamento Juvenil Simón Bolívar que fue emplazado en el campo universitario de la UNAM. Por varias noches estudiantes y otros acamparon cantando canciones revolucionarias a la vez que trabajaban juntos.

Los estudiantes pasaron una resolución en la que se le pedía al movimiento a que continuara la educación sobre como organizar contra el Plan Colombia, apoyar la autodeterminación para todos los pueblo oprimidos, presionar por una solución negociada al conflicto en Colombia y participar en el Seminario Latinoamericano por la Paz organizado por la Asamblea Juvenil Nacional de Colombia el 2-5 de mayo en la ciudad capital de Bogotá, Colombia.

Además, los estudiantes y otros en la conferencia concluyeron en organizar protestas el 20 de abril en toda América Latina para coincidir con la marcha nacional en Washington contra la guerra de Bush y contra el racismo. Los organizadores de varias ciudades se pusieron de acuerdo de regresar a sus lugares y organizar para el 20 de abril.

Aunque el tema principal del Encuentro fue el Plan Colombia, los representantes también discutieron tópicos más amplios



como el Tratado del Libre Comercio de Area de las Américas, la Iniciativa Regional Andina y el Plan Puebla de Panamá. La conferencia estuvo en completa unidad sobre la necesidad de organizar contra todas las formas de intervención por los Estados Unidos.

Alto al 'Plan Colombia'

Un momento destacado ocurrió cuando representantes de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) y el Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), los dos grupos rebeldes principales en Colombia, participaron en el evento. Los activistas que asistieron al evento tuvieron varias oportunidades de reunirse con los representantes de los rebeldes para poder conocer la situación en Colombia.

En su declaración, el ELN dijo a la conferencia: "Colombia atraviesa la coyuntura más peligrosa de su historia reciente a tenor de la situación mundial. El gobierno de los Estados Unidos ha profundizado su intervención, es una realidad diaria en muchos lugares de nuestra patria la presencia física de los militares estadounidenses y su política imperial conduce las principales decisiones del gobierno colombiano. El Plan Colombia, Plan Contra Colombia, la Iniciativa Regional Andina, se convierte en la punta de lanza del reposicionamiento geoestratégico del imperialismo. Actualmente el Plan se implementa y su fundamento es financiar la guerra contra nuestro pueblo."

La declaración sigue, "Las fuerzas insurgentes continuaremos con nuestro formas de lucha, en la búsqueda de la paz con justicia social, en la búsqueda de una salida política a este conflicto histórico que desangra nuestra Patria."

La declaración de las FARC-EP al Encuentro, leído por el comandante Marco Calarca dijo: "Es para mi un honor entregar a este Encuentro Internacional el saludo cálido y bolivariano de las guerrilleras y guerrilleros de las FARC-EP. ... Ustedes saben que el presidente Andrés Pastrana, resolvió acabar con la posibilidad

de encontrar soluciones diferentes a la guerra, al conflicto social y armado que vive Colombia hace más de cincuenta años. Por un lado para quitarnos la posibilidad como pueblo colombiano de discutir, proponer y transformar ese país; pero por otro lado porque necesariamente esas transformaciones implican una gran inversión.

"... Pero también por la presión internacional, en estos momentos que a partir del 11 de septiembre el imperio aprovecha la coyuntura internacional y aceleradamente intenta organizar, reposicionarse militar y geoestratégicamente ... en América Latina. En estos momentos es que estos eventos no son solamente justos sino necesarios, en estos momentos es cuando el pueblo colombiano, sus organizaciones, entre ellas su Ejército del Pueblo, decimos y nos damos cuenta, que no estamos solos. Aquí, gracias al coraje y la valentía del pueblo mexicano y sus organizaciones podemos reunirnos cientos de personas, que demuestran su coraje y su valentía de decirle al imperio, de decirle a la clase dominante colombiana, de decirle a las clases dominantes del mundo que hay solidaridad con las luchas del pueblo colombiano.

"Cuando dicen, 'O están con nosotros o son terroristas', borran de un tajo y por la fuerza derechos como el de autodeterminación de los pueblos y su libre desarrollo. ...

"Por eso nosotros mantenemos en alto la bandera de la paz, mantenemos nuestras propuestas; pero al tiempo ejercemos nuestro legítimo derecho a defendernos y por esa razón queremos señalar muy claramente que es el gobierno, que es el estado, que es el imperio responsable de la violencia que se vive y que soporta nuestro pueblo, y que no podemos dejar que este tipo de cosas se soslayan, tratando de ocultar las verdaderas causas de los problemas a través de la prensa."

El Tercer Encuentro Internacional en Solidaridad y por la Paz en Colombia y Latinoamérica se va a llevar a cabo en Nicaragua en una fecha todavía por determinar.

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