

## JUNE 1 ANTI-WAR CONFERENCE

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## BUSH & SHARON

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## CUBA, SYRIA, LIBYA

# Bush threatens more countries

By Deirdre Griswold

Like the rolling out of a bad movie, the Bush administration is testing out on the public a lurid and ridiculous scenario for demonizing those countries it wants to attack.

On May 6, John Bolton, under-secretary of state for arms control, added Cuba, Syria and Libya to the list of countries the U.S. government accuses of developing "weapons of mass destruction." Of course, the Pentagon's immense arsenal of conventional, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons is immune from being characterized in that language, even though it puts the rest of the world to shame in terms of ability to eliminate the population of the Earth many times over.

This anti-worker, pro-big business government chose the venue of a speech by Bolton to the conservative Heritage Foundation to declare these small developing countries to be "terrorist." Most people in the world will see this as further proof that the gang occupying the White House are hell-

bent on using any means to justify their quest for world domination. But whether or not anybody believes them, the right-wing cabal making decisions about foreign policy have cranked up the machinery for further

economic and military measures against these three countries.

Anyone who has been to Cuba comes away with great respect for that socialist country's highly developed

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## Workers for socialism

# Millions march in Cuban May Day

By Gloria La Riva  
Havana

More than seven million of Cuba's 11 million people joined in gigantic celebrations on May Day, the largest mobilization ever in the island's history. In Havana alone, 1.2 million rallied. Cuba's May Day demonstrations were the biggest in the world honoring workers on this May first workers' holiday.

This year's theme, "First for the homeland," stressed the struggle to

liberate five Cuban political prisoners held in U.S. jails.

Also highlighted in the historic gathering was a forceful condemnation of Latin American leaders who sponsored a U.S.-created resolution against Cuba at the Human Rights Commission in Geneva on April 18.

The U.S.-Israeli war on Palestine was denounced by Cubans and international guest speakers.

In a 48-minute oration, Cuban President Fidel Castro slammed the

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Fidel Castro addresses huge May Day rally in Havana, Cuba. What imperialist politician would dare risk such proximity to the people?

## Boston WWP meeting

# What Marxism has to offer movement

By Frank Neisser  
Boston

Seventy people packed into a room that normally seats less than half that. They filled the aisles, sat on the floor and stood in the doorway to listen intently.

The subject? Socialism. And the need to build an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist movement to win it.

Workers World Party hosted the May 4 meeting featuring activist-authors Minnie Bruce Pratt and Leslie Feinberg. The overflow crowd was made up of Black, Latino, Palestinian, Turkish and white people, of all ages, including many lesbian, gay, bi and trans youths.

Under a beautiful painted banner that proclaimed, "From Stonewall to Palestine, peoples' resistance will triumph," the meeting opened with a moving musical tribute to May Day that included singing The International in Spanish and English.

Pratt, an anti-racist lesbian activist, tore apart the Bush misinformation machine claim that its bombing of Afghanistan was aimed at "liberating women." She pointed out that if the White House and Pentagon officials really cared about the liberation of women, they would not

have armed and trained the Taliban to attack the secular progressive government in Afghanistan that attempted to free women. The revolutionary government had abolished the bride price, given women freedom of choice in marriage, set up literacy schools, trained women as health workers and sent them into the countryside to offer medical care where there was none.

Pratt added that the plight of Palestinian women and children, who have borne the brunt of U.S.-backed Israeli massacres—from Sabra and Shatila to Jenin—proves the hypocrisy of Bush's "concern" for women's oppression. Pratt also discussed ways the U.S. media has manipulated issues of nationality, gender, and lesbian and gay sexuality as justification for U.S. military intervention. She applauded anti-war groups—including Boston's Women Fight Back Network and the Stonewall Warriors of the International ANSWER coalition—that have mobilized against this cynical maneuver.

Feinberg, a lesbian and transgendered communist and a managing editor of Workers World newspaper, recalled that when she was a factory worker stamping electronic parts,

the bosses would remove the finished parts quickly so she and other workers couldn't see how much value they had created, compared to their meager take-home wages. She stressed that this massive theft of wealth by the tiny capitalist class is the driving force of racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, capitalist globalization and imperialist wars.

Feinberg compared communists to modern-day abolitionists. And she likened the workers' states in the Soviet Union, China, north Korea, Eastern Europe and Cuba to maroon communities trying to escape slavery, but surrounded by former slave-owners and bounty hunters. The "crime" of communists, from the ruling-class standpoint, is that they are trying to abolish private ownership of wealth that was created by collective labor. Freed of the restrictions of private ownership, a socialist society can plan production and distribution to meet the needs and wants of the people.

But no revolution has been successful without revolutionary leadership, she said, offering historical lessons of the need for a workers' party.



## New York WWP forum U.S. out of Korea!

Two speakers who recently visited north Korea described the mood there at a Workers World Party forum in New York on May 3. Yoomi Jeong of the Korea Truth Commission told of interviewing survivors of U.S. war crimes and massacres committed during the 1950-53 war. Jeong has been collecting evidence in both south and north Korea. WW editor Deirdre Griswold told of socialist Korea's readiness to resist any attacks by the Bush administration. Griswold's reports have appeared in recent issues of WW newspaper.

WW PHOTOS: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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## WW CALENDAR

### NEW YORK

#### Fri., May 10

People's victory in Venezuela. Hear WW correspondent Andy McInerney. Also Teresa Gutierrez on the Pentagon's escalating war in Colombia. 7 p.m. At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

#### Fri., May 17

Israel's defeat in Lebanon. Hear Joyce Chediak on the 2nd anniversary of the victory of Lebanese resistance to Israeli occupation. 7 p.m. At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

### Sat., June 1

National Anti-War Conference. Join hundreds of anti-war activists and organizers from around the country. Panels & workshops. Special panel: Palestine, the fight for freedom. 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. At FIT, 27th Street and Eighth Avenue, Manhattan. For info (212) 633-6646. www.international-ANSWER.org or e-mail answer@internationalanswer.org.

### Workers World

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

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## ANSWER leaders say:

# 'You're needed at June 1 anti-war conference'

By Leslie Feinberg  
New York

Some rallies and marches bring people together on an ad hoc basis to make a stand and take a stand. Other protests—like the massive April 20 marches in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco—go further and show that a new kind of movement is on the rise.

These protests pulled 35,000 into the streets of San Francisco and 100,000 in Washington. In virtually one voice they demanded freedom for the Palestinians, denounced the Pentagon juggernaut and the racist dragnet that is “disappearing” untold numbers of Muslim and Arab people in this country, and vowed to fight the Bush-Ashcroft onslaught against basic civil rights.

Workers World newspaper spoke to some of the members of the steering committee of the International ANSWER coalition, which had mustered the largest part of the impressive multitude of angry activists in Washington on April 20. The points of unity that forge this coalition are clearly stated in its name: Act Now to Stop War & End Racism.

What was significant about the April 20 mobilizations?

Chuck Kaufman, national coordinator of the Nicaragua Network, explained, “It brought new configurations: Latin America solidarity with Muslims with African Americans with white peace-and-justice people. So it was a mix of anti-imperialist and pro-self-determination forces that we haven’t seen in this country to date.”

Jennifer Wager, program coordinator of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, stressed the focus of the demonstrations. “I think it was definitely historic because of it being the largest—and so large—a demonstration in support of the Palestinian people and their cause.”

She added, “It was also almost historically unique in the depth and breadth of so many different communities of color and faiths as well. I don’t think that’s happened on such a massive scale in Washington—at least in some time. And in particular it brought together folks who had never really been politically active before. I feel that it was really a mass demonstration.”

Carl Messineo, a Washington-based attorney and co-founder of Partnership for Civil Justice, which has provided legal counsel to many people arrested in mass sweeps at demonstrations, pointed out that the power of April 20 was not just that it assembled diverse currents of society. “It was truly a history event because it brought together into one really large and loud voice of opposition all of these groups that had heretofore had to express their opposition separately. We had the Arab, Muslim and South Asian communities joining together en masse with the anti-war, anti-corporate globalization movements and other progressives to deliver the same message to the White House on its front doorsteps. I think it was very, very powerful.”

The International ANSWER coalition didn’t draw together just for a one-time march and rally on April 20. Kaufman noted, “The ANSWER coalition started on Sept. 14—just days after Sept. 11.” The umbrella group brought tens of thousands out in the streets of D.C. and San Francisco on Sept. 29 to say no to Bush’s “endless” war, to combat racist domestic round-ups of

Arab and Muslim people and to defend civil rights.

“We’re building a broad-based peace and justice movement in this country,” Kaufman said, “and that’s a full-time job. It needs to continue.”

Messineo agreed that this broad-based organizing must keep building impetus, “because International ANSWER is really the only coalition of such breadth that has an unapologetic anti-imperialist message.”

### Pack your bags for New York City!

What’s next on the movement agenda?

Messineo laid out ANSWER’s plans: “On June 1 we are holding an all-day Emergency National Anti-War Conference in New York City. It’s important for people to come so that we can continue the wonderful momentum that we’ve experienced. And so that we can have a conference to continue to discuss the interrelationship between the U.S. military role in Palestine, threatened Pentagon intervention against Iraq and ongoing intervention in Latin America. We need to all come together and discuss how to plan a comprehensive anti-war strategy.”

Kaufman concurred. “On June 1 we

want to get together organizations from all over the country to strategize about the future of the anti-war movement and what we all need to be doing next.”

The conference literature headlines: “Free Palestine. No new war against Iraq. U.S. out of Colombia, the Philippines and Korea.”

Wager pointed out that the June 1 conference “is going to be important because it is a means of focusing and furthering the anti-war and anti-racism movement. I would like to see this as the first of many such conferences or events across the country.” She feels ANSWER is a significant vehicle for struggle because “for the first time in a long time we have a coalition that is looking at many different issues—the Bush administration war drive and racism in this country—and bringing them all together and addressing the root causes.”

The conference also stresses the necessity of defending Arab and Muslim communities and civil rights.

June 1 is already shaping up to be a genuinely national mobilization. Sarah Sloan, national student and youth coordinator of the International Action Center, ticked off where people are coming from: the West

Coast, mid-West, South, East Coast and Canada.

Peta Lindsay, a high school student, is the youth and student coordinator for ANSWER. She told Workers World, “It’s incredible the amount of youth who are already planning on coming. Youth played a major role in April 20 and we were on the lead banner. Everyone is really interested in staying involved and wanting to know what the next step is and play a key role. June 1 is an organizing conference and youth organizing is a very important part of the movement.”

Sloan concluded, “We youths are the ones who are being asked to kill or be killed in Bush’s so-called war on terror. Instead, we are on the front lines of the anti-war movement and we are leaders in the International ANSWER coalition. We say to Bush and the generals: we want money for education and jobs and housing and health care, not for war.”

The all-day conference will run from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Fashion Institute of Technology on West 27th Street and Eighth Avenue. For more information, visit [www.InternationalANSWER.org](http://www.InternationalANSWER.org) or call (212) 633-6646.



Washington D.C., April 20: a new movement on the rise

WW PHOTO: GARY WILSON

## Kent State activists say

# 'Don't let their deaths be in vain'

By Martha Grevatt  
Kent, Ohio

Every year on May 4, activists have returned to this college town to honor the four students killed and nine wounded when the Ohio National Guard fired on a campus demonstration in 1970.

These murders were a deliberate attempt by the state to silence the hundreds of thousands of youths who were protesting the Vietnam War and the invasion of Cambodia. Days later two African-American students were murdered at Jackson State in Mississippi.

Every year since that tragic day, activists have returned to Kent to honor the slain students, at Jackson State as well as Kent, in a variety of ways. In the late 1970s, militant students and anti-war activists gathered to protest the building of a gymnasium on the site of the shootings, and delayed this act of

desecration for several years.

Prominent figures like the late people’s attorney William Kunstler and Black liberation leader Kwame Toure made a point of traveling to Kent on May 4 for the commemorations. Two years ago, students faced the hostility of both the campus administration and the capitalist media when they insisted on playing a taped statement from imprisoned Black revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal at the commemoration.

This year, organizers of the official commemoration toned down the politics so much that there was barely a mention of the current U.S. wars against Palestine and Afghanistan or the war threatened against Iraq. Determined to make the obvious connection between past and present imperialist wars and government repression, the Kent State Anti-War Coalition organized a militant

rally and march that immediately followed the traditional event.

The most rousing and moving speeches came from the student organizers themselves, representing the Muslim Students Association, Student Environmental Action Coalition, and KSAWC. National speakers included Gulf War resister Jeff Patterson and a Michigan representative of the campaign to free Rabbih Haddad. A high point was when Jeff Johnson, vice president of the Black United Students, read a solidarity message from Mumia Abu-Jamal.

An energetic march wound its way around campus, with loud chanting and percussion. Here the emphasis was clear, with antiwar and antiracist signs and Palestinian flags. At the parking lot where the slain students fell—now a permanent memorial—the message was deafening: “Let them not have died in vain, no more killing in our name.”



## Tip of the iceberg?

# Job losses show no 'recovery' for workers

By Milt Neidenberg

Picture a giant stretch limousine filled with bankers and corporate heads. It is roaring down a bumpy global road, lurching wildly out of control, headed in the direction of a crash. Trying to steady the wheel is Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan, aided by President George W. Bush and select members of his big business administration.

But strewn along the road are Enron, Global Crossing, Tyco, Qwest, Kmart, Bethlehem Steel and other bankrupt corporations. Wreckage is piling up.

Is this image of a catastrophe in the making far-fetched?

On May 3, the Wall Street Journal reported that a Dow Jones study of 1,146 corporations, made in the first quarter of 2002, found they were collectively in the red for the first time in 10 years. Among them was AOL Time Warner, which in the first quarter reported a \$54.24 BILLION loss in the value of its assets—one of the largest write-downs in U.S. corporate history.

WorldCom, the nation's largest telecommunications firm, is in a meltdown that to date has cost its shareholders a colossal \$2 trillion. (New York Times, May 1) A Dow Jones news wire, from the same company that produces the Wall Street Journal, sorrowfully summed up a bleak future: "If the first quarter is an indication of what we can expect over the rest of the year, then revenue growth will be very weak."

Weakness indeed. This war-mongering, arrogant, greedy ruling class is facing a developing capitalist crisis—a crisis of their own making. Profits are declining, U.S. trade with the world is running at a deficit. Overproduction continues to plague the financial markets as corporations and banks dig in, fearing more meltdowns on the horizon.

Debt in the corporate and public sector is reaching record-breaking levels. The Bush administration has announced it must increase its legal borrowing—the current limit is \$5.95 trillion—to avert a potential financial crisis. The dollar is weakening and consumer confidence has been shaken by the alarming rate of unemployment.

### Believers never give in

Nevertheless, the believers never give in. On April 26, the Commerce Department

announced that the economy grew 5.8 percent in the first quarter of 2002. The first reaction came from the prophets of boom. The growth percentage figure confirmed their conviction that the first-quarter economic expansion heralded a robust year to come. For them the recession was over.

A number of Wall Street consultants and their allies in academia joined the chorus. They described the economy as a capital V—that a sharp downturn had begun in March 2001 but now there is a sharp upturn, confirmed by the Commerce Department report.

President Bush characterizes this as a "jobless recovery," a recovery primarily for the rich recipients of his trillion-dollar tax cut. Also happy are the military-industrial complex, who received a \$400-billion bonanza to fatten up their profits. Greenspan, too, was taking credit for his expertise in keeping billions of dollars flowing into the coffers of the banks and corporations at unusually low interest rates.

The optimism was short-lived. On the same day, April 26, the Dow Jones index of industrial stocks—Wall Street's forecaster of economic trends and the representative of the financial services industry—plunged over 100 points, making it the stock market's worst week since the World Trade Center catastrophe.

Paul Krugman, a liberal economist, correctly pointed out in his column that "more than half the 5.8 growth was just inventory bounce. When demand drops, inventories build up, then production drops sharply as businesses work off the overhang. There's an 'inventory bounce' when the overhang is gone. But the bounce doesn't necessarily presage a true recovery. To get that, you need increased sales to final buyers." (New York Times, April 30).

Krugman takes the steam out of the phony optimism orchestrated from Wall Street and Washington.

Krugman is describing the crisis of overproduction, but he leaves out the impact this process has on the multinational working class. During a crisis of overproduction, the output per worker per hour of work intensifies at a rapid rate. In the late 1990s information technologies gave the bosses an endless supply of faster, more efficient electronic equipment. The rate of exploitation of labor grew to astronomical levels, until overproduction burst the bubble of the so-called new economy.

### Missing: millions of jobs

Eight to ten million U.S. jobs have since gone down the drain. And, like a plague, job loss is rising at an alarming rate. The Department of Labor on May 3 reported that the jobless rate had increased to 6 percent, the highest level in eight years. This doesn't include workers who have given up applying for jobs and those who are first-time lookers. It's also much higher among the oppressed nationalities, particularly among the youth and the elderly, as racism and immigrant-bashing spread across the country.

The biggest cuts last month came in construction—79,000 jobs gone, the largest drop since 1991. Textile workers, apparel makers, automakers, airlines, hotels and supermarkets, to name a few, are also victims of the crisis of overproduction. Average wages are plummeting as the bosses reduce the workweek and hire more temporary and part-time workers.

The growth in productivity has brought only more unemployment, poverty and misery. The truth is that while the laboring masses produce the goods and services that make up the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a sum estimated to be in the \$10-trillion range, they can buy back only a portion of what they produce. The wealth and the profits derived from their labor are the private property of a small clique of billionaires.

It is important to note how the ruling class views productivity. Alan Greenspan proclaimed in a speech in January 2002: "As we have witnessed so clearly in recent years, advances in technology have enhanced the growth in productivity, which has been essential to lifting our standards of living."

Whose standard of living?

Could Greenspan, whose claim to fame has been to master the complex data that enables him to steer a steady course for the capitalist economy, have missed a previous study done by the Congressional Budget Office? The CBO found that in 1997 the pre-tax yearly income of the top 1 percent had increased by 142 percent to \$1.07

million per family, while the lowest 20 percent declined 3.4 percent to only \$11,800. The last five years have only further widened this gap, although a recent finding showed a slight reduction in the number of billionaires due to the Enron syndrome.

### Evidence of growing social crisis

Other studies confirm that Greenspan is lying. The Fordham University Institute for Innovation in Social Policy, in a report called "The Social Health of the States," says that while "the GDP had continued to grow over the last 30 years, American social health had actually gone down rather drastically as problems like child poverty, decreased average wages, youth suicide rate and lack of health insurance coverage had all worsened."

So much for the recession being over. With thousands of new families asking for food relief every week, private charities announced a new national Hunger Day to be held June 5 as part of an emergency effort to fill the depleted stacks in their soup kitchens and food pantries. "In recent months hunger in America has reached a whole new level," says Robert Fourney, president of Second Harvest, a network of non-profit food banks that provide 80 percent of the food distributed by private charities. (New York Times, Feb. 27)

The Greenspan thesis that capitalist production is an equalizer bringing good times for all is a ruling class deception. The economy is on a collision course. The present situation is being compared with the October 1987 stock market crash. (Wall Street Journal, May 6)

Rather than so-called upward mobility for the laboring masses, the polarization of the classes is deepening. Bush's global war drive will only aggravate the crisis here at home as the multinational working class, containing so many oppressed nationalities, bears the brunt of a growing war-time economy.

The class struggle is heating up. History has confirmed again and again that all profound social change starts from below.



WW PHOTO: PADDY COLLIGAN

## New York May Day

# Thousands of teachers demand a contract

On May Day, thousands of New York City teachers poured out of packed subway trains in downtown Brooklyn chanting, "Union, union, contract, contract." A sea of United Federation of Teachers members surrounded the Board of Education. They're angry because they've been working without a contract for 18 months.

The police estimate of the crowd was 10,000, but it appeared to be thousands more. Adjacent streets were so packed they were closed to traffic even before the rally began. Protesting the lack of a contract and the arrogance of billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg in refusing to meet with them, they announced that a 3,000-member delegate assembly meeting on May 7 would take up authorizing a strike. Ballots will be mailed to the membership for their approval.

—M.N.



Workers at the Ravenwood Nursing Home in Baltimore staged a one-day strike on May Day to protest horrendous working conditions. AFL-CIO union officials called on other union workers to celebrate May Day by supporting them. The nursing home company unilaterally dismantled health insurance for workers for three months and was refusing to pay them a livable wage. Patients at the facility, along with church and community supporters, joined the picket line.

—Story and photo by Sharon Black

# Robin Hood in reverse

By Greg Butterfield

Legend tells of Robin Hood, whose merry band of thieves robbed England's corrupt, wealthy rulers and gave the spoils to the poor.

In 1996 President Bill Clinton twisted that legend into its opposite: a law on "welfare reform" that stole food from the mouths of hungry families to benefit the rich and greedy. Republican and Democratic politicians worked together to scapegoat poor people for capitalist society's ills.

Now Congress is getting ready to renew welfare reform's central plank—"Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" (TANF)—in August. In its current form, the policy constitutes a huge crisis for the labor movement and the whole working class by undercutting workers' wages and right to organize.

And despite still-rising unemployment, homelessness and hunger, President George W. Bush—that modern-day Sheriff of Nottingham—wants to tighten the screws still more.

Bush's proposal to amend TANF calls for big increases in forced-labor workfare programs in every state and a new ideological crusade that is racist, anti-woman and anti-gay.

## No new money for day care

Currently, the 50 states are required to enroll 50 percent of people who receive assistance in work programs. Under current statutes, that can mean job training and educational programs as well as workfare.

Bush's proposal would increase the states' work requirement to 70 percent by 2007—and eliminate job training and education as options. It would increase the number of hours required for "work-re-

lated activities" each week from 30 to 40.

While hundreds of thousands of single parents would have to work for their benefits, the Bush proposal makes no additional money available for necessities like day care or transportation.

Bush's plan also steps up the demonization of single mothers. Under his proposal, women who get married would be eligible for small but significant increases in benefits. Public money would be given to private religious charities to promote this so-called "pro-family" policy. (Washington Post, April 19)

Women's organizations and lesbian/gay/bi/trans groups have denounced this thinly veiled attempt to promote the right-wing's social agenda. The National Organization for Women points out that many women are on welfare because they had to leave abusive marriages or relationships. Gay and lesbian parents, who are prevented from legally marrying, would of course be barred.

Congressional Democrats have not opposed Bush's proposals in any meaningful way. On May 2 a group of prominent Democratic senators, including Hillary Rodham Clinton, John D. Rockefeller IV, Zell Miller and Evan Bayh, said they would support the increased work requirements if more money were allotted for childcare. (New York Times, May 3)

## An attack on all workers

The argument put forward by welfare's enemies in the mid-1990s—that

assistance to the poor was a major drain on the national budget—was false. Social programs were always underfunded and never amounted to more than a fraction of the trillions spent on U.S. military adventures, Pentagon stockpiles, interest payments to the big banks and corporate welfare.

Since 1996 the welfare rolls have been cut in half nationally, and in some states, like Wisconsin and Illinois, by as much as 70 percent. That's over 2 million additional people competing for a limited number of mostly low-paying jobs. Even during the "boom" of the late 1990s, there weren't enough jobs for everyone who needed them.

Now tens of thousands more are losing their benefits, thanks to a provision of the 1996 law limiting lifetime assistance to 60 months.

Recent studies show that welfare reform has done nothing to help poor people. A study of 700 mothers in California, Florida and Connecticut conducted by several universities concluded that those who found work made an average of \$12,000 a year—little more than they got on welfare. The difference, if any, was more than eaten up by childcare and transportation costs. Half had no health-care benefits and still needed assistance from the government. (San Francisco Gate, April 16)

A Joyce Foundation report on seven Midwestern states found that half of former recipients were regularly unable to

buy food, pay rent or pay utility bills. One in 10 had been evicted from their homes. (New York Times, April 25)

## Jobs or income for all

A real welfare reform policy, aimed at ending poverty and chronic unemployment, would have to begin with a serious job creation program that includes decent wages, health insurance and benefits, and protection of workplace rights, including the right to join a union.

It would require recognition that raising children—the next generation of workers—is a real job, as worthy of wages and benefits as any other.

If welfare reform has failed poor people, why is it still so important to Washington?

It has been a boon to private corporations and government agencies looking for cheap labor to replace union jobs. Welfare reform also puts downward pressure on all workers' wages by increasing the competition for every job. If the Bush administration has its way, this pressure will grow worse.

Welfare was a concession won by the working class during the tremendous class struggles of the 1930s and the great civil-rights battles of the 1950s-1960s. At that time, organized labor and the progressive movement understood that capitalism could never provide enough jobs for all who need them.

It's time for the labor movement to move from words to action and fight to take back these rights and more: for living-wage jobs or income for all; free, quality health care and child care; and against the demonization of the most oppressed workers.



# UMass resident assistants fight union busting

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

In what is shaping up to be an epic battle, resident assistant undergraduates (RAs) at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst continue to fight with their bodies and voices against a belligerent administration intent on busting their new union.

With the administration fighting them all the way for over 18 months, the RAs voted by a two-thirds majority on March 5 to join United Auto Workers Local 2322. The 365 RAs, the first body of undergraduates to unionize in the U.S., are paid to live in the dormitories to enforce rules, counsel new students, and organize educational and social events.

The students receive a tuition waiver of up to \$5,000 annually and about a \$50 stipend per week. Students say they often work more than 20 hours, are constantly on call, paid a pittance and are required to stay in their dormitories at times such as major sporting events when boisterous parties put them at risk.

A year ago, UMass opposed a student petition for a union election, claiming that students aren't employees; however, the Massachusetts Labor Relations Commission voted in January that students could vote on joining a union.

The commission also certified the RA vote for the Auto Workers, but in what many see as a clear union-busting move, the administration arrogantly refused to recognize the union on March 26.

"The administration is quite adamant on this," said Kay Scanlan, assistant vice chancellor for communication and marketing. "They will not bargain on this issue."

In response, the UAW filed an unfair labor practices complaint with the labor commission, which is pending. The university has retained the union-busting law firm of Seyfarth Shaw.

With major support from the UAW and the 3,000-member Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) at Amherst, the RAs initiated a series of actions to pressure the university to recognize the union and gain wider labor and community support.

On April 29, in the most militant action to date, 35 students and union activists were arrested at Amherst after staging a protest sit-in and occupation of the Whitmore Administration Building—office of the vice chancellor for student affairs. This was the first mass arrest at Amherst in a decade. Those arrested were charged with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and trespassing.

Undergraduates who participated in the April 29 protest were initially suspended from campus after being arrested; seniors were told they wouldn't be allowed to graduate, among other outrageous measures. These measures were later lifted, but students still face possible loss of this semester's credits. RAs who were arrested will continue to live in dormitories, although their employment was suspended. Among other things, the administration claims the

students violated the university's so-called Picketing Code, enacted after the 1997 Goodell building takeover, which bars picketing and building occupations on campus.

On May 6 a follow-up demonstration of about 300 was held at Amherst with the demands: drop the criminal charges, end the disciplinary action, and obey the law and bargain. Other actions are planned.

RA supporters include various Massachusetts union locals affiliated with AF-SCME, the Amalgamated Transit Union, the National Education Association, and the state Service Employees union, as well as labor support organizations like the Harvard living-wage campaign, Pioneer Valley Labor Council and Boston Labor's ANSWER.

The Amherst Town Council has passed a resolution in favor of the RAs. Amherst Labor Studies Director Tom Juravich and 28 other faculty and elected officials initiated a petition in support of the RAs that forced Chancellor Marcellette G. Williams to schedule a meeting with them May 8.

According to the Worcester Telegram, the five-campus UMass system is struggling with \$28.5 million in state budget cuts. The Amherst campus, which is losing about \$17 million, is cutting seven varsity sports, raising student fees, laying off 95 workers, cutting academic programs by 6 percent and phasing out jobs. About 400 employees have filed for early retirement, including about 100 professors.

With the university in this position it

might seem odd that it is spending possibly millions of dollars fighting the RA union. But Benjamin Balthaser, GEO organizer and English graduate student, says it makes perfect sense for the administration and its allies.

"Academic capitalism—this is where the administrators are going right now and they don't want to be challenged."

With an explosion in GEOs on public universities, from about five in 1991 to over 40 and growing today, administrations view a parallel undergraduate union movement as "incredibly threatening," claims Balthaser, not only because of profit motives but because student unions build off-campus unity with labor and community organizations and provide a strong base to fight issues like university privatization.

The university, besides attacking and trying to intimidate the RAs and their supporters, is relying on the struggle to subside as summer break sets in. It is imperative for the future of the labor movement that the Amherst RAs be supported at this critical time.

The RAs are asking supporters to fax letters to Amherst President William Bulger at (617) 287-7044 or call (617) 287-7044 or email Chancellor Marcellette G. Williams at mwilliams@chancellor.umass.edu, phone: (413) 259-1872; fax: (413) 545-2328. For more information see www.geouuaw.org or www.uaw2322.org.

# What U.S. is trying to do in

By Richard Becker

Is Washington contemplating a U.S. protectorate in Palestine? According to Martin Indyk, who ran the White House's Middle East policy during President Bill Clinton's first term, the answer is yes.

On May 7, President George W. Bush welcomed Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to Washington for the fifth time in his 16-month presidency. Bush, formerly known as "Governor Death" for the record number of executions he approved as governor of Texas, once again called the blood-thirsty Sharon "my friend" and "a man of peace."

At the same time, Bush attacked Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, with whom he has never met, in highly arrogant and condescending terms. "He has disappointed me as a leader," Bush said of Arafat. "He has to lead ... he has to perform ... he needs to earn my respect," etc., etc., ad nauseam.

Meanwhile, the U.S. dollars continue to flow like a mighty river into Israel's coffers, at a rate of \$321,000 per hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year—half of it in the form of military assistance.

Given the above, no one can believe that the U.S. is an honest broker. Clearly it's not just an Israeli, but a U.S.-Israeli war, being waged against the Palestinians.

As in all wars, what binds the alliance partners together is a common enemy, not necessarily common goals. Both

seek to deny the long-oppressed Palestinians any real justice or self-determination. But beyond that, the real aims of the U.S. and Israeli ruling groups are far from identical.

## Commonalities and differences

The differences between Bush and Sharon emerged immediately in their May 7 meeting. When asked by the media if a Palestinian state should be the goal of the "peace process," Bush replied, "Yes, I haven't changed my position."

Sharon responded that it was "still premature to discuss this issue," before there was "reform" of the Palestinian Authority. It would be hard to imagine a more openly colonialist position than Sharon's.

The Bush-Sharon meeting ended with news that a suicide bombing had killed 16 people and wounded more than 50 others. The bombing in the Israeli city of Rush Le Zion was said to be in retaliation for Israel's massive assault on Palestinian cities and refugee camps, which killed hundreds of people and left behind enormous destruction.

What Sharon and his government are seeking is clear: to incorporate as much of the West Bank as possible into the Israeli state and prevent the emergence of any kind of Palestinian state. Bush, on the other hand, wants to offer the Palestinians a weak, broken-up and U.S.-dominated entity that might be called a "state," but would lack control over its own borders, economy and security forces.

Sharon is part of the dominant grouping in Israel which, for more than half a century, has aspired to expand Israel's borders. As long ago as 1949, merely a year after the creation of the Israeli state, Sharon's mentor Moshe Dayan told a U.S. diplomat, "The present borders of Israel are ridiculous."

Sharon's is the latest in a long series of Israeli governments—Labor, Likud and "National Unity"—determined to expand those borders. Central to achieving this objective is the liquidation of the Palestinian resistance movement and the elimination of all institutions and organizations that challenge Israeli hegemony.

The Bush administration and the U.S. ruling class agree that the Palestinian national liberation movement must be eliminated or decisively weakened. That is why the U.S. initiated what is known as the Oslo "peace process" in the early 1990s.

What is driving U.S. policy, however, is not Palestinian land, but a much larger interest: the long-established goal of controlling the Middle East as a whole, and the Persian/Arabian Gulf—home to two-thirds of the world's petroleum reserves—in particular.

To secure that strategic objective, the Bush government is very anxious to launch a new all-out war on Iraq, a country already decimated by nearly 12 years of blockade and bombing. Iraq itself possesses 10 percent of the world's oil.

While Iraq has been greatly weak-

ened by the U.S. war and sanctions, its government has not surrendered to Washington's demands. For the past several years, "regime change" has been the official U.S. policy toward Iraq. In other words, the U.S. openly states its intention to overthrow the Iraqi government and replace it with one that will take orders from Washington.

But there is no Iraqi opposition movement with the popular base to lead this effort, even with massive U.S. support. The projected overthrow, Pentagon planners have concluded, can only be accomplished by a U.S. invasion of Iraq involving hundreds of thousands of troops. Recent reports speculate that the Pentagon is planning such an operation for early 2003.

Establishing a puppet government in Baghdad would also greatly weaken the position of Iran, the other relatively large and populous country in the region not in the U.S. orbit.

## Obstacle to new war against Iraq

A major obstacle to launching such a major new war is the already burning anger toward the U.S. throughout the region. This anger has several sources, including the U.S. military occupation of much of the Gulf region and the suffering of the Iraqi people due to the U.S./UN blockade.

What has greatly intensified popular outrage throughout the region is the vicious repression of the Palestinians. While the corporate media here focus on Israeli casualties, media in the Arab world regularly show the far greater and more systematic suffering imposed on the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupation.

That popular anger manifested itself as a political force in March and April when the largest and most militant demonstrations in decades broke out in capitals and smaller cities throughout the Middle East. Even the most aggressive militarists in the administration had to acknowledge the seriousness of the situation.

Vice President Dick Cheney's tour of 10 Middle East countries in March was intended to line up support for the new war on Iraq. But Cheney found that even the most compliant regimes—like those in Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain—demanded that the U.S. put off its Iraq plans until something was done to calm the rising anger over Palestine. Exacerbating that anger with a new strike on Iraq, it quickly became clear, could endanger the very existence of some pro-U.S. regimes.

It was the Palestinian struggle and mass support for the Palestinian cause that forced the Bush administration to re-engage in the "peace process."

The administration's strategy promises nothing positive for the Palestinians. While the besieged Arafat leadership has been calling upon the U.S. to restrain Sharon and the Israeli military, administration officials have made it clear that the price for any such actions is PA subservience to the U.S.

An example was the deal to release Arafat from his captivity in Ramallah. Six Palestinians, including the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), were turned over to U.S. "supervision" inside a PA jail in Jericho.

## A Palestinian 'protectorate'?

On the day after the latest Bush-Sharon meeting, the New York Times editorially demanded that "the United States must seize control of the political agenda in the region and ... not let renewed violence sabotage efforts to construct a lasting peace."

Martin Indyk, in charge of Middle East affairs for the National Security Council in Clinton's first term, and subsequently U.S.

# What Israelis did to Ministry of Culture

*This is excerpted from an article by Amira Hass that appeared in the May 6 issue of the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz.*

No one deluded himself that the Palestinian Ministry of Culture would be spared the fate of other Palestinian Authority offices in Ramallah and other cities—that is, the nearly total destruction of its contents and particularly its high-tech equipment.

After all, Israel Defense Forces troops were deployed in the building for about a month.

Armed vehicles were always parked in front of the building, around which the familiar pictures of destruction accumulated; crushed cars, banks of earth, deep ditches in the roads, broken pavements, dismantled stone fences, toppling electricity poles, loose cables and clouds of dust and dirt enveloping every vehicle, tree and roof in thickening layers.

Every night the neighbors, who hid in their houses, heard the sounds of objects smashing as they were hurled through the windows of the Ministry of Culture.

During the 10 days that preceded the lifting of the siege on Arafat's office, the force in this building shot every night at the Asra, a large commercial building opposite the ministry, on the slope of the hill. The residents of the neighborhood at first tried to locate armed Palestinians who had perhaps opened fire at random in the direction of the military base. But there were no armed Palestinians there.

The neighbors concluded that this was nightly entertainment for the soldiers.

One night the neighborhood awoke to the sound of barking: They saw that someone had attached a speaker to a tape recorder and was playing a recording of barking dogs.

This is an established neighborhood of single-story or two-story stone houses, surrounded by gardens and thick with cypress and fruit trees. L remembers how her husband planted some of the trees several decades ago. The rural character of the neighborhood was unaffected despite its proximity to the busy main streets and the tall commercial buildings that have sprung up during the past 10 years.

A few days after the partial withdrawal, neighbors were astounded to hear bulldozers and the cutting down of the shady row of cypresses.

One cypress tree was lying across the road, a natural barrier against cars, and an apricot tree laden with fruit had been uprooted from the garden of one woman who lives in the neighborhood and whose entire world is her 35-year-old son who is mentally retarded.

On the evening of Wednesday, May 1, when the siege on Arafat's headquarters was lifted and the armored vehicles and the tanks had rumbled out, the executives and officials of the ministry rushed to the site.

Employees of the local radio and television station, Amwaj, also hastened to the scene, as did the employees of the local television channel, Istiqlal, which take up three stories of the building.

What awaited them was beyond all their fears, and also shocked representatives and cultural attaches of foreign consulates, who toured the site the next day.

All the high-tech and electronic equipment had been wrecked or had vanished—computers, photocopiers, cameras, scanners, hard disks, editing equipment worth thousands of dollars, television sets. The broadcast antenna on top of the building was destroyed.

Telephone sets vanished. A collection of Palestinian art objects (mostly hand

embroideries) disappeared. Furniture was dragged from place to place, broken by soldiers, piled up. Gas stoves for heating were overturned and thrown on heaps of scattered papers, discarded books, broken diskettes and discs and smashed windowpanes.

In the department for the encouragement of children's art, the soldiers had dirtied all the walls with gouache paints and destroyed the children's paintings.

In every room of the various departments—literature, film, culture for children and youth—books, discs, pamphlets and documents were piled up, soiled with urine and excrement.

There are two toilets on every floor, but the soldiers urinated and defecated everywhere else in the building, in several rooms of which they had lived for about a month. They did their business on the floors, in emptied flowerpots, even in drawers they had pulled out of desks. They defecated into plastic bags, and these were scattered in several places. Some of them had burst. Someone even managed to defecate into a photocopier.

The soldiers urinated into empty mineral water bottles. These were scattered by the dozen in all the rooms of the building, in cardboard boxes, among the piles of rubbish and rubble, on desks, under desks, next to the furniture the soldiers had smashed, among the children's books that had been thrown down.

Some of the bottles had opened and the yellow liquid had spilled and left its stain. It was especially difficult to enter two floors of the building because of the pungent stench of feces and urine. Soiled toilet paper was also scattered everywhere.

Now the Palestinian Ministry of Culture is considering leaving the building the way it is. A memorial.



# Palestine

ambassador to Israel, wrote in the Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot of April 26 that Bush's advisors are contemplating an "imposed solution. They are thinking in terms of a big response, really big.

"How will this imposed solution look? Concerning the Palestinians, because of Arafat's failed leadership and the collapse of PA institutions, this solution will require an international protectorate for a three-year period, which will remove control of the Palestinian state from Arafat's hands. With the help of guarantees from the Arab states, this international body, headed by the U.S., will be responsible for establishing the institutions of the new Palestinian state. These will be democratic, professional, transparent and open to criticism. This body will supervise the formulation of the new Palestinian constitution, in which the "ra'is" [president, for example, Arafat—RB] will have a function like that of the president in Israel.

"It will also supervise the inflow of aid on an enormous scale for building the state's economic infrastructure. The trustees will also need an international military force, to be headed by the U.S., which will maintain order, confront those who oppose the agreement, and build the new Palestinian security apparatus."

The imposed solution, said Indyk, would oblige Israel to dismantle some isolated settlements in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. The other settlements would be concentrated into three blocs, as envisioned at Camp David. The two sides would negotiate on final borders, on the future of Jerusalem, and on the refugees. No Palestinian refugees would be allowed to return inside the 1967 borders of Israel under the plan.

"How can Bush impose such a thing," Indyk asked, "when he can't even achieve a cease-fire?" Indyk answered that if the conflict intensifies, endangering vital U.S. interests, "oil and regional stability, the world's only superpower, with massive international backing, will be able to do what it wants."

Whether Indyk's prediction is borne out remains to be seen. But there can be no question that the U.S. is moving in the direction of greater direct intervention.

As Sharon flew to Israel on May 8, Bush announced that he was dispatching CIA Director George Tenet to the region to begin organizing a new Palestinian security force in the West Bank, to replace the one largely destroyed by Israel.



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

## Palestinian flags confront Israel Day parade

By G. Dunkel  
New York

Hundreds of people gathered along Fifth Ave. May 5 to confront the annual Salute to Israel parade. They chanted, "Free, free Palestine" and "Sharon, Sharon, you can't hide! We charge you with genocide!"

When Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Gov. George Pataki, and former mayors Rudolph Giuliani and Ed Koch marched by, the chant changed to "Shame, shame!"

Besides Muslims and Arabs, the protesters included Orthodox Jewish rabbis

wrapped in Palestinian flags, Jews Against Zionism, Tikkun, International ANSWER and other progressive groups. Al-Awda, the Palestinian Right to Return Coalition, had a significant presence. The Palestinian Activist Forum-NY organized the protest.

ANSWER organizer Bill Doares said, "Hundreds of people came out to expose the racist character of this well-funded, Klan-style parade." Signs in the parade calling for "Arabs out of Israel" and "Israel must be Jewish from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River" called for the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

# European solidarity group visits Baghdad

By John Catalinotto

In the hallways of Saddam Pediatric Hospital in Baghdad this April 15, women in tears gathered around the mother of a child who had just died. He was the third infant she had lost to malnutrition and dehydration.

Like so many others in what was once a top hospital for this part of the world, the child suffered also from the lack of medicines and equipment brought on by almost 12 years of U.S.-imposed sanctions.

One of the women asked, "What evil did our children do to deserve to die like this? And what did their mother do to deserve such a fate?"

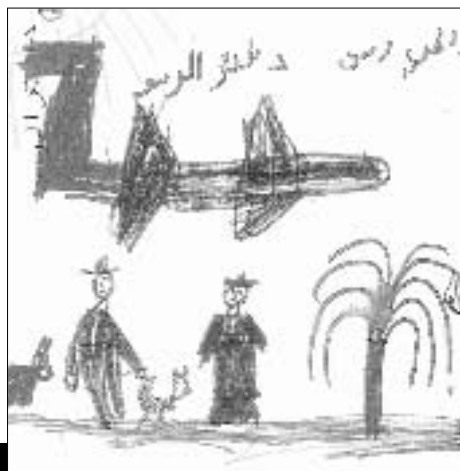
It's unlikely this story, repeated so many times, would have become known outside Iraq were it not that a delegation from two Belgian organizations, SOS-Children of Iraq and Doctors for the Third World, were present in the hospital that day to hear it.

The group consisted of 114 people from 14 European countries, Algeria and Canada, who visited Iraq from April 13 to 27. They made the trip to show the harm caused by sanctions to the Iraqi people and to win support for ending the sanctions.

It had another purpose that grows more imperative with each passing day: to begin to mobilize against the new war Washington and London threaten to carry out against this Middle Eastern nation.

Among the delegates were elected senators, both to national and European parliaments, Gulf War veterans including one stricken with a disease caused by depleted uranium, a dozen journalists and authors, and seven medical doctors, along with professors and anti-war activists.

Michel Collon, author and journalist for the Belgian weekly *Solidaire*, was a key organizer of the trip. U.S. anti-war activists



**Iraqi mothers ask, 'What evil did our children do?'**

know Collon for his books on the years of imperialist plotting against Yugoslavia, including "Liar's Poker," which was recently translated into English and published by the International Action Center.

**1.7 million deaths equal genocide**

The child dying in the Baghdad hospital was only

the last of a long list of children who have suffered the same fate since the sanctions began. According to a report from the doctors present on the trip, the number of people who died during the 12 years from August 1990 to February 2002 was 1,659,186. "Faced with a number like that, one can speak of genocide," they wrote.

They added that 7,000 children under five years old were continuing to die each month from causes related to the sanctions. "That's double the number of victims who fell due to the Sept. 11 attack in New York, but among young children and repeated each month," the doctors stated.

They also wrote of a high incidence of cancer in the Basra region in southern Iraq—10 times what it had been before 1988. The Pentagon's use of depleted uranium in anti-tank weapons, fired in large numbers in that region, is suspected as the

cause.

The doctors called first of all for accelerating the political struggle against the sanctions. Then, after noting the heroic work of their Iraqi colleagues under horrific conditions—the Iraqis even managed to eliminate polio despite the sanctions—they called on doctors and medical workers around the world to help Iraqi doctors obtain the equipment, technology and access to medical literature that they need.

### Political action

In the middle of the trip, some members of the delegation joined a march in the Palestinian quarter of Baghdad to demonstrate their solidarity with Iraq and Palestine. "In French, English and Arabic we shouted slogans like 'Stop the sanctions, no new war,' 'Iraq, Palestine, solidarity.' The volume rose greatly at the slogan 'Bush, Sharon, terrorists,'" a participant wrote.

Iraqi political and cultural leaders refuted Washington's charges against Baghdad. One was Huda Amash, a professor of microbiology and responsible in the Iraqi government for the unions and non-governmental organizations.

"With the aim of justifying aggression and maintaining sanctions," Amash said, "the United States has formulated three accusations against Iraq: that we support terrorism, produce weapons of mass destruction and refuse access to our country to United Nations inspectors.

"Even if Iraq wanted to, it couldn't support terrorism. The country lacks foreign currency and the little money earned with the 'Oil for Food' program is placed in a French bank and is entirely managed by the United Nations. Iraq's air space is controlled totally by the United States and Great Britain. International flights are unable to land here."

How could Iraq produce weapons of mass destruction with an embargo that interdicts technology and science? "How could we obtain the necessary informa-

tion when even letters weighing more than 20 grams are not allowed," Amash asked himself. "We cannot even develop a test against ear infections. For children with diarrhea, we cannot determine the responsible bacteria."

Regarding the refusal to allow inspections, Amash said that "during eight and a half years we showed ourselves to be conciliatory. To obtain the least amount of material for studies, we had to fill out a form consisting of 13 questions. Date of importation, factory of origin, port of transit. One day, we left a question unanswered because we didn't know any longer when a refrigerator for the laboratory, made in 1957, had entered the country. We were reproached for not wanting to cooperate and the sanctions were extended."

### Statement from the trip

On April 27, after this experience, the group issued a statement that "with priority, we demand that our governments stop the U.S. administration and its allies in their preparation of a new war against Iraq. We demand that they refuse to participate in this war. For us, the sole aim of such a new aggression would be to submit an independent nation and its oil resources to the complete control of the United States.

"Let Iraq be Iraq and let the Iraqi people decide themselves how they want to be governed and how they want to develop their country. ... We want to tell the people of the West that the Iraqi people don't want to capitulate, just as the Palestinian people don't. We want to tell them that the struggle against Bush and his allies has the support of the great majority of the people of the Middle East. ...

"We want to sensitize public opinion to tell our governments: 'You shall not kill people like us in violation of all international laws. You cannot do that in our name.'"

*Selections from reports by trip participants published on the Web site of the Belgian Party of Labor at [www.ptb.be](http://www.ptb.be).*

## May Day around the world

# War, immigrant bashing and poverty

By Leslie Feinberg

May Day arose out of class battles by workers against their bosses in the United States in 1886. The first May Day combatants demanded an eight-hour workday. Since then, the demands and struggles that arise in regions and countries around the world on May Day reflect the living relationship of forces between workers and peasants, and the wealthy owning classes that exploit them.

This year May Day reflected a variety of issues facing working people. Reports rounded up from diverse world media sources include the following.

Just days before the U.S. upped the ante against this revolutionary Caribbean island by adding Cuba to its never-ending list of "terrorist" countries in its crosshairs, **1.2 million Cubans jammed into Havana's Revolution Square**. There, the ever-defiant President Fidel Castro pledged, "We will not lower our flags before the hegemonic superpower that today dictates its orders to lackeys and boot-lickers" in Latin America. He noted, "This has been the largest demonstration in Cuba since the triumph of the Revolution" in 1959.

Across the 14 provinces of **Cuba, seven million out of the population of 11.2 million marched** and rallied in support of their country. They joined Fidel Castro in castigating the governments of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay for supporting a U.S.-sponsored resolution in the United Nations condemning Cuba. The mass demonstrations also demanded freedom for the Cuban 5—prisoners being held in U.S. for the "crime" of monitoring right-wing terrorist groups operating against Cuba from U.S. soil.

**Protesters marched through the streets of Colombia's capital Bogotá** on May Day, dressed up in costumes similar to those worn by the hated death-squad paramilitaries that the U.S. supports. The demonstration hit the Pentagon's "Plan Colombia." The Andean country is the hemisphere's number-one recipient of U.S. aid. But the more than \$2 billion that



Paris

Washington will sink into the nation by the end of 2005 is solely for U.S. military intervention against those fighting for social change in their country.

Corporate news reports in the days before May 1 forewarned that opponents of **Venezuelan** President Hugo Chávez might clash with his supporters on May Day. But there were no reports of any mass outpouring for the counter-revolutionary business and banking class that tried to oust Chávez in a recent CIA-supported coup. Instead, alternative media sources like FrontlinesNewspaper reported that **hundreds of thousands of working and poor people poured into the streets of Caracas**—as they did to bring Chávez back to power after the capitalist coup d'état of April 13-14. Many proudly wore the red berets and tee shirts of the neighborhood organizations known as "Bolivarian circles"—neighborhood groups armed to defend the revolution. The Bolivarian circles were one of the primary military targets of the bosses' coup regime.

Fidel Castro was right on target when he told the May Day crowd in Havana that the Latin American governments attacking Cuba have no ground to do so. Their servile relationship with imperialism has not raised the standard of living of the masses. Just the opposite. Imperialist globalization has left these countries wracked with economic and political crisis. **Argentina** is a good example and one of the three largest South American economies. But the insatiable appetite of the International Monetary Fund has deepened poverty, unemployment and suffering in the country. Mass anger erupted in December, toppling the Argen-



Venezuela

tine government. On May Day, **tens of thousands** turned out to press their demands for economic and social justice **in four protests in the capital and 10 other cities**.

In **Haiti, several thousand** members of the National Peoples Party (PPN) marched through the streets of Port-au-Prince carrying signs and banners demanding land to those who cultivate it, an end to the "free-trade zones" on the Dominican border and agrarian reform. Farmers in Haiti are generally the poorest laborers in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Since the IMF forced the Haitian government to open its markets, Haitian farmers have to compete with big U.S. agribusinesses that drive down prices until local competitors are out of business. Prices then shoot up, leaving urban dwellers hungry.

### A specter is haunting Europe

As the U.S. unabashedly continues to arm the Israeli settler state against the Palestinian people, anger is growing—even within the NATO countries that the Pentagon tries to lead into its vortex of imperialist war.

Pro-Palestinian demonstrators in **Greece** burned an effigy of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon outside the U.S. Embassy in Athens. Thousands assembled in



Indonesia

Syndagma Square in the central city. They unfurled a red banner that read, "Long live international solidarity to Palestine."

And in **Turkey**, where government and police repression make May Day an event requiring great courage, the theme of the Istanbul rally this year was, "A thousand greetings to the Palestinian resistance."

**Europe** is becoming more volatile as the capitalist economies slump while unemployment and the cost of living soar. The political lurch to the right since counter-revolution overturned workers' states on the continent is arousing resistance.

In France, an estimated **1.5 million French anti-fascists** of all nationalities flooded into streets in Paris, Lyon, Rennes, Montpellier, Marseille and other working-class strongholds. The huge and powerful outpouring eloquently denounced the racist, anti-immigrant policies of neo-fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen. The former torturer of Algerian liberation fighters came in second in the first round of France's presidential election. The progressive vote had been split among many candidates.

Police fired water cannons and tear gas at protesters in **Berlin** on the eve of May Day who took to the streets to oppose neo-Nazis. Left-wing youth fought hand-to-hand with police, who claimed 62 officers injured in Prenzlauer Berg and 21 in Kreuzberg. Cops protected an ultra-right-

## May Day millions affirm Cuba's system

Continued from page 1

leaders of Uruguay, Argentina, Mexico, El Salvador, and other Latin American countries as cowardly and servile for doing the U.S. bidding in Geneva.

He said, "We were condemned in Geneva by those who believe that this sea of people gathered here, which can be seen from every corner of the globe, has been deprived of its human rights. I am certain that not one of those Latin American countries that promoted, co-sponsored or supported this project could gather even 5 percent of the number seen here in their respective capitals.

"Are these fanatic, ignorant and uncultured individuals who lack any historical or political knowledge?"

### Cubans have economic guarantees

The Cuban leader spoke proudly of the real human rights that are a reality for every Cuban—free health care and education, culture and democracy for the people—and contrasted them to the scandalous statistics of poverty, death and misery rampant

in Latin America.

He said, "For 50 years [our Latin American sisters and brothers] have been told that the hundreds of thousands of children who die every year due to neglect and hunger; the millions who work for pitiful salaries cleaning car windshields or shoes, or being traded or sexually exploited instead of going to school, represent democracy and respect for human rights. ...

"It doesn't occur to them that the economic, political and social system that they defend is a total negation of all possibility of equality, freedom, democracy, human dignity and justice. ..."

"What kind of democracy and human rights could exist in these conditions? It would be like trying to grow flowers in the middle of the Sahara Desert."

Song, dance, poetry and speeches dedicated to the five "Heroes of the Republic, Prisoners of the Empire," heightened the spirit of solidarity. Celebrants waved their Cuban flags to punctuate the speakers' remarks.

It is hard for a worker who lives in the capitalist world to imagine such a power-

ful, united and revolutionary support for workers and socialism, but it exists and thrives in Cuba. Unfortunately, in the United States, where May Day was born in struggle in the late 1880s, it is only a remote footnote for most people.

Cuba's youth, from elementary school Pioneers to Young Communist Union members, not only organized and led the celebration but gave dynamic speeches.

Ten-year-old Lazarito Castro held the multitudes truly in awe as he spoke. Lazarito had no notes or written talk. As he himself said, he was "speaking from my heart." He said, "While in many parts of the world the workers are holding demonstrations and marches for the most elemental right of a person to work, in our country what we do is celebrate, because these rights are already won, they have become reality and are guaranteed for the future.

"I tell you this as a Cuban Pioneer, who, like hundreds of thousands of Pioneers across this country, appreciates the workers in their great effort so that the children can have more classrooms, more computer labs, more televisions and videos."

### Emphasis on freeing Cubans in U.S. jails

Gerardo Hernandez, Fernando Gonzalez, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labanino and Rene Gonzalez are the five Cubans whose images permeate the island. They have been unjustly incarcerated since Sept. 12, 1998, in the United States, the result of a ruthless campaign by the U.S. government to persecute them under false charges related to espionage. They were sentenced last December to from 15 years to two life sentences.

Today in the heart of the Plaza of the Revolution, the more than 1 million people gathered there could see a huge billboard of the five heroes' images.

While International Workers Day in Cuba honors all workers' labor and achievements, the last three annual celebrations have also focused on the country-wide mobilizations to denounce increasing U.S. hostility against socialist Cuba.

It is for this reason that four foreign delegates were invited to share the stage with the Cuban hosts.

Pablo Micheli, general secretary of the



# fuel angry protests

wing march in one of Berlin's northern suburbs by members of the National Democratic Party, keeping anti-fascists from getting their hands on the neo-Nazis. Other ultra-rightist marches were scheduled to take place in Goettingen, Mannheim, Dresden, Ludwigshafen, Fuerth and Heidelberg.

Police attacked progressive demonstrators in the northern city of **Hamburg**. Cops arrested a dozen anti-fascist activists. In the western city of **Frankfurt**, anti-Nazis tried to block a neo-Nazi march by igniting tires in the streets. (BBC, May 1)

Workers and the poor in other countries across Europe are feeling the toll of the capitalist economic crisis and the ensuing anti-labor offensive.

Tens of thousands of Italians protested in **Bologna** against attempts by the right-wing Berlusconi government to repeal a law that workers had won to protect their jobs. Massive demonstrations also took place in **Milan, Turin, Napoli** and **Rome**.

In Spain, center-right government plans to slash subsidies for unemployed workers sparked mass opposition in **Madrid** and some 75 other demonstrations **across the country**.

Several thousand workers and progressive activists gathered outside **Brussels** for the May Day festival of the Belgian Workers' Party (PTB). Organizers and invited guests discussed the Congo—at one time a Belgian colony and now wracked by an imperialist-inciped civil war—and a report from a trip in solidarity with Iraq. The parents of young anti-globalization activist Carlo Giuliani, who was murdered by the Italian cops in Genoa last summer, spoke, as did trade-union militants known as the Clabecq 13. PTB General Secretary Nadine Rosa-Rosso reported on the recent challenge of the French fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen and the aggressive worldwide war crusade of U.S. President Bush.



South Korea

Workers Confederation of Buenos Aires, spoke of the critical level of hunger in Argentina, a hunger "invented" by the International Monetary Fund in that agriculturally rich country.

Ramon Pacheco Llanes, leader of the independent Mexican Union of Electricians, denounced the betrayal of Mexico's historically independent foreign policy by President Vicente Fox and Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda.

Uruguayan union leader Jorge Castro spoke for the thousands meeting on May Day in his country who had sent over 7,500 signatures on a petition to the government protesting Uruguay's sponsorship of the United Nations resolution.

Gloria La Riva, coordinator in the U.S. for the National Committee to Free the Five, told the crowd that the struggle in the U.S. will be critical to win effective support and their liberation. She concluded, "Thank you, Fidel, for defending the world of the workers and oppressed. Thank you, Cuba, for showing that only socialism can

One invited speaker was Tony Murphy of the International Action Center, who reported on the April 20 anti-war and pro-Palestinian demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco. He discussed the role of Marxists in the anti-war movement in the United States.

Bicyclists converged on the U.S. Embassy in **London** as thousands took part in anti-capitalist, pro-environmental protests in the British capital. (Reuters, May 1) The BBC reported that about 6,000 police massed against a demonstration of 10,000 anti-globalization activists who targeted London's well-heeled Mayfair district.

After years of imperialist dismemberment of the former socialist infrastructure in Yugoslavia, **thousands of workers** from the two most important unions in Serbia demonstrated on May Day in **Belgrade** for jobs and wage increases. News accounts noted they voiced their rejection of the so-called "Transition" period to a NATO-dominated, neocolonial capitalist economy. And amidst economic hard times in the former Yugoslav republic of **Croatia, workers marched in the capital Zagreb** to protest government attempts to curtail labor rights.

## May Day at a glance

Detention of immigrants by a private prison corporation was the focus of the May Day demonstration in Sydney, **Australia**. Police on horseback tried to disperse activists who surrounded the offices of Australasian Correctional Management to "imprison" company executives so they would "know what it feels like, in the way that they imprison refugees."

Iran is enduring intense imperialist pressure after George W. Bush labeled the country one of the "Axis of Evil" targets. In



Bangladesh

create a just society. Thank you Fernando, Rene, Ramon, Antonio and Gerardo for your sacrifice, which you have never regretted. We will never let you down."

It was on May 1, 2000, that foreign guests were invited for the first time to speak from Cuba's May Day podium.

At that time Elián González had still not been completely freed to return home, and the U.S. had just pressured a narrow majority of countries to vote against Cuba at the UN Human Rights Commission.

The numerous million-strong marches from early 2000 until Elián's return home in June 2000 proved decisive to the little six-year-old's freedom.

Popular mobilizations will also be critical in pressuring the United States to release the five Cuban prisoners. These heroes are truly in the dungeons of U.S. imperialism, separated from each other in a cruel way by U.S. federal authorities, who have moved them into maximum-security units scattered across the country.

The Cuban people, steeled in struggle



Argentina

Tehran some 5,000 workers marched against mounting inflation and low wages. Clothing factory workers who swelled the ranks of the demonstration said they had not been paid in 14 months.

In **Japan**, where workers are reeling from the plunging market economy, a total of 670,000 workers took part in several protests against wage cuts and layoffs. An estimated 35,000 demonstrated in Tokyo, where near-record unemployment is devastating workers' lives.

As conditions of life worsen under capitalism, a reported 100,000 rallied at Karl Marx Square in Moscow, **Russia**, at a May Day event organized by the Communist Party. Party leader Gennady Zyuganov pointed out to those gathered that more youth are taking part in the May Day celebrations than in recent years. Rallies were also slated in about 500 cities and towns across the former Soviet Union.

Almost two decades after the bloody CIA-engineered coup in **Chile**, protesters burned a U.S. flag at the May Day rally in Santiago.

Indonesian police unleashed violence against workers in the country's second-biggest city of Surabaya. Thousands of laborers across **Indonesia** marched for better conditions of work and life. Seven thou-



Philippines



Turkey

sand police outnumbered some 3,000 May Day protesters in Jakarta.

When labor activists marched through the center of Kuala Lumpur in **Malaysia**, with banners demanding more rights for plantation workers, police arrested at least 17. Organizers pointed out that "May Day is an act of solidarity, recognized even by the state. The police action mocks fundamental rights of workers to assemble peacefully."

More than 2,000 sex-industry workers held a torchlight march in Calcutta, **India**, to demand social welfare benefits and an end to their criminalization by the state. Radha Sardar, speaking for a nongovernmental organization working in the "red light" districts, said, "Sex workers are a part of society, and as such they are exercising their right to join the international working class in celebrating May Day."

May Day protests also reportedly took place in Manila in **the Philippines** where the U.S. has extended its "war on terror" by beefing up Pentagon bases and troops inside the archipelago; Damascus, **Syria**; Calcutta, **India**; south **Korea, South Africa** and **other African countries; Mexico, Ecuador, Switzerland** and **Sweden**.



Chile



WW PHOTO: GLORIA LA RIVA

Cuban President Fidel Castro speaks on May Day in Havana.

over decades, know how difficult this one will be. Yet their fight-back spirit resonated through the streets of the Plaza area, signaling to Washington that Cuba will not tire of the battle nor give up.



# International criminal court

The Clinton administration waged predatory wars against Yugoslavia and attacks on Somalia and Iraq under the cover of “defending human rights.” The Bush administration, relying on the events of Sept. 11, 2001, wages equally predatory wars under the cover of “combating terror.”

That difference determined the Bush gang’s latest decision to “unsign” a treaty establishing a permanent international war crimes court, a treaty Clinton had signed in his last few weeks as president. With utter contempt for allies as well as enemies, Washington is just taking it all back.

It is hard to foresee how this tactical decision will change events in the future. But it is one step closer to revealing the truth about U.S. wars. Namely, they are carried out for the base material interests of a small group of enormously wealthy monopoly capitalists.

To that extent it is worthwhile to examine just what the current decision means and what the Bush administration wants, and to use this analysis to expose the underlying reasons for U.S. wars.

At the present time, there are ad-hoc courts for war crimes set up by the United Nations. One of these puts people from Rwanda on trial for mass killings that occurred in 1994, but refuses to examine the events leading up to that period. The other is used mainly to punish Serbs for alleged crimes committed during 10 years of civil war in the Balkans.

Even though the U.S. and other NATO powers undermined governments, provoked secession, armed reactionary insurgencies and finally bombed and destroyed much of Yugoslavia, no U.S. or NATO agents face the court in The Hague. Nor do U.S., French or Belgian agents who worked in Rwanda face any charges from the court in Africa.

These courts are “victors’ courts,” that is, inherently unfair, as only the wars’ losers go before them. This makes them acceptable to the U.S. ruling class and to its officials in the

Pentagon, but they are unconvincing for anyone who is at all fair-minded.

A permanent international war crimes court, like the one Clinton signed onto and many of the U.S.’s European allies are backing, would also have a strong pro-imperialist bias. The big powers would still control the media and demonize their enemies. They would provide the funding and influence the court’s officials. They would in general make the rules. But such a court needs to have at least the appearance of impartiality. It couldn’t have rules that forbid charges from being brought against the imperialist countries.

And there’s the rub. That’s why people like Bush and Rep. Tom Delay and Donald Rumsfeld and the Pentagon generals and a whole bunch of present and future war criminals want no part of the court.

They know that the U.S. military is stationed in over 100 countries. They know that U.S. troops will be sent into combat from Iraq to the Philippines to Afghanistan to Somalia to Colombia and—well, the earth’s the limit. When they are in combat, they will drop bombs on civilians, they will toss gas into buildings, they will shoot highly explosive rockets from hundreds of miles away. There is no doubt they will commit war crimes.

In addition, when you strip back the lies used to justify these wars, you will see that the war is really fought for control of oil resources, or to establish strategic military bases, or to show the rest of the world who’s boss. That is, they are aggressive wars for plunder, and thus those who order the wars—in the White House and the Pentagon—are also war criminals. And if the Pentagon uses nuclear weapons as Bush threatens to do, they are committing genocide.

The Bush administration thinks it would be foolish to allow even the remotest possibility that U.S. soldiers, officers and commanders could be tried before the world for the crimes that are already in the Pentagon’s plans.

Bush knows he’s a criminal. That’s why he “unsigned” the treaty.

## In French election

# Left takes struggle against fascism into the streets

By G. Dunkel

Two weeks of daily demonstrations throughout France, which hit a high on May Day when more than 1.5 million people came out in more than 60 cities, gave President Jacques Chirac a sweeping majority in the national election May 5, with 82.2 percent of the votes.

The only choice for French voters in this runoff election was between fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen and Chirac, a rightist who represents the French and European imperialist ruling class. The vote for Chirac was a big jump from what he had received in the first round—less than 20 percent—when there was a large field of candidates, including many parties on the left. He will continue as president for the next five years.

Even Chirac himself in his acceptance speech didn’t take this vote as a mandate. In the last week of the campaign there had been a strong movement proposing that those voting for him should wear hazmat suits or rubber gloves or clip their noses with clothespins to demonstrate their disgust. This move was so strong, in fact, that France’s highest court declared such behavior illegal. People did it anyway.

The vote for Chirac was actually a vote against Le Pen, who is seen as not just another corrupt bourgeois politician, but a fascist with blood on his hands. The slogan in the demonstrations summed it up: “Vote for the crook [Chirac], not the fascist.”

Le Pen is leader of the National Front, which is not a fascist movement in the full sense. But if there were one, he has the background to lead it. He has been convicted in French courts for delivering anti-Semitic and racist speeches. He physically attacked a socialist running for a seat in parliament against his daughter a few years ago. For that crime, the French courts sentenced him to loss of his political rights for a few years.

But Le Pen’s earlier work as an intelligence officer for the paratroopers in the French war against Algeria reveals his true character. In 1958, according to an article in the May 4 *Le Monde*, the platoon commanded by Le Pen tortured Ahmed Moulay to death. Mohammed Cherif Moulay, who had just turned 12, along with his five brothers and sisters and his mother were forced to watch and listen as their father was agonizingly killed. All Moulay had a chance to say to his wife before he died was, “Take care of the kids.”

This report was widely circulated and confirms an earlier report in the newspaper *Libération* 17 years ago. The revelations had an obvious impact and were part of the widespread and vigorous media campaign against Le Pen, whose economic program

would have been a disaster for French big business.

While Le Pen did get the formal endorsement of another fascist-type party, his percentage of the vote went up less than 1 percent from the first round to the second.

Opinions on whether to vote for Chirac varied among the parties that are called “the left” in France—which range from social democrats like the Socialist Party to the Communist Party to groups that call themselves Trotskyist. These seven parties totaled about 40 percent of the vote in the first round.

Lutte Ouvrière, or Workers’ Struggle—the group whose candidate Arlette Laguiller got 1,630,045 votes, or 5.72 percent, in the first round—called for casting a blank or spoiled ballot in the second round. This call, and similar ones from smaller organizations, obviously had some effect. The percentage of spoiled ballots went from 3.38 percent in the first round to 5.31 percent in the second round.

Other left-wing parties took a different view. The Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), whose candidate Olivier Besancenot got 1,210,562 votes, or 4.25 percent, in the first round, issued a statement after the first vote saying, “We must bar the road to Le Pen, the worst enemy of the workers, in the street as in the elections. The LCR will mobilize so that Le Pen scores the lowest possible vote on Sunday, May 5. We understand those electors who will vote for Chirac to oppose Le Pen, but we do not think that Chirac is a rampart against the new rise of the far right. On the contrary, he is among those responsible for it, and there is no doubt that following his election he will take measures against wage earners, youth and immigrants.”

On April 28, the LCR raised the idea of a third round—in the streets—on May 6 to prepare for a struggle of “all together” against Chirac’s policies.

Other groups had the same idea. Celebrations on May 5 and 6 drew members of the LCR, militants from the French Communist Party, anarchists, members of the Association of North African Workers, anti-racist and anti-Le Pen groups to discuss future struggle in the streets: a Third Round.

Two rounds of parliamentary elections are coming up in the first two weeks of June, when Chirac’s right wing is going to be sorely tempted to make deals with National Front leaders. There the strength of Le Pen’s party, as well as the rest of the left and right currents in the electoral arena, will be more easily seen.

But the struggle against fascism and racism took to the streets these past two weeks in France, and it appears many people want to keep it there.

## Bush threatens more countries

*Continued from page 1*

medical care system, which is free and available to everyone and has been highly commended by the World Health Organization. Cuba has more doctors and nurses per population than any other country in the world, sending medical missions to help other poor nations, and has driven down its infant mortality level to the lowest in the Americas.

So it is particularly maddening that this administration, which won’t even help sick people get affordable medicines, has chosen Cuba’s highly developed medical system as its target. The great advances Cubans have made in de-

veloping new vaccines through biotechnology are not to help people, says Bolton. Why, their magnificent public health system is just a front for an international bioterrorist network.

This kind of claptrap from sworn enemies of the Cuban Revolution appointed by Bush would have no credibility at all if the capitalist media and the Congress weren’t so terrified that even the slightest whisper of dissent might lead them to be branded as well. That’s the cowardly political climate the Bush gang have created with their doctrine of “you’re either with us or with the terrorists.”

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## Ashcroft 'indicts' FARC leaders

# Another ploy to justify intervention in Colombia

By Teresa Gutierrez

Developments out of Washington indicate that the Bush administration is steadily moving toward a wider intervention in Colombia that will have grave consequences.

On April 30, Atty. Gen. John Ashcroft indicted six members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) in the 1999 deaths of three North Americans. The three were Ingrid Washinawatok, Laheena Gay and Terence Freitas.

Washinawatok and Gay were Native Americans.

Then, on May 1, Secretary of State Colin Powell certified that the Colombian Army now meets the necessary requirements to receive an additional \$104 million in U.S. aid.

This additional money, over and above the billions already allocated in Plan Colombia, had been held up because of congressional requirements that the Colombian Army improve its dismal human rights record.

Both developments show that the Bush administration is gearing up for a wider military intervention in Colombia. Both announcements allegedly deal with human rights, but in reality show U.S. imperialism's heightened arrogance and hypocrisy.

What is the background to Ashcroft's indictment of the FARC members? In February of 1999, Washinawatok, Gay and Freitas traveled to Colombia on a trip in solidarity with Colombian Indigenous groups. They were there to work with the Uwa people, whose ancestral lands Occidental Petroleum had targeted to drill for oil.

The three were killed while in the jungle. The tragic deaths were a tremendous blow, not only for the Indigenous people of Colombia but for the U.S. movement as well. The three had a long history of progressive activism here. Washinawatok had worked with the International Action Center, among other organizations, and her loss was felt by the entire movement.

The U.S. government immediately accused the FARC of the assassination. The anti-war movement here was skeptical, as the U.S. government has a long history of arranging such atrocities to discredit liberation movements.

### FARC didn't try to cover up the tragedy

A week after the incident, however, FARC Commander Raul Reyes announced that a FARC guerrilla had indeed been responsible for the killings. Reyes apologized to all the Indigenous peoples of the world and asked for their forgiveness in a statement issued to the public. He explained that the killings were in no way FARC policy.

Reyes also asked anyone who planned to enter areas under the control of the rebels to please seek authorization from the organization first. He added that revolutionary justice would deal with those who had carried out the action.

The Clinton administration immediately used the incident as a pretext to break off negotiations with the rebels.

Since this tragedy, the U.S. government has often referred to it with crocodile tears. Atty. Gen. Ashcroft, however, did not even bother to get the correct pronunciation of

Laheena Gay as he announced the indictments. After repeatedly stumbling over her name, he finally just said "Ms. Gay."

Could anyone believe that Ashcroft and Bush care about the lives of Gay, Freitas and Washinawatok? This is the same government that continues to unjustly imprison Native American leader Leonard Peltier.

Peltier has been in jail for over 26 years. His only crime is that he defended the rights of his people on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. President Bill Clinton had a chance to pardon and release Peltier before he left office, but backed off as a result of FBI pressure. Clinton at the same time was shedding crocodile tears for the three people killed in Colombia.

### Murderous U.S. record

Where has there been even one U.S. indictment in the deaths of over 200,000 Guatemalans, mainly Indigenous people, during the CIA-supported war there?

What has the U.S. government done for the Native people of Chiapas? They still face dire economic conditions as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which was forced on Mexico by Washington.

The U.S. government has the blood of millions of Indigenous people on its hands. It has been behind the deaths of countless

Indians, not only in Latin America but in its very own territory.

The indictment of the FARC rebels has nothing to do with concern for the loss of lives. It has everything to do with finding any pretext for further intervention in Colombia, where a sharp polarization between rich and poor has fueled a 30-year guerrilla insurgency.

The parents of Terence Freitas have heroically spoken out against the indictment. They have stated that the U.S. government must not use the death of their son as a pretext for intervention.

A close look at Ashcroft's statement shows that the indictments are really about expanding the Bush administration's so-called war on terrorism into Colombia.

"Today, the U.S. strikes back at FARC's

reign of terror against the United States and its citizens," he said. "Just as we fight terrorism in the mountains of South Asia, we will fight terrorism in our own hemisphere." (Washington Post, May 1)

The additional money the Bush administration is giving the Colombian military will strengthen its genocidal attacks on poor communities that support the rebels.

Plan Colombia, a \$7.5-billion aid package for Colombia, is a deadly act of aggression against the people not only of Colombia but of Venezuela and other nations in the region. The \$62 million awarded on top of over \$1 billion already spent for military hardware in Colombia makes it even more compelling that the anti-war movement in this country continue in its work to stop Plan Colombia.



A May Day greeting from the Cuban 5.

### WORKERS WORLD

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March 30, 2001

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# Como Bush convenció a Fox traicionar amistad México-Cuba

Por Gloria La Riva  
La Habana

Con el voto en abril en México en contra de Cuba en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la ONU en Ginebra, el gobierno de Vicente Fox se llevó a cabo aún otro mando de Washington, subordinando más la soberanía mexicana y creando la potencial de una ruptura con Cuba.

El voto del gobierno de Fox no solo representó una capitulación a las presiones de los Estados Unidos, sino también una ruptura con la larga tradición de relaciones amistosas con Cuba.

En una respuesta decisiva el 22 de abril, el Presidente Cubano Fidel Castro reveló la complicidad más temprano en la expulsión virtual del líder cubano de la Cumbre de la ONU sobre el Financiamiento del Desarrollo, que tomo lugar en Monterrey, México el 21 de marzo.

Es ampliamente conocido que George W. Bush rehusó aterrizar en Monterrey hasta que el Presidente cubano habría salido. Antes de esta última revelación, Cuba solamente había atribuido la acción a Jorge Castañeda, el canciller mexicano.

Después de la salida de Castro de Monterrey, contestando preguntas de periodistas mexicanos e internacionales, Castañeda denegó haber presionado a Castro a salir. En semanas recientes, Castañeda se ha dedicado en ataques sin precedente contra Cuba. A mediados de febrero abiertamente instigó una crisis en la embajada

mexicana en La Habana, para alentar a cubanos a entrar a la embajada mexicana.

Mientras tanto, en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos en Ginebra, el gobierno de los Estados Unidos laboró horas extras por meses para encontrar a un país latinoamericano listo a auspiciar una resolución anti cubana para la votaciones del 18 de abril. Líderes gubernamentales de países latinoamericanos fueron invitados a varias reuniones en los Estados Unidos, incluso un desayuno en el hotel de lujo el Waldorf Astoria en Nueva York, con el propósito descarado de auspiciar a la resolución.

Aislar a Cuba en la diplomacia internacional ha sido una de las muchas tácticas de Washington en contra de la Revolución Cubana desde su triunfo en 1959. A su vez, muchos países que conforman a la Comisión de los Derechos Humanos y otros organismos internacionales se someten a las políticas de los EE.UU. de condenar a los países socialistas o antiimperialistas.

Desde el colapso del campo socialista, algunos países ex socialistas han servido a los deseos de Washington. Por ejemplo, por los tres años pasados la República Checa, parte del ex Checoslovaquia socialista, había presentado la resolución anti Cubana en Ginebra.

Esta vez los Estados Unidos estuvo decidido a obtener a un patrocinador latinoamericano. Este año Uruguay le sirvió a Washington como su señuelo.

**Incremento de intervención de EE.UU. en Latinoamérica**

La acción del gobierno mexicano debe ser interpretado en el contexto de la interferencia de los Estados Unidos que se profundiza en Latinoamérica, que tiene como su meta debilitar la soberanía de los países.

Estados Unidos dejó sus huellas digitales en el frustrado golpe militar en Venezuela contra Hugo Chavez. Está participando más directamente en acciones militares en contra del ejército revolucionario de las FARC en Colombia.

Es de gran significancia que recientemente México cerró las oficinas de las FARC en el Distrito Federal de México. México, que representa un centro político continental para los latinoamericanos, ha albergado a muchos exiliados políticos huyendo la represión durante muchos años. Desde Leon Trotsky hasta los luchadores republicanos de España, los progresistas chilenos escapando del fascista Pinochet, y el revolucionario puerriqueño William Morales, México ofreció refugio seguro.

La política extranjera de México, históricamente independiente de los deseos del imperialismo estadounidense, está enraizado en la Revolución de 1910 y las luchas radicales que resultaron en la nacionalización de las compañías petroleras de los EE.UU. y Bretaña por parte de Lázaro Cárdenas el 18 de marzo de 1938. Esa política en muchas maneras ha con-

trastado con lo del mismo gobierno en relación del movimiento progresista mexicano. El ejemplo más notorio de eso fue la masacre del gobierno de cientos de estudiantes en 1968.

Ramón Pacheco, secretario internacional del Sindicato Independiente de Electricistas Mexicanos dijo a Mundo Obrero en La Habana: “El peso de la Revolución Mexicana aún lleva fuerza y la política extranjera de México está vinculada a ese sentimiento.

“Solamente hace dos generaciones, nuestros abuelos participaron en la Revolución. Escuchamos los cuentos vivos de ellos que buscaron crear una sociedad autónoma y justa. Y siempre ha existido un sentimiento fuerte de hermandad hacia Cuba.

“Hasta en los momentos peores por ellos entre nosotros, los activistas mexicanos que no se acuerdan con las políticas del gobierno en contra de los trabajadores, nunca hemos olvidado que la política extranjera está basada en los principios de Benito Juárez: ‘el respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz.’”

Pacheco explicó que hay oposición amplia con la mayoría en las dos cámaras del Congreso Mexicano en oposición a los ataques de Fox y Castañeda contra Cuba. Y los sentimientos de la población son fuertemente sospechosos de las versiones de los dos líderes en relación al Escándalo de Monterrey.

## Alarma anti-guerra

# E.U. filtra planes de gran invasión contra Irak

Por John Catalinotto

Un artículo publicado en la plana de la edición del 28 de abril del periódico The New York Times, se detallan los planes de los Estados Unidos para invadir a Irak a finales del 2002 o a comienzos del 2003. Cualquiera que sea el itinerario, el movimiento anti guerra tiene que tomar estas amenazas muy en serio y prepararse para combatir estos planes de guerra contra Irak.

El Times reportó que oficiales estadounidenses “dijeron que los planes nacientes para una fuerte campaña aérea y un asalto terrestre ya incluye una cifra grande de soldados, variando de una mínimo de 70 a 100 mil y hasta 250 mil... La invasión incluiría entre 75 y 200 mil soldados estadounidenses y británicos después de un fuerte y continuo ataque aéreo.”

Según el Times, los oficiales de Estados Unidos dicen que ellos están esperando un buen momento de condiciones políticas y militares.

Los planes de guerra de la administración se han encontrado con obstáculos. Ninguno de los regímenes en la región del Golfo, aún los más obedientes a Washington, tienen la voluntad de decir públicamente que apoya los planes de invasión de los Estados Unidos. Aún los aliados de Eu-

ropa occidental en la OTAN han advertido en contra de un asalto contra Irak—aunque ninguno se enfrentaría a Washington en este tema.

Además, la continua lucha del pueblo palestino contra la invasión de Israel ha despertado a las masas árabes y musulmanas en todo el mundo, y las ha contagiado con combatividad. También ha inspirado a los movimientos anti guerra en algunos países imperialistas, incluyendo los Estados Unidos.

Las tácticas militares de los Estados Unidos no necesariamente seguirán el programa mencionado en el Times. De hecho, el periódico Boston Globe reportó que los asistentes del Secretario de la Defensa, Donald Rumsfeld ha estado empujando por una invasión lo más pronto posible.

Un grupo no oficial de veteranos de la guerra fría incluyendo el Asistente al Secretario de la Defensa, Paul Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, el Vice Presidente Dick Cheney y Henry Kissinger han estado empujando agresivamente por un asalto contra Irak.

Estas fuerzas sostienen de que una vez que el Pentágono se comprometa a ganar en el Golfo, los líderes indecisos de estos estados clientes se alinearán detrás de los Estados Unidos aún si esto lleva riesgos de revoluciones en sus propios países. Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz y sus conspiradores don muy poca importancia a la

lucha de las masas. Ellos son capaces de sobre estimar la fuerza de los Estados Unidos porque ellos basan sus estimaciones solo en el poder económico y militar de este.

Mientras tanto los Estados Unidos continúa la guerra contra Afganistán y en la frontera de este y Pakistán, además continúa expandiendo sus bases militares en Asia Central. El 29 de abril el periódico Washington Post reportó que las fuerzas estadounidenses y británicas se concentraron en esa frontera y se están dirigiendo a los que ellos creen que son fugitivos de al-Qaeda en las montañas del área. Javid Marwat, el oficial administrativo del gobierno pakistaní en Miram Shah, dijo que tropas pakistaníes y estadounidenses rompieron la puerta de un sitio religioso y buscaron en todos los cuartos de sitio religioso y de la escuela preparatoria.

Marwat dijo que el allanamiento “fue totalmente sin base y malo.”

Después de la visita por Rumsfeld, Turkmenistan y Kazkhstan—hasta ahora los últimos en aguantarse—se ha unido a Kirgystan, Uzbekistan y Tajikistan en recibir tropas, aviones de guerra, bases militares y facilidades de espionaje estadounidenses. El Pentágono está preparándose para una intervención militar en toda el Asia Central, donde la mayor parte de reservas petroleras en el mundo existen.

**Tariq Aziz expone las intenciones de E.U.**

Dirigiéndose el 25 de abril a un grupo de 121 personas progresista y activistas contra la guerra de 17 países, el Vice Primer Ministro de Irak, Tariq Aziz expuso las intenciones de Estados Unidos en la región del golfo.

Después de los más reciente acontecimientos en Palestina y Venezuela, Aziz explicó, que debe ser claro para todo el mundo que las actitudes beligerantes de Washington hacia Irak e Irán son basadas “ni en los derechos humanos ni en la democracia,” sino al “control total de las reservas petroleras de los estados en el Golfo.”

Aziz agregó que sería imposible el que los Estados Unidos use a fuerzas anti Bagdad en la región norteña de Kurdistan o los región sureña shiita para crear una revolución y así derrocar al gobierno central de Irak como se hizo con Afganistán. Tanto los Shiita como los Kurdos “se creen fuertemente iraquíes” para que esto pase, dijo Aziz.

Aparentemente los oficiales de la CIA están de acuerdo con esta evaluación y han dicho a la administración de Bush que solo una invasión eliminaría al gobierno de Saddam Hussein.