

AIRLINE RIPOFF



After getting concessions from workers, airlines are laying off thousands while protecting their wealth through bankruptcy. With so much sweat equity, airline workers should be first in line as creditors. **5**

BASEBALL CARTEL

There was no 'Strike and yer out' this year. The players backed off after a hostile media blitz labeled them greedy and overpaid. Fans of the world, unite behind the players! Don't let billionaire owners ruin the game. **4**



HEROES BEHIND BARS

★ A day in the life of Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, who sacrificed his freedom to stop terrorism against Cuba. **7**



★ A new appeal by Mumia asks the court to do a simple thing: listen to the testimony of the confessed killer who admits to the crime that put Mumia on death row. **6**

PVN PHOTO

BUILD SCHOOLS, NOT JAILS!

But the opposite is happening. A new report gives shocking statistics on the racist, lock 'em up policies that have made the U.S. #1 in incarcerations. **6**

EARTH SUMMIT

Bush hung Colin Powell out to dry when he sent him to Johannesburg to represent Washington's hated policies. When the general dutifully attacked Mugabe and other African leaders, he was booed off the podium. **8**

Coalition sets national protests:

STOP the war before it starts

By Greg Butterfield

With each passing day, the Bush administration grows more isolated in its plan to launch a full-scale invasion of Iraq. Among the world leaders who have condemned Washington's war plan is Nelson Mandela, the heroic symbol of South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle.

But isolation is not enough to stop a new war, said members of a recent peace delegation to Iraq headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. A powerful people's movement is needed, they declared.

At a Sept. 4 news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., the delegates joined with anti-war organizations, Muslim and African American community leaders, students and labor activists to announce plans for a National March on Washington to Stop the War on Iraq on Oct. 26. A march will also be held in San Francisco.

Organizers are calling on opponents of war and racism to protest in cities around the world that day. October 26 is the first anniversary of the Patriot Act that curtailed civil liberties in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, disaster.

The Oct. 26 March on Washington was initiated by International ANSWER—the Act Now to Stop War and End Racism coalition, the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation and the National Lawyers Guild.

"People in the United States and everywhere have an obligation to stop the Bush administration's drive to a new, all-out military aggression against Iraq," said Brian Becker, a member of the Clark delegation and spokesperson for ANSWER. "The Bush administration has no right to wage war against a country that is posing no threat to the U.S."

"Disregarding all international law, President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Co. are planning to send tens of thousands of young GIs to kill and be killed in another war for oil profits.

"The most important point is this," Becker added.

"While world public opinion is decidedly against Bush's war drive, it will take a mass people's movement—in the streets, workplaces, communities, campuses and high schools—to stop the coming war.

"We call for civilians and soldiers alike to exercise their political rights to speak out against an illegal war."

SPECIAL REPORT

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Emergency anti-war actions are also planned for Sept. 14-17 in Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and other cities. For more information, visit the Web site www.internationalanswer.org.

Nelson Mandela: 'We are appalled'

On Sept. 2, former South African President Nelson Mandela denounced U.S. threats against Iraq, saying the White House was "introducing chaos in international affairs, and we condemn that in the strongest terms."

Mandela said: "We are really appalled by any country, whether a superpower or a small country, that goes outside the United Nations and attacks independent countries." (CNN.com, Sept. 2)

The governments of Germany, France, Russia and China have all publicly opposed the U.S. war plan. Washington's closest ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, has not taken a position on the invasion plan, though he agreed with Bush that the Iraqi government must be "replaced."

No members of the U.S.-led coalition that carried out the 1991 Gulf War have signed on for Bush's adventure. All fear that a U.S. invasion of Iraq, lacking UN cover or any credible pretext, could ignite a new wave of struggle among the oppressed peoples of the Middle East and popular anti-war movements in the U.S. and Europe, like during the Vietnam War.

European leaders soon to face re-election, like Germany's Gerhard Schroeder, are also motivated by

Continued on page 8



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Members of a fact-finding delegation headed by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark are joined by community leaders at D.C. press conference calling for a campaign to prevent a U.S. war against Iraq.

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WW CALENDAR

ATLANTA

Sat., Sept. 7
 Voices for Palestine. Hear Dr. Sami Al-Arian, Florida professor fired for supporting Palestine, Sara Flounders national co-director of the International Action Center, and Rania Masri, Middle East human rights activist. 12:30 - 4:30 p.m. At Georgia Tech Student Center. For info phone (770) 989-2536; email aps@atlanta4palestine.org or alantaiac@aol.com.

Sun., Oct. 6

Demonstration at the America Israel Political Action Committee National Summit. Sponsored by Atlanta Palestine Solidarity. 2 p.m. At Swissotel, next to Lenox Mall. For info email aps@atlanta4palestine.org.

NEW YORK

Sat., Sep. 21-Sun., Sep. 22
 Workers World Party Emergency Conference. For info call, email or write

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SAN FRANCISCO

Emergency protest against war Sept. 14

By Nancy Mitchell
San Francisco

Anti-war activists, community groups and the labor movement in the Bay Area are working to build an emergency march and rally on Sept. 14 under the slogan: "No new war against Iraq!"

Since a call went out for national emergency actions to stop the war before it starts, the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the International ANSWER coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) has received many emails, phone calls and offers of support. Similar protests are planned in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Seattle and other cities.

The Bay Area labor movement has enthusiastically taken up Sept. 14. Longshore union ILWU Local 10 is an initiator of the protest. Several other unions and labor leaders have endorsed, and the San Francisco Labor Council endorsed the action and passed a resolution against a new war.

The Labor Council resolution recalled Bay Area labor's role in stopping a new war against Iraq in 1998 and resolved to "reaffirm and join the growing movement in opposition to any U.S. war against Iraq." (For full text of the resolution, see the Sept. 5 Workers World or <http://www.workers.org/ww/2002/sfiraq0905.php>.)

The resolution linked the struggle against the war with the ILWU's battle against the employers and government.

As the labor movement here gears up to help defend the ILWU in its intensifying struggle against the Pacific maritime bosses and the Bush administration's threats of military intervention in the ports, all are acutely aware of the negative effect that a new war would have, both on the workers abroad and the struggles here at home.

Among the many other sponsors of the Sept. 14 San Francisco march and rally are American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; National Lawyers Guild-Bay Area Chapter; Rev. Dorsey Blake; California Prison Focus; Sacramento Valley Labor Committee for Peace & Justice; International Action Center; Global Exchange; Kriss Worthington, Berkeley City Council member; Committee for a New Colombia; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer, S.F. Labor Council; Howard Wallace, organizer, Health Care Workers, Local 250; Gloria La Riva, President, Typographical Sector, N. Calif. Mediaworkers, Local 39521; San Jose Peace Center; and many others.

In addition to opposing a new war on Iraq, the Sept. 14 protest is demanding: government hands off our unions; defend civil rights and civil liberties; stop racist scapegoating; money for jobs, health care, housing and schools, not for war.

The Sept. 14 march will gather at UN Plaza at 11 a.m., and march at 12 noon to Jefferson Square Park, Turk & Gough Sts. For more information, call 415-821-6545.



PVN PHOTO: JOHNNIE STEVENS

Ramsey Clark visits victims of U.S. bombs at hospital in Basra, Iraq

Conference in New York Sept. 21-22

Workers World Party to meet on 'Capitalism in Crisis'

By Deirdre Griswold

The criminal corporate ruling class has frequent strategy sessions at which its members and hired brains define and refine how they will deal with the problems of the day to obtain the desired result: keeping the workers and oppressed off balance so that exploitation can go on without unpleasant interruptions.

Of course, they don't put it this way. But that's the essence behind all their obscure symposiums and dialogues on the economy, politics, foreign affairs and "civil society."

Workers, on the other hand, have few opportunities to get together and discuss what is in their class interests in an environment free of pressure from bourgeois institutions of one kind or another.

The need to do this is greater than ever. The capitalist economy is in a mess, and the

corrupt, big business government of George W. Bush thinks it can keep the system from tanking by launching an unending, global war against the oppressed countries. What will happen to millions of people is hanging in the balance.

So Workers World Party has called an emergency conference on "Capitalism in Crisis" in New York City on Sept. 21-22. That's where progressive people should be who want to maximize their skills and effectiveness in fighting against war, racism and the new form of repression cloaked as "homeland security."

It will also take up the broader question of how to build a revolutionary movement to change society from the bottom up, to end the scourge of war, of class division, and all the extra kinds of oppression that make life hell for so many people.

Fill out the coupon below, come to the conference, and get prepared for the struggles that lie ahead.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Sat., September 21

9 am Registration
9:30 am-8 pm

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Sun., September 22

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Panels and Workshops

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Community outraged over death of Ernest Prather

NYC police kill another unarmed Black man

By Michelle Quintus
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Police terror continued here Aug. 27 when cops from the 79th Precinct in the community of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, shot and killed Ernest Prather, a 39-year-old African American man. Residents who knew him described him as an intelligent, nonviolent man who rode a bicycle around the neighborhood.

Just before the killing, Prather had been volunteering at a church that serves food to the homeless on Tuesdays, the "So Great a Salvation Ministries" located at 345 Franklin Ave. Police were called to the church after a verbal dispute over some juice. Laura Prather had suggested to her husband that the argument was "not worth it" and that he should leave to cool off.

When Prather tried to return to the church at 2:49 p.m., he was met by four cops with their guns drawn on the corner of Franklin and Greene avenues. He lifted up his T-shirt to reveal a bright orange plastic squirt gun in his waistband. Many witnesses say he never even reached for the toy many residents carry on hot summer days to keep cool.

A witness who identified himself as Mr. Carey, who has lived in the neighborhood for 38 years, said Prather kept repeating, "Look, this is not a gun; this is not a gun," with his hands raised. Then, Carey said, the cops started shooting.

All witnesses to the shooting reported six to 10 shots to the abdomen.

When this reporter arrived at the scene just minutes before 3 p.m., Prather's body lay motionless on the sidewalk surrounded by six police vehicles. His eyeglass case was

there, but no "realistic-looking toy gun," as cops described it, was present anywhere on the sidewalk or near Prather's body.

Meanwhile, cops were pushing witnesses—including Laura Prather and many neighborhood children—back with loaded guns. Outraged community members shouted, "Diallo" and "You can't go around killing Black men."

Witnesses were pointing at the man they called the shooter, who had already removed his badge and the top of his uniform to be unidentifiable.

An ambulance arrived shortly after 3 p.m., late enough for Prather to bleed to death. Contrary to police reports that say he died later at Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center, Prather was taken from the scene of his murder in a body bag, as evidenced by a Daily News photo of Aug. 28 and many witnesses.

By 3:05 p.m., all witnesses had been pushed back to where they could not see the crime scene. Community residents were not allowed within two blocks of the shooting for hours, even to go home.

Prather's killers were taken to a nearby hospital and, according to the Aug. 28 New York Times, treated for "trauma."

Later that night, Laura Prather, along with her husband's friends and community members, lit a single white candle in his honor on the corner of Franklin and Greene avenues where he had died.

At this spontaneous street corner memorial, one outraged resident, Zukirah Brown, said: "We're all tired of the police brutality against Black people. I'm tired of the cops shooting down Black men. It's got to end. ... It's got to end now."

By Mumia Abu-Jamal
from death row

WAR on the waterfront

In times of war, even one so nebulous as the "War On Terrorism," there are wars within wars. Wars not merely fought abroad, but little, internal wars of interests battling for dominance.

With the elevation of George W. Bush to the nation's highest office by the Supreme Court, business interests know they have "their guy" in the White House, and they are now trying to change the rules of the game, using government muscle and federal power to threaten labor into compliance with their bosses' interests. This can be seen clearest in the struggle between the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA—the waterfront employers) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU—the unionized workers).

The PMA allowed the labor contract to expire on July 1 and has issued harsh demands to the unions that would seriously undermine long-standing and hard-fought labor rights. The PMA wants to introduce new technology into the shipping industry, which the ILWU has agreed to; but the PMA wants to use these technologies to circumvent the time-honored union hiring hall, a move that cuts into pivotal union power.



The union hiring hall didn't always exist; it came into being as a result of long, hard, deadly struggles, organized not by union leaders, but by everyday rank-and-file ILWU members, who pushed the Great Maritime Strike of 1934 into labor history.

Historian Howard Zinn writes that "[L]ongshoremen on the West Coast, in a rank-and-file insurrection ... held a convention, demanded the abolition of the shape-up (a kind of early-morning slave market where work gangs were chosen for the day), and went out on strike. Two thousand miles of coastline were quickly tied up. The teamsters cooperated, refusing to truck cargo to the piers, and maritime workers joined the strike. When the police moved in to open the piers, the strikers resisted en masse, and two were killed by police gunfire. A mass funeral procession for the strikers brought together tens of thousands of supporters. And then a general strike was called in San Francisco, with 130,000 workers out, the city immobilized." (See Zinn, "A People's History of the United States," pp. 386-7.)

While union organizers recall it was six strikers killed by cops, the point remains that the hiring hall wasn't a gift bestowed by the bosses, but a right won by blood and death. The PMA wants to computerize it away, to distant points like Utah, Arizona, and even overseas!

Another tool of the wealthy owners has been the corporate press, which has falsely portrayed the longshoremen as if they were pro baseball players, making over \$100,000 a year, when, in fact, their average wage is closer to half that. While the ILWU quite rightly takes pride in the fact that it has fought for decent wages for its members—over 70 percent of whom are African American or Latino in the San Francisco/Oakland ports—the PMA's tactic is designed to stir up labor envy in the midst of a falling and faltering economy.

Into this simmering labor conflict now comes "Unconstitutional Tom" Ridge, the stone-faced Homeland Security Czar, and guess on whose side? Czar Ridge placed a less-than-veiled threatening call to Jim Spinosa, ILWU president. The message? A breakdown in talks (not to mention a strike!) threatens "national security." Why isn't it ever that when a worker, or even thousands of workers, faces job loss, that isn't a "national security" threat? Why isn't job security "national security"? How is it in the "interests" of a nation to abolish a hard-fought right that labor won through terrible battle?

Despite the whines of the wealthy and the bloats of the corporate press, the ILWU has every right to hold firm in the face of this state-managerial assault on their glorious traditions.

The radical writer Randolph Bourne once observed, "War is the health of the state." By this, he meant that governments accrue tremendous powers during war, and rarely, if ever, return power to the people.

The ILWU should fight, and fight hard, in its noble tradition, against this new-age "shape-up" scheme pushed at them by management, and threatened by the Bush regime. The ILWU, with the aid and assistance of sister unions, can once again teach an historic lesson, that "Labor security is national security."

Owners push back baseball union

Players up against billionaire cartel

By Mike Gimbel

The billionaire "good ol' boy" cartel that runs major league baseball has used every contract negotiation since 1976 to try to get the players back on the plantation.

Before 1976 professional baseball players, after signing an initial contract, were tied like feudal serfs to a single team for the life of their careers. They could be traded from team to team without any right to protest. Today professional players still start their careers in the aptly named farm system, as though they belonged to some huge plantation.

Even today, the pay for most professional baseball players "down on the farm" is scandalously low. Most perform for many years under difficult conditions without ever reaching the major leagues. If they do finally reach the majors, where they can make a good income, their careers there average only about three or four years.

The means by which team owners previously tied players to their teams was a lifetime contract called the reserve clause. In 1949, Brooklyn Dodgers executive Branch Rickey said the reserve clause was criticized only by "persons of Communist tendencies" who "deeply resent the continuance of our national pastime." In 1976 an arbitrator ruled that these contracts were illegal and that all baseball players were to be free agents after one year.

The reserve clause was dead, but the owners have been trying to resurrect it in another form ever since.

Baseball owners have attempted to restrain salaries ever since the game became a sports industry late in the 19th century. In 1881, Albert Spalding, who owned the National League franchise in Chicago, said: "Professional baseball is on the wane. Salaries must come down or the interest of the public must be increased in some way. If one or the other does not happen, bankruptcy stares every team in the face." (John Helyar's "Lords of the Realm")

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? The franchise owners have sung this same song ever since, yet no franchise has gone bankrupt. In fact, every franchise up for sale has sold for a greater amount than the previous owner paid for it.

1960s upsurge affected baseball, too

Professional baseball was not immune from the progressive upsurge of the late 1960s to mid-1970s. The arbitration decision against the reserve clause would never have happened in earlier decades; it would also be unlikely today in the current reactionary political atmosphere.

Curt Flood, a star Black center-fielder for the St. Louis Cardinals, was the first player to challenge the reserve clause. In the late 1960s, under the influence of the powerful civil rights and progressive movement of the period, he refused to report to his new team when the Cardinals attempted to trade him. He lost his case and was effec-

tively "blacklisted."

Flood's career was finished, but his action stirred the other players to begin a serious and coordinated fight to get the reserve clause outlawed.

After the owners lost the 1976 arbitration, they were forced to sit down with the players' union and negotiate a new system. The union agreed to a system whereby the players were tied to a particular franchise for six years. While this was a concession, the union was concerned at that time that if all the players were immediately made free agents, the competition for jobs might actually depress individual players' salaries.

The players' union, using the rising salary for so-called star players, has forced the franchise owners to raise all major league players' salaries. Unfortunately, the union has done little to improve the salaries for minor leaguers, other than those deemed future stars.

The minor league players have benefited from the decision ending the reserve clause, so they are also able to become "free agents" after three to five years in the minors. These free-agent minor leaguers have little or no bargaining power, however. They end up begging for a place on a minor league roster in the faint hope of reaching the major leagues. Most are simply discarded by the owners.

A few of the discarded minor leaguers try to keep their hopes alive by joining an independent league, unaffiliated with the major leagues. A few of the better minor league players, unable to win a job in the major leagues, have agreed to let a major league franchise sell their contracts to a team in Japan, where they can earn a salary far greater than here in the minors.

It's really a billionaires' cartel

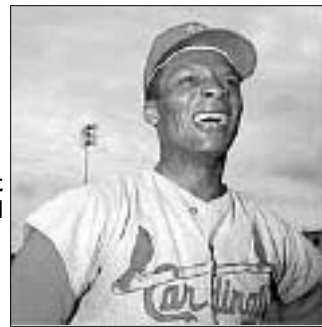
Major league baseball, by a ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, is exempt from federal anti-trust laws. This has enabled its billionaire owners to maintain a monopoly cartel that carves out territories and enables the owners to put up a united front against the players in salary matters.

The owners also hammer the public interest by threatening to move a franchise whenever they want to coerce a community into building expensive stadiums and giving them tax breaks.

It is no accident that President George W. Bush was until recently one of these franchise owners. Bush used his public notoriety as owner of the Texas Rangers baseball team as a stepping stone to become governor of Texas.

The team owners are referred to as franchise owners because, even though each franchise is in competition with the others on the field, major league baseball operates as a single co-operating entity. These franchises have very different money sources, just as a fast food franchise owner would have, depending on whether the location is good or bad. A franchise in a big-market location like New York City has a financial advantage over the small-market owners in terms of television contracts.

Curt Flood



The Yankees bring in about \$175 million annually from local television contracts because they play in a metropolis. Local television contracts for the smallest-market franchises might garner only \$1 million to \$5 million a year.

Over the years, these small-market franchise owners have wanted to take on the big-market owners to try to force "revenue sharing" of the local television income. Supposedly they need the money to be able to put a competitive product on the field. But there is no guarantee that money from revenue sharing wouldn't go into the owner's pocket, rather than for signing contracts with the better players.

While some small-market owners have made noises about challenging the big-market owners, they have always united with them to get the players to pay for this "revenue sharing."

The owners' proposal of a "luxury tax" for revenue sharing is really a back-door attempt to introduce a salary cap, which would reduce the players' ability to bargain for better salaries. This tax would financially penalize a big-market team for signing a player away from a small-market team if the total player contracts signed with a particular franchise exceeded a certain amount. The effect would chill the player's ability to negotiate a market-value contract.

In other words, the money saved by holding down player contracts would pay for "revenue sharing." The actual local television revenue would not be shared at all.

Free market versus socialism? Not!

Some progressives might be confused, since the players are demanding that capitalism function in a free-market manner while the owners might seem to be proposing a socialist solution to share the wealth. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The owners of big business have always sought "socialism" for the rich with government handouts, tax breaks and other largesse. All the players are doing is attempting to maintain the bargaining power with these powerful billionaire franchise owners that they won in the 1976 arbitration decision.

The negotiation just ended was the ninth since the 1976 decision. To illustrate how hard the owners have pressed the players' union for concessions, each of the eight previous negotiations resulted in a strike. In every negotiation the union has been forced to compromise in some manner and give up "free agency" in bits and pieces.

In the current negotiated contract, under very difficult conditions for the players and with some owners wanting to bust the union entirely, the players made concessions on the luxury-tax salary cap. But they were able to

Workers must fight for property rights

Concessions won't stop airline bankruptcies

By Michelle Quintus
Local Council 5 Representative
Association of Flight Attendants
New York City

force the owners to withdraw their attempt to "contract," or close down, two franchises. They also set back the owners' attempt to impose a worldwide draft of amateur players, which would have suppressed salaries for all drafted amateurs.

Unfortunately, during these difficult negotiations, the players allowed the owners to frame the public terms of the political struggle over the contract as "millionaire players vs. billionaire owners." This put the players in a very bad negotiating situation. As a result, the owners were able to use public opinion against them during the negotiations.

The players' successful struggle to save two franchises was never used by the union. The cities involved and the millions of fans of these teams could have been rallied to the players' side had they effectively used the issue.

Even George Steinbrenner, owner of the richest franchise in baseball, has used a bogus threat to move the New York Yankee team out of the city if he didn't get a stadium on the West Side of Manhattan—which would have cost the public more than \$1 billion.

The players were fighting for the fans and against the owners' ability to coerce individual cities, but you would never know it if you followed the public information available during these difficult negotiations. The owners were able to turn many fans against the players because the fans did not see how their interest was in any way connected to that of the players.

Look for new struggle in four years

The settlement just reached is for four years. The union certainly wanted a longer contract, but the owners want as many shots as possible to weaken the union. The owners did want an agreement, but they don't feel they have gotten enough. In four years, look for an even more difficult negotiation.

This agreement has not satiated the owners' thirst. One concession the players made was to not challenge the owners if they decide to "contract" franchises after the current contract ends in 2006. The franchise owners will be sure to use the threat of "contraction"—which would result in fewer available jobs and more players trying to negotiate individual contracts with fewer individual teams, causing strong downward pressure on all player salaries.

The current contract postpones this continuing confrontation for four years. The owners' success in gaining concessions in previous contracts will only whet their appetite for the next round. The greedy and overpaid owners will again call the players greedy and overpaid.

Who ever went to a stadium to watch the owners perform? The players are not only the performers, they are the product. Only under capitalism can this absurd situation exist: parasitic owners publicly complaining about and degrading the very product they are attempting to sell to the public.

The greedy baseball franchise owners produce nothing. Who needs them? What purpose do they serve? Shouldn't teams that purport to represent a community be publicly owned?

That, of course, can only happen under socialism. As long as capitalism exists, the public will be subject to the owners' greed, the owners' threats to move if they are not allowed to reach into your pockets and financially bleed the communities they supposedly represent.

It all comes down to that old labor song, "Which side are you on?" There should be just one side for the working-class public: the players' side.

It seems not a day goes by without some mention in the media about trouble in the airline industry.

President George W. Bush's attempts to prohibit airport security workers from organizing into unions, the rise in airline CEO salaries while they claim loss of profits, the mergers that neglect worker contracts, worker layoffs and bankruptcies—all have become regular topics.

However, almost every bit of "news" regarding the airlines rests on a myth: that labor is the cause of ongoing financial struggles in the airlines—and that the workers had better accept pay cuts and concessions or the airline companies will be driven into bankruptcy.

Many airline workers at Pan Am, Continental, Eastern and TWA survived bankruptcies. They know the truth: Worker concessions never saved an airline.

Concessions from workers, bonuses for top management

USAirways workers learned this recently when they accepted concessions in pay and work rules, supposedly to save the company from bankruptcy.

The airline had requested \$950 million per year total in cost savings from all its work groups. Still, USAirways filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy just days after reaching concessionary agreements with its workers.

One week after USAirways' bankruptcy, the company asked the courts to release \$6 million for bonuses for approximately 500 senior management employees.

The reality in the airlines mirrors the reality in other U.S. corporations like Enron and WorldCom: The corporate owners are stealing more and more from workers' wages and retirement funds.

Many airlines are doing this in the name of the Sept. 11 tragedy. But most of the airline financial struggles began long before that.

United Airlines, for example, hasn't turned a profit in two years. Management's solution is to point a finger at the workers who keep the airline in the air. These same workers actually own 55 percent of the company through Employee Stock Option Plans, but they are denied basic decision-making power over the airline's direction. Worker-owners are also denied the profits generated by their own labor.

Gov't abets airline bosses

The U.S. government is also playing a role in the anti-labor rhetoric.

The Bush administration established the Airline Transportation Stabilization Board in September 2001 in the name of bringing airline corporations financial relief through government subsidies and loans. This so-called stabilization board has given handouts to airline corporations—\$807 million each to United and American Air-

lines—without including any relief for airline workers.

Now it has gone a step further by requiring worker concessions at airlines seeking loans through the ATSB. These demands for labor concessions convey the message that labor costs are the airlines' primary problem.

In rebuttal, the Flight Attendants union at United Airlines points out that an arbitrator recently ruled that United enjoyed a \$48-million advantage in its flight attendant costs over the average of its competitors in 2001.

"The math doesn't add up," explained Greg Davidowitch, president of the Flight Attendants at United Airlines, "when management asks for exorbitant concessions from workers—totaling \$9 billion over six years—to obtain a \$1.8-billion loan guarantee from the Air Transportation Stabilization Board. We ask: Is United using the ATSB as its heavy to extract huge concessions from its workers to cover for years of mismanagement? Or is the White House attempting to dictate what airline workers in this country earn through the ATSB?"

United Airlines was recently denied an ATSB loan until it gets worker concessions. The bosses then presented labor groups with a "cost recovery plan"—and announced publicly that they might file Chapter 11 bankruptcy by November 2002. The corporation offers no management contribution to this plan, nor any guarantee to workers that these concessions would avoid a bankruptcy filing.

In fact, UAL has hired Jack Gallagher, attorney for Paul, Hastings, Janofsky and Walker—a known union buster from the days of Frank Lorenzo at Eastern Airlines—to assist it during this process.

But union solidarity is strong at the airline. Leaders of all unions at United Airlines have agreed to participate in a coordinated labor response to the financial dilemma. They are meeting on Sept. 4 to discuss plans.

Ramie Miller, a United flight attendant

who formerly worked at Continental Airlines and who went through a Chapter 11 bankruptcy at that company, says: "I'm not afraid of bankruptcy. Truth is, I can't live on anything less; there is no room for us to give anything back."

"Continental used to ask us not to collect our welfare checks in our uniform because it was an embarrassment to the company. And cutting wages here [at UAL] puts us right back in that position."

Workers are principal creditors

Bankruptcy may not be the end of the road for airline workers. In the book "High Tech, Low Pay," Sam Marcy suggests that bankruptcy may be the ideal time for workers to assert their right as the principal creditors. After all, workers routinely advance credit to the company by advancing labor power for a period of time prior to getting paid.

"The unions," Marcy explained, "can insist on the right to become the trustee in bankruptcy and to operate ... in the interests of the workers. When a company files for bankruptcy, it is no longer the legal owner; it surrenders its title. The union(s) as the principal creditor of the company are, therefore, the de facto owner on behalf of the workers."

Karl Marx also showed that the worker's status as a creditor is not a fiction, but reality.

To be sure, the other creditors of airline companies, including the banks, will not surrender their claim to trusteeship without a struggle. But the right to a job is a property right, accompanied by the right to seize and occupy that property.

Airline workers need not remain victims to the mismanagement and corporate exploitation that drives the industry into bankruptcy and workers into concessions or unemployment. Worker rights must be asserted in mass action and solidarity with each other. In this way, labor is not the cause of airline financial difficulties, but may, in fact, become the answer.



Prison news keeps getting worse

U.S. substitutes jails for schools

By Heather Cottin

In an Aug. 28 report titled "Cellblocks or Classrooms," the Justice Policy Institute, a think tank located in Washington, found that spending for prisons accelerated at a criminal pace over the past 17 years.

Overall, state spending on "corrections" grew at six times the rate of state spending on higher education. Between 1985 and 2000, the increase in state spending on prisons was nearly double that of the increase to state colleges—\$20 billion versus \$10.7 billion. The total increase in spending on higher education by states was 24 percent, compared with 166 percent for prisons.

The report also highlighted the prison-industrial complex's institutionalized racism. A disproportionate number of Black youths, who would be better served by expenditures for education, health care or housing, are instead locked up in penal colonies. Reuters reported recently that about 3 percent of the U.S. adult population is in the prison system.

The Electrical Workers union (UE), fighting the racist/capitalist depredations of the prison-industrial complex, notes that while African Americans make up 12

percent of the total U.S. population, they compose 51 percent of prisoners. (www.ranknfile-ue.org)

Angela Davis has written: "More than 70 percent of the imprisoned population are people of color. ... The fastest-growing group of prisoners are Black women and Native American prisoners are the largest group per capita." (Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex)

According to the Justice Policy report, "In 2000, there were an estimated 791,600 African American men in prison and jail, and 603,000 in higher education." In some states the ratio is more appalling.

In Pennsylvania, where Mumia Abu-Jamal has been on death row for 20 years, spending on higher education has increased by 25 percent since 1985 while spending for prisons has skyrocketed by 413 percent. In New York state, spending for higher education decreased by 25 percent, while spending for prisons increased by 137 percent.

Prisons are big business

In a depressed U.S. economy, prisons are still big business. Westinghouse, AT&T, Sprint, MCI, Smith Barney, American Express, General Electric and Cor-

rections Corporation of America operate 48 correctional facilities in 11 states, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom and Australia. They are raking in billions of dollars by cutting corners, which harms prisoners, for instance through providing substandard diets, imposing extreme overcrowding, and employing abusive and often racist prison guards. (See the www.prisonactivist.org web site.)

Corporations are raking in more billions of dollars by paying prisoners 22 cents per hour and creating a new form of slavery. Major corporations are contracting prison labor.

The UE points out: "Prison-industry partnerships are up 200 percent since 1979. Thirty-seven states participate in these arrangements, which put prisoners to work in a variety of manufacturing and service jobs.

"For years prisoners in California booked flights for TWA. Microsoft uses convicts to ship Windows software. Honda pays \$2 an hour to prison labor in Ohio to do jobs that UAW members once did for \$20 an hour. In Georgia, a recycling plant replaced 50 sorters with prisoners."

The JPI notes that between 1980 and 2000, the U.S. prison and jail population quadrupled from 500,000 to 2 mil-

lion prisoners. During that time three times as many African American males were added to the prison population as were enrolled in state university systems in the United States. Costs of colleges soared at the same time, so that student tuition and fees for higher education rose at eight times the rate of the state's input.

For a low-income family, the cost of tuition at a four-year public institution increased from 13 percent of their income in 1980 to 25 percent in 2000.

The racist prison-industrial complex is kidnapping Black youths onto the wretched galleons of a new slave system. A new breed of plantation owners—corporate business owners—benefit from racism, state funding and protection, and the super-exploitation of captive labor in the prisons of the United States.

As the economy tightens its chains around the poorest and most exploited workers in the United States, the young are rotting away in the dank dungeons of the prison-industrial complex. The terrible contradictions within the system make the truth more obvious. As one of the signs at the reparations rally in Washington said, "Money for schools, not jails."

Wrong man still in jail

Mumia asks court to hear confessed killer

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Lawyers for death-row journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal filed an appeal Aug. 27 asking the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to invoke a little-used procedure for the court to directly hear testimony under oath from Arnold Beverly, an ex-mob hit man. Beverly has made a sworn deposition that he was hired to shoot and kill police officer Daniel Faulkner on Dec. 9, 1981.

Beverly has stated in a videotaped confession that Abu-Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting, for which he was convicted and is currently on death row in Pennsylvania. Beverly also promised that he is willing to testify in court whenever given the chance to do so.

Prosecutors have refused to allow this crucial evidence to be heard. Courts on both the local and federal levels have blocked previous efforts to depose Beverly.

The brief argues that Abu-Jamal is the innocent victim of a frame-up by corrupt police and organized crime, and demands his immediate release. At a news conference after filing the appeal and again at an evening Town Hall meeting for Abu-Jamal, attorneys Marlene Kamish and Eliot Lee



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Protesters in Philadelphia watch Arnold Beverly's videotaped confession.

Grossman provided more detail on the appeal brief.

Abu-Jamal's appeal is based on the sworn statement of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter that at the time of the 1982 trial, she heard the trial judge, Albert

Sabo, say in reference to Abu-Jamal: "Yeah, and I'm going to help 'em fry the n****r." According to Abu-Jamal's attorneys, the judge, who died earlier this year, never denied under oath having made the

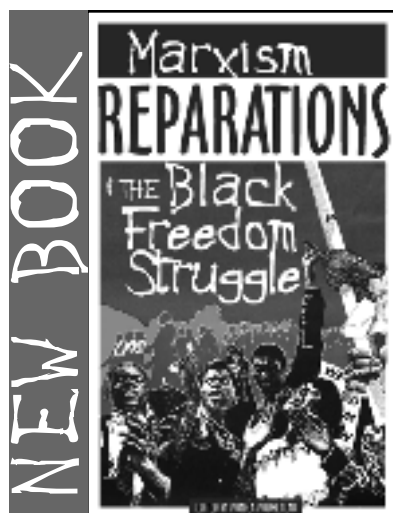
racist statement attributed to him by Maurer-Carter.

When this was first brought to the court's attention in August 2001, Common Pleas Judge Pamela Dembe ruled that Sabo's racism was irrelevant and that Abu-Jamal had no right to an impartial judge. In appealing Dembe's outrageous ruling, Abu-Jamal's lawyers compared her decision to the pre-Civil War Dred Scott case in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Scott, a Black slave suing for his freedom, "had no rights the white man is bound to respect." The brief quotes from the Dred Scott decision and commentary by Abu-Jamal on this historic case.

At the evening Town Hall meeting, attorney Eliot Grossman stressed that, given Sabo's racist statement, it was obvious that no Black person could get a fair trial before a judge like that. "We presented evidence, the press covered Maurer-Carter's statement—the case should have been over," Grossman said. "But Dembe in effect ruled that Mumia did not have the right to a fair judge at his trial, and chose to ignore the evidence."

"We searched for an historical example to make it clear what this actually means—this is the Dred Scott decision all over again," Grossman continued. "This is not only a case of abject racism, but we have evidence to prove his innocence—a confession confirmed by lie detector tests—and the court made it clear that they don't care if he's innocent, they just want to keep him locked up."

Grossman also reminded the audience that as a result of Judge William Yohn's ruling last year, Abu-Jamal is "legally off, but physically on death row." With both sides appealing Yohn's ruling, and Pennsylvania gubernatorial candidate Ed Rendell, formerly the Philadelphia district attorney, promising to reinstate the death warrant if he is elected, public support for Abu-Jamal is more important than ever.



- ◆ Racism, national oppression & the right to self-determination *Larry Holmes*
- ◆ Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery *Sam Marcy*
- ◆ Reparations & Black Liberation *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Harriet Tubman: woman warrior *Mumia Abu-Jamal (Guest Commentary)*
- ◆ Black labor and the fight for reparations *Bill Cecil*
- ◆ Black farmers demand justice *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Greetings from Mumia Abu-Jamal to the 3rd UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia & Related Intolerance
- ◆ Nigerian women take over Chevron Texaco *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Nigerian women's takeover ends in victory *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Causes of turmoil in Jamaica PART I PART II PART III *Pat Chin*

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Gerardo Hernández Nordelo

A day in the life of a political prisoner

By Alicia Jrapko

This article describing the prison life of one of the five Cuban political prisoners held in the United States for monitoring the terrorist activities of right-wing Cubans in Miami also appeared in Spanish in the Cuban newspaper Granma.

The living conditions of five Cuban political prisoners held in U.S. prisons is one of the greatest preoccupations of millions of Cuban people.

The five were accused of espionage, among other things. They received long sentences—from 15 years to double life terms. Since they were sentenced last December, the five have been scattered across the United States in different federal prisons. The U.S. government obviously separated them in an attempt to break the strength and morale they had shown throughout their trial and sentencing.

Conditions in the federal prison system vary from one facility to another. Their severity depends on several factors, including the political climate of the state and the level of security of a prisoner's unit.

Gerardo Hernández Nordelo faces the most severe sentence: two life terms plus 80 months. He is in Lompoc federal prison in California.

Lompoc is called the "New Rock" because it replaced the infamous Alcatraz prison in San Francisco Bay. Prisoners deemed to have had some type of "disciplinary" problem in other prisons are often sent to Lompoc. If after 18 months their behavior improves, they are assigned to federal prisons that are supposedly less severe.

Like all the other prisoners at Lompoc, Gerardo starts his day at 5:50 a.m. That is when the guards automatically open the bars of all the cells and the prisoners can go to the common areas of their unit. Between 6:15 and 6:30 they are called for breakfast. After breakfast the prisoners return to their cells or to the common areas, and around 7:45 are called to go to work.

The U.S. prison-industrial complex, which continues to grow, is now the second-biggest employer in the country. It is responsible for eliminating thousands of jobs on the outside, many of which had been covered by union contracts. Exorbitant profits are generated from cheap prison labor.

Each prisoner makes 23 cents to \$1.15 per hour; Gerardo makes approximately 50 cents per hour.

In all federal prisons, all prisoners have to work. The corporation that operates all prison production is called "Unicor." In Lompoc there are three factories: one cable joiner factory, a print shop and a sign factory. The three factories are located inside the prison walls. They are considered a desirable place to work because the work tends to be less menial than in other jobs.

Although the wage is very low, it is the only source of income for many prisoners. If they cannot get work in the factories, they are assigned to other jobs, such as general cleaning, cooking or other services.

Gerardo first worked in the cable factory. After a month he was transferred to a job in the sign factory, which he feels is a little bit more interesting. In the sign factory prisoners make everything from small stickers to big signs for the freeways.

The factory's clients are all government

agencies and institutions. For example, the Forest Service orders posters with messages such as forest fire prevention. Any sign found in a national park was most likely produced in Lompoc.

Brought skills from Cuba

As in any other work place, the bosses in prison quickly identify the workers who are more skilled to be assigned to specific jobs. Gerardo was assigned to a job of high responsibility, not because his bosses were concerned with his well-being or because they were interested in his progress, but because they found out that he brought with him a high level of education and knowledge that could be utilized to further maximize profits.

This is not surprising because Gerardo, like the four other Cuban political prisoners, grew up in Cuba, where everyone has access to free education from kindergarten to graduate school. The United Nations has named Cuba's educational system the best in Latin America.

Gerardo mostly works on a computer, where the entire sign database for the factory is stored. His responsibilities include inputting orders, keeping records, redirecting orders, passing them to production, closing orders that are sent to clients, making sales and order status reports, and responding to any requests for data.

At 4 p.m. he returns to his cell. The prison guards close all the cells and count the prisoners. Between 4:30 and 4:45 they open the cells and at 5:00 there are "activities"—prisoners can go into the yard, to the library or to church after passing through a series of metal detectors.

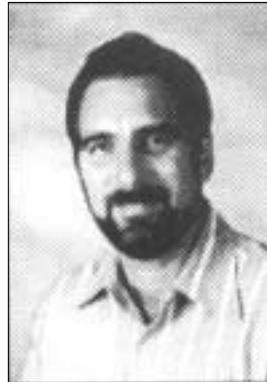
Around 5:30 they are called to the dining area. After supper the prisoners can either go back to their cells or go directly to the yard. All movement of prisoners takes place under close surveillance at designated times, after being announced on loud speakers. At 10 p.m. all the cells are closed until the next morning.

The weekends provide some break from the routine. It is then that Gerardo tries to get some time in the yard for exercise and some sun. Sunday also means the possibility of a phone call to Cuba.

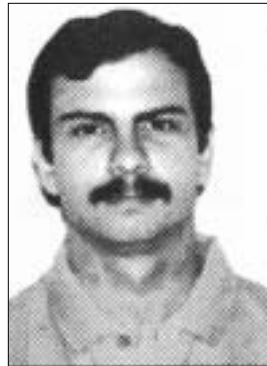
In the last two months, Gerardo has been by himself in his cell because his "celly"—cell mate—was sent to another prison. Lompoc is a very old prison and the cells are small, so this is a great advantage. It not only provides him a little more comfort, but he can also decorate the cell to his own taste.

He has two bulletin boards in his cell that he was able to acquire with a lot of perseverance. The boards, he explains, have become a collage of photos of Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, images of the Cuban people attending open tribunals, Cuban marches calling for the freedom of the five, and pictures sent to him by Cuban students, as well as photos of demonstrations by solidarity groups around the world.

Gerardo is well known in Cuba as a cartoonist. His work will soon appear in a new book, so besides his task of keeping up his correspondence, he spends as much time as he can creating new caricatures that reflect his political point of view and his undaunted sense of humor. Gerardo's cell lacks a chair or a little table to write on, and although he has become used to writing and drawing while standing up against the



René Gonzalez Schwerert



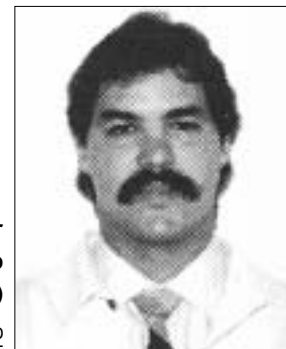
Fernando Gonzalez Llort

Ramón Labanino Salazar and Antonio Guerrero Rodriguez (right)

PHOTOS: NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO FREE THE FIVE



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo



closet, his greatest complaint is not this obstacle but the lack of time he has to write and draw.

Mail from all over the world

Because the case of the five Cubans is gaining international recognition, Gerardo is receiving between five to 10 letters per day from all over the world. He expresses his gratitude for all the support and good wishes he receives daily, and at the same time wants to apologize for not having enough time to respond in a timely way to all the letters.

The solidarity letters are a great source of encouragement. All this mail has given him a sense of pride, knowing that so many peace- and justice-loving people support the case of the Cuban Five and their defense of Cuba against the terrorism that emanates out of Miami.

There are 20 Cubans in Lompoc prison, six of them in Gerardo's unit. All the others are people who left Cuba in the 1980s and are known as Marielitos. Although many of them have completed their sentences, they are being retained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, victimized by the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

This particularly cruel aspect of the 43-year-old blockade of Cuba comes because there is no extradition treaty between the two countries, so many Cubans in prison are in legal limbo. This situation plays itself out in many state and federal prisons throughout the United States, where thousands of Cubans are imprisoned for an undefined time. Many of them have been in prison for 10, 15 and even 20 years without charges.

Many of the Cubans in prison with Gerardo have no contact with their families. In a show of solidarity, he has helped some of them find their families in Cuba. Due to this effort he has become known in the prison and even some prisoners from the United States have asked him to help them find

their lost relatives.

Many Cubans in the prison have told him that leaving Cuba was the biggest mistake they ever made. Many consider themselves revolutionaries and have asked to have a photo taken with him to send to their families in Cuba. Others share letters they have received from their Cuban families, who have asked them to look out for him and show him solidarity.

Gerardo's case, like that of the other Cuban patriots, is well known by other prisoners, too. Some have read the court closing statements of the five and asked Gerardo for a book with his signature. Several African American prisoners ask him regularly to let them read materials he receives in English. Many have followed closely the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal; others have expressed to Gerardo their admiration for Cuban President Fidel Castro.

It is clear that Gerardo has been able to remain strong behind the walls of Lompoc. Sometimes late at night, on a small radio, he has been able to tune in Radio Havana Cuba in English. One night he was even able to pick up the Cuban National Anthem.

Gerardo and his four comrades—Ramón, René, Fernando, and Antonio—are the only political prisoners in the United States who have the unconditional support of their entire country. The five inside U.S. prisons and the great majority of the Cuban people in Cuba fight the same battle—the battle for self-determination and the right to defend the sovereignty of Cuba against all types of aggression.

Sooner or later the five will return to their homeland.

For more information about the five Cuban political prisoners and their prison addresses, visit the web site: www.freethethefive.org.

Jrapko is a member of the National Committee to Free the Five and is from San Francisco.

Mugabe applauded, Powell jeered

Mass anger breaks through at Earth Summit

By Leslie Feinberg

If flowery speech were edible, the world's poor could feast on the rhetoric produced by the World Summit on Sustainable Development—dubbed the Earth Summit. Unfortunately, the conference was short on substance.

The United Nations conference drew some 65,000 delegates from close to 200 countries and more than 100 heads of state to Johannesburg, South Africa, Aug. 26 to Sept. 4. This was not an international convention of activists working to protect the world's species. The real clout at this parlay came from behemoth transnationals like McDonald's, Nike, Nestle and British American Tobacco, as well as the oil giants. (Guardian Unlimited, Aug. 26)

Environmental activists, expressing anger and alarm at the final back-room deal cut by officials, denounced the summit as "a waste of time and money." (CNN.com, Sept. 3) The 71-page "action plan" expected to pass muster by summit delegates at the close of the conference is all gums and no teeth.

"It's worse than we could have imagined," Steve Sawyer, climate director for Greenpeace, told Reuters. (Sept. 3)

The United States delegation, 130 members strong, was roundly denounced for its obstructionism. The draft of the document had included a modest proposal that by 2010, replenishable resources like solar, wind and tidal power would account for 15 percent of the world's total energy production. But the U.S. team filibustered and stonewalled until this humble formula was scrapped.

The U.S. delegates did acquiesce on a recommendation to try to halve the number of people living without sanitation by 2015 and

reduce the loss of endangered animals and plants by 2010. Today, one in four mammal species—key gauges of the ecosystem health—is at high risk of ceasing to exist in the near future. (BBC, July 15)

Of course, even with a second term in office, Bush and Co. won't be in the Oval Office to be held accountable by then.

And the final resolutions that the conference approves are not legally binding in any way, shape or form.

Actions speak louder than words

The Bush delegation dug in their heels whenever they heard two words they found particularly odious: timetables and targets. U.S. officials said they prefer consensual, voluntary partnerships with big business.

"It's true that targets for the sake of targets has never been our objective," Assistant U.S. Secretary of State John Turner told media at the summit. "Implementation was our real focus." (Washington Post, Sept. 3)

Did he say it with a straight face? The actions of the Clinton-Gore and Bush administrations speak louder than wordplay.

The landmark Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro a decade ago put the environmental crisis and poverty on its agenda. But many of its goals were never implemented. Some argue that Rio helped set the stage for the Kyoto protocol that aimed to diminish carbon dioxide emissions. Yet these gas emissions have risen by almost 10 percent since then. (Guardian Unlimited)

And the number of people in the developing world scabbling together an existence on less than a dollar a day has not changed since the Rio conference. (Washington Post, Aug. 25)

According to the Aug. 27 Washington Post, "In the 10 years since the Earth Sum-

mit in Rio de Janeiro, treaties protecting biodiversity and limiting climate change have languished. However, the United States is seeking to erase specific targets and timetables on many topics throughout the plan, which includes 150 pages addressing biodiversity, food security, clean water and health care."

Almost as soon as Bush went from roaming his ranch to pacing the West Wing, he abrogated the international Kyoto treaty that would have reduced global greenhouse gas emissions by just 1 percent. (Guardian Unlimited, Sept. 2).

In addition, "U.S. officials have also been criticized for promoting privatization—the sale of government-owned companies to investors—and arrangements between governments and large companies to extend such basic services as health care, water and electricity to developing countries." Privatization has resulted in "huge profits for big companies, shoddy service and skyrocketing prices that poor people cannot afford." (Washington Post, Aug. 30)

Turning down the volume

The neo-colonial sovereigns who dominate Africa know full well that the conference is taking place smack in the middle of a terrible famine in the southern region of the continent, caused in part by climate changes that have reduced rainfall, a lack of potable water and sanitation. (Guardian Unlimited)

An estimated 18 million of South Africa's 44 million people live without adequate

sanitation. (WashingtonPost.com) Almost half the population in South Africa today survives on less than \$2 a day.

If the stated objectives of those who wield the greatest power at this summit—alleviating poverty and taking steps to deal with the environmental crisis—were heartfelt, would it have been held in the opulent suburban enclave of Sandton behind bales of barbed wire, armored vehicles and 27,000 riot-clad security forces? Sandton was a whites-only enclave during apartheid rule. Nearby Alexandra is an impoverished and densely overpopulated Black township, emblematic of the fact that capital owned by a white minority has not really changed hands since the victorious political revolution of the Black majority.

If they were sincere, would the heads of countries that have looted Africa for centuries be able to face themselves in the mirrors of their marbled bathrooms at the plush Michaelangelo Hotel in Sandton Square, knowing their responsibility for the grueling poverty just a stone's throw away?

Wouldn't the AIDS epidemic that is particularly ravaging Africa have been featured at the top of the agenda, not buried at the bottom?

And, most importantly, wouldn't George W. Bush—head of state of the wealthiest imperial empire—tear himself away from his month-long holiday at his Summer Palace in the Lone Star state to play a leading role? Instead, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell was expected to deliver a five-

Continued on page 10

Bush envoy cut short

"Neither police nor protocol could protect Colin Powell once he was inside the conference hall," BBC correspondent Tom Heap reported from the Earth Summit in Johannesburg on Sept. 4. The U.S. secretary of state could not complete his five-minute speech.

Stormy protests drowned out the Bush administration's envoy and jeered him off the stage.

The first loud round of heckles and boos interrupted Powell when he denounced Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe for his government's redistribution of land ownership from white former colonialists to Black farmers. Powell blamed Mugabe for exacerbating the famine affecting several drought-stricken southern African countries, without mentioning that the White House and Downing Street have imposed economic sanctions to starve Zim-



babwe into submission.

Powell also drew howls of outrage when he censured Zambia for resisting the use of U.S. genetically engineered corn crops.

But the convention really erupted when Powell tried to defend the U.S. record on environmental issues and its pretended aid to underdeveloped countries. Shouts of "Shame on Bush!" filled the hall. Delegates unfurled banners reading "Bush: People and planet—not big business" and "Betrayed by governments."

Beefy security forces moved in and forcibly dragged more than a dozen protesters out. But the uproar continued and Powell walked off the stage.

—L.F.

Stop the war before

Continued from page 1

simple vote-grabbing arithmetic. Polls in Germany, France and Britain have consistently shown public opposition to a new war at 70 percent or more, and hostility toward any official seen acting as Bush's stooge.

Syria and Iran, both longtime opponents of Iraq's government, joined in condemning the Bush plan, knowing they could be next on Washington's hit list. So have pro-U.S. regimes like Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt.

Even Kuwait, the tiny, U.S.-dependent monarchy whose invasion by Iraq was the pretext for the Gulf War, doesn't support the White House plan.

Weapons inspections the solution?

Many U.S. allies are using the issue of weapons inspections to soften their opposition and not appear too out of step with Washington.

Rather than forthrightly defending Iraq's right to sovereignty and self-defense, they are pressuring Baghdad to accept the return of UN weapons inspectors, hoping that this will somehow make Bush's invasion scheme unworkable.

Secretary of State Colin Powell has also taken up this position. Powell made his opposition to the Bush invasion scheme public during an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation Sept. 1. Powell said that Bush has to make his justifications clear to Congress and the world. "A debate is needed ... so that everybody can make a judgment about this.

"As a first step, let's see what the

inspectors find, send them back in."

For months Bush and his closest associates have tried to build a case for invading Iraq. Their main ploy was to claim that Iraq was developing "weapons of mass destruction."

But some UN weapons inspectors, who toured Iraqi facilities throughout the 1990s, publicly refuted these claims, saying that Iraq did not have such weapons or the capacity to build them.

Former U.S. Marine Scott Ritter, who headed an inspection team, even admitted that they were little more than spy operations for Washington. Ritter said the inspectors fed information on politically and militarily sensitive sites to the CIA for use in bombing raids, like the 1998 U.S.-British "Desert Fox" operation.

Since the U.S. withdrew the inspectors in preparation for that assault, the Iraqi government has understandably refused to let them back in.

Grasping for another justification, Cheney gave a belligerent speech Aug. 26 claiming a "pre-emptive strike" was necessary because Iraq might someday develop a nuclear weapon. Cheney said further UN weapons inspections would serve no purpose.

On Sept. 2, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said the return of UN inspectors was "still under consideration" and could happen, but only as part of a "comprehensive settlement" that ends U.S.-backed sanctions, which have killed more than 1 million people since 1991, and the return of sovereignty over Iraq's whole territory.

Report from Iraq

U.S. drops bombs every day

By Brian Becker
Mosul, Iraq

A trip through Iraq in blistering late-August heat makes it crystal clear that the Bush administration is already waging a “pre-war” war that includes bombings almost on a daily basis.

Designed to degrade Iraq’s potential for air defense and to monitor its military response to air assaults, these bombings are taking a toll. People are getting killed and wounded regularly, but you would never know it if your source of information is the Western mass media.

This writer went to Iraq on Aug. 25 as part of a fact-finding anti-war delegation led by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. The delegation flew into Iraq’s “no-fly zones” in the north and south of the country for five days. In those five days, the U.S. bombed Iraq on five separate occasions.

True to form, the U.S. media said almost nothing about these daily bombings. Each day after we returned from the site of the latest bombing we would check the web sites of the Western media. Nary a peep about the lawless aggression waged from the skies by U.S. warplanes. Instead, the U.S. media focused its coverage on “why Saddam Hussein is such a great threat to world peace.”

Bombs drop every day

On Aug. 25, U.S. planes bombed Basra, the second-largest city in Iraq. Eight people died on the spot and 10 more were wounded. When we arrived in Basra on

Aug. 27, we learned that one of the seriously injured had also died from his wounds.

When the U.S. press does mention the regular bombings of Iraq, it usually buries the information in a small article far from the front page. The Pentagon is almost always quoted, explaining that the attacks were in self-defense. They say it was against military targets and against Iraqi radar, which was flipped on to trace U.S. and British warplanes overflying Iraq’s airspace in two large areas in both northern and southern Iraq.

But civilians as well as soldiers are being hit.

“We heard a terrible explosion Sunday morning here in the hotel,” a worker at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Basra told us. “It was close by and we could hear it and feel it. Thousands of civilians live in this area, so naturally many of the casualties were civilians.”

The decision to create the “no-fly zones” was not authorized by the United Nations. Rather it was the decision of the major imperialist countries—the United States, Britain and France—to refuse to allow Iraq to fly its own aircraft in the areas of the countries where almost all of its oil is located. But of course the imperialists could fly their planes in the zones. These zones were created in 1992. France later changed its policy toward Iraq and withdrew its warplanes in the mid-1990s.

While the delegation was visiting one of



PHOTO: MARA VERHEYDEN-HILLIARD

Two U.S. missiles destroyed civilian radar installation at Mosul airport during delegation’s visit to Iraq.

the wounded at the Training Hospital in Basra, U.S. warplanes struck again—attacking Mosul in the north and Al-Nukhayb, south of Baghdad.

The delegation managed to fly into Mosul about 36 hours after the strike. Mosul is a beautiful and historic city in the far north of Iraq. It borders the predominantly Kurdish area and is located inside the no-fly zone.

The civilian airport had been without radar since the 1991 Gulf War. It had been largely non-functional until recently, when the government decided to defy the no-fly zone and resume daily flights into the city from Baghdad. The assumption was that U.S. aircraft would not shoot down civilian airliners.

U.S. warplanes have not yet shot down any passenger planes, but on Aug. 27 two powerful missiles took out the airport’s radar that guides the civilian airliners in their takeoff and landing and as they travel through the surrounding air space.

The delegation went through the wreckage of the totally destroyed radar, which lay in crumpled ruins not far from the runway. The radar was very old, made up of balkanized parts from earlier rudimentary radar systems. Clearly, it was not a sophisticated military-type radar.

The civilian terminal was about 200 yards from where the missiles hit. The force of the explosion shattered the windows along the waiting rooms.

Right to air safety

Barred from most trade and commerce for 12 years, Iraq has had to submit potential contracts for equipment to a UN sanctions committee. Iraq has had a pending request before the sanctions committee to import a modern radar for Mosul airport, but so far the U.S. has blocked the application. Iraqi technicians cobbled the old radar pieces together and installed this electronic relic on June 4. Now that U.S. missiles have taken out the radar, Iraqi civilian passengers must fly blind into Mosul—an area that has more bad weather than most parts of the country.

As we walked through the snarled rolls of metal in the airport, it was hard not to ponder what the effect would be if the shoe was on the other foot. What would be the emotional and psychological impact on the people in the United States if the radar they depended on for air safety were destroyed without provocation and without warning

by fighter planes from a foreign power?

Asking the question, of course, answers it. But the Bush administration is hoping that the demonization and racist images of Iraq will successfully prevent people from asking this question.

Since December 1998, the U.S. has bombed Iraq regularly without mass protest. The U.S. pulled UN weapons inspectors out of the country on Dec. 16, 1998, and began a four-day campaign that included the launching of 400 cruise missiles and dropping of 600 precision bombs on Iraq.

Iraq claims that more than 1,500 people have been killed by U.S. bombs since the Gulf War ended.

As the Bush administration prepares for a massive invasion and bombing campaign under the doctrine of preemptive war, it is clear to the people everywhere that these are just fancy words for aggression.

Ramsey Clark’s visit to Iraq included an explicit anti-war message. The mass media around the world gave coverage to the trip, and there was limited coverage in the U.S. Clark appeared live on three consecutive CNN segments on Aug. 29, where he was accused by CNN correspondent Wolf Blitzer of being “used by Saddam Hussein.”

Clark ridiculed the accusation, replying: “You can still say what you believe, you can still stand for what is right. If you don’t do that, who are you, what do you stand for, and what’s going to happen to the world?”

In his interviews in the media, Clark insisted that the decisive factor in stopping the war was the mobilization of opposition inside the United States. “We can stop the Bush administration but we must act now. People everywhere must mobilize for the Oct. 26 March on Washington. We cannot let the government speak in our name and carry out this war that aims to dominate the people of the Middle East and the natural resources of this region.”

Brian Becker is a co-director of the International Action Center. He was a member of a U.S. anti-war delegation that traveled throughout Iraq from August 25 to 30. The delegation also included Ramsey Clark, Johnnie Stevens, co-director of the Peoples Video Network, and Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, attorney and co-founder of the D.C.-based public-interest law firm, Partnership for Civil Justice.

it starts

“If you want to find a solution, you have to find a solution for all these matters, not only pick up one certain aspect of it. We are ready to find such a solution,” Aziz said after meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the World Development Summit in Johannesburg Sept. 3.

Ruling class interests

The split between Powell and the Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld group isn’t one of principle. Both serve the interests of U.S. big business and want to see Iraq’s independence crushed. Their difference is over the most effective, least costly way to achieve that common goal.

Bad press or misgivings by administration insiders won’t stop Bush from carrying out his war plans. He serves a much stronger master—the interests of the profit-hungry U.S. ruling class, which is determined to secure its domination over the oil-rich Middle East.

And while they fear the consequences of rash U.S. action, none of the other capitalist governments around the world can be counted on to mount a serious resistance to the war drive. Unfortunately, this is also true of the current ruling group in China, the only socialist country on the UN Security Council.

These governments are more interested in staying on the empire’s good side than in standing up for international law or Iraqi sovereignty. None of them wants to risk being the next target of Pentagon aggression.

The United Nations organization cannot be relied on either. Despite the hopes of

the many oppressed countries that sit in the General Assembly, the UN has historically served as a cover for U.S. imperialist adventures, from the Korean War to the Gulf War, though the Bush crew would now like to bypass it altogether.

The only thing that can prevent a war—the only thing that will give the Bush regime and its corporate masters pause—is the threat of social upheaval and mass resistance at home and abroad.

Fortunately, there is fertile ground for building a mass anti-war movement here: anger over the deepening economic crisis of poor and working people, outrage at attacks on civil rights, growing apprehension at the consequences of Bush’s “war time all the time” policy.

A Time Magazine/CNN poll released Sept. 1 showed that support for sending U.S. troops to overthrow the Iraqi government had fallen from 73 percent last December to just 51 percent in August. A Los Angeles Times poll found that 64 percent—less than two-thirds—would back a war, even in the current wave of media-sponsored jingoism marking the 9/11 anniversary.

Some 49 percent of those polled by Time/CNN agreed that a war in Iraq would be “long and costly.”

These figures show a much greater skepticism and opposition to war than existed in the early years of the Vietnam War, and they are shifting further away from Bush all the time.

Building for Oct. 26 in Washington can be a big step toward forging a movement that can stop the war.



State of emergency?

NO new war against Iraq—keep the government off the docks!” The voices of longshore workers and anti-war activists, defenders of civil liberties and the environment, raised these demands in unison at a protest against President George W. Bush’s visit to Stockton, Calif., on Aug. 23.

It’s a natural alliance for a movement that shows signs of growing and maturing. The struggles to stop the mass round-ups and disappearances of Arab, Muslim and South Asian people in this country, to halt Attorney General John Ashcroft’s war on civil liberties, and to put an end to Bush’s “endless war” are all organically linked to standing up for labor’s rights.

Just ask members of the militant International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Since its contract expired on July 1, the ILWU has tried to turn up the heat on its bosses—the Pacific Maritime Association.

Enter Tom Ridge—pit bull for the Bush administration’s Office of Homeland Security. ILWU International President James Spinoza reported that Ridge interjected himself just a few days into the negotiations on behalf of the bosses. Ridge threatened the union president and other leaders that any disruptions following the expiration of the contract would be bad for the national interest.

This is a heads-up for the labor movement. Will any union or activist who militantly defends the rights of the vast, multinational working class be slapped with the label of “terrorist”? Is a union that’s forced to strike for workplace justice a threat to “national security”?

There’s a big catch-22 here. The

U.S. has been in a perpetual state of national security alert since Harry S. Truman declared a state of emergency during the Korean War in 1950. The “emergency,” which the executive branch issues as a diktat to give itself extraordinary powers, is periodically renewed. Wall Street wants it that way, because who knows what otherwise illegal measures might need to be taken around the world—or at home—to feed its insatiable drive for profits.

Today the Bush administration has a palette of five hues of alert levels, one of which is always in effect.

According to the government and the big-business interests it champions, there’s never a good time for workers to fight back in their own class interests. Strikes will always disrupt capitalist accumulation of wealth, and isn’t that what life is all about?

So Tom Ridge is trying to lean on the Longshore workers. Once again, the 9/11 tragedy is being used as an excuse to clamp down on the working class right here. The state is beefing up its powers as a weapon in class war.

The best way to ensure that workers maintain their right to the strike weapon is for labor to be ready to use it.

The battle of the ILWU is triply important. It’s a fight for justice for dock workers. It’s a frontline struggle to defend the civil liberties of all—immigrants, Arab, South Asian and Muslim people, and the working class as a whole. And it’s bringing the most conscious workers to the barricades against the Pentagon’s war—really the capitalist globalizers’ war—against working people around the world.

Basque nationalist party outlawed

By John Catalinotto

On Aug. 26, Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzon charged the pro-socialist and pro-independence Basque party Herri Batasuna with responsibilities for the armed attacks of the group known as ETA—the armed, underground wing of the Basque national-liberation movement.

After a recent ETA assassination attempt that resulted in the deaths of civilians, the right-wing Peoples Party (PP) government of Jose Maria Aznar, the social democrats (PSOE) and the big-business media jumped on the opportunity to open up a full attack on the Basque movement in general.

Washington has thrown its full support behind Madrid’s repressive steps. They parallel the restriction of freedoms and aggressive war moves pushed through by Bush and Ashcroft after Sept. 11.

The Spanish state had demanded that Batasuna denounce the ETA armed action. When its leadership refused, Judge Garzon suspended Batasuna’s political activities for the next three years.

It was a decision even many bourgeois legal analysts in Spain consider unconstitutional as well as repressive. On the same day, the Spanish Parliament voted 295 to 10 for a bill asking the Supreme Court to outlaw Herri Batasuna permanently.

Batasuna had received 10 percent of the vote in the Basque area in the last election and has about 1,000 local elected officials. It has hundreds of thousands of active supporters.

The Basques are a people of distinct language and culture who live mainly in what is now northeastern Spain and southeastern France. Their struggle for self-determination and sovereignty has had strong support, both when it combated the fascist rule of Gen. Francisco Franco and now against the republican rulers in Madrid.

In the spring of 2001, some 450,000 people in the Basque country took part in a general strike in support of sovereignty and against a wave of attacks launched by the Spanish and French governments against Basque nationalist forces. A coalition of Basque groups, including Herri Batasuna, called that strike. A major issue then, as now, was the demand for amnesty for the hundreds of Basque political

prisoners in Spain and France.

Even before Garzon’s decision, thousands of people demonstrated Aug. 23 in Bilbao, a major city in the Basque region, protesting the anticipated action against Batasuna. The word Batasuna means “unity” in the Basque language.

Under Judge Garzon’s order, the 24-year-old party is barred from calling public demonstrations or political rallies and from running in municipal elections scheduled for May of next year. Batasuna members already in office will be allowed to serve out their terms.

Writing Aug. 20 and 29 in the Spanish daily El Pais, professor of jurisprudence Javier Pérez Royo wrote that Garzon’s order violated the constitution because an organization could only be outlawed if its recognized leaders took part systematically in illegal acts. This would have to be proven in court, where the defendants would have full rights to defense. In no way could they be convicted for refusing to say something.

‘Trying to destroy Basque identity’

Arnaldo Otegi, a representative of the outlawed group, charged the Aznar regime of having the goal not just to smash a party, but “to destroy the identity of the Basque people, just as Franco tried to do. They are trying to hold back what is irresistible, namely, that the Basques themselves decide democratically their future.

“Aznar is wrong when he says that Batasuna doesn’t fit in a Spanish democracy. It is the Basques who don’t fit in this democracy—as these gentlemen understand the word.” (German daily Junge Welt of Aug. 29)

Otegi added, “They have tried to ban us before and they only managed to strengthen our project of liberation, justice, peace and democracy.” The Basque movement had this experience under Franco, he said, and “while we don’t like that painful and harsh situation, we have no fear of it.”

The Aznar government has tried to depict Batasuna and ETA as one isolated armed group and compares it to Al Qaeda. It’s interesting that many in the British press, however, describe Batasuna’s relation to ETA as something like Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army, and warn that it is a



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Mass anger at Earth Summit

Continued from page 8

minute talk at the close of the conference on Sept. 4.

Emperors know that talk is cheap

The Landless People’s Movement and Anti-Privatization Forum organized a militant “anti-summit” of thousands of farmers, squatters and other protesters during the Earth Summit. The LPM has proposed a land summit. Ownership of 80 percent of all arable farmland in South Africa remains in the tight-fisted grip of 600,000 white farmers. The two organizations also led a march of thousands from Alexandra to the conference center in Sandton on Aug. 31. The march included Palestinian activists, women’s groups and international environmental organizations. Many wore bright red tee-shirts and carried placards characterizing Bush as a “Toxic Texan.”

And in a soccer stadium just 20 miles away from the Black township of Soweto, a “Global People’s Forum” took place, organized by relief agencies, unions and anti-globalization activists.

These protests against the Earth Summit talk shop, some of which resulted in scores of

arrests, got little media play in the U.S.

But hollow phrases by the leaders of the world’s ruling dynasties seemed to be the cheapest, most renewable energy source at this world conference. This hot air, also polluted, enjoyed wide media coverage.

French President Jacques Chirac waxed eloquent: “Humanity has a rendezvous with destiny. Alarms are sounding all across the continents. ... We cannot say that we did not know!” However, France—indeed, the entire European Union—caved in on the U.S. demands to gut the 71-page conference recommendations.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair issued a plea for the Kyoto treaty to be ratified “by all of us.” He did not acknowledge that emissions in the United Kingdom have risen despite Britain’s Kyoto pledge. (Guardian Unlimited)

The reference to Kyoto was a calculated rebuff to Bush who, according to The Guardian, “instructed his team at the earth summit to remove all mention of [Kyoto] from the final 30,000-word ‘plan of action.’” Blair played to a home audience, said the paper: “While Britain may be maintaining its controversial ‘shoulder to shoulder’ position over the possibility of military action against Saddam Hussein, Downing Street will hope Mr. Blair’s

Haiti tense as U.S. blocks aid

By G. Dunkel

While life in Haiti grows grimmer for most people, pressure from the U.S. is growing more intense.

The U.S. government, quite illegally, is blocking \$500 million in loans and international aid because it doesn't like the way Haiti counted the votes in a parliamentary election two years ago. \$500 million is roughly equivalent to the yearly budget of Haiti's government.

\$148 million of the \$500 million is a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. Shockingly, Haiti has had to pay interest on this loan, which was designated for its water, education and health needs, even though the money still sits in Washington.

Working through the Organization of American States, the Bush administration is pressuring the government and Fanmi

Lavalas party of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to come to an agreement with its opposition, the so-called Democratic Convergence, over holding elections sometime this year.

The OAS, in a murky maneuver, wants local mayors and council members elected in 2001 on the Fanmi Lavalas slate to have to run again in the next election.

The OAS has also given Haiti 60 days to arrest the leaders of the popular organizations in the slums of its major cities. These leaders, historically Aristide's most solid base of support, have been implicated in attacks on Convergence leaders after an assassination attempt was made on Aristide last December.

On Aug. 18 the Miami Herald, which exerts a lot of influence on U.S. policy in Latin America, ran a headline: "Haitians' growing discontent with Aristide may force U.S. to act." Certainly the Haitian

government has to regard this headline as a threat, if not a prophecy.

The economic pressures on Haiti are intense. Remittances from Haitians living abroad, especially in North America and Europe, who support family members at home are drying up as the worldwide recession cuts into jobs and wages. Fuel prices have shot up and supply is scarce, leading to only three hours a day of electric service in many areas of the country, business closings and layoffs of even skilled workers like welders, electricians and mechanics. Higher fuel prices mean higher transportation costs, which boosts the price of almost everything.

Even a little inflation causes a great deal of pain in a country where most workers make less than one dollar a day.

Ben Dupuy, secretary general of the National Popular Party, pointed out in a press conference Aug. 27 that the Haitian gov-

ernment has cracked down on trade unions, sold off national territory to Dominican businesses fronting for U.S. interests that intend to set up free trade zones, incorporated Macoutes, Duvalierists and other supporters of former dictatorships into the government, and adopted neo-liberal reforms that have opened up Haiti's economy to more exploitation from abroad.

But even that is probably not enough to satisfy an imperial power that concerns itself with which political party in Haiti has a majority on the city councils of places like L'Estere, Port-de-Paix, St. Marc, Petit-Goave and Cap-Haitien.

"We know that the United States, especially with the Bush administration, thinks it is the world's policeman," Dupuy said. "If they think that the OAS can't do the job, they may act unilaterally, as they always do, and invade."

Struggles around the world

Milosevic in The Hague: An old joke, but is it funny?

As the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia reopened its proceedings for alleged war crimes against Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic at the end of August, a fly on the wall might have heard an old joke making the rounds in the back rooms of The Hague courtroom.

It tells of a slave-rebellion leader captured by the Romans. Faced with certain death from the lions at the Coliseum, he asked for a chance to fight, whatever the odds. The Roman emperor answered: "I'll give you a chance. You'll be buried up to your neck in the sand. If you nevertheless manage to defeat the lion, we'll set you free."

Deciding to die fighting, when the lion leapt at him the slave leader quickly ducked. Then as the beast skidded past around him he reached up and grasped the lion's testicles in his teeth, hanging on with all his strength. The

lion bled to death. The slave leader demanded his freedom.

"Oh no," said the Roman emperor. "That doesn't count. You didn't fight fair."

Milosevic has been in court with minimal help against a mighty NATO-created machine since last February, representing himself and his country before a phalanx of hostile witnesses backed by a hostile court. He has to cope with his own too-high blood pressure and the threat of serious illness under miserable prison conditions. He must prepare his case from his cell.

When he demolishes the lies of a witness, as he has done so often, the judge berates him for being "too aggressive." The Western media, which at first gave heavy coverage to what was to be the "trial of the century," has now backed away from showing how strong Milosevic's arguments are as he proves that NATO was the aggressor.

On Sept. 13 the prosecution is supposed to end its presentation regarding Part I of the trial: the Kosovo war. Milosevic will then have two weeks to

tough criticism over Kyoto will show he is not cowed by Washington." (Sept. 2)

Applause for Mugabe

Blair demagogically pledged to heal the scars of Africa. Yet when the Zimbabwean government began steps to restructure the colonial legacy of private, large-scale land ownership, Britain and the United States imposed strangulating economic sanctions. The Bush administration is now working to overthrow President Robert Mugabe.

Mugabe reportedly received rousing applause from fellow heads of state when he took the summit podium to blast Blair as a British colonialist and defend his government's right to evict rich white farmers who account for less than 1 percent of the population but own 70 percent of its arable land. "Ours is an agrarian economy," he stressed. "To effectively combat poverty in any developing country, the land comes first, before all else."

And during news briefings Blair seized the opportunity to attack Mugabe, as well as Namibian President Sam Nujoma for defending Zimbabwe's land expropriation in his talk at the summit.

Meanwhile, U.S. and European

agribusinesses are hell bent on keeping subsidies in place that give them a leg up on the world market at the expense of impoverished countries whose farmers and landless peasants cannot possibly compete. The United States, Europe and Japan spend a total of roughly \$300 billion a year on these subsidies—about six times the amount they spend on foreign aid to underdeveloped countries. (Washington Post, Aug. 25)

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, whom the U.S. ruling elite is also working behind the scenes to remove from his elected seat of power, called for the creation of a global fund to ease poverty.

Earth Summit protester Vuyo Moshabela observed about the 10-day event: "This summit is about big business. The needs of poor people in Africa, in Asia, in South America have been held hostage by the profiteering of corporations in America and Europe." (Washington Post, Sept. 1)

And demonstrator Patrick Mthembu, wearing a tee-shirt with the image of Cuban revolutionary leader Che Guevara, concluded, "We will fight their corporate greed with the same fury with which we fought apartheid."



New York, Sept. 3.

study the material and present his response at the end of September as the trial gets ready to move into Part II: Bosnia.

Parliament says Slovak CP still legal

When 43 of 80 voting parliamentarians supported a repressive amendment on July 10, it looked like the vote would criminalize the Communist Party of Slovakia's electoral campaign. But Slovak President Rudolf Schuster refused to sign the bill, which would have made it illegal to "propagate communism" in Slovakia.

On Aug. 19, although the amendment had the support of the Social Democrats and the Democratic Left, it got the votes of only 63 of the 150 members of parliament. The CP believes it has a good chance in the Sept. 20-21 national elections of breaking the 5-percent barrier for the first time and winning seats in parliament.

Letter from Prague

After running the article "Czech CP says: Call off NATO meeting, use funds for flood relief," (Workers World, Aug. 20), we received the following letter from Prague:

"Thanks for your solidarity. Readers can obtain a free sample copy of the September issue of Postmark Prague (includes articles on Czech Communists

and the floods, this month's Slovak elections and the Prague NATO summit in November) from Postmark Prague, PO Box 42, 182 00 Prague 8, Czech Republic. Email: postmarkprague@cmail.cz."

U.S. out of Vieques!

Demonstrators packed the sidewalk at 42nd Street and Broadway Sept. 3 as thousands of Times Square commuters and visitors passed by. They were demanding the U.S. government stop the Navy's bombing of Vieques. "Vieques yes, Navy no," they shouted in English and Spanish to the rush-hour crowd.

The U.S. Navy has used the small island off the east coast of Puerto Rico for target practice since the 1940s, and even loaned and rented it to NATO allies, despite the protests of Vieques' population. The Bush administration has used the so-called war on terror to break a former agreement that halted target practice on the island.

This demonstration, called by the Vieques Support Campaign and supported by many other anti-war organizations, showed that the movement to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques is strong both in New York and in Puerto Rico.

—Photo and stories by John Catalinotto

SEGUNDA PARTE

Discurso por Fidel Castro

Batalla tras batalla, la educación avanza

Intervención del Presidente de la República de Cuba, Fidel Castro Ruz, en el acto de entrega de 254 escuelas de la capital reconstruidas o construidas, efectuado en el teatro Astral el 13 de agosto del 2002.

Alrededor de 22 mil constructores profesionales, constituidos en su mayoría por obreros de los más prestigiosos contingentes de la capital y del experimentado movimiento de microbrigadistas, apoyados cada hora y cada minuto por miles de voluntarios—que incluían hombres y mujeres de todos los oficios, maestros, estudiantes, niños, adolescentes, jóvenes y hasta hombres y mujeres de la tercera edad—con orden y disciplina, aseguramiento de materiales, buena organización y dirección política y técnica, son los autores de la proeza de haber concluido, entre el 29 de junio y el 13 de agosto, la restauración o construcción en sólo 45 días de 254 escuelas. Faltan todavía por terminar de restaurar o construir 123 instituciones educacionales para finalizar el programa.

Si fuera a buscar un nombre para esta hazaña, la llamaría como aquella novela de la literatura heroica rusa cuando el Ejército Rojo defendía Moscú de las hordas nazi: Días y Noches, escrita por Konstantín Simónov.

Hubo por cierto errores, ineficiencias, indisciplinas, faltas de coordinación y otros fallos de carácter humano en tan complicado e inmenso programa constructivo, pero se luchó incesantemente y sin tregua contra los mismos. Por ello, resaltan abrumadoramente el entusiasmo, la disciplina, la eficiencia y el espíritu de trabajo y sacrificio que prevaleció. Nada pudo empañar la proeza.

En esta etapa final se avanza contando ya con una gran experiencia acumulada, acudiendo al refuerzo, en cada una de las obras pendientes de concluir, del personal más calificado de las que se van concluyendo, una productividad mucho mayor y un entusiasmo renovado.

El comportamiento del tiempo fue y aún continúa siendo la preocupación fundamental. La temporada no ha sido, afortunadamente, muy lluviosa.

Se aplicó preventivamente la táctica de favorecer con prioridad todo lo que fuese fundición de cimientos y construcción de techos para garantizar la no interrupción por lluvia en las fases finales de cada obra.

Han brillado la ingeniosidad de nuestros técnicos y el interés que sin excepción prestaron los jefes de organismos y empresas, cuyos constructores y voluntarios apoyaron las restauraciones y construcciones.

Un principio ha sido aplicado con el

máximo de rigor: la calidad de cada objeto de obra estaba por encima de todo. La vigilancia y control sistemáticos han sido constantes. Al convertirse las escuelas de sus niños en el orgullo y el interés máximo de todos los vecinos, millones de ojos custodiaban de forma especial la calidad y la belleza de lo que se hacía.

Debe recordarse en adición a todo lo señalado que cada escuela concluida cuenta con un moderno laboratorio de computación, jóvenes profesores especialmente preparados para impartir esa enseñanza, medios audiovisuales en todas las aulas y un Canal Educativo a su disposición.

El espectáculo de nuestra capital ha sido alentador en este caluroso verano. Las noticias de las escuelas que se restauran en las demás provincias son también excelentes.

Conscientes de la inmensa obra que nos espera en todo el país para alcanzar un salto de calidad en nuestros servicios educacionales y una verdadera revolución en ese campo con un mínimo de gastos y apelando fundamentalmente a nuestro capital humano, nuestra confianza y seguridad se fortalecen.

Y como expresé hace tres días en la graduación de 741 alumnos de la Escuela Emergente de Enfermería del Cotorro,

no está siendo olvidada ni lo será otra esfera de importancia magna: los servicios de salud, golpeados también por el período especial, en adición al brutal y cruento bloqueo imperialista, sin que los factores subjetivos y la incapacidad de algunos cuadros dejen de ocupar un importante papel junto a dificultades objetivas.

Esta esfera será objeto de sólida y profunda atención para garantizar los grandes avances alcanzados y pasar a niveles superiores con el empleo pleno del enorme capital humano disponible que, con su ciencia y su espíritu de solidaridad y humanismo, hoy asombran al mundo con los servicios que actualmente prestan a otros numerosos países.

Esta noche precisamente se graduarán miles de profesionales y técnicos de la salud. Las fuerzas de nuestro glorioso ejército de lucha por la vida, vencedor del dolor y la muerte, crecen y se multiplican. Su espíritu de combate será cada vez más fuerte; sus conocimientos, más profundos. En estrecha unión con nuestros investigadores y científicos, serán ejemplos y paladines de una nueva concepción de la noble función de los servicios de salud, que ha de ser ajena por completo al vil espíritu mercantilista sembra-

do por el sistema imperialista, capitalista y neoliberal que hoy impera en el mundo.

No debe olvidarse que este mismo año 2002 la ciudad libró victoriosamente, durante 70 días consecutivos de incesante lucha, sin uno solo de receso, la batalla contra el dengue, totalmente erradicado aquí y en el resto del país, y también que nuestro pueblo durante diez meses ha estado llevando a cabo la reparación de los daños ocasionados por el huracán más dañino y devastador de los últimos 100 años, que será concluida en menos de doce meses.

Estas y otras esferas vitales para la justicia, el bienestar, la libertad y la dignidad de los seres humanos avanzarán con fuerza en medio de nuestra ya histórica e impresionante batalla de ideas en el mundo convulso y desesperado que nos rodea.

El próximo mes de septiembre será inolvidable por su trascendencia para la educación en Cuba:

El día 2 graduaremos más de 5 mil jóvenes como Maestros Emergentes de Enseñanza Primaria, procedentes de Ciudad de la Habana, Matanzas, Cienfuegos y Ciego de Ávila, a los que se unirán también en el mismo acto los primeros mil graduados en pleno ejercicio ya de su hermosa profesión.

El día 9 será inaugurada, en las instalaciones de la “Salvador Allende”, la Escuela de Profesores Emergentes para Secundaria Básica, con 4.500 alumnos de todo el país, lo cual inicia la etapa igualmente trascendente en que será revolucionada radicalmente la enseñanza de ese nivel, hoy sumergida en una profunda crisis de carácter mundial, aparentemente insoluble.

Y el 16 de ese mismo mes tendrá lugar la inauguración oficial del curso escolar 2002-2003.

Los niños de la capital y de todo el territorio nacional, por su parte, iniciarán sus clases el 3 de septiembre.

¡Felicidades, compatriotas de la capital y de todo el país!

Batalla tras batalla, iremos enfrentando peligros y venciendo obstáculos.

No deseo extenderme más. Los hechos son siempre más elocuentes que las palabras.

¡Gracias por todo lo que han hecho!

¡Gracias por la profunda Revolución educacional y cultural que están llevando a cabo, la que no sólo beneficiará a nuestro pueblo sino también a muchos otros!

¡Gracias por el ejemplo que con lucha tenaz, heroica y creadora hoy ofrecen al mundo!

¡Viva el Socialismo!

¡Patria o Muerte!

¡Venceremos!

Conferencia Urgente del Partido Obrero (Workers World Party)

Septiembre 21-22 2002 • En la ciudad de Nueva York

EL CAPITALISMO EN CRISIS

- X La campaña de guerra de Wall Street
- X La guerra imperialista contra Irak
- X La depresión económica
- X El racismo y la represión

Ven a escuchar a marxistas revolucionarios hablar sobre opciones de lucha

Pasa un fin de semana aprendiendo, intercambiando puntos de vista e información y a funcionar en red con otros que lucha por el Socialismo y la liberación. Si estás buscando por análisis y una guía para tomar acción contra el militarismo y la ola de racismo que sale de Washington y Wall Street, es aquí donde debes venir.

Habrà una sesión plenaria, talleres y muchas oportunidades de compartir tus experiencias con pensadores marxistas y luchadores de todas las edades.

Para más información y cómo registrar tu nombre, llama o contáctanos por escrito y email a:

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212-627-2994; ww@workers.org