As Clinton/Gore speak of 'democracy'

Los Angeles police riot

Convention protests continue despite tear gas, rubber bullets

By Workers World Los Angeles bureau

Hundreds of heavily armed police rioted outside the Democratic Convention Aug. 14, attacking peaceful demonstrators and concert-goers as President Bill Clinton delivered his nationally televised speech to the delegates.

The police assault was a further escalation of the government's war against the new anti-capitalist, anti-racist youth movement following the arrests of more than 450 protesters during the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia.

While Clinton praised himself and Vice President Al Gore inside the plush Staples Center, police fired tear gas, rubber bullets and concussion grenades at 10,000 youths and others who gathered outside to hear a free concert by Rage Against the Machine and Ozomatli.

Between 10 and 15 people were reported arrested. Paramedics treated three dozen for serious injuries. Many more suffered head wounds from rubber bullets, the effects of tear gas and other injuries.

"Scores of people were hit by rubber bullets or other projectiles," reported the Aug. 15 Los Angeles Times. "Many of those who were hit were bleeding or displayed deep, silver-dollar sized bruises."

The police "fired indiscriminately for more than an hour," according to the Times.

There was no condemnation of the LAPD brutality by Clinton, Gore or other Democratic leaders.

"All along the media have been praising the so-called 'restrained, peaceful' role of the Los Angeles Police Department," said Workers World Party presidential candidate Monica Moorehead, "especially during the Aug. 13 demonstration demanding a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal."

"Tonight the police showed their true colors," she charged. 

"The LAPD is a repressive force against workers, the oppressed and young people."

"This kind of blatant police repression won't stop us from protesting," she added. "It will only serve to make this new movement..."
Cape Cod drives Army out of Camp Edwards

By Richard Hugus
Cape Cod, Mass.

After almost 90 years of environmental abuse, the people of Cape Cod, Mass., have forced the Army and Department of Defense to end mortar, rocket and artillery fire bombardment of the Camp Edwards impact area. The Pentagon has also agreed to clean up the unexploded ordnance, contaminated soil and polluted groundwater it left behind.

The cleanup will be enforced under the Safe Drinking Water Act by an Environmental Protection Agency administrative order that went into effect on Jan. 14. This order followed two from 1997 that required an environmental study of Camp Edwards and a "cease-fire" of the guns that have been firing steadily there since World War I.

This retreat came only after years of struggle by residents living around the base concerned about noise, high cancer rates, contamination of air and drinking water. The Defense Department had fiercely resis-
ted setting a legal precedent by which it could be held responsible for remediation of as much as 65 million acres of active and inactive firing ranges it owns in the United States.

And with the struggle against U.S. bases now white hot in Puerto Rico, South Korea and Okinawa, this development has international implications, too.

Because Camp Edwards sits at the very top of a big mound-shaped aquifer, explosives left behind from military training have traveled in all directions toward nearby ponds, wetlands and water-supply wells. Among the munitions-related contaminants detected in groundwater at Camp Edwards are RDX, TNT, HMX, DNT and nitrocellulose.

Levels of RDX in groundwater are as high as 370 parts per billion. The EPA's "lifetime health advisory" for this compound is two parts per billion.

Camp Edwards comprises two thirds of the 21,000-acre Massachusetts Military Reservation, which also hosts Otis Air Base. The historic dumping of toxic fuels and solvents at Otis has already destroyed large areas of western Cape Cod's aquifer, with many big planes of contaminated groundwater. This aquifer is the sole source of drinking water for the region's 200,000-year-round and 500,000 seasonal residents.

In the fall, F-15s from Otis are scheduled to go to Iraq to enforce the illegal no-flight zones. Though some see far worse damage than Camp Edwards.

By Richard Hugus

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Western wildfires

Blame the profit motive

By G. Dunkel

Since June, wildfires in the western United States have burned an area larger than the state of Connecticut—almost 4.4 million acres. Some won't be controlled until the snows come. Hundreds of houses have been destroyed and thousands more damaged. An electric transmission line from Montana to the West Coast melted. Another was badly damaged and put out of commission.

This loss of power—topped by a heat wave—pushed California's power grid to the edge of a meltdown Aug. 1-2. (Los Angeles Times, Aug. 12)

Smoke, ash and flames have closed major highways and small roads. In some areas, the fires' heat sterilized the soil, which waits for recovery for decades. When the wet fall and winter weather comes, the burned-over areas will face rock slides, mudslides and flash floods because of the absence of ground cover.

Federal experts project the cost of controlling these fires to be $1 billion. Estimates of the property damage done so far are not available. (Christian Science Monitor, Aug. 14)

The fire season will last at least six more weeks.

An election issue?

In this election year, the magnitude of the burning is a Republican politician's chance to blast the Clinton administration.

"The Clinton administration didn't cause these fires, but their policies have left the Forest Service under-funded and understaffed for this crisis," Gov. Marc Racicot of Montana charged. Racicot claimed the Clinton administration has "a philosophy ... that leads to explosive fires that destroy everything." (New York Times, Aug. 12)

The American Forest and Paper Association, a group closely identified with the Republican Party, chimed in support for Racicot's attack. The APA, a proponent of ecologically damaging logging practices, claimed the Clinton administration did not understand "that to save a forest you have to cut a tree."

The White House dismissed Racicot's charges as "nonsense.

But the administration also had to answer more serious charges made in a memo leaked by a former U.S. Bureau of Land Management official. The memo charged that the department was understaffing the training of federal and local firefighters and the staffing of fire suppression efforts.

The Clinton administration admitted that funding had been cut. But it asserted the cuts were reasonable.

The BLM's preferred approach to controlling wildfires is called "prescribed fires." These are fires that are intentionally set and controlled to remove the fuel that otherwise allows explosive fires to take off.

This approach has its limits. In 1989 a BLM-set fire raged out of control in Los Alamos, N.M. It destroyed over 200 houses and threatened the government's premier nuclear research laboratory.

100 years of logging

Ecologists, firefighters and other experts say that before 1900 numerous small fires marked the Western areas of the United States and Canada every year. These natural fires—many of them started by lightning—cleared the forests of accumulated dead leaves, grass and other fire fuels. They promoted plant growth and left between 30 and 80 widely spaced large trees per acre—trees that could survive most fires.

The expansion of the logging industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries left fewer small fires. Fires grew bigger and more explosive, culminating in the Bitterroot Blaze of 1910, which produced hurricane force winds, killed 87 people, and burned up to 4 million acres of prime forest.

The government's response was the "10 a.m. policy." In 1910 the U.S. Forest Service, the predecessor of the BLM, mandated that every wildfire be put out by 10 a.m. the day after its detection.

The rigorous suppression of wildfires protected the most profitable resource the federal government sustained—timber. At the same time, it allowed a hazardous buildup of brush, dead trees, grass and other fuels.

Today the situation is potentially even more deadly than it was 90 years ago, given the increasing number of "dream houses" built deep within Western forests.

Laird Robinson, a former Forest Service smoke jumped who collaborated with the late author Norm MacLean on the book "Young Men and Fire," has joined scientist Kevin Ryan of the Forest Service Fire Laboratory in Missoula, Mont., and others in calling for a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar effort to solve the problem.

According to the Aug. 11 Seattle Times, their plan calls for thousands of forest restoration workers to cut and burn through the dangerously thickened timberland of the West.

But even its proponents know that such a plan, while it meets an obvious need and would supply employment to thousands of people for years, won't fly. It would have to be organized by the federal government, which is in the process of shedding its responsibilities for welfare and health care and doesn't intend to take on any new ones, however necessary.

The BLM won't even completely fund the $200 million fire-fighters it has, much less train thousands of new recruits in the rigorous and complicated techniques.

These capitalist profit-seekers interested in cutting timber don't want it done in the cheapest, quickest way possible. They don't want to cut a few trees here and there over thousands of acres of forest.

Meanwhile, capitalists interested in selling "unspoiled vistas" to tourists or building "dream houses" oppose any mechanical removal of trees, which they see as an opening wedge for full-scale logging.

The government shows no sign of trying to resolve this conflict. From year to year the potential for a much greater catastrophe grows. Only a system that assesses the needs of society as a whole can carry out a careful plan to reduce the wildfire risks to a manageable level. Socialism is the name of that system.

Send Toto back to Haiti!

Protest targets Haiti death-squad leader

By G. Dunkel

Queens, N.Y.

Just over the boundary from Nassau County, N.Y., in a quiet, tree-lined neighborhood in Laurelton, Queens, where all the houses have lawns, flower gardens and garages for their cars, Emanuel "Toto" Constant lives and works as a real-estate agent. The Haitian government wants him extradited for directing the mass murder of over 5,000 people during the coup against President Jean Bertrand Aristide in the early 1990s, and for complicity in the rape, torture and disfigurement of thousands more.

The U.S. government has granted him de-facto political asylum, a safe haven from the justice that awaits him in Haiti. Constant has admitted that he was a paid informant for the CIA during the coup, making $700 a month.

As news spread through Laurelton's Haitian community that Constant was working for Rigaud Realty, anger and apprehension grew. On Aug. 12 a group of protesters gathered, with help from the Center for Constitutional Rights, Faimi Lavals and State, County and Municipal Employees District Council 1707, and marched to his house.

The protesters held a short rally. They explained Constant's crimes, as well as the U.S. State Department's role in granting him asylum, to his neighbors. One neighbor said: "I don't care who he is, but it's not fair that they let him live here, while some kid who gets into trouble here is sent back to Haiti before he can turn around."

After Stuffing leaflets into mailboxes and under car windshield wipers, the protesters marched back up 225th Street screaming for justice for Rigaud.

The march took about an hour, but when the group arrived its chants were loud, militant and angry.

"Assassin, murderer, send Toto back to Haiti—right now," they chanted. "Shame, shame, shame on you, Rigaud."

A rally followed. Many speakers addressed conditions in Haiti and problems faced by Haitians living in the United States, as well as Constant's crimes.

A Haitian bystander who was listening across the street, told Workers World that many Haitians supported the protesters, even if they hadn't joined them that day.

An African American bystander said, "We should let bygones be bygones, but, and he pointed to a picture of one of Constant's victims, "this guy is so vicious he deserves justice."

"Mumia, what they're doing to the protesters in Philadelphia, this gay living in my neighborhood, all this stuff is just too much."
ground flights
Fewer than half of all United Air­lines flights have left on time—defined as within 14 minutes of the scheduled time—since Memorial Day. Things have been even worse in August. For the first 10 days of the month, on-time performance was down to 40 percent.
Why? Mostly because pilots are refusing to work overtime.
That simple job action is shining a bright light on a dirty secret that United shares with many companies: Instead of hiring enough people for good-paying jobs, they plan production or service based on speedup and over­work. Most employers would rather pay overtime than hire more workers with the competitive and-benefit package that entails.
That's been the tune at United. Now the airline is paying the piper. Ten thousand­ers are exercising their right to work only their regular full-time schedules. As a result, United has had to cancel hundreds of flights every day this summer.
United's second-quarter is supposedly "owned" by its employees. But the "employee stock ownership plan" provisions covering wages expired April 12. Pilots are demanding significant pay and benefit improvements to make up for the years of cuts they endured under the ESOP.
Wichita strikers defy court
It's the first strike by Machinists Lodge 70 at the Young International plant in Wichita, Kan. The workers, who manufacture heating and cooling equipment, got the hang of it real fast. Over 90% of them voted to reject the company's proposal; Lodge 70 President Richard Aldrich said the 3­percent wage increase offered was "simply not sufficient." The 700­ers walked out later that evening.
By the next morning, company law­yers were in court trying to get an injunction. That didn't bother the strikers. They kept blocking vehicles from entering the plant, causing traffic to back up on surrounding streets, according to the bosses who complained to the judge several days later. The bosses were also upset that strikers were using bad words, calling scales ugly names.
Naturally, the workers say, they're mad. Of them commented that they make air conditioners but they don't even have air conditioning inside the plant. They say they'll stay out until their demands for decent pay and improvements in working conditions are met.
Wash. farm workers march
Over 4,000 farm workers and their supporters marched four­and­a­half miles—from Desert Aire to Mattawa, Wash.—on Aug. 7. United Farm Work­ers President Arturo Rodriguez led the march in 90­degree heat in the apple­growing region southeast of Seattle.
Workers, most of them getting in an immigration appeal, said they're upset that other people don't want to do, and they're treated like second­class citizens.
Despite all the threats against them, including the threat of deportation, the workers made some threats of their own. Strike talk was in the air. "We cannot feed our families with these low wages," said farm worker Arnnalo Ramirez. "And we will stop working if necessary to get a fair wage."
UPW Regional Director Lape Gamboa commented on the mass­turnout for what became the biggest march for immigrant workers' rights ever in Washington: "It shows how much worker discontent there is.
Georgia bricklayer solidarity
Members of the Bricklayers union demonstrated outside City Hall in suburban Smyrna, Ga., on Aug. 9. "Drop the charges," they chanted. The con­struction workers were protesting the racial arrests of six of their union­ers in July.
The workers' crime? Working—at 7 p.m., one hour past the 6 p.m. cut­off time stipulated in a city noise ordin­ance. Police charged six Mexican bricklayers with violating the law. They were arrested, handcuffed, taken to jail and forced to post $175 bail each.
Outraged union members said they had never before heard of workers being arrested for working. Six organ­izers personally reimbursed the immi­grant workers for the bail money.
Bricklayers National Organizing Director Bob Vegy said, "They were arrested and handcuffed because they are Hispanics in Smyrna."
Needless to say, police made no move against the construction comp­any that employed the workers even though the honors are clearly the ones responsible for violating the noise ordi­nance. Nor has there been an investig­ation of whether they were paying the workers overtime.
"People碗" get the vote, the rich get their way
By Vinose Copeland
Every four years, big money chooses the presidential candidates. Their war chest filled to the brim, they are then packaged by the media as 'the people' s choice.'
It's U.S. style democracy—of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich.
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Verizon strikers vs M weiter MANIA

By Milt Neidenberg

Fear now pervades management at Ver­
iron, the giant telecommunications cor­
poration formed by the merger of Bell At­
antic and GTE. Did the monopoly take
the pre-strike preparations too light­
ly in negotiating a contract?
It was clear to the Communications Work­
ers and the Electrical Workers that the two
unions, who together represent more than
87,000 striking members in 13 states, were
fired up over management’s heavy­
hand, oppressive tactics. But Verizon
decided to ignore it.
That was a serious miscalculation.
The strike is one of the longest and most
lignant in years. Directory assistance has
completely broken down. Requests for re­
pairs and installations in 13 states have
nearly tripled.

Customers are angry and frustrated.
Threats to leave the company for other
service providers are real in the cut­
throat competitive telecommunications
industry.

Verizon’s strategy has backfired. They
had anticipated that the strike would be
rious and scab supervisors to do the job.

Thirty thousand managers, untrained
and ill equipped to handle the technical as­
gpects of the industry, are no substi­
tute for an experienced, skilled, union­
rized workforce. Working them 12 hours
a day, seven days a week can’t overcome
the lack of experience.

Herein lies the breakdown of opera­
tions that has left thousands across the
region without service, including pay­
oc, as the company falsely charged.

This truth didn’t stop the courts, always
availing when the bosses are in need, from
issuing restraining orders against the
unions in at least three states.

Verizon management compounded its
miscalculations when it announced Aug.
8 that the company had purchased a 55
percent stake in NorthPoint Communica­
tions at a cost of $800 million in cash.

That was a clear provocation. The unions
charged that the money could have been
made available to improve their con­
tracts.

NorthPoint is a non-union, high-speed
Internet digital subscribers line (DSL). The
Electrical Workers have warned Ver­
iron before that the company is using
NorthPoint’s 1,500 non-union workers, a plan
that would blunt Verizon’s strategy to
eliminate jobs and undermine union
wages, benefits and working conditions.
This issue has yet to be resolved.

Verizon was initially more concerned
about its nationwide advertising cam­
paign to make the merged corporations
a household name rather than discuss­ing
the union contract.

On Aug. 8, the second day of the strike, Wall Street and the stock market
confirmed the unsettling position Verizon
had gotten itself into with
87,000 union workers. Verizon shares
plunged more than 12 percent and an
additional 3.7 percent the following day.

Bosses blink
As the strike gets stronger and the work­
ers longer grow, Verizon has begun to
wobble.
The company’s first concession oc­
curred less than a week into the strike
when it reportedly agreed to the unions’
demand for better access to represent the
32,000 non-union workers at Verizon Wireless. Fifty-five percent of Verizon
Wireless is owned by Verizon and 45 per­
cent by Britain’s Vodafone AirTouch PLC.

This means that Verizon would be a
“neutral player” in a procedure called a
card check. Under this agreement, Verizon
bosses would recognize the union as a
majority of the non-union workers signed
authorization cards.
The unions would thus avoid costly and
protracted legal entanglements with the
National Labor Relations Board and the
courts—a process that often takes years.

Verizon Wireless is the nation’s largest
phone company as well as the largest wire­
less owner. This significant concession on
union representation will have far-reach­
ing effects on an industry that is over­
whelmingly non-union.

In addition to the card-check victory, the Communications Workers
announced on Aug. 8 that GTE/Verizon signed a tenta­
tive agreement with its unionized work­
force in Kentucky moments before a walk­
out. Progress is reported in western North
Carolina and other areas.

Workers vs mega-mergers
Verizon began as Bell Atlantic follow­
ing the breakup of AT&T into 22 Bell Sys­
tems companies in 1982. It bought out
New York, one of the Bells, in 1996, a rec­
ently merged with GTE to form Verizon.
Mega-mergers and spin-offs like this are intensifying mass layoffs, downsizing,
increasing profits and overall business.

In every industry in the last decades—
telecommunications, banking, oil, auto,
manufacturing, retail, and others—corporate
downsizers have wreaked havoc.

These corporate mergers and acqui­
sitions are usually carried out in secret to
keep the workers in the dark. Meetings are
held behind closed doors. Billions of dol­
ars and overpriced stocks change hands in
the boardrooms of high finance. Commer­
cial bankers, investment bankers, high­
lowered lawyers and accounting firms, along
with an army of “gimme” parasites, are
paid hundreds of millions of dollars to pull
off these mergers successfully.

Thanks in large part to these transac­
tions, the value of U.S. stocks has risen
by more than $10 trillion since 1994—to
$16 trillion, or 16 millions of millions of
dollars.

Workers in and out of unions are the
main victims of the cover-ups of these wheeling and dealing operations. They
are often caught by surprise when
replacements are called in to do the work
that had been laidoff downsizing begin.

Verizon workers are fighting to avoid
this kind of catastrophe. The strike has ex­
posed the corporate machinations and
schemes that make the mega-mergers
profitable.

The timing of the strike can upset Veri­
zon’s plans to intensify exploitation to suit
the needs of the merger. With the strike as
a direct threat to its plans, Verizon can’t
afford to wait until layoffs are inevitable in any merger.

They can fight Verizon’s plans to transfer
unionized jobs to the non-union sector.

They can wrest the corporate decision
to transfer them to areas where the
merger needs experienced workers and
create a chorus of the stress factors that
permanently their jobs—especially forced
over-time. They can force Verizon to sub­
ject speed-ups and restructuring plans to
negotiations, instead of allowing bosses
to reorganize at will.

Frenzied, merger-driven develop­
omies has enabled Wall Street to be
the dominant player in the world of inter­
national finance capital. Bankers use the
wealth extracted from the labor power of
the workers and the sacrifices forced
upon them to impose their imperialist
policies and further impoverish workers
all over the world.

A broad and growing movement of pro­
gressive forces, including militant youth
and people of color, are challenging this
anti-worker corporate culture. These ac­
tivists have challenged both the Demo­
crat and Republican conventions, pointing
to the lords of high finance and mega­
merger architects that control both par­
ties and their candidates.

Linking these struggles with the 87,000
Verizon workers show the way
Will the strike of 87,000 telecommunications
union members be the influence on the
million-fold work force of this highly competitive, overwhelmingly non-union industry? That is the greatest fear of the telecommunications bosses in industry-wide.

And fearful they should be. These oper­
ation are ripe for union organizing.

In 1998, Worldcom merged with MCI to
create a combined workforce of 75,000
employees. Less than 500 are unionized.

At Sprint only 10,500 of the company’s
78,000 workers are unionized.

There are virtually no unionized work­
ers in the long distance, wireless and In­
ternet industries. Verizon’s communications
unions has agreed to be acquired by
Deutsche Telekom, a German telecommunications
company that has no union workers.

Bell South Corporation has
52,000 union employees of a total work­
f ore of 96,000.

Others like AT&T, Southwestern
owned by SBC, and other former Bell
companies, which have a higher percent­
age of union workers, are in the process of
building up non-union sectors in their
wireless and Internet divisions.

With the Verizon strike now in its sec­
d week, the unions’ tentative victory on
the card check issue to reach the unorgan­
ed workers needs to be seen in the
context of all the battles in the telecom­
uncions industry.
The corpora­
tions will fight these efforts with a
vengeance.

That will raise the need for creative
forms of struggle on company property—
like the sit-ins of the 1930s—and in the streets to overcome the bosses’ challenges.

The 87,000 Communications Workers
and Electrical Workers will need to be
prepared for a continued, aggressive battle as Verizon digs in. While the outcome looks
favorable to the unions, the final victory is yet to be decided.

Thousands of striking Verizon workers and supporters rally in New York, Aug. 10. WM PHOTO: G. DANIEL

Is Verizon James Earl Jones?

When people think of Verizon/Bell Atlantic, they think of actor James Earl Jones and his great voice. But this is just slick advertising. What is Verizon and who’s really behind it?

Here are some of the facts:

Verizon is not just a monopoly here. It owns the main telephone companies in 21 countries and has a presence in another 19 countries. These include Canada, Venezuela, Dominican Repub­
lic, Britain, Italy, Greece, Micronesia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, New Zealand, and the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico.
Verizon has 87,000 wireless cus­tomers overseas.

Who’s on the board of directors?
Not James Earl Jones.

Verizon is owned by SBC, one of the nation’s biggest

500 companies are represented on the board:

Bank: Chase, First Union, PNC

Pharmaceuticals: American Home

Products

Oil: Shell

Military-Industrial Complex: United

Technologies

Steel: USX

Transportation: CS Railroad

When you look at who owns the stock, you discover who’s a Who of big business and big banks: Barclay’s, Fi­
delity Management, Bankers Trust, Met­
ron Bank, State Street Bank and others.

You may not see these folks in the
Verizon ads. You may not see their faces
on your telephone bill. But these corpo­
rates interests are part of the system of
exploitation that dominates our lives from
telephones to political offices.

They’re part of the system we are fight­
ing when we protest police brutality.

So when you pass the picket line, let
the strikers know you support them. Not
only because this battle is just—but
because they are fighting for all of us!


—Jeff Bigelow
**LOS ANGELES**

Mumia protest reaches millions

By Brenda Sandburg and Bill Hackwell

Los Angeles

The eyes of the world were on the opening of the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles last August 12 as 5,000 people marched Aug. 13 to save the life of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and end the racist death penalty.

Over 200 media outlets from around the world reported on the protest, drawing unprecedented attention to Abu-Jamal’s case. The former Black Panther is a prisoner on Pennsylvania’s death row.

People came from all over the country to send a clear message to the Democratic Party wing of the ruling class.

Buses came from San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego and Mendocino County, Calif. People organized vans and car pools from the West Coast. Others came from as far away as New York and Washington.

The event was youthful and multiracial, a wide range of ages and struggles was represented.

The spirited daylong event set the tone for the week packed with protests against corporate plunder, police brutality, racism, the U.S. war against Iraq and the Navy occupation of Vieques.

Protesters defy police, govt. threats

“If the Democrats and Republicans really cared about working people, they’d be out here on the streets with us protesting against police brutality,” said rally co-chair John Parker, a leading organizer of the Los Angeles Coalition to Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal and co-coordinator of the Los Angeles chapter of the International Action Center, which initiated the demonstration.

“Instead, they’re more concerned about not offending their corporate sponsors who hire these thugs [the cops], the same people who are trying to kill Mumia.”

Organizers said the demonstration would have been even bigger if not for the blatant threats made by the Los Angeles Police Department and federal authorities.

“Despite every effort by the LAPD to marginalize the struggle to save Mumia and to intimidate and frighten people from coming out to the demonstration, a massive grassroots mobilizing effort has succeeded in reaching millions who are aware that the world is watching about Mumia’s case,” said Preston Wood, co-coordinator of the Los Angeles IAC.

Originally, police tried to isolate protesters in a fenced-in area far from the convention site. The American Civil Liberties Union and National Lawyers Guild filed a lawsuit on behalf of protest organizers. A court ruled that the city’s planned restrictions violated the First Amendment and that people had the right to demonstrate in the vicinity of the convention center.

The fact that the demonstration was linked to the Democratic Convention was vital in boosting media attention to Abu-Jamal’s case. “This is the first demonstration for Mumia to get widespread national coverage,” said James Lafferty, a co-chair of the rally and member of the National Lawyers Guild. “The amazing coverage is a major breakthrough in putting the issue of Mumia on the map.”

In addition to demanding a new trial for Abu-Jamal, protesters called for an end to the racist death penalty, police brutality and the prison-industrial complex.

Dorsey Nunn of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children that noted that 6 million people are currently on parole or probation. “Mumia’s case is a continuation of an all-out attack on racism,” Nunn said.

Speakers said there is no fundamental difference between the leadership of the Democratic and Republican parties.

Abu-Jamal’s son, Mazi Jamal, declared: “The Los Angeles convention is an echo of the Philadelphia convention, bought and paid for by corporate people who are nothing but public-relations spokespersons for the bosses. Whether you vote Republican or Democrat, you vote for your own oppression.”

Gloria La Riva, center, with WWP candidates Gloria La Riva and Monica Moorehead at Aug. 13 march for Mumia in Los Angeles.

Leonard Weinglass, center, with WWP candidates Gloria La Riva and Monica Moorehead at Aug. 13 march for Mumia in Los Angeles.

“Without Mumia’s case, this convention would have been even bigger if not for the blatant threats made by the Los Angeles Police Department and federal authorities,” Weinglass said.

“Gore and the Democrats are just as responsible for every execution in Texas,” La Riva said. “President Clinton signed the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which is what has prevented Mumia and others on death row from gaining a new trial.”

Pam Afrika of International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal urged people to sign an appeal to U.S. District Court Judge William H. Yohn. Yohn will decide later this year whether to allow new evidence to be presented in court on Abu-Jamal’s behalf.

Afrika said the evidence “shows there was a conspiracy against Judge Sabo, the district attorney and Mumia’s public defender” at the time of his conviction.

War at home and abroad

Protesters demand to end the prison system’s brutality and injustice to U.S. policy abroad.

The U.S. government “killed women and children in Iraq and kills people in the United States, even if they are mentally disabled or under 18, even if malfeasance and misrants are horrendous,” actor Edward Aumer said.

“Until Mumia is granted a new trial, we will continue to watch the Al Gores laugh up their sleeves while the George W.布什s inexorably march the young, the disabled and quite possibly the innocent to their deaths,”

Labour Holmes, a national leader of Million for Mumia IAC, echoed Sankofa’s last words. “We lost Sanka for Mumia,” Holmes said.

Ike Marzouk, of the Los Angeles Bus Riders Union, Bob McCloskey of Service Employees Local 325, Bob Mandel of the Oakland Education Association, AFSCME representative Roy Stone, spoken-word artist Jime Salcedo, and several bands including East LA Sabor Factory and Azhan Underground.

Jackson: ‘We must not lose Mumia’

The Rev. Jesse Jackson came to lend his support to the protest. He declared, “We lost Sanka, we must not lose Mumia.”

Jackson said the laws must be changed to make state executions illegal, adding, “We cannot rest until all political prisoners are free.”

Larry Holmes, a national leader of Million for Mumia IAC, echoed Sanka’s last words. “We were put in a holding cell with about 40 other women for 36 hours. There was no water, no toilet facilities,” she explained.

“People were forced to be fingerprinted and released,” was a popular chant. Another was, “Brick by brick, wall by wall, we’re gonna free Mumia and free them all.”

Many activists who had been released described the struggle and solidarity of those swept up in the mass arrests.

Sharon Ellis, a health care worker and IAC member, was among those arrested in Philadelphia. As she was released from the jail, Ellis said she was exonerated in the Roundhouse police station to Workers World: “A few people were handcuffed so tight that they had numbness and tingling in their arms,” she explained.

“I was put in a holding cell with about 40 other women for 36 hours. There was no bathroom facility,” she explained.

“While we were able to see a lot of the torture and abuse that was going on,” Ellis reported, “People were forced to be fingerprinted and released.”

“Some people had handcuffs hang off their body, and dropped down onto their throat into a wall. We witnessed this several times.”

The protesters vowed to keep fighting until all their comrades were released and all charges were dropped.

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Imani Henry, a coordinator of the lesbian/gay/bi/trans group Rainbow Flaps for Mumia, told the crowd, “I was arrested in Philly at the Republican National Convention protest and realted here to tell the Democrats, like we told the Republicans, that they have the blood of Shaka Sankofa on their hands.”

Henry urged people to protest at the first national debate between Bush and Gore in Boston Oct. 3.

Workers World Party presidential candidate Monica Moorehead denounced the forces lined up against the demonstrators. “The cops can detain and torture activists as they will, but you can’t a revolutions.”

Henry declared, “We will stand between the execution chamber and Mumia.”

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Brutality by design
Clinton's real legacy on display

By Fred Goldstein

At the same moment President Bill Clin­ton delivered his speech to the Democratic National Convention extolling the so-called accomplishments of his administration, the Los Angeles Police Department opened fire with rubber bullets, pepper spray and bean bags on a crowd of 10,000 concert goers with rubber bullets, pepper spray and bean bags on a crowd of 10,000 concert goers at the Hollywood Bowl. The police then concluded with the concert featuring Rage Against the Machine. The band had finished its set and the police pulled the plug on the Latino group Ol� Oskull.

Their goal was to clear the streets before the delegates emerged from the hall after Clinton's speech. So the LAPD used the excuse of a few bottles and rocks being thrown over a fence as the pretext for a full-scale military attack, complete with cops on horses, motorcycles, bicycles and foot, all outfitted in riot gear.

To underscore the satisfaction of Demo­cratic Party officials with the police action, a Los Angeles Independent/World Net dispatch of Aug. 15 quoted Julie Green, a convention spokesperson, complimenting the police on a "smooth operation."

The simultaneous events summarize the entire Clinton administration. Clinton is at the podium posing as a friend of the people while his henchmen send the police to attack the people with full force. It is this type of maneuver that has earned him the accolades of the bourgeoisie—despite their distaste for him.

A monumental renegade

After his speech all the commentators praised Clinton as the greatest politician of his generation, if not of the past century. What was his greatness? He got the Democrats back into the White House after a long period of Republican rule. Wherein lies his political brilliance? He stole the Republican thunder by moving the Democratic Party all the way to the right, adopting most of the Republican program while still holding onto its party's base.

The ruling class, in its arrogance, took the Clinton Democrats as a party that has the backing of the unions, the Black bourgeoisie leaders, the women's movement and the gay movement.

But then proceeded to destroy the welfare system, strengthen capital punishment, pass NAFTA, refuse to fight for anti-scalp legislation, impose the "don't tell" anti-gay military policy, hand over the country's medical care to the insurance companies, make balancing the budget the bell and call of the White House, commit blatant military aggression against Yugoslavia and Iraq.

Of course it is not hard to chart a reactionary course when all of Wall Street is demanding it. It is easier than it appears to carry out that program when you know you can count on the consent of the party base's leadership, which hopefully follows the time-worn and ultimately bankrupt "lesser evil" theory and will not break with the pro-imperialist Democratic Party leaders.

But when history is written, Clinton and his Democratic Leadership Council, the architects of this turn to the right—of which both Al Gore and Joseph Lieberman are leading members—may get mixed reviews from the bourgeoisie. The reason for this is precisely what is happening on the streets of Los Angeles as well as what happened in Philadelphia, Washington and Seattle.

Clinton-Gore exposed big business control

The Clinton-Gore leadership became so brazen that they expected big business' control over the Democratic Party—a control that was supposed to remain behind the scenes.

They made an enormous effort at fore­stopping imperialist neoliberalism down the throats of the oppressed countries on behalf of the multinational corporations. They openly carried on fund-raising from big business in shameless Republican style. Their reputation for brutal­rally, anti-poor and anti-working class, as they implemented the budget dem­ands of the bondholders.

In the scheme of U.S. politics, the Re­publicans were supposed to be the party of big business and the Democrats the party of the common people. Of course, this was never true. But Clinton and Gore have accomplished what volumes of po­litical argument could not accomplish—they have converted the two-party polit­ical system before a new generation.

To be sure, breaking the two-party sys­tem of corporate rule is not an end in itself. The question of how to make the struggle forward must still be answered.

But it is nevertheless a vital and indis­pensable beginning on the road to build­ing an independent revolutionary strug­gle against the capitalist system.

Should this struggle widen and spread to the masses, the ruling class and the Demo­cratic Party leadership is fully capable of reviving its demagogic liberalism.

But for now, since the protests in Seat­tle and Washington, the bourgeoisie has realized that the youths who are carrying out resistance to corporate domination, racism and repression, whatever their ide­ology, are irrevocably opposed to the manifestations of capitalism and the two bourgeois parties.

Beginning in Philadelphia and now in Los Angeles, the bourgeois establishment is officially treating them as ene­mies to be intimidated and crushed. The illegal jailings and beatings in Philadelphia and the heavy use of mili­tary-style police force in Los Angeles can only be understood in this light.

The government's nervousness was evident when the LAPD raided Patriotic Hall, where the Shadow Convention and the Independent Media Center were housed, on Aug. 14. On a trumped-up claim that a van was filled with explosives, the police shut down the hall while the IMC was preparing to upload a broadcast about the demonstra­tions to 150 stations through a satellite connection.

In place of the IMC broadcast the police sent a message saying the pro­gram had been closed down by the LAPD. Activists were forced to stand outside for six hours.

Repression breeds resistance

Among the many accounts of the attack on the Rage concert, one by Los Angeles Times staff reporter Joe Mozingo shows that the government has much to fear.

Mozingo was covering the demonstra­tions and rushed to the site of the attack to join the crowd. A phalanx of 20 mounted police and a line of foot cops en­circled the crowd and drove it towards a corner into another phalanx of police with shotguns armed with beanbags and rub­ber bullets.

"They began to shout 'Don't shoot,'" wrote Mozingo, and then, "they were push­ed onto Olympic Boulevard. The group stopped just past Francisco Street. The po­lices ordered them to move. They didn't.

"The horses were lined up—23, side by side. Hundreds of other officers were in tight formations...Then boom!"

Rubber bullets were flying. Mozingo himself was shot several times.

The crowd retreated and then "stopped under the overpass of Harbor Freeway. The police lined up 50 yards away behind spires of smoke...Again, after repeated orders to move on, shooting erupted in trails of sparks...We ran away again and had several other stand-offs on Olympic."

Protesters were picking up rubber bullets as souvenirs. Finally the crowd was pushed out of the area.

But it is clear from this report that the concert-goers, almost all youths, did not flee in panic or fear. They were angered into resistance and held their ground in the face of overwhelming force. They only dispersed when they had no means to overcome police firepower. The crowds in Seattle had similar fight-back reactions against police attacks with rubber bullets and tear gas.

This is the first development of a sus­tained resistance movement in a genera­tion.

It comes after the defeat of the USSR and the great setback for the socialist camp. This defeat paved the way for the triumphal march of U.S. corporations all over the Third World and for the arrogance of the Clinton administration and its repression policies at home. It arises in a much more reactionary political atmosphere, both na­tionally and internationally, than existed during the 1960s and early 1970s. It has tested the ruling class and drawn a vicious reaction.

The ruling class feels free to dispense with all elementary norms of capitalist democracy. It is setting the police free to do virtually anything they want to suppress any manifestation of militant resistance.

But in the long run this strategy is bound to fail. In fact, the struggle can become an invaluable education that will ultimately make the movement stronger.

All organizations that consider them­selves Marxist or socialist, despite ide­ological and tactical differences, are duty bound to give support to this movement and to help turn the capitalist strategy of destruction into a means to fan the flames of resistance.

PHILADELPHIA

Women prisoners speak

By Sertia Joubert-Ceci
Philadelphia

Over 450 people were arrested during the Aug. 1 protests against the "criminal injustice system" at the Republican Con­vention. The 20 protesters who remain in Philadelphia jails will be released Aug. 15, supervised, as was said.

After deliberating among themselves and consulting with lawyers, the activists have decided to switch their tactics from "jail solidarity" to "court solidarity."

Judges reduced the bail for many pro­testers already in jail. Several were given $1 million.

Eris Hermes from the R2K Network legal defense team told Workers World that the newly released activists plan to hold a press conference on the evening of Aug. 15.

There are the ex-prisoners—most of them women—will announce their new strategy.

The women will also speak out about the conditions they were subjected to while in jail, including physical and psychological torture, isolation and sexual abuse.

Hermes said the activists want to keep the focus on the struggle to abolish the prison-industrial complex and the current situation of the 2 million people behind bars in this country.

"They will give voice to the general prison population by reading a list of demands drafted by non-protesters in the jails. These prisoners' 16 demands include the right to a speedy trial, prompt medical and dental attention, decent food, an end to overcrowding, an end to abuse by guards and to help turn the capitalist strategy of destruction into a means to fan the flames of resistance.

In a statement, the protesters said, "These demands reflect the long-term day-to-day problems inside the Philadelphia prison system that are not unique to us and will remain long after we are gone."

"These are the problems that we were trying to draw attention to when we were arrested."
NATO troops seize mining complex

By Sara Flounders

Claiming they were concerned about controlling air pollution, some 3,000 NATO soldiers stormed a lead smelting plant in Zvecan at 4:30 in the morning of Aug. 14. The plant was the only functioning industry in the vast Trepca mining complex in northern Kosovo, a few miles from the city of Mitrovica.

At 6:30 a.m., in a further attack that had nothing to do with air pollution, NATO soldiers closed down and confiscated the equipment of Zvecan's Radio S—the only one allowed to report information critical of NATO.

The northern part of Mitrovica is the only remaining multi-ethnic part of Kosovo. Thousands of Serbs, Romanies, people with mixed nationalism and peoples of mixed background have been driven out of other areas by Kosovo Liberation Army attacks and vigilante groups. Many have fled to the north side of the Iber river.

Thus, with the local Serb population, they have resisted more than a year of KLA attacks in an economically devastated region.

The surprise attack by NATO shut down the only radio station and the main source of employment for the local population.

On Wednesday, the main energy, refining and power centers, once constituted one of Yugoslavia's leading export industries and a main source of hard currency. It was the major source of jobs in the region.

Defending the pre-dawn attack, Bernard Kouchner, the head of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), said, "As a doctor and chief administrator of Kosovo I would be derelict if I allowed a threat to the health of children and pregnant women to continue for one more day." UNMIK is the police force set up by NATO to administer Kosovo.

Kouchner has never had a word of criticism of the environment heave NATO created throughout the entire region with the use of depleted uranium weapons, the bombing of chemical plants and the use of cluster bombs.

If you find it hard to accept that NATO is suddenly concerned with pollution, it's worth looking for what is really at stake.

"Most valuable piece of real estate" said, "This is now an illegal demonstration. "The police continued to shoot tear gas at the protesters and used a water cannon.

"The main orientation of the police was to control the situation and to stop the crowd from affecting military arm to insure primarily U.S. corporate control; the first move after seizing the complex was to turn it over to a consortium of private mining companies. This consortium—ITT Kosovo Ltd.—is a joint venture of U.S., French and Swedish companies.

The most interesting partner in this deal to control Trepca is the U.S. company Morrison Knudsen International. On July 7 Morrison Knudsen merged with Raytheon Engineers and Constructors, a major military contractor that makes Patriot missiles and radar equipment for the Pentagon.

This is an enormously lucrative deal. ITT Kosovo Ltd. will administer Trepca, appoint executives and a board of directors, develop the investment strategy and skim the greatest profits from every possible deal.

Those in the Albanian population who hold illusions that control by these corporations will mean the return of the thousands of well-paid, secure jobs that existed before the war should read the plans multi-billionaire Soros has in store.

Once NATO has control of the whole industrial complex, according to the International Crisis Group, foreign investors would develop a very modern, highly profitable facility with a small workforce. In this outright theft of an industry that was built by the efforts of all the peoples of Yugoslavia, Soros's think tank recommends that the management and administration be made up of foreign executives "in order to prevent corruption."

As Clinton/Gore speak of democracy

Los Angeles police riot

Continued from page 1 more determined and militant."

Legal assembly

The Aug. 14 concert was the culmination of a day long protest against capitalist globalization, the National Missile Defense program and economic injustice. The actions converged for the concert, a legal assembly, in the fenced off "protest pit" outside the convention center.

Earlier, police attacked a 2,000-strong street protest targeting Gore's ties to Occidental Petroleum. That Big Oil monopoly threatens the sovereignty and environmental safety of the Indigenous Uwa people in Colombia. Ten people were arrested.

The crowd at the concert was multi-ethnic, including many Latino youths. There were young Native Americans working with the Service Employees union and a Korean drum corps. The Chicano students' group MEChA, the Filipino group Bayan and the Iberian M. A. Group converged for the concert, a legal assembly, in the fenced off "protest pit" outside the convention center.

"The police continued to shoot tear gas at the protesters and used a water cannon."

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The rape charge &
Washington’s war propaganda

By Sara Flounders

On Aug. 10, a federal court in New York ruled that Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader during the civil war in Bosnia seven years ago, must pay $745 million in damages for the crimes of rape, torture and genocide committed during the civil war.

Of course, the money is expected to be recovered. The charge was originally filed in 1993 for propaganda purposes at the height of the Bosnian civil war. The decision seven years later received the full front page and three inside pages of coverage in the Aug. 11 edition of Newsday, and wide attention in other media.

How could a U.S. federal court in New York even have jurisdiction over what happened in another country to people who had no connection to the United States?

This “trial” is part of a continuing effort to give the U.S. government the basis to charge and convict leaders of any country that is the target of CIA destabilization. It revived all the charges that were used to justify U.S. military intervention and occupation in the Balkans.

Karadzic is not charged with committing any of the crimes directly. He is charged as the leader of a government that has been a target of continuing demonization.

Karadzic did not travel to New York or present any defense in this one-sided trial. He is in hiding in Bosnia after being indicted on similar charges at the court established at The Hague by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright—the so-called International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Of course, not testimony presented in the U.S. federal court in New York or the Tribunal was based at The Hague even mentioned Washington’s role in manufacturing the break-up of the Yugoslav Federation, fo­menting the civil war and bombing civilizations in Bosnia and Yugoslavia.

But the criminal role of the United States, Germany and other Western governments has been well documented in people’s tribunals in New York, Berlin, Rome, Athens, Moscow and Kiev, Ukraine, over the past year.

NATO bases the real goal

The charges of genocide and mass rapes in Bosnia were the beginning of a massive, well-orchestrated public relations campaign to demand U.S./NATO intervention in the Balkans.

Claiming that a force for peace and stability in a bloody civil war, the Pentagon has now established a whole network of military bases in Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Serb towns in Bosnia were the targets of more than 4,000 U.S. bombings in 1994 and 1995. In 1999 the Pentagon and NATO bombed Yugoslavia for 78 days.

The crime of rape made against the Serbs shaped the views of millions of people who previously had little interest in the Balkans.

In late 1992 and early 1993, sensational news reports charged that mass rapes were a planned, deliberate strategy of the Bosnian Serb leadership.

Women are the first victims in every war. Rape and the degrading abuse of women are all too often carried out as a stamp of defeat by invading armies imbued with patriarchal attitudes.

But the charge of rape has also been consciously used as an essential prop of war propaganda. The supposed defense of women is used to mobilize armies and to galvanize blind hatred.

A lie repeated becomes fact

Without any examination of the hearsay sources, the major Western media gave lurid descriptions of rape camps where it was claimed that between 20,000 and 100,000 Muslim and Croatian women were raped. This crystallized the public view that Serbs were the evil aggressors and Muslims and Croats the helpless victims.

The charge that 30,000 women and girls had been raped originated with the commissioner of Bosnia, Haris Silajzic, in order to stall peace talks in Geneva in late 1992.

In January 1999 the Warburton Report authorized by the European Community estimated that 20,000 Muslim women had been raped as part of a Serb strategy of conquest. This report was written by an authoritative, independent source.

No coverage was given to a dissenting member of the investigative team—European Parliament President Stanislaw Veil—who revealed that the estimate of 20,000 rapes was based on interviews with only four victims, two women and two men.

The Croatian Ministry of Health in Zagreb was the main source on which the Warburton Report based its esti­mate of 20,000 rapes.

Because the charge of systematic Serbian rapes of Muslim and Croatian women has been repeated so often, it is now accepted as an undisputed fact.

Publications cited with each other for sensationalized accounts. USA Today told the story of a 5-month-old baby who was supposedly the result of Serbian rape. The New York Times car­ried a photo story with the caption, “Two-month-old baby born to a teen-age Muslim woman after she was raped by a Serbian detention camp.”

The war was not yet nine months old.

Ms. Magazine ran a cover story that accused Bosnian Serb forces of raping for the purpose of producing pornographic films. No such films were ever found and the charges were not sup­ported by the findings of Helsinki Watch or Human Rights Watch.

Croatian (Dis)Information Center

The woman who was the star witness and main media spokesperson in the New York trial and judgment, Jadranka Cigelj, is a paid propagandist who worked for the Croatian Information Center.

She was well known in radical Croat­ian nationalist circles. She was also the vice-chair of Croatian President Franjo Tdijman’s fascist HDZ Party.

The HDZ is closely linked to the Us­terate Party that led Croatia during the Nazi occupation in World War II.

Perhaps because of her fascist political background, in interviews Cigelj always brands the Serbs as “far worse than the Nazis.”

Cigelj’s rape charges are extensively quoted in almost all articles and testi­mony on rapes in Bosnia. However, her accounts have changed several times.

Thomas Deichmann, a German re­searcher and journalist, has documented Cigelj’s varied testimony and her political background in a chapter of the book, “War, Lies and Videotape,” published by the Inter­national Action Center.

In one publication produced by the Croatian Information Center, Cigelj charged that a Serbian reserve officer raped her. In another article a Boy Outman of Novsday, she charged that Zejko Majak of the Serbian commander of a refugee camp, and two camp guards raped her.

Later, in a German publication, her story changed again. She testified in the highly publicized case of another man, former Serbian soldier Zjzmir Topcic, who faced deportation from the United States in 1999.

Cigelj offered to become a key prose­cution witness against another Serb, Dusan Tadic, at the Hague Tribunal.

Swan rejected because she was seen as an unreliable witness.

However, Cigelj has been featured in documentaries, received financial awards, and appeared in the cover story of a 25-city U.S. tour organized by Amnesty International.

None of the discrepancies in her story or her right-wing political activities was reported in the coverage of her testimo­ny against Radovan Karadzic.

Capitalism promotes sexual slavery

Nowhere in Newday’s three pages of coverage recounting charges of rape in Bosnia do you learn that in the West women face today under NATO occupa­tion even mentioned.

Throughout Eastern and Central Eu­rope, in Russia and the former Soviet re­publics, the chaos and dislocation of the capitalist market have eroded the enor­mous gains of the women’s movement.

A decade ago these countries guaran­teed full employment and two years paid maternity leave. Now unemployment is at 30-40 percent is the norm. Health care and child-care services have collapsed.

Women’s organizations were under­standably outraged by the lurid reports concerning mass rapes in Bosnia seven years ago. They would make a contribu­tion if they focused their resources on exposing the conditions for women liv­ing under U.S. domination today.

U.S. troops and bases do not protect women. They exist to protect the extinc­tion of profits for giant capitalist institu­tions. In every U.S. military operation an entire sex industry of bars, strip joints and brothels is created around the bases.

This experience of Vietnam, Thailand, Korea and the Philippines is now the real­ity around U.S. bases in Turkey, Bosnia, and at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.

At the United Nations Beijing Plus Five Conference of 10,000 women in June, the worldwide status of women was examined. It was estimated that more than half-a-million women from Central and Eastern Europe alone are shipped abroad each year as part of the world­wide trafficking in prostitutes. Bosnia was cited as one of the worst examples. (New York Times, June)

Flounders is co-director of the Inter­national Action Center in New York. Background materials for this article ap­peared in two IAC books, “NATO in the Balkans” and “War, Lies and Videotape,” both available at leftbooks.com.
Target: Lumumba

The year was 1960. The people of the Congo had just witnessed independence from Belgian imperialism. Their leader was 35-year-old Patrice Lumumba, who declared he was ready to seek Soviet assistance to drive out the remaining Belgian troops. To the people of Congo, he was a hero.

To the Cold Warriors in the Eisenhower White House, Lumumba was a "communist agent." To Belgian ruling circles, he was an uppity African who dared to challenge their murderous rule as anything but benign.

To both sets of imperialist rulers, Lumumba was a target. He was someone to be pushed out, gotten rid of, eliminated. U.S. and Belgian imperialist interests competed then—and still compete—in the Congo. And they both compete with French and British corporations. But they all agreed in the summer of 1960 that Lumumba must be destroyed.

This year new official material has come out that backs up the rumors, leaks and rational analysis that the CIA and/or Belgian secret services and military conspired with corrupt Congolese officials—namely Joseph Mobutu and Moise Tshombe—to get rid of Lumumba. "Orders for the U.S. hit came directly from the top. As the British Guardian publicized this Aug. 10, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower told a meeting of the National Security Council that he thought Lumumba should be erased. According to Robert Johnson, the minute-taker at that Aug. 18, 1960, meeting, who spoke to a Congressional committee in 1979, Eisenhower turned to Allen Dulles, director of the CIA, "In the full hearing of all those in attendance, and saying something to the effect that Lumumba should be erased."

Johnson recalled: "There was stunned silence for about 15 seconds and the meeting continued." According to many reports, Dulles and the CIA put a plan in motion to poison Lumumba with biological agents so he would fall ill and die, and the United States would escape blame. This elaborate plot failed, for while U.S. imperialism is capable of attempting the greatest crimes, it does not always succeed.

The CIA made dozens of similar elaborate attempts on Cuban President Fidel Castro's life, and the Pentagon carried out simpler direct bombing strikes aimed at Lumumba's land. For from Romania to Yugoslavia's elected President Slobodan Milosevic. But sometimes the murderers succeed. In September 1960, following a coup led by Mobutu, Lumumba wound up under house arrest. When he attempted to escape, U.S. and Belgian agents helped his enemies capture him. He was turned over to Tshombe's forces and murdered on Jan. 17, 1961.

A book written last year by Ludo de Wit, based on Belgian government documents, shows how officials and officers from that country were actively working to get rid of Lumumba just as the CIA was. Whoever struck the final blow, both imperialist powers were acting like what they are: organized criminals. Highly organized, but still criminals.

Lumumba, on the other hand, was a national hero. And a revolutionary liberation hero for the world who is still inspiring the people of the Congo to fight for their independence. The last words he wrote while awaiting his death that January show why:

"History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that is taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington or in the United Nations, but the history which will be taught in the countries freed from imperialism and its puppets. Africa will write its own history, and to the north and south of the Sahara, it will be a glorious and dignified history.

"Do not weep for me, my dear wife. I know that my country, which is suffering so much, will know how to defend its independence and its liberty. Long live the Congo. Long live Africa!"

By Michael Bar-Am

The Israeli settler state is in the midst of a deep political and ideological crisis. A military crisis also looms as Sept. 13 approaches.

That is the date when the Palestinian Authority has said it will declare an independent state of Palestine. The PA now administers a small percentage of Palestinian land from which Israeli ground forces have withdrawn.

In May Israeli troops were forced to make a humiliating retreat from southern Lebanon, which they had occupied since June 1978. The retreat was brought on by a heroic armed struggle and people's war carried out by the Lebanese people.

Lebanese youths played a leading role in attacks on Israeli military bases and in the daily ambushes of Israeli infantry and armored vehicle patrols. Less than two months later, the Clinton administration tried to broker an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority at the Camp David compound outside Washington.

President Bill Clinton chaired the talks. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was close at hand.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak led the Israeli delegation. Yassir Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and head of the PA, led the Palestinian delegation.

The talks collapsed over control of Jerusalem, Palestinian sovereignty and the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Palestine, including Ashquelon, Haifa, the Galilee and the West Bank.

When Barak returned to Israel, he found his shaky parliamentary coalition near collapse. Israeli political parties and establishment media are deeply divided over how to try to deal the Palestinians a historic defeat that would once and for all legitimize the Israeli settler-state worldwide.

Liberal, centrist and moderate are for using the carrot, that is, offering concessions to Palestinian statehood. Right-wingers, racists and religious fundamentalists are for using the stick and repressing the Palestinians militarily. But all support the existence of an apartheid-like state with a virtually all-Jewish population.

With armed struggle throughout the Palestinian real possibility in September, the Israeli daily newspaper Ha'aretz reported May 26, the "crisis of motivation among Israel's soldiers has been officially recognised since 1996" by the Ministry of Defense. Compulsory military service is putting tremendous pressure on the PA not to declare an independent state. The Israelis are threatening a land, sea and air blockade if independence is declared.

The Palestinian leadership has studied the successful military campaign in southern Lebanon and thousands of Palestinian teenagers are spending their summer vacation in military training learning to use ammunition.

Palestinian legislator Ziad Abu Zayyad told the Associated Press Aug. 13 that a final decision would not be made until a PLO leadership meeting in late August-early September.

Meanwhile, Ha'aretz reported May 26, the "crisis of motivation among Israel's youth has been an officially recognised phenomenon since 1996" by the Ministry of Defense. Compulsory military service for all 18-year-olds is a thing of the past. Now there is "selective conscription."

"The four years of the great war on draft dodging have not reduced the number of people avoiding the draft," Ha'aretz warned.

Ronni Barkan, from the town of Ramla, entered the Israeli Defense Forces after college. He left the army after two months. "For me, the so-called enemy nations are not enemies at all. I have no personal interest in watching in the morning to find there's a State of Israel," Barkan explained.

This growing disaffection of Israeli youths offers perhaps the best opportunity to de-fang the Pentagon's aggressive ally in the Middle East.

Bar-Am served in the Israeli Defense Forces during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and since that experience has been active for decades as a supporter of the Palestinian liberation struggle.
Venezuelan prez resists U.S. pressure

Chavez defies sanctions on Iraq

By Andy Mclnerney

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez delivered a diplomatic body blow to U.S. efforts to isolate and economically strangle Iraq on Aug. 10. Chavez crossed the Iran-Iraq border to meet with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein—the first meeting between Hussein and a foreign head of state since the 1991 U.S.-led war against Iraq.

The meeting was held as part of Chavez' 10-nation tour to meet with members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. But it had special importance because of Washington's efforts to isolate Iraq, including the 10-year policy of economic sanctions that has caused over 1.5 million deaths.

"We regret and denounce the interference in our internal affairs," Chavez said. "We do not and will not accept it. "What can I do if they get upset?" he continued. "We have dignity and Venezuela is a sovereign country."

In addition to discussions on maintaining oil prices at near $25 per barrel, the Venezuelan delegation made a special point of criticizing the U.S. sanctions against Iraq.

"President Chavez affirmed the Venezuelan position supporting an accord against any kind of boycott or sanctions that are applied against Iraq or any other country in the world," said Deputy Foreign Minister Jorge Valero. After leaving Iraq, Chavez took the case of Iraq to Indonesia, another OPEC member. Chavez and Indonesian President Abdurram Wahid issued a joint statement opposing U.S. sanctions in Iraq.

"We share the sentiments of President Chavez with regard to the Iraqi people," Wahid said on Aug. 12. "For that reason Indonesia hopes for lifting the blockade of Iraq soon."

Defiance reflects mass support

Venezuela is currently the leading oil exporter to the United States. Normally a country of such importance would be held under the thumb of U.S. imperial-

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein greets Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in Baghdad Aug. 10. Chavez defied U.S. efforts to isolate and economically strangle Iraq. New York Times

ism through client regimes and economic pressure.

But in 1998, seeking discontent from Venezuela's 23 million people, rocketed Chavez to the presidency, breaking the grip of Venezuela's notoriously corrupt traditional political parties. Chavez had led a 1992 military rebellion against the government in support of popular demonstrations against poverty and austerity. On July 30, Chavez was enthusiasticaly re-elected in a special election called "re-legitimise" his government. His Fifth Republic Movement and allies in the Patriotic Pole won 60 percent of the seats in the new legislative body.

Expectations are high that Chavez will confront the country's mass poverty—afflicting nearly 80 percent of the population—and unemployment. Chavez is promising a "revolution" to shake up the traditional ruling elite.

In the international arena, Chavez has already defied the United States by refusing to allow U.S. military planes to fly over Venezuela in operations directed at neighboring Colombia. Chavez also praised his Cuban counterpart Fidel Castro as a "brother." Visiting Beijing in 1999, he encouraged the Chinese government to conclude a peace treaty that would not be run by a universal police that imposes everything.

He has advocated cooperation of exploited nations against U.S. hegemony. "We, the small, poor nations, underdeveloped, of the Third World... we have no alternative but to unite, whatever our geographic location," Chavez said on Aug. 6, before leaving on his tour of OPEC nations.

The social ferment throughout Latin America—from the Chavez government to the revolutionary movement in Colombia—is beginning to be felt on the international arena.

U.S./Britain bomb civilian targets

By Gery Armbsy

U.S. and British warplanes attacked sites in northern Iraq Aug. 15. This followed heavy bombardment in southern Iraq Aug. 10-12.

The air strikes killed two civilians and injured more than 20 others. They also destroyed a train station, several homes and a food rations storage and distribution facility that warehoused food allowed into Iraq under the United Nations Oil-for-Food program.

The Pentagon claimed the jets were targeting anti-aircraft artillery sites. In almost daily bombing raids, U.S./British maneuvers have killed over 200 Iraqi civilians and wounded more than 800 since December 1998.

At that time, Collins reported, over 400 bombs rained on Iraq for four straight days.

The two imperialist powers claim to be enforcing so-called "no-flight zones," which they imposed on Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War. Baghdad has protested the no-flight zones, pointing out that the unilateral constraints violate Iraqi sovereignty.

The zones cover most of the northern and western portions of the country, restricting Iraqi flights over two-thirds of their own air space.

The latest bombings by the United States and Britain occurred in these zones: in the city of Samawa, 175 miles south of Baghdad; and near Mosul, 250 miles to the northeast of the Iraqi capital.

At an Aug. 13 Baghdad news conference, Iraqi Air Defense Commander Lt. Gen. Shaheen Yassin Ahmad said, "I expect them to intensify their activities and

Residents of Samawa, Iraq, clear debris after an Aug. 12 U.S. airstrike.

aggression."

He also suggested as a pretext for the increased U.S. and British hostilities "their international political failure, the challenge of the Venezuelan president [Hugo Chavez] to their policies and the calls of the world community to stop aggression."

The Iraqi Air Defense Command reported in July that more than 21,600 U.S. and British warplanes have flown into Iraq's air space since December 1998. An average of one bombing or missile attack occurs every three days; Pentagon bombs kill an average of one civilians every other day.

The Pentagon admits to flying over 280,000 sorties since imposing the "no-flight zones."

Anti-IMF protests set

Thousands of activists are preparing to face off against the Sept. 21-29 meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Prague, Czech Republic.

"This summit is a challenge to those who are concerned about the destiny of today's world," charged the Initiative Against Economic Globalization (INPEG), one of the coalitions organizing the protests. "Let us face the globalisation of capital with the globalisation of solidarity."

Demonstrations by Czech unionists and leftists will take place on Sept. 23. INPEG's Global Day of Action is scheduled for Sept. 26. Solidarity actions are also being organized around the world.

The Czech government is mobilizing at least 11,000 riot police for the demonstrations.

Protests demand referendum against privatization

On Aug. 2, representatives of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and the Coordinating Committee of Social Movements (CMS) delivered over 1.5 million signatures to the Supreme Electoral Court demanding a people's referendum. The six items proposed for the referendum are the main demands of the movement that overthrew former President Jamil Mahuad on Jan. 21.

The first question asks for a ban on foreign military bases on Ecuador's territory. U.S. troops are using the Manta base in eastern Ecuador as part of their war maneuvers against Colombia's revolutionary movement.

Economic matters include removing the "dollarization" of the economy, where the U.S. dollar has become the national currency; immediately returning frozen bank funds, canceling the foreign debt, and ending privatizations.

The final point on the proposed referendum is a general amnesty for the participants in the Jan. 21 uprising.

CONAIE President Antonio Vargas told the Quito-based Pulsar news agency that the "cease-fire" with the current government of Gustavo Noboa is over.

Mobilizations to support the demands and against the government's privatization attempts are planned for Aug. 15.
Somos 24 presos masculinos detenidos actualmente en la cárcel Curran-Churchill Correctional Facility por nuestra participación o nuestro intento de participar en las acciones directas no violentas del 1 de agosto contra la Convención Republicana en Filadelfia. Las convenciones cuidadosamente coreografiadas por los dos partidos políticos mayores no tienen nada que ver con la democracia. Son espectáculos grandiosos de una sistema que funciona de parte de los ricos y sostiene su dominación.

Nuestras acciones en las calles de Filadelfia tuvieron la intención de llamar la atención de la gente sobre el trato inhumano que las personas encarceladas en los Estados Unidos; al uso sistemático de brutalidad policial para intimidar a comunidades enteras; sobre el racismo y crueldad de la pena de muerte; sobre los muchos presos políticos, incluso a Mumia Abu-Jamal, quienes están encarcelados por su compromiso de luchar por la justicia social. Nuestras acciones tuvieron la meta de distanciarnos de la Convención Republicana lo más que nos fuera posible.

Desde el momento de nuestra detención hemos experimentado y observado el mecanismo del sistema diseñado para disminuirnos a seres humanos. Muchos de nosotros fuimos brutalizados durante el proceso de detención. Algunos fuimos golpeados o expuestos a gases lacrimógenos después de ser esposados. En algunos casos tuvimos las manos y los pies esposados juntos y algunos tuvimos las esposas tan apretadas que perdimos la visión.

Nos negaron la oportunidad de estar en contacto con nuestros abogados defensores después de ser arrestados. Algunos fuimos obligados a usar un abogado defensor del supuesto sistema de justicia. Mientras que pasamos por esta experiencia estamos aprendiendo en carne propia del maltrato que experimenta todos los días la gente en este país. Como un grupo mayoritariamente de hombres blancos de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que recibe rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase media, sabemos bien que el tratamiento que reciben rutinariamente la gente de la clase medio