

London Bombings, p.10 + Psychedelic Splatter, p. 13 + Brooklyn Greens, p.3

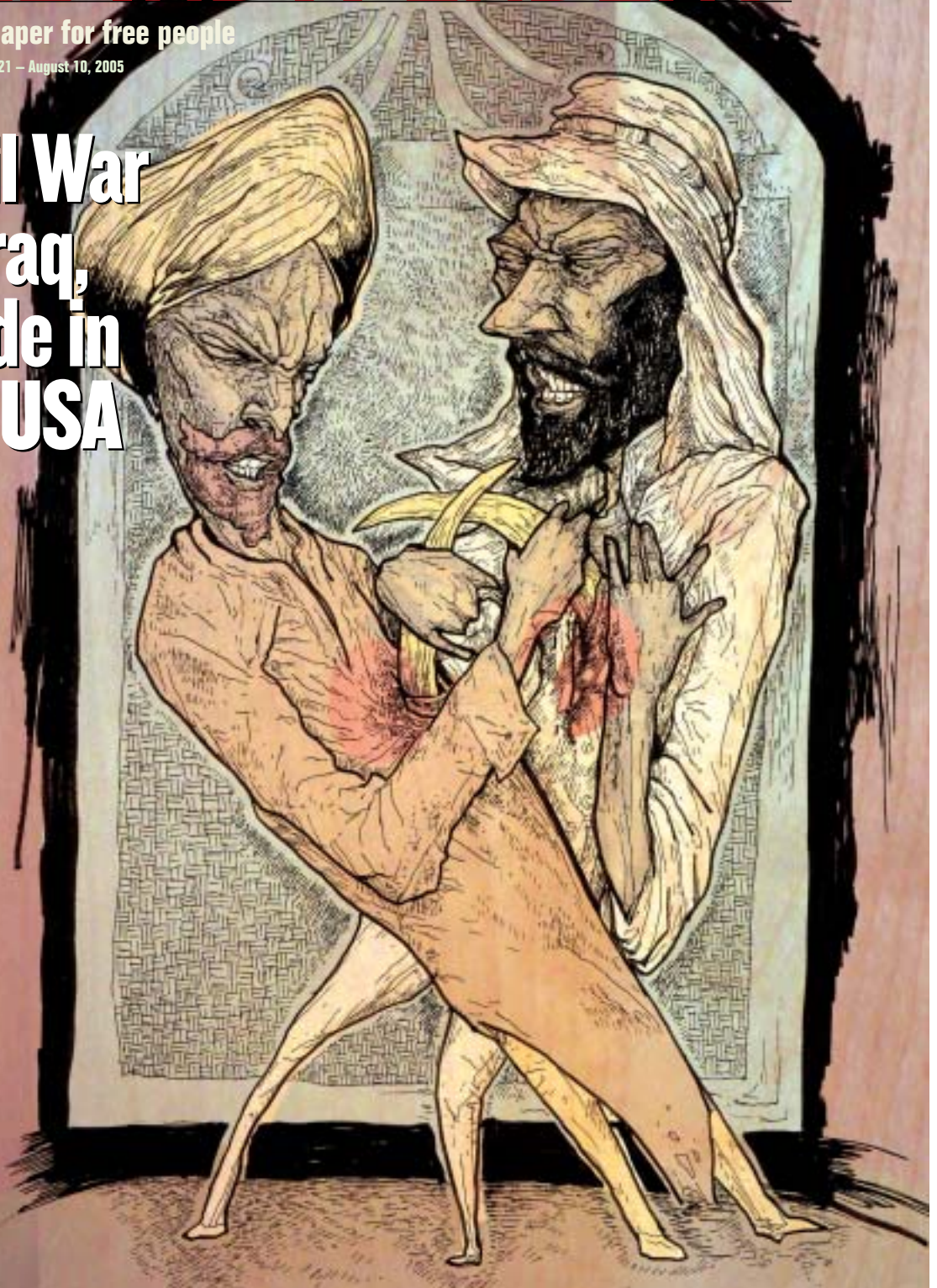
THE INDEPENDENT

a FREE paper for free people

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Civil War in Iraq, Made in the USA

page 8





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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for *The Independent*, about film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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letters & comment

CONFESSIONS OF AN UNREPENTANT FLAG-BURNER

Laws against flag burning are repressive and stupid. But flag burning itself is just as self-indulgent. It's an art project, not a revolutionary act. If you think that flag burning only offends the white rich right-wing crackers, think again.

You want to signal to the workers and the poor that you are from the upper classes? Burn a flag. It's more effective than wearing a Rolex. But if you want to make revolution, then enough already with the "student art projects" and take that flag back from the marauders who stole it.

—Harriet Tubman

What the flag means depends a lot on where you're standing.

—Random Name Generator

When "student art projects" break the vacant consensus that prevails, good for them. So what if many people support the idea of what America is supposed to be. They are wrong. America is what it is. This country burns people and then says debating its role in the world is forbidden. When the defenders of the flag tell me what year it wasn't being used to occupy some country, steal some land or impose the worst of capitalism, then maybe I'll change my mind.

When were America's glory years? It's not like the flag was "taken from us." Some of us never had it.

—33 1/3

We should look at the red, white and blue with as much disgust as people who are being shot down by soldiers wearing it.

—Shebab

Show me someone whose politics are first to go and listen to the people, what the common person out there wants and desires, and acts obeying the people, and I'll show you a true revolutionary.

Most of the rest of what happens in the name of being "radical" is not-ready-for-prime-time artists and attention-seekers trying to get an audience. Period. Maybe "radicals" feel no duty to the people, but "revolutionaries" do.

—Deb

RICH GIRLS, HOBBY WHORES

I thought the article was going to be about knitting or crafts... you know, "hobby whores."

—HW

Wow. Rich white girls can enjoy prostitution for fun and spending cash. That is so cool. I guess the only real problem is the stigma, so if we just decide we don't care... what does it matter?

What a great time to be a man. Pussy on demand, by the hour. And the girls love it. I'm so glad feminism is over. Feminists used to talk about real change, now it's all about just getting over.

I checked Craigslist and the price is right. Not too many Barnard girls, but a lot of "services" offering fresh-off-the-boat Asian girls, Russians and Black girls for even cheaper! I love that my wallet buys

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sexual power over women. That's liberation, baby! I just hope my parents don't find out. Then I'd be in real trouble.

—Dudeman

It's far simpler to be a self-employed sex worker than to get a job in an office... and who can blame us? I don't miss getting up at 6 a.m., or the other hazards of working 9-to-5. Legalizing prostitution will at least keep women from being thrown in jail because they do what they have to live.

Not all sex workers are rich girls who are addicted to endless greenbacks. For most, this is livelihood. Even with an impressive college degree, there are no guarantees of security.

Give us decent, affordable housing, job protection and security, and food, protection from violence and harassment, and maybe you'll see fewer girls selling themselves on Craigslist. Don't look at the symptom, but the problem.

—Lady Dommie

Barnard College girls: Will you pee on my lawyer?

—Damfino

Most men treat women like whores anyway. What's wrong with exploiting that fact and just being more clear about things? That's capitalism, right?

—Anon

IRAQ UNION TOUR CONTROVERSY

American leftists don't need to answer for what a complex, multifaceted and largely decentralized resistance to the occupation does. Iraqis have the right to resist foreign occupation and they don't need to meet a set of PC conditions to do so. The Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) is part of the Allawi government structure that was selected by the U.S. What matters is what they do... not what they say.

—Parallelogram

The IFTU are not collaborators. They have chosen to participate in the government, but so did millions of Iraqi's who voted and ran [for offices].

The majority of Iraqis want the military occupation to end. The anxiety with many Iraqis is that the

Edward Herman responds to Jackson Allers' *Nowhere to Roma*

Allers' summary of the NATO war is the establishment party line on the Balkans conflict: "The 78-day campaign ended the Serbian crackdown on Kosovo's independence-minded Albanian majority." He fails to note that the crackdown was part of a civil war stoked by the U.S. and NATO. It is now on the record that before the NATO bombing war, the Serbs had allowed a thousand or more OSCE observers into Kosovo, and reduced their operations there, but NATO failed to curb KLA provocations. The CIA was arming the KLA and encouraging it to hope for a NATO war. The CIA helped stir up conflict, which they then used to justify a war that was clearly planned and desired by the United States.

The USA and NATO did less than nothing to negotiate a settlement that would preclude war, and they deliberately sabotaged the Rambouillet conference because the Serbs "needed a little bombing." The summary by Allers also glosses over the fact that the bombing war was in violation of the United Nations Charter and eventually became a war on Serb civilian life, in violation of international law.

Allers article has some useful material on the plight of the Roma, which is the main thrust of his piece, but he fails to point out that the Roma did reasonably well under Serb rule, and he softens what happened to them under NATO-KLA rule. Under the latter they have become targets of a major ethnic cleansing operation that has involved the destruction of over 10,000 Roma homes and many killings. He fails to stress that the crisis of the Roma has been a NATO-UNMIK responsibility, with NATO utterly failing to curb the KLA, their war and prewar ally.

Under this regime we've seen the greatest ethnic cleansing operation in the Balkans in proportionate terms, and ecumenical as well — extending to Jews, Turks, Serbs and Roma. Kosovo is also now a drug and sex-trade capital of Europe.

Remember that Bill Clinton had said we fought that war in Kosovo to help bring about a "multi-ethnic and tolerant society!" The war was built on lies, and continues to elude the criticism that it deserves because those lies have been institutionalized.

THE CRUSADE & THE CLOSET

The system co-opted LGBT culture years ago. Ideas like "Queer is the new straight" used to market products only serve consumerism. One oppressed group can be disarmed by the privileges extended to it, while the inequality continues. And the real divides remain. My hope is that LGBT can be a bridge across race and class lines.

—Thanks

Why is it that all queers should be fervent anti-capitalists? Is this some sort of "Queer Womyn's Burden?" Maybe the attitudes of the LGBT "elite" are more or less reflective of the attitude in the community. I have some good queer friends down here in Toronto, and they're not smashing bank windows. And why is it, exactly, that they're expected to? Because anarchists have some cock-eyed theory about how capitalism oppresses gay people?

Queers are a market segment. A niche. A profit opportunity. They make money and buy shit just like everyone else.

—C.

CORRECTIONS:

The photograph for *Nowhere to Roma* was taken by: Eric S. Thompson.

In *Rich Girls, Hobby Whores*, the Sex Worker Project and the Sex Worker Organizing Project are different groups.

Confessions of a Flagburner noted an effigy of the artist Dread Scott Tyler. The effigy was not burned.

Frank Reynoso burned the flags on the cover of issue #72.



THIRD GENERATION parishioner, Catherine King, has attended St. Brigid's for 31 years. PHOTO: Antrim Caskey

St. Brigid's on the Cross?

Venerable Tompkins Square Parish 'Nearer to God'

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Fleeing famine, Irish immigrants built Saint Brigid's Catholic Church in 1848. The yellow gothic-style church, situated across from Tompkins Square Park, has welcomed the Irish, sqatters and Latino immigrants. In June 2001, however, the Archdiocese closed the church due to structural problems while hundreds of parishioners continued to hold mass in the social hall. Saint Brigid's faithful began a fundraising drive that collected around \$100,000 to reopen the church.

"How do I explain to my five-year-old child that they want to destroy this church?" asked Catherine King, echoing several longtime parishioners whose families grew up worshipping at Saint Brigid's. In September 2004, the Catholic

hierarchy sent word that the church would forever close and demolition could be imminent as a plan to convert the space to apartments failed.

The Church has shuttered numerous churches in the past couple of years for lack of priests and ostensibly to pay hundreds of millions of dollars owed to victims of priest sexual abuse.

The Archdiocese sold St. Ann's church, on 13th Street, to developers that built residential housing in its place. "Many of these poor parishes are sitting on valuable property," said former Saint Brigid parishioner Ed Torres. Community members are also getting involved in the fight to save the church. "We used to have meetings here about the police riots in the eighties and nineties," said veteran Village squatter Richard Degen. "They don't shut down churches on Fifth Avenue."

Pay Parks

For the cost of a pricey bottle of wine one can take a child to Victorian Gardens, a small, 11-ride amusement park on the southeast side of Central Park. The cheap thrills at Victorian Gardens costs \$18 for a day-pass or \$6 a la carte. Perhaps to distract from the steep ticket price, a sign posted outside attempts to sweep prospective entrants into a make-believe land.

BY HALLEY BONDY

Once upon a time there lived a beautiful and wealthy couple named Victor Ian and Mrs. Victoria Gardens. They lived a rather lavish life traveling across countries and exploring many new lands. They were, in short, social butterflies in their circle of friends. — The tale describes how this extravagant yet lonely couple could not have children. But fret not! The couple built a rink-sized amusement park, drawing children of all ages, and lived happily ever after!

"I'd venture to say that our prices are not particularly high compared to other amusement

parks," says Dana Santulli, Victorian Gardens' sales manager. "Our prices are competitive."

The price is comparable to admission to Six Flags in New Jersey, or a full day at Coney Island, both of which feature many more rides. At the entrance to Victorian Gardens, parents and nannies negotiate with children on how many rides they can go on, or leave the area entirely.

"It's hard, because what can you do with your children in New York City?" one woman asked, after refusing to pay admission for her disappointed son. "This place is tempting for any child."

Victorian Gardens sublets its space at the Wollman Ice Skating Rink, a Donald Trump venture. According to a marketing assistant at the Central Park Conservancy, the privatization of Central Park is common. "We have corporate sponsorship, and they are allowed to hold special events in exchange."

According to Santulli, the operator of the facility, Central Amusements is funded by "anonymous investors," who presumably are not the fantastical Victor Ian and Victoria Gardens. Nevertheless, it's making a killing this summer, and enjoying a very different kind of fairy tale.



By Vanessa

MASSIVE ROUND-UP OF BLACK MEN AFTER COP SHOT IN QUEENS

On June 14, NYPD Officer Christopher Wiesneski was shot in the leg with his own gun while arresting a man who was smoking marijuana. In the three following days, police rounded up over 180 people in the Cambria Heights and Laurelton section of Queens. Police say they are looking for the culprit in the police shooting. Most of those who were arrested were African-American men picked up on minor "quality-of-life" offences.

According to *Democracy Now!*, many of those arrested claimed they were detained by police without explanation. "We contacted several people and we found a disturbing pattern that really yells racial profiling," said Marq Claxton, a retired NYPD detective and member of the group 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care.

FEDS PUSH RACKETEERING CASE ON LONGSHORE UNION

The U.S. Department of Justice filed RICO charges against the International Longshoremen Association's (ILA) top leadership as well as leading Cosa Nostra mafia figures on July 6. The complaint lists Union President John Bowers and over 30 other union figures along with jailed Gambino boss Peter Gotti as defendants. The East coast longshore union represents around 15,000 members from Maine to Texas. Rank-and-file workers are fighting for a place in discussions between ILA leaders and the government on a possible trusteeship of the union. They are also demanding direct elections of leadership, who are currently elected by hand-picked delegates. Rank-and-file longshoremen working through the Longshore Workers Coalition are going port to port organizing the piers.

"The LWC believes that the only way to stop corruption is to have longshore workers elect their leaders," said Tony Perstein of Local 1588 in New Jersey and coalition co-chair. Newark Local 1235 President Al Cernadas was previously indicted by the feds last year and is named once again under the RICO suit. Cernadas is a reputed "associate" of the Genovese crime family who control the New Jersey docks.

VISUAL RESURRECTION

Artist collective Visual Resistance has initiated a new project to draw attention to the dangers faced by bicyclists in New York City. Ghost bike, inspired by a similar project in Pittsburgh, memorialized bicyclists killed by cars with a bike spray-painted white and a stenciled plaque at the site of the accident.

To date, three memorials have been erected, one in Park Slope and two on Houston St. The Houston St. stretch in particular has been deemed the most dangerous in the city to cyclists, as recently demonstrated by a taxicab that crashed into a memorial, demolishing it.

"Creating and installing a ghost bike is heart-wrenching every time," writes Visual Resistance. "But we will create memorials as long as they are needed." Two of the ghost bikes remain standing.

For more info, see visualresistance.org

Brooklyn Greens Gun for Marty

BY RAHUL CHADHA

Since assuming the office of Brooklyn Borough President in 2002, Marty Markowitz has dedicated himself to a bare-knuckled boosterism designed to evoke nostalgia for a Brooklyn that no longer exists. The former state senator has a knack for knowing where and when to mug for the cameras of the borough's weeklies and plays the role of the "fulgedaboudit" Kings County native to the hilt.

But Markowitz has also steadfastly supported Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards development plan, which includes a new arena for the Nets and highrises up to 50 stories. In doing so, the borough president has prompted the wrath of many who feel the plan is grossly out

of scale with the neighborhood.

"He's been outrageous in his shameful courting of Bruce Ratner. What I've really learned traveling around Brooklyn is that there are several communities angry about his complacency about land use," says Gloria Mattera, a Park Slope resident who serves as co-chair of the Green Party for New York State and is mounting the only serious campaign against Markowitz.

Many feel the position lacks real authority. The borough president's views are regarded only as suggestions to the New York City Council. (Markowitz's stand against the rezoning plan for Greenpoint and Williamsburg was ignored by the council in its recent vote to approve it.)



WILLIAMSBURG POLITICKING: Gloria Mattera presses the flesh with Jonathan and Sharon Schwartz. Photo: Rahul Chadha

But Mattera argues that the position holds plenty of sway over land-use issues in naming appointees to the borough's community boards and one member to the City Planning Council. "It's important for people to know that the borough president has a lot of influence on land-use issues and planning boards," she says.

OPERATION RED SCARE



David Horowitz's Academic Battlefield

BY BILL BERKOWITZ

A specter is again haunting U.S. colleges and universities. At the beginning of the Cold War in the early 1950s, Joseph McCarthy, the infamous Republican Senator from Wisconsin, stalked the political landscape hurling reckless charges that hordes of Communists had infiltrated the U.S. government before, during and after World War II.

McCarthy and his band of self-proclaimed patriots also trained their guns on the creative community — writers, directors and actors

working in Hollywood and on Broadway — as well as public school teachers and academics on college campuses across the country.

The hysteria these men stirred up through largely unsubstantiated charges caused thousands of people to lose their jobs. Some committed suicide.

Flash forward 50 years: David Horowitz, the 1960s left-wing radical turned right-wing activist/provocateur and Republican political consultant, has crafted a campaign to stifle the speech of liberal academics. Disguised as an attempt to broaden free speech on campus, Horowitz's Academic Bill of Rights has been making the rounds of statehouses and college campuses during the past year or so. Legislators in 14 states, including California, Florida, Minnesota and Maine, have introduced bills on that theme.

In early June, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that "four state universities in Colorado... [had] adopted the principles under legislative pressure in 2004."

In Florida, State Representative Dennis Baxley (R-Ocala) has introduced an Academic Freedom Bill of Rights. In addition to guaranteeing that students would "not be punished for professing beliefs with which their professors disagree," the bill would have advised professors "to teach alternative 'serious academic theories' that may disagree with their personal views."

"Some professors say, 'Evolution is a fact. I don't want to hear about intelligent design, and if you don't like it, there's the door,'" Baxley maintained.

The bill went nowhere after passing a committee vote in March, but Baxley "also appealed directly to the state's university presidents to implement his proposals administratively," says Susan Greenbaum, president of the Faculty Senate at the University of South Florida. As chair of the Education Council and a member of the Education Appropriations Committee, she adds, he "certainly has their attention."

"The real test," Greenbaum pointed out, "will come in whether there is an escalation in student grievances at Florida universities, and what happens to those complaints. However, what seems to be lacking in this whole issue is real student dissatisfaction. They have garnered almost no action among students on these campuses; David Horowitz presented a pitiful array of dubious anecdotes when he testified in Tallahassee."

CAMPUS BROWNSHIRTS

Horowitz set up Students for Academic Freedom in 2003 to do the grunt work. On some campuses, they and similarly minded groups have launched an all-out assault on liberal professors, using classic McCarthyite tactics.

At Santa Rosa Junior College in Santa Rosa, Calif., veteran journalist David Bacon reported, college Republicans posted leaflets on the doors of ten faculty members, accusing them of "teaching communism." California law makes that illegal. The California College Republicans called the episode "Operation Red Scare."

Horowitz's efforts on campuses across the country and Rep. Baxley's work in Florida "represent an inversion of the original intent of academic freedom, which is to protect the right of professors to express controversial ideas without fear of retaliation," Susan Greenbaum maintains.

Bill Berkowitz writes the "Conservative Watch" column for *WorkingForChange.com*, where this was originally published.



Lawrence Herisnor, 19, of Manhattan, works with Youth Activist Youth Allies (YaYa), a member of the NYC Counter Recruitment Coalition. Photo: Antrim Caskey

Stopping the War at the Source

BY ANTRIM CASKEY

On July 14, several dozen antiwar activists organized by the New York City Counter-Recruitment Campaign picketed the military recruiting offices on Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. The coalition's focus is to inform parents of high-school-age students that they can "opt out" of the provision in the federal No Child Left Behind Act that requires schools to give students' names, addresses and other information to military recruiters — who have been using increasingly high-pressure tactics to get people to enlist.

"It's important to take a stand against military recruiters who are preying on poor people, coming to black neighborhoods," said Brian Lewis, a New School student who is working for the summer with Youth Activist Youth Allies (YaYa), one of more than 15 groups participating in the counter-recruitment campaign. "I'm taking a stand today and saying no."

"Somebody told me, as the oldest in my house that I have to go to war?" Alwyn Hall, 16, of Brooklyn, asked Lewis. "We do need people to fight a war. It's my country, and I want to serve, but . . ."

"If you want to serve your country, there's other ways to do that — the Peace Corps, as a civil servant," Lewis answered. "You don't have to put your life on the line."

Hall, who hasn't yet been targeted by recruiters, left saying that he was going to talk to his parents about the "opt-out" clause. About 3,000 leaflets were distributed during the event.

Lawrence Herisnor, 19, of Manhattan, who also works with YaYa, just graduated from the High School of Environmental Studies in Midtown. Military recruiters were at his school "almost every single day," he said, but "they never approached me. They could see I was gay. They'd come and ask my friends in front of me and never talk to me."

FRUSTRATED RECRUITERS

As the demonstrators marched on the sidewalk, three recruiters stood in silence in the open door of the recruiting office. Sergeant Shivers, who has been a recruiter for two-and-a-half years, called military veterans among the protesters "hypocritical." "They didn't like it when people protested against them," he said. "So why are they now protesting against those who are fighting for their freedom?"

The recruiters would not comment on whether their recruiting rates were up or down. Nationally, the army is facing its worst recruiting crisis since it became an all-volunteer force in 1973. Its year-to-date recruiting numbers are off by 14 percent, and at its current pace it will miss its annual goal of 80,000 recruits by more than 11,000. The Army National Guard and Reserves are experiencing similar shortfalls.

Civil libertarian Norman Siegel, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for public advocate, said that normally he would not keep military recruiters out of schools, but expressed concern that military recruiters were coming to schools and lying to students about what they would get if

they signed up. If that were the case, he said, "I'd say they couldn't be in the schools."

Siegel says military recruiting in schools also presents an opportunity for local antiwar groups to speak to students.

Ike Enwereuzur, an aspiring sports writer who considered enlisting for the first Gulf War in 1991, paused while passing by on his bicycle. He said that he had a couple of friends who joined the military for educational benefits, but "they never got it. [The military] kept delaying it, and they got frustrated. I think it's a scandal."

According to the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, two-thirds of all recruits never receive college funding from the military. Only 15 percent graduate with a four-year degree.

"I NEEDED A JOB"

One member of the crowd insisted that this reporter destroy a photograph of him taking antiwar leaflets. He said he was a military policeman home on leave from serving the Iraqi city of Basra and could not be seen at a demonstration.

He said he enlisted because, "Well, as you might know, 50 percent of black men don't have jobs. I needed a job." Recruiters told him that he "may or may not go to Iraq."

He said the war and the military are nothing like what the media or the military portray. Blacks and Latinos get undesirable assignments, no one from different races really mixes and supervisors are verbally abusive — "like *Full Metal Jacket* and shit."

"Our superiors treat us like shit," he continued. "We treat Iraqis like shit. Shit rolls downhill, you see? The officers, they live in palaces, you know Saddam's old palaces. I live in a tent."

And the Iraqis? "We treat them like they have no rights," the military policeman said. "If there's an explosion, we arrest everyone on the street. We'll arrest the family til a suspect turns himself in. 'I hold them til they get to Abu Ghraib, like Rikers, you know," he explained. "I've never seen [abuse of prisoners]. I've heard about it. I've seen people do sleep deprivation to prisoners. I'm not involved in that."

For more, see counterrecruiter.net



Recruiter Sgt. Ibanez fends off a reporter's questions. Photo: Antrim Caskey

Corporate Fundamentalist

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

For the last 15 years, Democrats have argued that people should vote for them because a Republican president would put disastrous judges on the Supreme Court. With President Bush's nomination of John G. Roberts to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the moment of truth for both the high court and the Democratic Party has arrived.

Roberts, 50, who has been a judge on the federal DC Circuit Court of Appeals since 2003, is an experienced litigator with a long history of right-wing positions on issues from abortion to labor, media ownership to mining. In 2003, the liberal Alliance for Justice said he had a "record of hostility to the rights of women and minorities."

In a televised address July 19, Bush praised Roberts as "one of the finest legal minds in the country" who has "devoted his entire professional life to the cause of justice."

The battle over confirming Roberts could be the biggest since the appointment of Clarence Thomas in 1991 — or it could be a fizzle like the recent filibuster imbroglio in the Senate, in which the Democrats acceded to the nomination of three judges from the depths of the judicial right wing.

At stake are attempts by the far right, despite its denunciations of "judicial activism," to push forward a radical revamping of American jurisprudence. They want to pack the benches with judges who combine a Talibanoid Christian social agenda with a relentless sanctification of property rights. In this philosophy, environmental regulations are deemed unconstitutional "takings" of property rights, but laws against oral sex are not an unconstitutional intrusion on privacy rights. Judge Janice Rogers Brown, confirmed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in the filibuster compromise, has said that rent control is as odious as slavery, and complained that a "socialist revolution" took over the federal courts in 1937. Before that "revolution," the Supreme Court routinely struck down laws protecting workers, including bans on child labor.

TORTURE IS "MODERATE"?

Another crucial area is civil liberties, especially with the Bush administration's invention of "enemy combatants" as a category of detainees who are neither prisoners of war nor common criminals — and thus have no rights. Ironically, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, who helped craft the Justice Department's excuses for why torture was legal, was portrayed as a "moderate" when his name was floated as a possible Court nominee. The Christian right objected that he was insufficiently anti-abortion.

That won't be a problem for John Roberts. As deputy solicitor general under President George Bush Sr., he wrote a brief supporting the "gag rule" banning family-planning groups receiving federal funds from discussing abortion with clients. "We continue to believe that *Roe v. Wade* was wrongly decided and should be overruled," he argued, adding that there is no fundamental right to abortion anywhere in "the

text, structure or history of the Constitution." In another case, Roberts contended that harassing patients at abortion clinics might be discrimination against pregnant people, but it wasn't discrimination against women.

In another Supreme Court case, Roberts argued that the federal law banning flag-burning did not violate the First Amendment.

In private practice from 1993 to 2003, Roberts litigated several prominent corporate-rights cases. In 2002, he represented Toyota in a case where the Supreme Court ruled that a Kentucky assembly-line worker fired after she got carpal-tunnel syndrome was not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. He also represented Fox Television in its successful challenge to federal limits on media ownership, and wrote an amicus brief supporting the West Virginia Coal Association when it got the federal ban on mountaintop-removal mining overturned.

If the Democrats mount any challenge to Roberts' confirmation, they are likely to denounce him as an "extremist" and "out of the mainstream." The Republicans will call the Democrats "far-left obstructionists." The Democrats will probably not stress specific cases or issues, and the corporate media will almost certainly ignore those details to concentrate on the political conflict.

O'CONNOR A GONER

After Justice O'Connor announced her retirement July 1, numerous Democrats urged Bush to appoint a successor as "moderate" and "thoughtful" as she was. Her career, party chair Howard Dean said, "was marked by a commitment to placing the law ahead of partisanship and ideology."

Justice O'Connor may have been moderate compared with Chief Justice William



Rehnquist, Clarence Thomas, or Antonin Scalia, but she was on the wrong side in some of the Court's most screamingly unjust decisions of the last two decades. In 1986's *Bowers v. Hardwick*, she voted to uphold a Georgia law that made it illegal for an adult man to give a blowjob in his own bedroom. (When the Court reversed that decision in 2003, she agreed that the Texas law in question discriminated against gays, but would not hold that all sodomy laws were unconstitutional.) In 1993's *Herrera v. Collins*, she concurred that it wouldn't be unconstitutional to execute a man who claimed to have new evidence proving his innocence, as long as his original trial had been procedurally correct.

In December 2000, she voted to halt Florida's recount of its presidential vote, on the grounds that continuing it would cause "irreparable harm" to George W. Bush. (His lead had shrunk to 154 votes.) Three days later, in *Bush v. Gore*, she voted to prohibit the Florida recount, thus selecting Bush as president. The Court's rationale was that counting ballots that had not been properly recorded by voting machines would violate voters' right to equal protection, because different counties would probably use different methods.

California Medical Marijuana Activist Commits Suicide

San Diego medical-marijuana activist Steve McWilliams, 51, killed himself July 12. McWilliams, who ran the Shelter from the Storm medical-pot collective, was facing a six-month federal prison sentence for growing 25 ganja plants after being arrested in 2002. Friends and fellow activists said that he was depressed over the Supreme Court's June medical-marijuana decision, which effectively nixed his appeal, and in severe pain from nausea, migraine headaches, and old motorcycle-accident injuries. The terms of his bail had barred him from using medical cannabis. "Steve was a courageous fighter for the cause and he will be sorely missed," said Dale Gieringer of California NORML. Medical-marijuana activists held vigils in his memory July 19 in San Diego and other cities.

—STEVEN WISHNIA



Why Has the FBI Placed A Million-Dollar Bounty On Assata Shakur?

BY KATHLEEN CLEAVER

In a highly disputed trial held 28 years ago, an all-white jury convicted former Black Panther Assata Shakur of the murder of a New Jersey state trooper. In 1979, while serving a life sentence, she escaped from prison and eventually resurfaced in Cuba, where she was granted asylum and has lived ever since. But the U.S. government has continued to pursue her, regularly increasing the bounty on her head and classifying her as a "domestic terrorist." Last May the Justice Department issued an unprecedented \$1 million bounty for her return. Shakur, 58, continues to maintain her innocence.

Assata and Sundiata Acoli were arrested May 2, 1973, after a shootout on the New Jersey Turnpike in which State Trooper Werner Foerster and Black Panther Zayd Shakur were killed. Assata was severely wounded, shot while her hands were up. She has always maintained that she did not kill anyone. But in separate trials, Sundiata and Assata were convicted of murdering Foerster.

Several years after she escaped, Cuba gave her political asylum on the grounds that she had been subjected to political persecution and had never received a fair trial.

Many freedom fighters I knew and loved, including Eldridge Cleaver, to whom I was married, were arrested and imprisoned because of our membership in the Black Panther Party. Many turned into fugitives to save their own lives, including my husband, whom I joined in Algeria in May 1969. That was around the same time that Assata, then a bright New York City college student named Joanne Chesimard, joined the Black Panthers.

We had a concrete ten-point program to end racial inequality. We insisted on decent housing, appropriate education, economic justice, an immediate end to police brutality and other rights our people had been fighting for since slavery ended. We were not patient, we were not passive, and we were willing to defend our principles with our lives. We became prime targets for law enforcement and intelligence agencies, particularly after J. Edgar Hoover, then FBI director, labeled us the "greatest threat to the internal security" of the United States in 1968.

We were young and passionately determined to secure the freedom of our people in our lifetime. Assata saw our leaders imprisoned and killed. Both Black Panther Party founders Huey Newton and Bobby Seale faced the death penalty, and Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, leaders of the Illinois chapter, were murdered in 1969 in a pre-dawn raid while they slept. Assata reported that she was beaten, tortured and denied medical attention after her arrest, then continually threatened by police and prison guards. There was no question that she felt her life was in danger.

Under international law and Cuban law, Shakur is entitled to the protection and freedom of asylum. There are no legal grounds for her return to the United States because no treaty of extradition exists between the United States and Cuba, which has been subjected to a U.S. blockade and trade embargo for more than 40 years.

Despite this, the U.S. government and the state of New Jersey have repeatedly called for her capture. The meaning of this new million-dollar bounty is to encourage and finance what amounts to a kidnapping.

The government has elevated this barbaric conduct to the diplomatic level as a way to reimprison one Black woman who dared fight for our freedom. We cannot allow them to engage in lynch-mob diplomacy.

Kathleen Cleaver is a law professor and former communications secretary for the Black Panther Party. For more information about Assata Shakur, please visit handsoffassata.com, or call the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement at (718) 254-8800.



ED WILEY stands outside the West Virginia state capitol. PHOTO: Antrim Caskey

Coaltown Crusade

BY ANTRIM CASKEY

CHARLESTON, West Virginia—Tired of being ignored by a rapacious coal company and indifferent politicians, Ed Wiley of Rock Creek, West Virginia began a hunger strike on July 5. It was barely past lunchtime when he got what he wanted: a face-to-face meeting in the state capitol with Gov. Joe Manchin.

"I do believe we've opened up quite a can of worms," says Wiley, who came to press his demand that the students of Marsh Fork Elementary be moved to safety from its current site, which Massey Energy has made toxic.

"You will see some changes in West Virginia, and I believe you'll see some people shifted around," adds Wiley, 47, whose 10-year-old granddaughter attends Marsh Fork Elementary, which lies directly beneath an earthen dam holding 2.8 billion gallons of coal sludge. Wiley refused to leave until Manchin spoke on the steps of the capitol. The governor promised television cameras that he would make sure the Marsh Fork students were safe. His impromptu press conference with Wiley came four days after the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approved a permit for Massey Energy to expand its coal operations in Sundial.

TAKING AIM AT KING COAL

Wiley's hunger strike was the latest challenge to the state's political establishment, which traditionally has had a cozy relationship with the coal industry. 16 people were arrested on May 31 at a protest outside of Massey Energy's coal preparation plant in Sundial, West Virginia. Four more people were arrested at a June 30 protest at Massey headquarters in Richmond, Virginia.

Perhaps no one's attitude toward the coal industry has changed more than Wiley's. Six years ago he was helping Massey build roads, slurry lines and sludge ponds—the infrastructure of the devastating practice of mountaintop removal.

"I was blinded by the \$13.50 an hour I never had," he says. "I was blinded by the medical card I never had. I didn't realize that I was setting up something that could one day kill my granddaughter. They're putting a

price on their own children's head. Anybody who tells me these [dams] are not supposed to leak—that's bullcrap. That is a lie."

In Sundial, locals like Wiley and out-of-town activists are demanding not only that the children be moved to a safe school but that Massey shut down its preparation plant, coal silo, 1,849-acre mountaintop removal site as well as the 2.8 billion-gallon coal sludge dam.

"Massey wants it all. They are a cruel people. They don't care what they do to you," says Jackie Browning, of nearby Horse Creek. "They make this place so ugly."

"THE GOVERNOR IS DRAGGING HIS FEET"

Two days after his meeting with the governor, Wiley and his supporters met with the heads of all the relevant state regulatory agencies to discuss the Massey plant's harmful impact on the health of the community.

The newly attentive group of government officials also toured a proposed new site for Marsh Fork Elementary students. Wiley and his supporters gave Manchin five days to respond to their demands before returning to their campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience. Wiley's initial hopefulness waned. "I'm about tired of waiting on them. The governor is dragging his feet," Wiley told *The Independent* on July 15, after not hearing from Manchin's office for a week.

Hours later, the governor's office announced that the permit for Massey to construct a second silo at the site had been revoked. Manchin's made his decision following a meeting with activists including Jack Spadaro, a whistle-blowing mining engineer. Spadaro dug up information to prove that both the existing and the proposed silos were illegally close to the school—within the 300-foot buffer zone guarding schools from mining operations. Massey had begun construction on the foundation for the silo in April, three months before the DEP granted a permit.

"The governor is an ex-coal operator," Spadaro said. "He's not an environmentalist. Because it involved children, he had to get involved."

For more, see mountainjusticesummer.org and sludgesafety.org

dream on

Everyone Loves the Rich

BY DON MONKERUD

Michael is the type of person one would expect to vote in his self-interest. Now in his early sixties, he lives in a modest house with his wife and two daughters and works a minimum-wage job at a manufacturing plant, which he took in a 1990s recession after years of self-employment. Despite appearances, however, he identifies with the rich.

"You may think I've given up, but I haven't," Michael says. "I am going to be rich someday." Without concrete plans to propel him to riches, Michael nonetheless shares a dream held by many Americans. The "get rich someday" dream is cited by many as the reason Americans lend their political support to the wealthy, voting against their own economic self-interest.

GETTING RICHER FASTER

The nation's top 0.1 percent, some 145,000 taxpayers with an average income of \$3 million a year, is amassing wealth at an unprecedented rate according to a recent study by the *New York Times*. Since 1980, they more than doubled their share of national income to 7.4 percent—the highest level since the 1920s.

FEW FULFILL THEIR DREAM

The number of those with \$1 to \$5 million in net worth increased by 123 percent from 1983 to 2001, while those with between \$5 and \$10 million increased 304 percent. The super rich, with over \$10 million, increased by 409 percent to 338,400. With his hourly wage paying his bills, Michael can only dream of reaching these sums.

While some get rich in the technology industry where Michael works, with the

top ten Silicon Valley CEOs alone taking home \$578 million combined in 2004, they cannot compete with the nation's truly rich.

HALF THE WORLD'S BILLIONAIRES

Nationwide, billionaires are richer and more numerous for the second year in a row, according to *Forbes* magazine's 2005 survey. The *Forbes* 400 list of the richest Americans starts at \$750 million, of which 78 percent were billionaires in 2004. In the past year, 69 more became billionaires, giving this country almost half of the world's billionaires. In 2004, the combined net worth of the nation's wealthiest was \$1 trillion, an increase of \$45 billion in one year.

Workers fared differently, however. Wages for most Americans didn't improve from 1979 to 1998 and the median male wage in 2000 was below the 1979 level, notwithstanding productivity increases of 44.5 percent. Despite the 1990s' income gains, the *Financial Times* reported in May that wages are falling faster than at any time in the last 14 years. Meanwhile hidden unemployment soars in this "jobless recovery."

BORROWING INTO WEALTH

Borrowing is what leads to identification with the rich, say economists Fabrizio Perri of New York University and Dirk Krueger of Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany. They trace the credit surge to the widening income gap between rich and poor from 1970 to 2000. Simply put, people feel richer because they consume more. From 1990 to 2003, median income only rose 6.5 percent, yet spending jumped 30 percent and debt increased 80 percent.

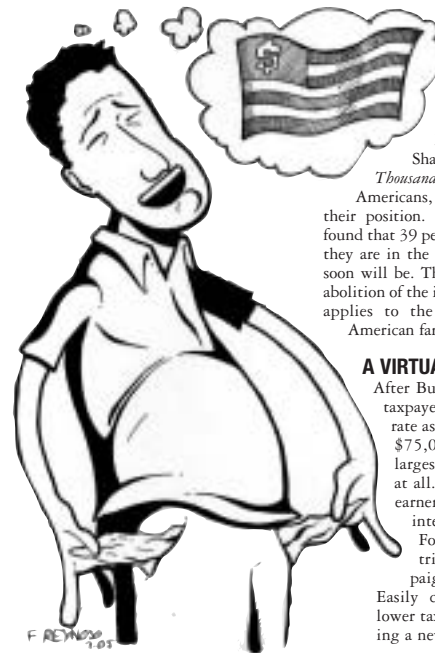
Despite longer hours and lower pay, Americans mimic the wealthy by going ever deeper in debt to consume more. Since 2001, they cashed out \$480 billion in home equity, 2.5 times more than they cashed out from 1993 to 2000.

FANTASY WORLD

Michael J. Graetz and Ian Shapiro, authors of *Death by a Thousand Cuts*, point out that most Americans, like Michael, misperceive their position. A 2000 Time/CNN poll found that 39 percent of Americans believe they are in the wealthiest one percent, or soon will be. They even supported Bush's abolition of the inheritance tax, which only applies to the richest two percent of American families.

A VIRTUAL ARISTOCRACY

After Bush's tax cuts, the 400 top taxpayers now pay at the same rate as those making \$50,000 to \$75,000 and many of the largest corporations pay no tax at all. Unlike the average wage earner, these people know their interests: 72 percent of the *Forbes* richest 400 who contributed to the 2004 campaign gave money to Bush. Easily convincing Americans to lower taxes further, they are creating a new aristocracy.



Bush & Blair's War on the World

By A.K. GUPTA

The London bombings were a fitting exclamation point to the grotesque self-indulgence on display at the G-8 summit. George Bush, Tony Blair and company spent the meeting repackaging the tired, old international aid shell game as salvation for Africa: recycling previous aid (which often arrives in the form of subsidies to Western corporations) and shaving off a mere \$55 billion in non-performing loans when the continent is saddled with more than \$300 billion in debt.

Many Africans wonder why they must pay back these debts, most of which were accrued by Western-backed despots who burned billions on palaces, jets and massive arsenals purchased from their "freedom-loving" patrons to torment their people. Other observers were impudent enough to note that the West is notorious for lavishing such promises before the cameras while flinty about actually paying up.

But there was no chance for debate. Court jesters Bob Geldof and Bono capered upon the world stage declaring their missionary work a huge success. Then the bombings provided Bush with a bloody pedestal to clamber upon and yammer about spreading "an ideology of hope and compassion that will overwhelm their ideology of hate."

For his part, Tony Blair preached from the gospel according to Bush: the attack was a product of an "evil ideology," it had nothing to do with the Iraq war, but was an attack upon our way of life. Blair also struck fast at civil liberties, proposing new laws to log details of all emails, text messages and cell phone calls, make admissible evidence gained from phone-tapping and bugging, increase

detention powers, imprison those "attacking the values of the West," and further limit the rights of immigrants.

Bush and Blair are the prime beneficiaries of the bombing. They want a security-surveillance matrix to suppress dissent, not terrorism: animal rights and environmental campaigners, anti-war activists, unionists, civil libertarians, anarchists and anyone who opposes the state. Internationally, they use it to stage coups against popular leaders like Haiti's Jean-Bertrand Aristide or Venezuela's Hugo Chavez. Meanwhile, Blair wants everyone to forget that his government abandoned British-born Muslims swept up in the new torture-first-ask-questions-later order. Some have been freed from the globalized gulag, their innocence "confirmed" only after being tortured for months or even years.

Bush and Blair have turned Iraq into a charnel house, where suicidal slaughter is inflicted on Iraqis every day. Tying the Iraq conflict to the "war on terror" has made it a self-fulfilling prophecy. A CIA report concludes Iraq is becoming an "even more effective training ground for Islamic extremists than Afghanistan." Insurgents in Afghanistan, Chechnya and elsewhere are benefiting from tactics developed in Iraq and are drawing from a new generation of militants created by the war on Islam. But mention any of this, and the "war on terror" propagandists screech "naïve" and "dangerous" and "traitorous."

The media plays along, focusing on the forensics — the who and how — but never the philosophy — why. "It is our freedoms they hate." But even Osama countered in his pre-U.S. election video last fall that if his followers really hated Western freedoms, "Why do we not strike Sweden?"



Protests Greet G8 Ministers in Scotland

For three straight days, high-energy demonstrations filled Scotland's streets. On the morning of Wednesday, July 6 groups blockaded roads surrounding Edinburgh, preventing delegates and other important personnel from reaching the summit. The "hori-zone" campsite was an important activist base. Many woke up to the rumors of an attack in London. They huddled around portable radios gleaning information from BBC, while Londoners phoned family and friends to check if everyone was safe. After the bombings many protesters in Scotland edited their signs to include slogans against the attacks in London. People came out against the bombings while at the same time continuing to voice their opposition to war and the policies of the G8.

—Pictures and coverage by Matthew Cassel

"They" hate "us" because of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, because of the torment of Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Kashmir, the hand that props up butchers in Uzbekistan and Pakistan. They hate us for our hand-holding with oil-rich despots in the Gulf. They hate us for our policies, which is why the war must be defined as a theological battle between good and evil — because policies can be changed.

Such as Western policies toward Pakistan, one of the war's covert battlefields. Reports are that three of the London bombers were of Pakistani descent. Bush and Blair heartily support Pakistan's tyrant, Pervez Musharraf, who has unleashed a war along the border

region with Afghanistan, allows his people to starve, lets the FBI run rampant and levies no protest when hundreds of his citizens are disappeared into the Anglo-American torture network. For his fealty, Musharraf has been given billions in aid and loans, much of which is reportedly lining his pockets.

But that's the way of the West. It rewards thugs who terrorize the poor and who — like Saddam, Mobutu, Suharto — can be sacrificed in a show of Western commitment to "democracy" when they've outlived their usefulness.

In searching for the true masterminds of the London attacks, one not need look any further than 10 Downing St. and 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

response

London Bombings: The Price of Empire

By Tariq Ali

During the last phase of the Troubles, the IRA targeted mainland Britain: it came close to blowing up Margaret Thatcher and her cabinet in Brighton. Some years later a missile was fired at No 10. London's financial quarter was also targeted. There was no secret as to the identity of the organization that carried out the hits or its demands. And all this happened despite the various Prevention of Terrorism Acts passed by the Commons.

The bombers who targeted London were anonymous. It is assumed that those who carried out these attacks are linked to al-Qaida. We simply do not know. Al-Qaida is not the only terrorist group in existence. It has rivals within the Muslim diaspora. But it is safe to assume that the cause of these bombs is the unstinting support given by "New Labour" and its prime minister to the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

One of the arguments deployed by Ken Livingstone, the mayor of London, when he appealed to Tony Blair not to support the war in Iraq was prescient: "An assault on Iraq will inflame world opinion and jeopardize security and peace everywhere. London, as one of the major world cities, has a great deal to lose from war and a lot to gain from peace, international cooperation and global stability."

Most Londoners (as the rest of the country) were opposed to the Iraq war. Tragically, they have suffered the blow and paid the price for the re-election of Blair and a continuation of the war.

Ever since 9/11, I have been arguing that the "war against terror" is immoral and counterproductive. It sanctions the use of state terror



EDINBURGH MEMORIAL: Protests against the G8 turned to mourning as news of the London bombings spread.

— bombing raids, torture, countless civilian deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq — against Islamo-anarchists whose numbers are small, but whose reach is deadly. The solution then, as now, is political, not military. The British ruling elite understood this perfectly well in the case of Ireland. Security measures, anti-terror laws rushed through parliament, identity cards, a curtailment of civil liberties, will not solve the problem. If anything, they will push young Muslims in the direction of mindless violence.

The real solution lies in immediately ending the occupation of Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. Just because these three wars are reported sporadically and mean little to the everyday lives of most Europeans does not mean the anger and bitterness they arouse in the Muslim world and its diaspora is insignificant. As long as western politicians wage their wars and their colleagues in the Muslim world watch in silence, young people will be attracted to the groups who carry out random acts of revenge.

At the beginning of the G8, Blair suggested that "poverty was the cause of terrorism." It is not so. The principal cause of this violence is the violence being inflicted on the people of the Muslim world. And unless this is recognized, the horrors will continue.

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Life Under the Empire

BY TRISH SCHUH

KARBALA, Iraq, June 4 — It should have been little more than an hour's drive south from Baghdad. But it took an hour just to exit the checkpoints.

Along the road, a smashed car remained after colliding with a military vehicle. Iraqis complain that tanks sometimes drive over the tops of cars, crushing passengers.

From the chaos and dust, a train sped by and sent vehicles squealing; then, relief that it wasn't a car bomb.

The trip took nearly five hours. Camp Lima Forward Operating Base just east of Karbala is home to the 15th Armored Brigade of the Mississippi National Guard.

The Civil Affairs Battalion Team, headed by Chaplain Terry Partin, Maj. Jack Helmers and Maj. Kenneth Booth, voiced support for United States democracy, human rights and "winning hearts and minds." The soldiers offered an example. After a night house raid, troops would return to the neighborhood in the morning and disassemble the tanks.

Maj. Booth explained U.S. reconstruction plans and the unit's motto: S.W.E.A.T. (sewage, water, electricity, academic and trash priorities).

He said that the chief objective was securing rebuilding funds. Despite this limitation, the military had begun five water and electrical projects, as well as schools and a nursing home. Maj. Booth felt that

it was now "up to the Iraqis," and that those who demanded more assistance were being unreasonable. "They think every problem is a U.S. problem," he said.

In the country for nine months, Maj. Helmers was asked why he thought the U.S. had invaded Iraq. "There are many reasons," he said, "but mostly Saddam himself was a weapon of mass destruction. He killed Kurds and Shiites. He was working on other WMDs. We may still find them."

He added that part of the 155th's mission was "explosive ordnance disposal."

Experts contend that one WMD-depleted uranium — is easy to find. But American authorities have refused to clean it up or acknowledge its harmful effects. Conventional weapons also pose a danger. Live munitions found along streets, unmarked due to a shortage of yellow plastic "caution" tape.

During a visit to the Karbala office of Iraqi Human Rights Watch, employee Hussein Al Abrachy placed a cluster bomb on his desk. He claimed that citizens had unsuccessfully requested many times that the U.S. military retrieve these WMDs. However, cluster bombs were still being dropped throughout the city.

Children thought the yellow devices were toys. So on April 5, a committee headed by Ali Hamza of the Muslim Peacemakers Team decided to dispose of the ordnance themselves. Attempting to clear a school yard of explosives, Hamza was killed.

The Army promised compensation, but the family has received nothing. Responding to U.S. inaction, the Community of Victims' Kin was founded, demanding that five percent of Iraq's oil revenue be allotted to war victims' families.

Maj. Booth's statements about democracy and human rights have similarly been challenged. Ali Nassir of the Iraqi Council for Solidarity and Peace commented that the U.S. Army "didn't bring democracy."

It may not have brought equality either. On the way out of Camp Lima Base there were two latrines. One was marked, "RAQIS ONLY" — OTHERS: "NO" — AMERICANS: "NO."

BUSH'S EXIT PLAN: CIVIL WAR

BY A.K. GUPTA

"It's state-sponsored civil war," says journalist Dahr Jamal, describing the sectarian conflict engulfing Iraq. From the beginning of the occupation, most observers agreed that while civil war was a distinct possibility between Kurds and Sunni Arabs, a Sunni-Shiite conflict was highly unlikely because of factors such as nationalism, high rates of intermarriage and the moderating influence of Shiite Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani.

Jamail says that while average Iraqis are strongly opposed to intermarriage warfare, the use of ethnic-based military against the Sunni Arab insurgency has ignited a dirty war that threatens to become another Lebanon or Balkans conflict.

With the war at a stalemate, repeated deployments, wearing down troop morale and too few new recruits to maintain force levels, the Bush administration may be provoking civil war as its "exit strategy."

The goal would be to break up Iraq into mini-states to allow a reduction in U.S. troops while retaining access to massive oil deposits in the North and South.

"Every single thing the U.S. did led to civil war," says Christian Parenti, author of *The Freedom*, his account of occupied Iraq. "The failure of reconstruction, the firing of the army, the blatant theft of Iraqi oil money, the use of the Badr Brigade, the use of Peshmerga, the use of death squads, the use of indiscriminate detention and torture, and the destruction of Falluja and other towns in Al Anbar province," explains Parenti, created a raging insurgency and sparked civil war.

THE SECTARIAN SPLIT

The communal divide was widened by the U.S.-managed election process. Political parties were required to form "slates" for last January's election. However, with violence rampant, few candidates campaigned in public so Iraq voters cast ballots based on ethnic allegiance. At the same time, U.S. forces were trying to crush resistance in Sunni Arab regions, ensuring their alienation from the new government. Following the election, government posts were divided according to ethnic groups, similar to

Lebanon's system of government.

Parenti says that "because the major Shiite parties did run in the election, some insurgents view them as collaborators. There was a heavy Islamization of the Baathists and army after the first Gulf War. A list of the Sunni Baathists in the resistance think the Shiites are animals. They think they're Iranian scum." This has led to a wave of sectarian violence against Shiites, he adds.

Once the victorious Shiite parties cobble a government together in April, they placed the Interior Ministry under the control of the Badr Brigades, the military arm of the powerful Shiite-based Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. As for the army, a report in *The Guardian* states bluntly, "Both Iraqi and American officers say that the Ministry of Defense in Baghdad has fallen under the control of Kurdish political parties."

The result has been a wave of death-squad killings. Since April, "nearly 1,000 people — most of them Sunni Muslims" have been killed in the southern city of Basra alone, according to the Christian Science Monitor. In May, at least 10 Sunni and Shiite clerics were assassinated.

Writing in *The Independent*, Patrick Cockburn reports, "Many Sunni military officers and Baathist officials believe they are on a death list of the Badr Brigade which is operating through [the police] commands... an aggressive paramilitary force controlled by the Interior Ministry." *The Times* of London noted on July 18: "hardline Shia militias... are patrolling large parts of Baghdad, often rounding up suspected Sunni insurgents and imprisoning or even killing them." The U.S. took the sectarian strategy a step

further in May with "Operation Lightning," using 40,000 mainly Shiite troops to sweep through Baghdad and round up hundreds of Sunni males.

In the North, the Kurds have turned the tables on Sunni Arabs, who benefited from Saddam Hussein's repression of the Kurds. The effect can be seen in the largely Sunni Arab city of Mosul, with more than 1.7 million Arabs.

According to Salom.com, Kurdish forces refer to Sunni Arabs "as murderous 'dogs,' two-faced liars, animals and other epithets that indicate... hatred of a group clearly regarded as an enemy." The same report estimates that more than 40,000 Peshmerga have been transferred wholesale into the "national" security services.

The Kurds are even running their own network of secret prisons, according to *The Washington Post*. With the knowledge and cooperation of U.S. forces, the Kurds have seized hundreds of Arabs and Turkmen in the city of Kirkuk, and possibly Mosul, and illegally transferred them to prisons further north.

OIL OR NOTHING

A similar situation prevails in southern Iraq, which has become a de facto religious state: alcohol is banned, rigid dress codes are being enforced, prostitutes are being murdered and local governments and security forces are under the sway of competing Shiite parties and movements.

Just like the North, the South has massive oil reserves, which is fueling a separatist movement. "We want to destroy the central system that connects the entire country to the capital... one Shiite autonomy campaigner told *The New York Times*.

Breaking up Iraq may be part of the plan to cut U.S. forces. A report leaked to media in early July stated that the Pentagon plans to draw down troops from 138,000 to 66,000 by early 2006. Analyst and historian Juan Cole writes, "The withdrawal plan implies a willingness to run the five northern provinces over to the Kurdish Peshmerga paramilitary, and the nine southern provinces over to a combination of Shiite militias and new Iraqi government security forces." It's highly questionable if Iraqi forces



are up to the task. Truly Rubin traveled to Iraq to determine if Iraqi forces could take the slack. She wrote in the *Baltimore Sun*: "Today, there are more than 100 military and police commando battalions, totaling 160,000 Iraqis. But of the 80 military battalions, only three — at most — are fully capable of planning and carrying out counterinsurgency operations on their own."

"WE'VE READ MAO"

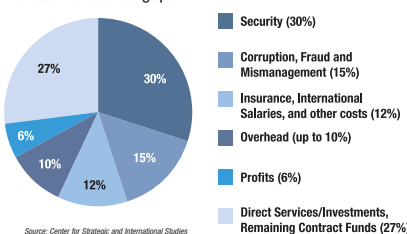
The ineptness of the Iraqi security forces is partly due to the success of the insurgency. Christian Parenti says insurgents he spoke to said, "We've read Mao," meaning they know how to conduct a sophisticated guerrilla war and isolate their enemy, the United States.

The resistance has forced out the United Nations, more than a dozen countries in the "coalition of the willing" and almost all international aid agencies. They have assassinated more than 50 high-ranking government officials since power was "handed over" on June 28, 2004. In the last few months, they have killed scores of mid-level officers in the security services, indicating they have thoroughly infiltrated the forces and are debilitating the operational leadership. Most recently, they attacked at least four foreign envoys within one week.

But they need a political wing to consolidate gains on the battlefield. Pepe Escobar of *Asia Times* argues that a national liberation front is emerging that includes the Association of Muslim Scholars and Shiites grouped around populist preacher Moqtada Al-Sadr.

PHOTOS BY ANDREW STERN and *moqtadern.net*

Estimated Breakdown of Funding Flows for Iraq's Reconstruction: How are the funds being spent?



Source: Center for Strategic and International Studies

Estimated Iraqi death toll: 25,000 129,000

Average number of insurgency related death per month in Iraq: 800

American deaths since war began (3/19/03): 1,770

Since "Mission Accomplished" (5/1/03): 1,633

Official count of American Wounded: 13,438

Estimated count of American Wounded 15,000 — 38,000

The number of children suffering from malnutrition has doubled since the March 2003 invasion.

Percentage of Iraqi children under five who suffer from chronic diarrhea and protein deficiency: 8

Percentage of child deaths in Iraq cause by diarrhea from unsafe water: 70

Sources in order: CEDADIA, RANDOLPH BOURNE Institute, UNICEF, Anthony Cordemans, CSIS, Defense Contract Audit Agency, *Washington Post* as of 7/20/05.

Putting the Occupation on Trial

BY AMY WOLF

The World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) conducted its culminating session in Istanbul from June 23-25. The tribunal has held sessions around the world for the past two years, aimed at challenging the silence around the aggression against Iraq and seeking the truth about the war and occupation in Iraq. Policy experts, Iraqi civilians and leaders in the peace and human rights movements gathered to investigate the role of the media, to give testimony to the abhorrent conditions and human rights abuses that take place every day to their clear recommendations to restore justice and to plan the next course of action.

This tribunal is modeled after the Russell Tribunal of the late 1960s and was solidified in October 2005 of anti-war convergence in Berlin, Jakarta and Istanbul. After listening to testimony from 54 advocates over 16 meetings of the tribunal, the Jury of Conscience, chaired by peace activist Arundhati Roy, defined this war as one of the most unjust in history.

Roy stated in the jury's findings, "The Bush and Blair administrations blatantly ignored the massive opposition to the war... embarked upon one of the most unjust, immoral, and cowardly wars in history. The Anglo-American occupation of Iraq of the last 27 months has led to the destruction and devastation of the Iraqi state and society. Law and order have broken down completely, resulting in a pervasive lack of human security; the physical infrastructure is in shambles; the health care delivery system is a mess; the education system has ceased to function; there is massive environmental and ecological devastation; and, the cultural and archeological heritage of the Iraqi people has been devastated."

Panelists included Dahr Jamail, an independent journalist who reported on human rights abuses and the sorry state of the reconstruction that otherwise would have been spent to provide clean water, electricity and sanitation for Iraqis.

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Ghraib, who stated, "The Americans brought electricity to my ass before they brought it to my house."

Thomas M. Fasy testified to the devastating effects of depleted uranium (DU) used by the U.S. in Iraq. Although the rates of cancers, leukemia and birth defects in Iraq rose sharply after the 1991 and 2003 bombings, the U.S. does not officially acknowledge these side effects, and so does nothing to clean up DU contamination.

Erroma Khanammar, an Iraqi human rights activist based in Baghdad, works to let the world outside Iraq comprehend the realities of occupation. She testifies, "The American

"The Americans brought electricity to my ass before they brought it to my house."

—A former

Abu Ghraib detainee

forces occupy the buildings, mostly private houses, where they imprison the whole family. They put them in one of the rooms, using the rest of the house as their quarters, as a temporary military station. Then they go around the neighborhood firing at people. I can understand why a soldier would shoot at a young person; he may feel threatened. But why would anyone point a gun at a 65-year-old woman? There are such examples, which are difficult to explain to you, such as American troops shooting a three-year-old baby in the head. Women sitting in their houses are fired at."

The World Tribunal on Iraq has posted the majority of transcripts and testimonies from this seminal event on its Web site, www.worldtribunal.org. In addition, Deep Dish TV recorded the testimonies and panel discussions, and will provide those to the public soon.



Amount Halliburton overcharged for fuel transportation in Iraq: \$212.3 million

Amount of money per year weapons manufacturer Lockheed Martin gets from the individual tax payer: \$105

...and from each U.S. household: \$228

Rate of taxation on the average American: 21-33%

Rate of taxation on Lockheed Martin: 7.7%

(Source: CorpWatch / Anne Trade Centering, 2/05)

World briefs

TURKISH MILITARY MASSACRES COMMUNISTS

On July 16 the Turkish military attacked a caravan of activists from the Maoist Communist Party of Turkey and North Kurdistan with helicopter gunships and 1,000 troops, killing 17 leading members including General Secretary Cafer Cangöz. The attack was reportedly unprovoked. Funeral marches numbering several thousand were held in Istanbul and among Turkish and Kurdish exiles in Germany. Turkey is a key ally in Bush's "war on terror."

MTV DESTROYS SEA TURTLE NESTS

MTV's shooting of its reality TV show *The Gauntlet* on Turtle Beach in Tobago caused massive damage to a nesting beach for critically endangered leatherback sea turtles, according to the Sea Turtle Restoration Project. Despite requests from a local conservation group to relocate, the shoot disrupted the nesting ground with heavy equipment, the presence of about 90 film crew members and the removal of sand, blocking turtles from nesting. The shoot destroyed an estimated eight nests containing approximately 400 eggs. Turtle Beach is Tobago's most famous and highest density site for the leatherback turtle as well as hawksbill and green turtles. In response to SOS Tobago's requests to relocate the event to another beach, MTV offered only to have their crew don SOS t-shirts.

ECUADORIAN ENVIRONMENTALIST FOUND DEAD

On June 20, Ecuadorian environmentalist and community leader Andres Arroyo Segura was found dead in the Baba River in eastern Ecuador. Arroyo Segura had been active in a campaign to stop the construction of a large dam on the Baba River. The Ecuadorian Ecueménica Commission on Human Rights reports that Arroyo Segura's body showed signs of foul play.

Baburam Bhattarai has been re-appointed to the top body of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) after several months of suspension. Bhattarai conducted the last round of negotiations with Nepal's King Gyanendra, and is widely reputed to be the rebels' second-in-command. Capitalizing on the monarchy's isolation, the communist insurgents have urged the country's sidelined parliamentary parties to unite against the feudal autocracy and support a nation wide constituent assembly to decide Nepal's fate.

"Either capitalism, which is the road to hell, or socialism, for those who want to build the kingdom of God here on Earth," said Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez as he announced expedited plans to confiscate idle lands from hundreds of private companies. The confiscations will also cover closed factories that would be reopened as workers' cooperatives.

Insisting that Britain does not have "long-term imperialist ambitions" in Iraq, U.K. Defense Secretary John Reid said British military forces will begin to scale back within the next year, though troops would not leave until Iraqi proxy forces "can gradually take control of their own security and counter-terrorism." The current war is Britain's third military invasion of Iraq in the last century.

Nawal Saadawi, renowned Egyptian novelist and feminist, withdrew from September's presidential elections citing a recent constitutional amendment that restricts viable opposition candidates. Challengers to five-term president Hosni Mubarak are required to receive advance endorsements from 65 of the 444 members of Egypt's lower chamber of parliament, 90 percent of whom are from the ruling party. Mubarak has been in power, bolstered by a continuous "state of emergency," since 1981.

African AIDS Groups Plagued by Fickle Western Donors

"Whenever there is money, I don't even relax because I know it might go," says Dr. Asha Mruma. One look around her crowded office, four floors above Arusha's smoggy, congested Sokoine Road, demonstrates the hectic pace here. Desks are piled up with files, and a colorful bulletin board of photos displays the broad range of activities undertaken by Mruma's organization. Across the hall, laughter spills out from a second, equally congested office in which a group of teenagers practice a skit about HIV prevention.

BY NEELA GOSHAL AND JEREMY KAMPS

ARUSHA, Tanzania — Mruma is managing director of Chawakua, one of Tanzania's oldest grassroots HIV/AIDS organizations. Despite their numerous accomplishments, the dedicated staff has been working without salaries for the past three months. "We have even been three years without a donor," Mruma laments.

Until three months ago, the 13-year-old organization had been funded by African Youth Alliance, which in turn received funding from the Gates Foundation. The program's limited five-year contract allowed Chawakua to continue their activities of peer outreach, education and prevention, such as a hip-hop and dance competition combined with sexual health workshops and forums.

"While we look for another donor, we can lose our staff. They will go to look for salaries to help their families and then, we will get funding again and we start all over to train them. We really lose time that way," says Mruma. Losing a donor just when the organization was beginning to flourish is nothing new for Chawakua, a scenario that has been repeating itself since its inception in 1992.

Donors come and go, often changing their funding policies in capricious manners. One funder chose to work in another region of Tanzania. "They told us they would find

another donor for us, so we waited for six months. Then, they were told to leave the country and we were left with six months debt for the office rent. The landlord came and took our things," Mruma explains.

FUNDING YOUTH-EDUCATION INSTEAD OF TREATMENT

Chawakua initially focused on community-based treatment of HIV/AIDS. But donor money had not funded the continuation of such work, and was instead earmarked for youth education. Staff agreed to take 10 percent of their salaries and give it to support those infected or affected, by funding such services as antibiotics, vitamins, food and clothing. "We cannot turn these people away or the community will lose trust in us," says Mruma.

Down the street from Chawakua the staff members of the nascent UVIWA (Partnership for the Youth and Women of Arumeru) are living proof of Chawakua's effectiveness. UVIWA grew out of Chawakua to bring peer education to the outlying villages around Arusha. It was not long ago that Simon Gervas was on the receiving end of their services. When the 26-year-old found he was HIV negative he decided to use the experience not only to change his own life, but to also educate others, beginning with his friends in a soccer league.

Like Chawakua, UVIWA is also operating

without a donor, subsisting on the funding of a sole individual. UVIWA reaches approximately 2,500 youth per year with a staff of five and an office too small to seat them all at once.

"We keep going because we really live as part of the issues. [Larger NGOs] can write very good proposals and get benefits for their organization, but then they lose focus of the real thing they are there to do" says Gervas, who now works as an HIV/AIDS educator in rural parts of the country.

Still, the volunteers and employees of such grassroots organizations insist there is a better way to connect the donor community with the fledgling community NGOs.

"Donors give instructions and say, 'You should do this.' But I think the best thing is to sit together and discuss so that the donor can get other ideas and start to really know the issues. It is even better for their money if decisions are made cooperatively," says Asha Hassan, another peer educator at UVIWA.

CABBAGES AND CONDOMS

In a climate of constant financial instability, organizations are looking for more sustainable sources of funding. "NGOs need to develop greater self-sufficiency, to look into diversifying funding sources. This way, they're not forced to give up their own strategies, goals and objectives," says a staffer at a U.S.-based AIDS organization. She cites the example of Thailand's "Cabbages and Condoms," a popular resort and restaurant.

Senator Mechai Viravaidya, 1997 recipient of the United Nations Population Award, established the restaurant to fund AIDS education projects undertaken by the Population and Community Development Association. However, she recognizes that not every small NGO has the capital or business know-how to start a profitable enterprise. "The problem is, these are activists and health workers, not business people," says Viravaidya.

Chawakua and UVIWA find ways to continue their work because it is needed. That may mean working without salary or cutting programming, but they persevere, writing proposals in hopes that donor money works its way through the chains of bureaucracy to their day-to-day work on the ground, though that can also create a new set of struggles. How long will the donor stay? What activities and visions will be sacrificed for financial support?

"We don't have money, so when a donor says, I will give you money but you have to do this, this and this, what can we do? We will agree," says Gervas.



YOUTH COMPLETE questionnaires evaluating the depth of their knowledge on STDs, AIDS and drug addiction at Arusha National Park in Tanzania. Photo: Neela Goshal

HAITI

Aristide's Sin Was Opposing Privatization

BY NAOMI KLEIN

When U.N. troops kill residents of the Haitian slum Cité Soleil, friends and family often place photographs of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on their bodies. The photographs silently insist that there is a method to the madness raging in Port-au-Prince. Poor Haitians are being slaughtered not for being "violent," as we so often hear, but for being militant; for daring to demand the return of their elected president.

It was only 10 years ago that President Clinton celebrated Aristide's return to power as "the triumph of freedom over fear." So what changed? Corruption? Violence? Fraud? Aristide is certainly no saint. But even if the worst of the allegations are true, they pale next to the rap sheets of the convicted killers, drug smugglers and arms traders who ousted Aristide and continue to enjoy free rein, with full support from the Bush Administration and the United Nations. Turning Haiti over to this underworld gang out of concern for Aristide's lack of "good governance" is like escaping an annoying date by accepting a lift home from Charles Manson.

A few weeks ago I visited Aristide in Pretoria, South Africa, where he lives in forced exile. I asked him what was really behind his dramatic falling-out with Washington. He offered an explanation rarely heard in discussions of Haitian politics — actually, he offered three: "privatization, privatization and privatization." The dispute dates back to a series of meetings in early 1994, a pivotal moment in Haiti's history that Aristide has rarely discussed. Haitians were living under the barbaric rule of Raoul Cédras, who overthrew Aristide in a 1991 US-backed coup. Aristide was in Washington and despite popular calls for his

return, there was no way he could face down the junta without military backup. Increasingly embarrassed by Cédras's abuses, the Clinton Administration offered Aristide a deal: U.S. troops would take him back to Haiti — but only after he agreed to a sweeping economic program with the stated goal to "substantially transform the nature of the Haitian state."

Aristide agreed to pay the debts accumulated under the kleptocratic Duvalier dictatorships, slash the civil service, open up Haiti to "free trade" and cut import tariffs on rice and corn in half. It was a lousy deal but, Aristide says, he had little choice. "I was out of my country and my country was the poorest in the Western hemisphere, so what kind of power did I have at that time?"

U.S. TO ARISTIDE: 2+2=5

But Washington's negotiators made one demand that Aristide could not accept: the immediate sell-off of Haiti's state-owned enterprises, including phones and electricity. Aristide argued that unregulated privatization would transform state monopolies into private oligarchies, increasing the riches of Haiti's elite and stripping the poor of their national wealth. He says the proposal simply didn't add up: "Being honest means saying two plus two equals four. They wanted us to sing two plus two equals five."

Aristide proposed a compromise. Rather than sell off the firms outright, he would "democratize" them. He defined this as writing antitrust legislation, insuring that proceeds from the sales were redistributed to the poor and allowing workers to become shareholders. Washington backed down, and the final text of the agreement — accepted by the United States and by a meeting of donor nations in Paris — called for the "democratization" of state companies.

But when Aristide began to implement the plan, it turned out that the financiers in Washington thought his democratization talk was just public relations. When Aristide announced that no sales could take place until Parliament had approved the new laws, Washington cried foul. Aristide says he realized then that what was being attempted was an "economic coup." "The hidden agenda was to tie my hands once I was back and make me give for nothing all the state public enterprises." He threatened to arrest anyone who went ahead with privatizations. "Washington was very angry at me. They said I didn't respect my word, when they were the ones who didn't respect our common economic policy."

Aristide's relationship with Washington has been deteriorating ever since: While more than \$500 million in promised loans and aid were cut off, starving his government, USAID poured millions into the coffers of opposition groups, culminating ultimately in the February 2004 armed coup.

COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT

And the war continues. On June 23 Roger Noriega, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, called on U.N. troops to take a more "proactive role" in going after armed pro-Aristide gangs. In practice, this has meant a wave of Falluja-like collective punishment inflicted on neighborhoods known for supporting Aristide. On July 6, for instance, 300 U.N. troops stormed Cité Soleil, blocking off exits and firing from armored vehicles. The U.N. admits that five were killed, but residents put the number of dead at no fewer than 20. Reuters correspondent Joseph Gaylor Delva says he "saw seven bodies in one house alone, including two babies and one older woman in her 60s." Ali Benasni, head of Médecins Sans



DEPOSED PRESIDENT ARISTIDE still loved in Haiti.

Frontières in Haiti, confirmed that on the day of the siege 27 people came to the MSF clinic with gunshot wounds, three-quarters of them women and children.

Yet despite these attacks, Haitians are still on the streets — rejecting the planned sham elections, opposing privatization and holding up photographs of their president. And just as Washington's experts could not fathom the possibility that Aristide would reject their advice a decade ago, today they cannot accept that his poor supporters could be acting of their own accord — surely Aristide must be controlling them through some mysterious voodoo arts. "We believe that his people are receiving instructions directly from his voice and indirectly through his acolytes that communicate with him personally in South Africa," Noriega said.

Aristide claims no such powers. "The people are bright, the people are intelligent, the people are courageous," he says. They know that two plus two does not equal five.

To be published in an August issue of The Nation.

PHILIPPINES

Ringtone Revolution

"Hello, Garci? So will I still lead by more than 1 million votes?" is ringing on cellphones throughout the Philippines. It is allegedly the voice of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo talking with commissioner of elections, Virgilio "Garci" Garcillano, in May 2004 before the election results were announced. Arroyo did, in fact, win by a million votes.

BY DAVID PUGH

On June 28, after three weeks of silence on the tape scandal, Arroyo admitted that she committed the indiscretion of talking to an election official and called it "a lapse in judgment." "Dagdag-bawas," a Tagalog expression for "vote padding and shaving" is virtually a given as the ruling elite pass the presidential baton from one clan to another. Never has a person outside the richest one percent been elected to the presidency, nor a person without the blessing of the U.S. government. The U.S. is backing Arroyo emphasizing that the "rule of law" must be followed, and utterly terrified of another "People Power" upsurge of the type that has already ousted two U.S.-backed rulers.

Every day in the Philippines, tens of thousands are taking to the streets to demand that



BURNING EFFIGIES are a staple of popular protest in the Philippines. Tens of thousands have demanded Arroyo's resignation in the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Arroyo resign or be ousted. Pressure is growing from the mass organizations of the left, opposition political parties, organizations of professionals, business groups, and retired military and police officers.

While political insiders want to replace Arroyo with her equally reactionary vice-president, grassroots organizations advocate a "Transition Council" that would include representatives of the poor and marginalized sectors. Among the tasks of the council would be to conduct an investigation into

the vote-padding scandal and implement electoral reforms. Other goals include canceling the country's onerous debts and protecting the country from the ravages of free-market globalization.

These issues are indicative of Philippines' grinding poverty, injustice and state terror. Nearly 60 percent of the annual budget goes to pay foreign debt and the military. At the same time, the government's central "labor policy" is to export labor, and now 10 percent of the population lives abroad. In the first half of 2005, soldiers and death squads killed more than 35 activists in various provinces. In November 2004, seven striking farmworkers were shot down by soldiers on a picket line at the Hacienda Luisita plantation in central Luzon.

Arroyo is seen as joined at the hip with the U.S. administration. Hers was the first government leader in Asia to join Bush's "war on terror" crusade, hosting up to 5,000 U.S. troops for "joint training exercises."

The Filipino people are not only fighting with picket lines and demonstrations.

In every major island of the Philippines, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army are building a mass revolutionary movement.

In a recent statement, the CPP said: "For the Filipino people, the crisis besetting the Arroyo regime is a good thing. It opens the possibility of advancing their most urgent demands. More importantly, it provides the conditions for pushing forward the people's war closer to final victory."



'Ringtone Revolution'

In a country with more cellphones than landlines, cellphones are a powerful tool to mobilize the masses. Choose your style: Billy Joel's "Honesty," or Lipps Inc's "Funkytown"? Both are ringtones paired with President Arroyo's voice: "Hello Garci? So will I still lead by more than 1 [million]?"

Following Arroyo's apology for talking with an election official, one can now download an Arroyo "I am sorry" ringtone.

At a fraction of the cost of a voice message, text messages are increasingly being used to foster political activism and awareness. An amalgamation of cellphone users, TXTPower mobilizes activists entirely through the text message: "Calling all patriotic, self-respecting, honest, anti-corruption and progressive Filipinos: Starting today, let's take part in a 'Texters Revolt for Justice.'"

Sample ring tones can be found at TXTpower.org and qc.indymedia.org.

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172 Allen St.
- Times Up!**
49 E. Houston St.
- Lotus Café**
Clinton & Stanton Sts.
- May Day Books at Theater for the New City**
155 First Ave.
(Btw 9th & 10th Sts.)
- Housing Works**
126 Crosby St.
- LGBT Center**
213 W. 13th St.
- Shakespeare & Co. Books**
1 Whitehall St.
- Brecht Forum**
451 West St.

14TH TO 96TH ST.

- Revolution Books**
9 W. 19th St.
- Chelsea Sq. Diner**
23rd St. & 9th Ave.
- Domvys**
413 W. 44th St.
- Second Wave Laundrocenter**
55th St. & 9th Ave.

ABOVE 96TH ST.

- Labyrinth Books**
536 W. 112th St.
- Kim's Video**
113th St. & Broadway
- Coogan's Bar**
169th St. & Broadway
- BROOKLYN**
- Tillie's of Brooklyn**
248 DeKalb Ave.
- Vox Pop**
1022 Cortelyou Rd.
- Green Apple Café**
110 DeKalb Ave.

- Marquet Patisserie**
680 Fulton St.
- Freddy's Bar and Backroom**
Dean St. & 6th Ave.
- Community Book Store**
7th Ave. & Carroll Sts.
- Tea Lounge**
Union St. @ 7th Ave.
9th St. @ 7th Ave.
- Atlantis Super Laundry Center**
472 Atlantic Ave.
- Photoplay Video**
933 Manhattan Ave.
- Verb Cafe**
Bedford Ave. & N. 5th
- Jane Doe Books**
93 Montrose Ave.
- Make the Road by Walking**
301 Grove St.
- Spoken-Words Cafe**
4th Ave. & Union St.
- QUEENS**
- Sunnyside Library**
43-06 Greenpoint Ave.
- East Elmhurst Library**
95-06 Astoria Blvd.
- Langston Hughes Library**
100-01 Northern Blvd.
- Café Aubergine**
49-22 Skillman Ave.
- Sunnyside Library**
43-06 Greenpoint Ave.
- BRONX**
- Bronx Museum**
165th St. & Grand Concourse
- The Point**
940 Garrison Ave.
- Baychester Library**
2049 Asch Loop
- LONG ISLAND**
- Free Space**
Ronkonkoma
16 E. 8th St. Huntington Station

Kosovo Confronts Its Future

By JACKSON ALLERS

KOSOVO – It is a regular sight in the Ferizai/Urosevac municipality of Kosovo, some 50 kilometers north of the Macedonian capital of Skopje, to see U.S. servicemen parking their Humvees in front of small cafes during their regular “security” details. With M-16s strapped across their torsos, the GIs snack on kebabs, wash them down with Coca-Cola and ogle the local Albanian girls.

They are part of an occupying NATO force known as KFOR (Kosovo Protection Forces) and are expected to be present in Kosovo for a long time to come. The so-called Contact Group countries – the United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Russia and Germany – those most involved in deciding the future of this southern province of Serbia, tout 2005 as the “year of decision” for the status of Kosovo. Six years after U.N. Security Council resolution 1244 designated Kosovo a U.N. protectorate, the beleaguered U.N. mission administering the province is looking to leave as quickly as possible despite the fact that the U.N.-appointed envoy to the region says the security and freedom of non-Albanian communities is at risk.

At the forefront of this push to resolve Kosovo’s status are representatives of two U.S. presidential administrations. During a July trip to Kosovo as the head of the Washington D.C.-based (and CIA-funded) National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright commented, “I know Kosovars have a dream, and people are entitled to have their dreams fulfilled.”

CLINTON'S LEGACY

But, any claim by the U.S. to “resolve” the situation in Kosovo is hobbled by the legacy of former President Bill Clinton’s decision to lead NATO in a 78-day bombing campaign of Serbia in violation of the U.N. charter. Diplomats and analysts point out that the bombing was illegal by international standards, and its repercussions have been felt widely, including its invocation by the Bush administration to justify its own illegal invasion and occupation against Iraq.

What is clear, however, is that the United States has no plans of abandoning Camp Bondsteel, the 955-acre military installation described on the camp’s official homepage as being “located on rolling hills and farmland” in southeastern Kosovo. The Pentagon has paid Halliburton subsidiary KBR more than \$2 billion to construct the camp – an amount, according to the U.S. General Accounting Office, that was one-sixth of the money spent by the Pentagon on Balkan operations from 1995 to 2000.

During a visit to Kosovo in June, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns said, “The U.S. is going to remain centrally involved in Kosovo, leading the diplomatic process [to resolve status],” adding, “we will certainly maintain a military presence here, with KFOR, as a symbol of our commitment for a secure and peaceful Kosovo.”

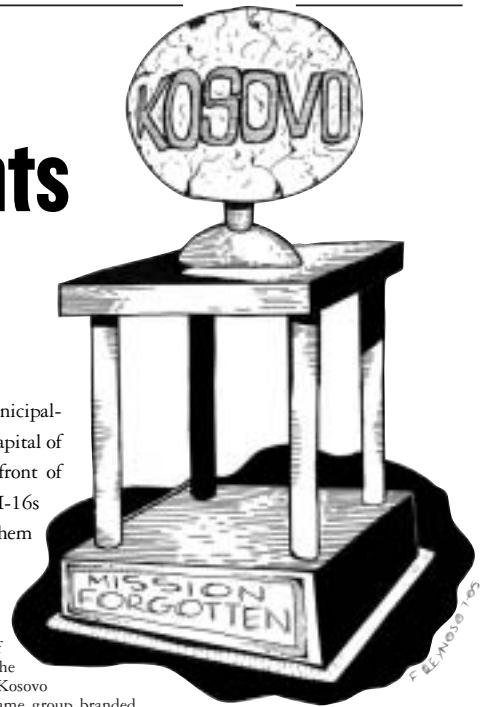
Few ethnic Albanians question the presence of the U.S. military. The U.S. support of the Kosovo Liberation Army, the same group branded by the U.S. State Department in 1998 as a “terrorist organization,” showed clearly to all ethnic groups in the disputed region that the U.S. favors the Albanians.

Political commentator Dukagjin Gorani, senior editor of the Kosovo daily paper, *The Express*, admits, “Kosovars are not very prompt to understand the geopolitics of conspiracies. To Kosovars the existence of Bondsteel, which is now the biggest U.S. military base in Europe, is and will probably remain a sign of political stability for Albanians. In fact, to most of us it is a sign that Kosovo will never again go back under the umbrella of Serbia.”

KOSOVO'S SERBS

But ordinary Kosovo Serbs see the U.S. and the international community suggesting that the province move towards independence as the theft, by military force, of the cradle of Serbian civilization.

Zoran Zdravkovic is a kindergarten teacher in the main central Serbian enclave, Gračanica, who traces his family roots in Kosovo back 600 years. He says that none



of his friends can imagine living under Albanian rule.

The Serbian political leadership is very clear that independence is off the table as a condition of future status. The line coming from Belgrade: “Less than independence, more than autonomy.”

But, as the Serbian leadership has acquiesced to earlier U.S. demands to hand over suspected war criminals to the International Court of the Former Yugoslavia in exchange for financial aid, many Kosovo Serbs are afraid that they will be forgotten by Belgrade’s leadership in future dealings.

Framed in a larger political context, analysts like Gorani see the resolution of status in a Muslim-dominated province as something that the Bush administration would love to cite as a “positive example” of U.S. foreign policy that would allow it to continue the unilateral imposition of “democracy and human rights” through military means. But, he concedes that the verdict is still technically out as to what the future status of Kosovo will be.

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Psychedelic Splatter and Screams of Freedom

BY STEVE WISHNIA

Coming north from San Antonio, where I wish I had a Black Sabbath T-shirt when we stop at the Alamo (Remember the Ozzy!), Austin looms like an oasis after the suburban sprawl of I-35. And it is. The South Austin Museum of Popular Culture is exhibiting the work of Guy Zuke and Jim Franklin, among the artists whose posters for clubs like Armadillo World Headquarters and the Vulcan Gas Company heralded the city's unique fusion of psychedelia, blues and country in the sixties and seventies.

The legacy is that Austin has one of the best local music scenes in the country. Today, there's more live rock'n'roll on a four-block strip of Red River Street — seven blocks — than there is left on the Lower East Side. We catch an amazing three-band bill at Room 710 on Red River: Gary Floyd's Buddha Brothers;

Rubble, Butthole Surfers drummer King Coffey's new band; and a Japanese trio called Green Milk from Planet Orange. Floyd, the singer for the eighties punk band the Dicks, has a fantastic voice, like an older, wiser and male Janis Joplin. The Buddha Brothers back it up with fat, heavy bass and bluesy, distorted guitar. Green Milk from Planet Orange transfix the crowd with psychedelic-splatter soundscapes. Rubble are in a similar vein, playing behind a screen of gauze and projections of nebulae, a whirlwind of rhythm and noise topped by clouds of wah-wah guitar.

The next night, we go to Gruene Hall — the oldest dancehall in Texas, a barnlike building opened in 1879 — in New Braunfels, between Austin and San Antonio. At the restaurant next door we're surrounded by 30 teenagers in matching "Heaven Bound" T-shirts. This is the second time in three days that I wish I had a Black Sabbath T-shirt. We catch Karen Abrahams of the Back Porch Vipers, who

intersperses country and blues tunes with Cajun waltzes and Western-swing versions of '30s reefer songs like "If You're a Viper." We slip outside to vipe and then jitterbug to "Jack, I'm Mellow."

MEANWHILE, BACK AT CBGB

Dee Pop's Wednesday-and-Sunday-night "Freestyle Jazz" series at CBGB is closing this month, as the club will spend August holding benefits to save itself from a massive-heart-attack rent increase. (The surrounding neighborhood is almost completely unrecognizable now, with whole blocks torn down or turned to fiendish-rent high-rises.) Pop, the drummer from the early eighties punkified-funk band the Bush Tetras, created a home for the city's free-jazz community, the heirs of Ornette Coleman at the Five Spot and the loft-jazz scene of the seventies.

You won't hear this kind of music on a beer commercial. About the most mainstream it

ever got was John Coltrane's last recordings, but the rewards are uncompromising sounds and talented, intensely dedicated musicianship. Usually entirely improvised, it's music of cathartic chaos, saxophones squawking hyperbolically, screeching for liberation atop a pounding wave of drum surf. It's music played at the extremes of the instrument that suddenly drops to serenity and delicacy, then morphs into an odd Dixieland march disrupted by snare-drum gunshots.

Freedomland, the second act at the July 6 show, is quieter. With Pop on drums, bassist William Parker, and an array of alto, tenor, and baritone saxophonists (including Daniel Carter and Dave Sewelson), their set has a low-key, chattering feel, like early-evening rainforest sounds or Sun Ra's "Friendly Galaxy."

The series' last two shows will be July 24 and 31. The Lucky Cat Lounge in Williamsburg and ABC No Rio will pick up some of the slack.

Live 8's Empty Lyrics: Why Your Voice Is Not Enough

BY CHRISTINA ZAWERUCHA

While scores of pretty-faced celebrities beseched us over computer and television screens to "one by one ... make poverty history," it's still questionable how successful the Live 8 concerts that took place in eight countries July 2 were in advancing genuine economic justice for the people of Africa.

The concert's sponsors, Bono of U2 and Sir Bob Geldof, claimed that nearly 3 billion people worldwide tuned in to watch the concerts. (There are only about 1.4 billion TV sets in the world.) The event featured the temporarily reunited Pink Floyd, Jay-Z, Madonna, Mariah Carey and others. Its rallying cry was, "We're not asking for your money. We're asking for your voice."

Many aspects of the concerts, however, did involve extracting money. In the U.K., people qualified for tickets only by text-messaging the correct responses to daily trivia questions via Nokia phones. AOL claimed exclusive rights to broadcast the show over the Internet, and those watching on TV had the performances they saw interrupted by advertisements for multinational corporations.

As for voices, the Live 8 concerts in London and Philadelphia were devoid of any criticism of the war in Iraq, and in the U.S. performers were instructed not to criticize Bush. In Gleneagles, Scotland, the Stop the War Coalition was denied the right to participate in the Make Poverty History March.

The Live 8 shows were the sequel to the 1985 Live Aid concerts which raised more than \$25 million to benefit Ethiopians during a massive famine. The hit music video "We Are the World" sprang out of this original "band aid." Still, the famine persisted long enough after the concerts to claim several hundred thousand lives.

The Live 8 Web sites collected 27 million signatures on a petition making three

While U.S. concert audiences were asking their government to increase foreign aid to 1 percent of its budget, no one at Live 8 was asking it to reduce the 40 percent that goes to military spending.

demands of the G8: the cancellation of debt for 40 of the world's poorest countries, an increase of first-world aid to poorer nations, and "fair trade." U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair initiated this month's G8 meetings in Scotland with the professed goals of relieving about \$40 billion in debts owed by 18 of the world's poorest nations, 14 of them African, and adding another \$50 billion in aid to Africa. But what strings come attached to these concessions, and were they really the result of Bono and Geldof's campaign?


Organizers of Live 8 were quick to take responsibility for the baby steps made at the G8 meetings. But Blair's promises to alleviate African debt were made the week of June

11, a month before the concerts, in response to years of organizing and pressure from grassroots organizations and citizens' groups. And the African debt relief is contingent upon the 14 nations' adoption of neoliberal and free-trade economic policies — putting new chains on their economies.

Similarly, President Bush promised to double aid to Africa by 2010. But when he returned home, he comforted his supporters

with the news that this increase had already been granted over the past year, and that there will be no further increase in U.S. foreign aid. While U.S. concert audiences were asking their government to increase foreign aid to 1 percent of its budget, no one at Live 8 was asking it to reduce the 40 percent that goes to military spending.

It remains to be seen how many people will actually continue the fight and change the way we live so we can end exploitation in Africa, and how many will return home "comfortably numb," as the Pink Floyd song goes. Perhaps some awareness was generated through the feel-good Live 8 concerts — but viable, effective solutions were not.



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TUESDAY, JULY 26
7pm • \$3 • \$5 Suggested
POETRY: WOMEN'S POETRY
JAM & WOMEN'S OPEN MIKE
Featuring: Filomena Danisi will be reading from *Battling Through Life: The Story of Filomena Danisi*. Marty McConnell releases poems that huddle between the world we travel and the one we battle to create. Women's Poetry Jam is hosted by Vittoria Repetto. Open mike sign-up starts at 7pm.

THURSDAY, JULY 28
7pm • Free
READING: LELA NARGI: *Around the Table*
In her tribute to home cooking, Lela Nargi gathers fifteen women to discuss food from biologists to mathematicians. Joining Lela Nargi will be contributors Anna Lappe, Kathy Ebel, Nancy Butcher, and Kendall Crollus.

FRIDAY, JULY 29
7PM • Free
Reading: *Rode Hard, Put Away Wet*
A collection of lesbian cowboy erotica, hard-riding stories of leather, lust, passion and kink. Please join editors Sacchi Green and Rakelle Valencia and contributors Crystal Barela, Chuck Fellows, Skian McGuire, Val Murphy, and Jake Rich.
And remember, when the big balls in cowntown, we'll all go down!

THE ADVERTISER JULY 21 - AUGUST 10, 2003 13

FILM: Rize White Eyes, Black Bodies

By YVONNE LIU

Pop culture has always been obsessed with black bodies. The fascination began during colonialism when the myth of the primitive and savage black body was used to legitimize slavery and white supremacy. Black men were virile and strong, black women lascivious and wanton. Capitalism continues the fetish of the black body, creating consumer products that emphasize the physical attributes of blacks, their basketball skills, dance moves, and ability to rhyme and flow.

The new film *Rize*, by the fashion photographer and music video producer David LaChapelle, is the latest installment of this obsession. The film is presumably a documentary about the new dance crazes of krumping, clowning and stripping among urban African-American youth. The film saturates the viewer with Technicolor images of sweaty, glistening and throbbing black bodies dancing to the fusion of breaking, popping, capoeira and ass-shaking on screen. What is essentially an extended music video with interviews attempts to pass as a serious documentary about the lives of the dancers.

Rize is set in post-industrial city South Central Los Angeles, a landscape scarred by

poverty, unemployment and economic racism. LaChapelle attempts to define the youth as the "children of Rodney King" by opening the film with clips from the 1992 riots. The youth come from broken homes headed by single mothers who struggle with substance abuse and incarceration, and they are haunted by gang violence and drive-by shootings. The problem is not social but individual, the film tells us, and the solution is spiritual salvation. Many of the dancers LaChapelle interviews are born-again Christians. In one of the film's most visually stunning but perplexing scenes, two dancers, Dragon and Miss Prissy, krump in front of a Pentecostal church congregation to Lauryn Hill's music.

Krumping is a variant of clown dancing, which was started by Tommy the Clown when he styled himself as a "hip-hop clown" to entertain at children's birthday parties. Older disciples of Tommy developed the harder and aggressive form of krumping. LaChapelle thinks the ability to krump is an innate quality of the African race. The most disturbing sequence of the film is when he alternates shots of krumpers in a school playground with naked Africans dancing, adorned with feathers and white body powder. This is racial essentialism: the belief that



Rize has garnered glowing reviews and earned over \$3 million to date, and was recently picked up by Lion's Gate Films. PHOTO: David LaChapelle / Vanity Fair.

those of African descent are genetically prone to raw and primitive dancing.

Like a tourist, LaChapelle's gaze lingers on the exotic, the contortions of the black body in the orgiastic dance. He avoids the difficult questions of how the oppression of the black youth is socially constructed, and of how his gaze continues the objectification of the black body.

Rize isn't the first example of ghetto tourism. *Hustle and Flow* by Craig Brewer, to be released on July 22, is another. Both

films subscribe to the notion of the "underclass" or the "construction of the ghetto as a reservoir of pathologies and bad cultural values," offers cultural historian Robin D. G. Kelley. The ghetto becomes "a place of adventure, unbridled violence, erotic fantasy, and/or an imaginary alternative to suburban boredom," Kelley wrote in *Yo Mama's Dysfunctional*. What we need is an honest look at life for the racially marginalized and economically deprived, and not the gaze of the voyeur.

Daily Show DVD All the (Moments of) Zen You Can Get

By ERICA PATINO

Want to combine the heartbreak of the last presidential election with the convenience of at-home theater? *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart: Indecision 2004* features all this plus sharp satire that is as much a criticism of major network news and newspaper coverage as it is a genial look at American politics. The three-DVD set includes on-site coverage of both political conventions, presidential debates and live coverage on election night.

While the material on the first two discs is strong, the real treat is disc three. It includes previously unaired bits such as Stewart's team of fake reporters doing a disarmingly good *capella* rendition of the national anthem. Longtime correspondent Stephen Colbert (set to have his own show, *The Colbert Report*, later this year on Comedy Central) introduces the Republican National Convention with a tour of the show's studio and offices, down to the staff copy machine, "Old Xeroxy." Reporter Ed Helms describes the American political process as "a total sausage-fest."

The show is at its best when bulldozing through already sensitive political subjects. The relative anonymity of *The Daily Show* reporters allows them to look credible and then ambush naive guests much in the style of Ali G, provoking confused and incredulous responses. Samantha Bee sits a group of undecided voters down and hurls obscenities at them for their indecisiveness. Too stunned to respond, they shuffle out of the room when she cheerfully dismisses them. At the Republican National Convention, Helms says to an attendee, "A lot of people are upset about the situation in Iraq, it seems to have developed into this kind of quagmire..." The attendee cuts Helms off and walks away. The refusal to comment speaks more than any response could, and more than any network coverage dares. One of the best segments is on the lavish full-service salon at the RNC, reserved exclusively for the media, proving that once again truth is stranger than fiction.



Xun Zhou plays the seamstress of the title and the romantic interest of two bourgeois youth who are relocated to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution.

BEWARE 'REFINEMENT'

By DIANE MASON

The problem with the new Chinese film *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*, based on the international best-seller by Dai Sijie, is that it glorifies refinement, and the bourgeois brand of European refinement at that. While it has its uses, people who exalt this quality, as of "classical" music and ballet, often disparage the sophistication of non-European art and the vigor of working-class culture, as at one time with jazz and more recently with hip-hop.

Co-scripted by Sijie and Nadine Perront, *Balzac* trivializes the continental upheaval of the Cultural Revolution by reducing it to a foolish, if essentially harmless, punishment of privileged youth. "Grievance literature," which recounts the privations of China's formerly privileged classes during the mass upheavals of China's communist years, has become a cottage industry. Following in the footsteps of Jung Chang's memoir *Wild Swans*, grievance lit narrows its focus to personal relationships and the opportunities they

provide for satire. History is told by isolated anecdote.

Ma and Luo (played by Ye Liu and Kun Chen) are sent to a remote mountain village for Maoist re-education. Scorned as the sons of "reactionary intellectuals," they do hard labor in the copper mines and fall in love with the spunky seamstress of the title (played by Xun Zhou), the granddaughter of a locally renowned tailor.

Ma's violin, thought to be a bourgeois toy, is spared because he says he's playing Mozart, which sounds to the unworried peasants like something to do with Mao. On the same lines, one of the foreign novels the boys get hold of is overlooked because a photo it contains of a bearded European is assumed to be that of Marx. The villagers are enchanted by the violin music and by the stories the boys weave from their clandestine readings when they are supposedly reporting on movies from

Albania and Korea. In other words, Ma and Luo respond to repressive circumstances with good old-fashioned subversion.

Dalliance with forbidden culture is the form subversion takes here, and that's okay. But the film encourages the viewer to identify with the upper classes and mocks the way poor, unsophisticated people digest revolutionary theory.

The bourgeois world was horrified at the Cultural Revolution. And sure, discomfort and even great suffering can ensue from how "unwashed masses" deal with their former rulers when given power over them. But why should we be horrified when we barely bat an eyelash over the mass impoverishment and degradation that precipitate rebellion in the first place?

"We" are assumed to be privileged ourselves. The broad suffering that most of the world endures never seems quite real, or at least not related to "us." We only become concerned about extreme conditions when we're directly threatened, or when they suggest a potential threat to our kind. To wit, how "we" reacted to 9/11 — and to the Cultural Revolution.



NOW SHOWING AT MOSEX: *Men Without Suits: Objectifying the American Male Body*. Photo: Museum of Sex

The G-String

Beefcake Americana

The Museum of Sex or MOSEX was the first museum I attended as a tax-paying tenant in New York City. Passing by I couldn't resist the allure of old hustler magazines and porn from the dawn of time, all cloaked in the safe warmth of academic legitimacy. Although it's certainly not the first sex museum, MOSEX founder Daniel Gluck desired nothing less than to produce the "Smithsonian of sex." Maybe the crew cuts at the Air and Space Museum will circulate a petition to let the sexperts join the club.

BY AMY WOLF

Men Without Suits: Objectifying the American Male Body presents a wide-angle look at the evolution of depictions of the nude male. Curator John Vollmer suggests the bulging American beefcake aesthetic developed because the hyper-masculine body was more socially acceptable. He explains that "social constructs permit muscle-building magazines to be displayed in racks without censorship, but require no less provocative images on the covers of soft porn magazines to be kept behind protective barriers." The viewer is guided through centuries of glutes with bite-size factoids glimpsing at padded cod pieces – 1450s jockstraps worn under man-skirts – and the celebration of prepubescent

boys in ancient Greece, which presaged the first Mr. Olympia contest in 1881.

This exhibit exposes Vollmer's challenge to construct a comprehensive evolution from only a scattering of sociological material produced on gender and sexuality. These fragments of our sexual heritage raise questions this exhibit could not begin to answer. The viewer must construct an understanding of how others deal with the male nude through an awareness of how these images arouse us today.

Stags, Smokers and Blue Movies: The Origins of American Pornographic Film, curated by Joseph Slade and Jennifer Lyon Bell, transports the viewer – through dim lighting, floor projections and ambient vocal outbursts of testosterone –

into a clandestine stag party, where gatherings of men watch illegal hard-core pornography in smoky backrooms.

In 1907, less than a decade after the movie camera was invented, porn was being produced in Hungary, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Argentina, North Africa and the United States. One of many rare films shown at MOSEX, *The Casting Couch* (1924), a 35mm silent film, is a pornographic parody of Hollywood's Mark Sennett, a notorious cad who demanded sex from attractive women in exchange for parts in Hollywood features. In this still-relevant x-rated social commentary, the casting director hands the lady a book titled *How to be a Movie Star*, and in a flash, they're fucking ravenously on the casting couch.

At the very least, this museum is an alter to the universal act of sex. Footage of a close-up of a labia being pulled to and fro as if it were doing the Charleston aside, its exhibitions tend to expose bonds between cultures and generations rather than distinctions.

Now showing at the Museum of Sex, 233 5th Avenue. For hours and tickets see museumofsex.org.



Rooftop's Mixed Bag of Shorts at the Mall Garage

BY LEAH MERMELSTEIN

Rooftop Films, N.Y.C.'s premier mobile independent theater, packed 13 films, five sets of fireworks and music by the Mountain Goats onto the roof of the Fulton Mall parking lot for their Fourth of July show. (Overstimulated and hanging out at the mall – very American.) The closest set of fireworks was occluded by some building that snuck by the event planners, but what appeared to be a carpet bombing of pyrotechnics in the distance did seem appropriate. As for the films:

World on Fire (Sophie Muller, Los Angeles, CA, 4:20) is a melodramatic Sarah McLachlan music video with an ill-steered conscience. Muller uses a series of simple equations, to the tune of "\$2,000 to cater a Hollywood shoot = food enough to feed 20,000 Haitian children breakfast" to illustrate her point. What point is that, you might ask. If we halt production on America's biggest export – crap like *White Chicks* or *National Treasure* – will hunger and world poverty cease to exist? Such misguided efforts to eliminate poverty and suffering are dangerous. The IMF and World Bank are case examples. (The millions of poverty-stricken and malnourished children in the U.S. are bypassed here. Perhaps the numbers are not drastic enough – a couple grand buys more in Haiti.) This film leads the audience away from the causes of

poverty and inequality: political control and distribution of money and resources, and instead focuses on providing charity.

There was a time where you could pretty much expect political non-fiction film to suffer from low-production values and didactic talking heads, rendering it useless for communicating to people outside the choir. **Luckiest Nut in the World** (Emily James, Fulcrum TV, 5:30) is a largely Flash-based short that makes the economics of global trade fun again. Unfortunately, it exemplifies a common pitfall of activist film: bad messaging. The singing American peanut does a great job of reaching a non-academic audience, but falls short on explaining how NAFTA affects working peanut farmers in the U.S. The nut sang to me that the U.S.'s sway in the global market place would compensate for otherwise harmful elimination of trade restrictions through NAFTA, ignoring the race to the bottom and loss of jobs in the U.S. However, for love of singing food, I am anticipating Emily James' next film.

Sarah Prior and Monica Bigler's crowd pleaser, **Buried in the Backyard** (30:00), interviews Americans who are "adequately prepared" to survive a nuclear blast and fend off hungry neighbors. Like a *Cribs* for the paranoid and tragically unhinged, the film follows these folks into the personal bomb shelters they love, showing off their bounty of

gallons of commercial-grade mustard and artificial pancake syrup. The character and plot development gleaned from these proud interviews penetrates into the deep survival instincts that can come to a head with our communal instincts. There are those that have enough food stocked for their neighbors: as one owner testifies, "feeding them is easier than shooting them." Others are going it alone. One elderly man goes so far as to set up electric fences around his property to deter and maim hungry post-nuclear-blast neighbors. Although there is a hint of comedic condescension in the characters' development, the audience is reminded that those with shelter only need to be right once; the shelterless need to be right every day.

The recruitment of young men and women into our nation's armed forces is a critical supply link directly enabling our occupation of Iraq. Many anti-war groups and individuals are focusing activist energy against the Department of Defense, which spent over four billion dollars on military recruitment in Fiscal Year 2003. **All That I Can Be** (Educational Video Center, New York, 8:00) gets to the gut of why the armed forces' strategies work: They look good because poverty is worse. We are introduced to William, a Brooklyn teen, and the army recruiter who sells him on going to war. The brevity of the film works to its disadvantage, cutting short William's story. It's a first chapter of an unsettlingly common story.



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FRIDAY JULY 29 • 8:00pm
\$5 sliding scale.

RIOT-A-GO-GO

Join us for a rockin' concert by female-fronted punk band Riot-A-Go-Go from San Francisco. The band plays high energy, catchy punk rock, and have been called "Minor Threat meets The Runaways."

SATURDAY JULY 30 • 8:00PM

\$5 sliding scale.

BLIGGINS & GOINES

Guitar and Goines are a guitar and harmonica duo playing and singing country, blues, americana and folk. These are original songs that tell the story of the Sourlands region in New Jersey. They are the winners of the 2005 New Jersey Folk Festival Songwriters Contest.

SUNDAY JULY 31 • 3:00pm

\$5 sliding scale.

WHITE BOY SLIM

Maurice Richard Libby carries the blues tradition. His raw, authoritative delivery is obviously born of his respect for the music. He draws a diverse set of influences, including jazz, funk, world music and hip hop to create a very personal, coherent and enduring blues sound.

White Boy Slim lives in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

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has open meetings every Tuesday at 7pm at 34 E. 29th St., 2nd floor.

Call for more info: 212.684.8112

Other NYC Indymedia Group Meetings:

Photo Team: 7pm Mondays

Video Team: 7pm Tuesdays

SAT JULY 23

10am • FREE
MEDIA RALLY AT NBC
 The NYC Downing Street Coalition will be holding a demonstration outside NBC News at Rockefeller Center on DSM Day to demand more and better coverage of the Downing Street memo.

NBC Studios Rockefeller Center, south side of 49th St. - btwn 5th and 6th Ave., right outside the NBC NEWS Building.

2pm • FREE
TORTURE AND LIES – WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?
 Speakers: Rep. Maurice Hinchey, Hon. Liz Holtzman and Randi Rhodes. Moderator: Bob Fertik, President of Democrats.com
 Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), who has represented conservative District 19.
 New York Society for Ethical Culture
 2 W. 64th St. at Central Park West

7pm • \$10 Donation
DEFEND POLITICAL PRISONERS: A NIGHT IN SOLIDARITY
 Analysis and updates about the cases of Sheikh Mohammed Al-Moayad and Mohammed Zayad, Mumia Abu-Jamal and Assata Shakur! Stay for discussion, literature, and musical performances featuring Movement in Motion and Ash-One.
 Event Sponsored by New York Committee to Defend Palestine and Movement in Motion
 ALWAN, 16 Beaver Street, 4th Floor

8pm • \$5.00 Sliding scale
STEVEN BACON'S TASTY MUSIC
 Singer/songwriter Steven Bacon's music is political, spiritual, reflective, introspective, acoustic, lonesome, mellow, alternative indie-folk. At Vox Pop, 1022 Cortelyou Road, Flatbush, Brooklyn

SUN JULY 24

6:30pm • Donation optional
 (Also showing on July 31)
 9/11 INFO RESOURCE SERIES

New documentaries w/evidence the gov't & media have withheld. Learn how the real conspiracy theory is the official gov't story. Post-screening discussion/strategy sessions. At St. Mark's Church, corner 2nd Ave & 10th St. Sponsors: NY 911 Truth, LES/WTC Truth Movement. www.ny911truth.org

7pm • FREE
READING OF "WHAT'S MY NAME, FOOL? SPORTS & RESISTANCE IN THE U.S." Dave Zirin illustrates how sports express the worst & at times the most creative, exciting & political features of our society. Bluestockings, 172 Allen St. 212-777-6028

12 – 5:30pm • Donations! It's a benefit.
BOOKS @ THE PIER TO BENEFIT "BOOKS THROUGH BARS" Featuring authors Walter Mosley, Herb Boyd, Amy Goodman, Terrie Williams, Toby Thompkins, Darren Coleman, Jimmie Briggs, Kalisha Buckhanon and Deborah Mathis, among others. Pier 63 at West 23rd St.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

July - August

TUE JULY 26

6:30pm Forum: 7 - 8:30pm • FREE
MAYORS ON PARKS
 The candidates for Mayor share their visions on the issues facing the City's parks, playgrounds, community gardens, sporting facilities, and open spaces.
 Pace University Gymnasium, 1 Pace Plaza (Across from City Hall Park in Lower Manhattan) Reservations Required 212.838.9410 x233 or rsvp@parks1.org

8pm • \$7
FIFTH ANNUAL MEDIA THAT MATTERS FILM FESTIVAL
 The Tank, 208 West 37th St.

7 - 9pm • \$25 (Donation to save the church!)
SAVE ST. BRIGID'S COMMITTEE POT-LUCK DINNER: home cooked Latino food, music, drink, short speeches.
 Help save this 160 year old church, a landmark of the Lower East Side.
 Ave. A, btwn 5th and 6th Streets
 RSVP to (347) 538-8563 or savestbrigids@yahoo.com.

THU JULY 28

7pm • FREE
SAVE ABORTION: WE WON'T LOSE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE! PRESS CONFERENCE
 LGBT Community Center, Room 301
 208 West 13th St. (at 7th Ave.)

12 – 2pm • FREE
THE GREAT AMERICAN JOBS SCAM
 Reading and lecture by Greg LeRoy, reading from his new book which exposes the truth about corporate tax breaks and the creation of jobs. Register online or call 212-633-1405 x 533. Demos 220 Fifth Ave. @ 26 St., 5th Fl.

7:30pm • FREE
MILLY QUEZADA / GRUPO AGUAKATE
 Dominican diva Milly Quezada – "la Reina del Merengue" – is a bona fide international superstar. This night pairs the traditional with the newest of the new: Grupo Aguakate will whip the crowd into a frenzy with its irresistible party vibe mash up of reggaeton, merengue, and hip-hop.
 Prospect Park Bandshell
 9th St. & Prospect Park West, Bkln

FRI JULY 29

Through SAT 30 • \$6 / \$3 students, seniors
 FREE Under 18
"THROUGH MY EYES: CHILDREN' DRAWINGS FROM CONFLICT ZONES," DARFUR, UGANDA, CHECHNYA, KOSOVO, SUDAN & IRAQ.
 At Chelsea Art Museum 556 West 22nd St.

6:30pm • FREE
STILL WE SPEAK
 Come out and oppose the City in its attempt to curtail the constitutional rights of all New Yorkers! Critical Mass is not illegal.
 Union Square South / www.stillwespeak.org

7:30pm • FREE
THE SOUND OF MUSIC / SLAM
 The hills of Prospect Park are alive with the sound of the Von Trapp family. Julie Andrews stars in this epic 1965 wide-screen masterpiece. The evening begins with the wacky mobile percussion of SLAM.
 Prospect Park Bandshell
 9th St. & Prospect Park West, Bkln

8pm • \$5 Sliding Scale
RIOT-A-GO-GO
 Join us for a rockin' concert by female fronted punk band Riot-A-Go-Go from San Francisco.
 Vox Pop, 1022 Cortelyou Road, Flatbush, Bkln

7pm • FREE
OPEN HOUSE AND OPENING & RELEASE PARTY
 The ABC No Rio Darkroom Folio Project and the opening of *Coloring* plus music, installation art, performance and spoken word.
 ABC No Rio, 156 Rivington St. (212) 254-3697

7pm • FREE
CRITICAL MASS: MANHATTAN
 Meet at Union Sq, Park North

SAT JULY 30

9:30am – 3pm
EAST NEW YORK FARMERS MARKET
 United Community Centers Farm
 600 Schenck Avenue b/w Livonia & New Lots
 By train – 1 to Van Siclen, walk on Livonia to the corner of Schenck Ave.

2 – 5pm • FREE
OPEN GARDEN - C.A.U.S.A. Festival Garden
 Garden will be open for public to view.
 790 Blake Ave. betw. Van Siclen & Miller, Bkln

2pm • FREE
HEALTHY COOKING DEMONSTRATION
 Market voucher worth \$5, Veggie Tip Sheet Guides, with JUST FOOD TRAINER
 Talk to gardeners about how to start a market garden in your community.
 Wyckoff Community Farm
 5816 Clarendon Rd., Bkln
 www.justfood.org/cityfarms/workshops/

SUN JULY 31

10:30am • FREE
BEACH RIDE TO JACOB RIIS PARK
 Bring water, suit etc.
 Meet on the Brooklyn side of the Williamsburg Bridge OR 11 a.m. Grand Army Plaza, Bkln. Sponsored by TIMES UP!

10am – 2pm • FREE
JAPANESE MUSIC FESTIVAL IN CENTRAL PARK
 Local and international performers on the Shakuhachi, Koto and Shamisen
 Performances of Horikyoku, Sankyoku, and Minyo. Solos and duets. Traditional and Modern pieces. Traditional Japanese dance
 Naumberg Bandshell and Mall Concert Ground Mid Park from 66th to 72nd St.

1 – 5pm • FREE
CITYWIDE RALLY: BRING THE TROOPS NOW!!!
 Guest Speakers, Spoken Word, Live Music, Food. Get ready to march on Washington, D.C. on September 24th, and with the Millions More Movement on October 14, 15, & 16.
HARLEM TENANTS COUNCIL
 and **TROOPS OUR NOW COALITION**
 The Marcus Garvey Park Band Shell
 Enter Park at 5th Ave. and 124th St.

2 – 9pm • FREE
AFRICAN FESTIVAL! PAPA WEMBA / GOKH-BI SYSTEM / MARIA DE BARROS / KAKANDE / ALAIN NKOSSI KONDA
 All-day party with music, food and culture featuring artists from around the continent.
 Prospect Park Bandshell
 9th St. & Prospect Park West, Bkln

3pm • \$5;
ABC NO RIO 25th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS
 Free Vegetarian BBO \$3/second plate
 Penny Arcade (performance) Poetry readings, music and video extravaganza!
 ABC NO RIO, 156 Rivington St. (212) 254-3697

MON AUGUST 1

6:30pm • FREE
LADIES' BICYCLE REPAIR NIGHT at TIMES UP!
 49 E. Houston St. (btwn Mott and Mulberry)

TUE AUGUST 2

6:30 pm • FREE
BIKE REPAIR WORKSHOP
 49 E. Houston St. (betw. Mott and Mulberry)
 Sponsored by TIMES UP!

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LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
MOONLIGHT BIKE / SKATES RIDE
 A scenic tour from Central Park, plus the lovely tree canopy and grand vistas of the Hudson River from Riverside Park. The ride continues down the greenway to the lovely pier. Then, a ride through leafy streets back to Columbus Circle. This ride usually covers a bit over 10 miles and lasts about 2 hours.
 Meet at the Columbus Circle at 59th St. entrance to Central Park

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