

Outrage at CUNY Over Frame-Up Verdict

Miguel Malo Is Innocent!

On October 24, Miguel Malo was convicted in Bronx Criminal Court on trumped-up charges of “reckless assault” and disorderly conduct. Miguel is the Hostos College student leader arrested in August 2001 for holding up a sign protesting cuts and fee hikes in bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) programs. He was falsely accused of assaulting campus “peace officers” who in fact brutally assaulted him. Although the first is a misdemeanor and the second a violation, Miguel faces up to a year in prison. This outrageous verdict has stirred up a hornet’s nest of opposition on campuses around New York City. Letters have been pouring in to the judge saying, “Miguel Malo must not go to jail!”

The Internationalist Clubs of Hostos and Hunter Colleges and the Revolutionary Reconstruction Club at Bronx Community College, in conjunction with the Internationalist Group have played a leading role in defending Miguel Malo over the last several years. Although his arrest predates the imperialist war on (and colonial occupation of) Iraq and Afghanistan, the heavy-duty repression against him is part and parcel of the war drive. The persecution of Miguel not only is a sign of worse to come at the City University of New York (CUNY), the fight to defend him is one of most important struggles against an escalating crackdown on campuses nationwide.

For more than four years, top CUNY administrators have been trying to make an example out of Miguel. The Bronx District Attorney “threw the book” at him, with an avalanche of bogus accusations. Malo has had to show up in court more than 50 times. Twice they have put him through a week-long trial on the same frame-up charges. By coming down hard on him, they hope to intimidate other protesters. Last March, CUNY security used the same methods against demonstrators protesting the presence of military recruiters at City College as they did against Miguel: bring in big squads of campus cops and security guards, aggressively attack and brutalize the protesters, then accuse

them of “assaulting” the cops.

The CUNY tops and Bronx D.A. must have figured that once they got a conviction of Miguel in their rigged trial it would all be over. But the exact opposite has happened. The day after the verdict, some 50 supporters came out in a driving rain to a press conference/protest in front of Hostos. Participants held up placards spelling out “MIGUEL MALO IS INNOCENT.” Speakers from CUNY faculty, students and staff emphasized that the vendetta against Miguel could hit everyone, that his fight is everyone’s fight. “¡Todos somos Miguel!” (We are all Miguel!) they chanted. The protest was covered by NY1 Noticias TV, which also interviewed Miguel.

CUNY students are now circulating a petition demanding that Miguel must not spend a single day in jail. Already, hundreds of signatures have been gathered. Meanwhile, faculty members at Hostos and other campuses are writing letters to the judge asking that he not be imprisoned. The letters are eloquent and moving testimony to a student leader who is being victimized for standing up for immigrant students struggling to gain a college education. They also drive home that jailing Miguel Malo bodes ill for the right to free speech and any conception of “academic freedom” at CUNY and elsewhere.

Sentencing is scheduled for December 13 at Bronx County Criminal Court (215 E. 161st Street). CUNY Action to Defend Miguel Malo, a united-front defense group, is urging supporters of Miguel and all defenders of democratic rights to attend the hearing to show the tremendous support he continues to have at City University, even after the frame-up verdict. The CUNY Internationalist Clubs are going all-out to protest this blatant capitalist injustice. We urge others to do the same. “CUNY Is Not a Prison!” says the banner of the Hostos Internationalist Club. *Miguel Malo must not spend another day in jail!*

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Internationalist photo

Hostos Community College student leader Miguel Malo (above), arrested in 2001 on bogus charges, faces up to a year in prison. CUNY students, faculty and staff say: *Miguel must not go to jail!*

CUNY Is Not a Prison!



Internationalist photo

Rally in defense of Miguel Malo outside Bronx Criminal Court, June 7.

Witch-Hunters Target “The Unpatriotic University”

By Abram Negrete

“Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel” – Samuel Johnson.

“The Unpatriotic University: City University of New York” – headline of *Front Page* magazine.

Things are going badly for U.S. imperialism in Iraq, and that’s a good thing for working and oppressed people here “at home.” As resistance continues against the colonial occupation, protests against military recruiters have spread on campuses across the U.S.

A growing number of students are asking basic questions about the kind of society we live in. The Katrina catastrophe showed with stunning clarity that race and class determine who lives and dies in capitalist America. Many students are repelled by crusades for ignorance, like teaching “intelligent design” (code words for Christian “creationism”) instead of evolution, and “abstinence” instead of sex education; by bigoted campaigns against gay marriage and women’s right to abortion; by the obscene inequality celebrated by the rich. Some are looking for the root of the problem – in other words, becoming radicals and potentially revolutionaries.

This has got the bourgeoisie (the ruling capitalist class) worried, and they have put their police to work: both the literal cops and spies enforcing the U.S.A. Patriot Act, and the ideological police who ferret out “subversive” heresies on campus.

Among the latter, one of the most sinister is David Horowitz, a former leftist who has become a raving right-winger. A lengthy smear piece from May 2003 in Horowitz’ online journal, *Front Page*, on “The Unpatriotic University: City University of New York,” attacks the CUNY faculty as “peopled largely by anti-American” elements, including Marxists and feminists, who “champion a full-throated leftist agenda.”

A particular target of *Front Page*’s ire is the faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), which is “led by the radical professor Barbara Bowen, who has helped to shift the union to the far Left.” They are especially incensed at Bowen for “casting the sole dissenting vote” against “the pro-war policy” adopted by the Executive Board of the American Federation of Teachers, and at the PSC as a whole for “scheduling teach-ins and ‘speak-outs’” against the occupation of Iraq.

Tops on their list was the PSC’s October 2001 antiwar forum at City College which the rabid warmongers of the *New York Post* labeled an “Anti-U.S. Hatefest.” In reality, far from being ferocious “far leftists,” the PSC leadership are, at most, tame social democrats. But that doesn’t deter the *Front Page* witch-hunters, for whom anyone to the left of Attila the Hun qualifies as a full-throated “red.”

Despite our modest forces, the Internationalist Group and CUNY Internationalist Clubs have not escaped the beady eyes of these latter-day McCarthyites. This is be-

cause, as the *Communist Manifesto* proclaims, revolutionaries “disdain to conceal their aims and views.” While various opportunists seek a shift in U.S. foreign policy, we Trotskyists forthrightly call for imperialism’s defeat.

Moreover, our revolutionary views get a hearing from quite a few students at CUNY, the largest urban public university in the U.S. And that makes the witch hunters sputter with rage. In its diatribe on “The Unpatriotic University,” the right-wing mouthpiece wrote:

“The Internationalist Group (IG), which agitates for ‘international socialist revolution and the conquest of power by the working class’ along with ‘a communist program for free public higher education for all,’ initiated a demonstration in 2001 to protest the ‘racist war purge’ underway at CUNY, otherwise known as a tuition hike.... The IG has its share of fellow travelers in the university system, cheerfully opining that, ‘there is considerable potential for winning youth to revolutionary Marxism at CUNY.’”

They got that right!

Not only did the IG spearhead opposition to the “anti-immigrant war purge” launched shortly after 9/11, when the CUNY administration more than doubled tuition for undocumented immigrant students, the paper of the Internationalist Clubs, *Revolution*, sparked the campaign that stopped the “Fatherland Security” program at Borough of Manhattan Community College. We fight for CUNY-wide mass mobilizations to drive out military and police recruiters. And at Bronx Community College last Spring, our campaign ran out Army, Air Force and Marine recruiters week after week.

In the same vein as Horowitz’ *Front Page*, the ultra-rightist *National Review* began a diatribe against antiwar protesters by railing against the Internationalist Group for supposed “anti-Americanism.” This outfit, which at one point called for a positive reevaluation of fascism, is the creature of Yale man and CIA spy William Buckley.

The *NR* (13 March 2003) article, published on the eve of the U.S. invasion, quoted an IG comrade’s statement: “We would be for the defeat of the U.S. in this war.... We are for the defense of Iraq. It is in the interests of working people in the United States that the same government which is trying to intimidate and silence them be defeated in this war.”

The truth of this is clear to a growing number of American workers and youth. What the *FrontPage/National Review* crowd would like to do is stop us from saying it. They pine for the days of Cold War “loyalty” oaths and mass firings, mob attacks on performances by “un-American” singers and artists, and blacklists of “subversives.” After all, Buckley coauthored *McCarthy and His Enemies* (1954), a paean of praise to Cold War witch hunter Joseph McCarthy. A glimpse of the repressive climate of the McCarthy years is provided by George Clooney’s new film *Good Night and Good Luck*.

Crusade for Campus Conformity

The venom spewing from the ultra-right red-hunters is not just empty rhetoric in cyberspace. McCarthyism is making a comeback in academe. In our article “Frame-Up Trials and Campus Purges – CUNY: Rehire Mohamed Yousry Now!” we reported on the firing of York College adjunct Yousry, one of those framed in the federal show trial of radi-

cal lawyer Lynne Stewart. We noted:

“Already in the early 1940s, City College reacted to passage of the anti-‘sedition’ Smith Act by purging leftist professors. In the ‘50s, CUNY officials played second fiddle to the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS) when the Congressional subversion hunters went after what they called ‘reeducators.’ Some professors were fired after being ‘identified as Communists.’ But in most cases, they were fired for citing their Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate themselves when asked, ‘Are you now or have you ever been’ a Communist?” – *The Internationalist* No. 18 (May-June 2004).

Today, “neoconservatives” seek to recruit a legion of junior Joe McCarthys on campuses across the country. This is a personal crusade for David Horowitz. Horowitz set up “Campus Watch” to encourage students to “name names” and file reports against professors with “un-American” views – that is, any criticism of U.S. society. Students of American history remember that lynch mobs enforced “hooded Americanism,” KKK-style, when segregation was the law of the land.

Horowitz is pushing a grossly misnamed “Academic Bill of Rights” to “protect” students against “liberal bias” in the classroom. Attempts to get this embedded in the House Education Act are an effort to “intimidate faculty from presenting diverse views” and “allow government to supervise classroom teaching and dictate curriculum,” notes United University Professions (*The Chief*, 1 September).

Horowitz chose the state of Colorado as the launching pad for his bill. Passage was narrowly avoided when the University of Colorado agreed to purge itself. Early this year, however, the state legislature went after Ward Churchill, a tenured Ethnic Studies professor affiliated with the American Indian Movement. The right-wing yahoos raised a hue and cry over an essay Churchill wrote four years earlier on the 9/11 attacks. Colorado’s governor called for Churchill’s dismissal and the legislature began considering proposals to put ideological constraints on academic tenure. The university put Churchill on a 30-day review as a first step towards firing him.

The witch-hunt reached a hysterical pitch at Columbia University. A Zionist hit squad calling itself the David Project launched a wholesale attack on the Columbia University Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) and its faculty. They took particular aim at Joseph Massad, an assistant professor of modern Arab politics and intellectual history. Meanwhile, the New York City Department of Education canceled lectures by MEALAC department chairman Rashid Khalidi to high school teachers on the Near East. The *New York Sun* joined the pack, demanding the firing of professors with “pro-Palestinian bias.”

This was the most recent step in an escalating frenzy against any and all who dare criticize Zionism (the ideology of the state of Israel) or tell even part of the truth about the expulsion and racist oppression of the Palestinian people. Most prominent was the late Columbia professor Edward Said, a widely popular Arab “moderate” who found himself placed in the crosshairs of this vile crusade.

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CUNY Tops’ “Master Plan”: Yearly Tuition Hikes!

In its drive to make education unaffordable for working-class, minority and immigrant students, the CUNY administration is now pushing for tuition to be raised *every year!*

The plan to increase tuition 3%-4% annually was leaked by CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein at the September meeting of the University Faculty Senate. Professors wanted to protest the new attack on their students – but Goldstein walked out of the meeting.

The administration says these hikes would finance “initiatives” in CUNY’s Master Plan. Previous Master Plan initiatives have destroyed remediation and gutted one program after another, constantly “deepen[ing] the stratification of the university and limit[ing] student access,” as the Professional Staff Congress (the CUNY faculty union) has noted.

The real “initiative” behind tuition hikes is pricing most of us out of an education.

CUNY administrators cut budgets, slash TAP and raise tuition with the argument that “there’s not enough money.” Did you know these same CUNY tops gave themselves pay raises of up to \$100,000? In October 2003, the chancellor’s salary was raised by 40 percent, to \$350,000. He gets an additional \$90,000 for “housing costs,” a car and driver, and other perks.

A bevy of bureaucrats got in on the raises, from a swarm of vice chancellors to the 18 CUNY college presidents whose new salaries approach \$200,000 a year. It’s high time for the administration and Board of Trustees to be *abolished*. If any of them have useful skills – like teaching – they could try to get along on an adjunct’s salary of \$12,000-\$20,000 a year.

The university should be run by teachers, students and workers, in the interests of providing free, quality education for all. A militant, massive struggle must be waged to restore *open admissions with no tuition*, and a living stipend to make education a real possibility for working-class and minority students. If that sounds revolutionary, it’s about time for a revolution.

Revolution

Newspaper of CUNY students from the Internationalist Clubs and Revolutionary Reconstruction Club, for the program of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, published in accord with the Internationalist Group, U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International



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NYU & CUNY: Strike to Win!

By Abram Negrete

“On strike, shut it down, New York is a union town,” chant enthusiastic pickets in front of New York University in downtown Manhattan. NYU is the largest private university in the United States. Since November 9, graduate students there – who do much of the teaching and grading – have been on strike for basic union rights. The strike lines have repeatedly brought out hundreds of picketers.

They’re joined on the lines by members of many other unions, including professors and adjuncts from the City University of New York. CUNY is the country’s largest urban public university, and its teaching staff has been working without a contract for three years. On September 29, some 1,200 members of the CUNY faculty union jammed the Great Hall of Cooper Union for a meeting, where every reference to a possible strike was applauded. A strike at CUNY would face the Taylor Law banning public employee strikes in the state of New York.

A joint strike by NYU and CUNY, a strike to win, that brings in thousands of undergrads and mobilizes real workers power to shut down the campuses – that’s what we need to be organizing to defeat the arrogant administrations at both universities and win a real victory for us all. This is particularly important given the concerted assault against graduate student labor organizations across the country.

The spirit is certainly there among NYU strikers, who display enormous energy, determination and creativity on the picket lines. Stickers proclaim “Honor the Picket Line,” “NYU on Strike” and the popular favorite: “The Nerds Are Pissed.” (A variant reads, “Nerds On Strike to Make You Even Smarter.”) Hand-made signs cover the gamut from “This Medievalist Won’t Be a Serf in [NYU president John] Sexton’s Fiefdom” to “WASPY Babes for GSOC.” The Graduate Student Organizing Committee is part of United Auto Workers Local 2210.

A genuine campus spy story erupted in the strike’s second week. Outraged faculty members discovered that administrators had secretly joined “Blackboard” electronic discussion groups in order to monitor pro-union opinions. Professors angrily protested that this action “threatens academic freedom and autonomy.” Meanwhile, the administration set up a “snitch line” – a special phone number for those who want to rat out their TAs for going on strike.

Social science students can see the class dynamics of the city minute by minute, as truckers, delivery van drivers, phone

workers and cabbies honk in support of the strikers, while yuppie business types turn up their noses and hurry past.

Class is what it’s all about in a strike against NYU, a super-wealthy institution that’s one of the biggest landlords in the city. Rolling in money and stoked on a permanent power trip, the NYU administration thinks it can get away with blatant union-busting.

GSOC was originally recognized following a 2000 National Labor Relations Board decision recognizing NYU graduate students’ right to a union contract. But following a new NLRB decision in 2004, NYU issued a *diktat* that it would no longer negotiate with the union, and slashed grad students’ health care. Labor leaders note Bush stacked the NLRB (the government body whose *raison d’être* has always been to control and discipline labor). But, as an article in the *Village Voice* (16 November) noted, two top aides in Sexton’s union-busting crusade “emerged not from the GOP...but from the Clinton White House”: NYU’s VP for operations Jacob Lew, Clinton’s former Management and Budget head, and Cheryl Mills, one of Clinton’s lawyers during the impeachment flap. Yes, Virginia, the party of capital really is a bipartisan affair.

Reveling in his tough-guy stance, Sexton proclaimed that the union can “either die a quick death or a slow death,” but the university won’t budge. As in any strike, what counts here is *power*. Grad students do not have the kind of social power that transport workers or coal miners do. They are a vulnerable, usually transient workforce. The key to winning a campus strike lies in actually shutting the campus down.

A lively GSOC flyer, “Picketing 101,” reads “No scabbing! Don’t teach, research, or cross a picket line!” on one side and “Thank you for not crossing picket lines!” on the other. The chant “Picket lines mean don’t cross” was picked up with gusto when introduced by some CUNY Internationalist Club comrades. But it’s not enough to move classes off campus, as GSOC has requested and many sympathetic professors have done. In order to win this strike it is necessary to *shut down classes*, and to *bring out the rest of NYU workers* so that the university literally stops functioning.

On November 16, a group called Faculty Democracy called a “Town Hall Meeting on the Current Crisis on Campus,” inside NYU’s Silver Building. Many GSOC members asked whether they were supposed to go in, since it is a struck building. To their credit, GSOC picket captains built a large picket line around the building, and most told strikers not to go in.



Striking graduate students picket outside NYU’s Bobst Library.

Yet “The World Can’t Wait” (the latest liberal front group of the Maoist RCP) announced a “Drive Out the Bush Regime” meeting in a struck building. On November 19 a “Student Solidarity Meeting” was scheduled for another part of the struck campus. Sending the message that it is OK to cross picket lines after all undercuts the most basic understanding of what the strike is all about. Picket lines mean don’t cross, period. And the key is to build militant picket lines that no one *dares* cross.

Shut It Down – One Out, All Out!

The potential to win is shown by the willingness of many unionized truck drivers to stop deliveries rather than cross the picket lines. New York is a union town, and labor could mobilize thousands to shut the campus down in an instant. Yet the labor tops have limited themselves to the ritual arrest of AFL-CIO head John Sweeney at a September support rally.

NYU employees are divided into various separate unions whose leaders negotiate separate expiration dates and have kept operations going during this strike. Maintenance, supply, elevator repair, garbage disposal and all the other plant work goes on. AFT Local 3882, representing clerical workers, just signed a contract, with a clause against sympathy strikes. Most absurd and self-defeating is the existence of a *separate* union for NYU adjuncts, UAW Local 7902, which operates out of the same office as striking UAW 2110 – but continues to work during the strike!

During the 2003 Yale University strike, clerical and other workers mobilized en masse, shut down streets, paralyzed crucial work, and beat back a haughty, aggressive administration. Members of the Yale workers’ union have repeatedly come to the NYU picket lines to show their support. In contrast, the recent (2004 and 2005) Columbia University graduate assistant strikes were lost: UAW 2110 struck but the union tops had clerical and other workers, often members of the same union, continue to work.

The concept of dividing the workforce into separate unions (craft unionism) was overcome in auto, steel, transport and other strategic industries in the 1930s’ battles to build “industrial unions.” On college campuses seven decades later, splitting workers up this way just plays into the administration’s divide-and-conquer strategy.

Fighting to win the current NYU strike would help open the way to unite everyone into a single union of *all* university employees. This should include the professors, who don’t have their own NYU union and in most cases continue to teach; it clearly must not include administrators, campus cops and other enforcers for the employer.

Strike CUNY – Smash the Taylor Law!

The CUNY administration matches NYU’s when it comes to high-handedness, arrogance and contempt for those who do the work on campus. It has pushed a hard, anti-union, takeaway line in negotiations with the Professional Staff Congress, the faculty union whose contract expired back in ’02. Four years have gone by with no raise; the administration is bleeding the health-care Welfare Fund, and seeks a series of anti-union concessions. The CUNY teaching staff has been pushed beyond endurance.

Conditions are particularly dire for CUNY’s adjuncts, who do most of the teaching at City University but are paid starvation wages (amounting to about \$10 per student per month), with no job security, benefits or, in many cases, health insurance.

At the September 29 mass meeting at Cooper Union, PSC members heard the union leadership pledge not to negotiate a giveback contract. “Solidarity” was pledged by NYC school teachers’ union head Randi Weingarten – who just shoved a giveback contract down her members’ throats. Every mention of a possible job action was greeted by the standing-room-only crowd. When a CUNY adjunct and supporter of the Internationalist Group called to prepare for a strike and to smash the Taylor Law, he was enthusiastically applauded.

For their part, CUNY’s chancellor and trustees have vowed to play hardball, sending an e-mail to every member of the teaching staff, threatening to use New York State’s Taylor Law – which makes it a crime for public employees to “cause, instigate, encourage or condone a strike.”

The Taylor Law was passed one year after the 1966 subway strike, when TWU leader Mike Quill became an instant folk hero. Jailed for defying the no-strike Condon-Wadlin Act, he said, “The judge can drop dead in his black robes. I don’t care if I rot in jail – I won’t call off the strike!” The strikers stuck it out and won. A TWU official spoke at the September 29 PSC rally, yet the transport workers’ leadership, in thrall to the bosses’ politicians, refuses to use the power of this strategic union, which could shut the city down and spearhead a fight to smash the Taylor Law once and for all.

In her speech to the rally, PSC President Barbara Bowen noted that the administration’s intransigence is part of a “well-developed agenda of dismantling the public sphere,” that CUNY “cuts costs in the time-honored corporate way” by replacing full-time faculty with underpaid part-timers, and “the austerity agenda for CUNY is an expression of contempt for our students.”

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PSC rally in Midtown Manhattan, April 19. A strike by CUNY professors will have to take on and defeat the strikebreaking Taylor Law through mass action.

The Fight to Keep Hostos Open

Hostos Community College in the South Bronx opened its doors in 1970 following the victorious struggle to win open admissions at the City College of New York the year before. But city officials immediately started trying to roll back open admissions and shut down colleges serving black and Latino minority areas. From 1972 to 1978, a movement developed to “Save Hostos.” Today, amid the war on Iraq, CUNY is again under attack, from exclusionary tuition hikes to arrests of antiwar students.

On April 6, the Hostos Internationalist Club held a forum on the struggle to keep Hostos open. The event was attended by over 100 students. At the end students presented Professor Gerald Meyer with a shirt and cap, thanking him and others who fought to save a school that made it possible for many immigrants, especially those whose native language is not English, to get a college education. We print below a slightly abridged text of the forum.

Gerald Meyer* Professor Emeritus, Hostos Community College

In 1970, the College began, and it started because for the first time in the city’s universities, there was open admissions. That meant that any student in New York City who had a high school diploma, or the equivalent of a high school diploma, could go to college. Before 1970, only 5 percent of students in the City University were African Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans. 95 percent of the students in the City University were white. That changed because the students struggled.

What happened was, they had to build new schools in order to accommodate all the new students: Latino students, African-American students, etc. And one of the new colleges that was built was Eugenio María de Hostos Community College. That was how we began. We began in order to accommodate this new group of students that now had the *derecho*, the right, to be in college for the first time.

What we had however, was one building, over there [across the street]. It had been a factory. And that building was terrible, it was very small. There was no gymnasium, there was no bookstore, there was no cafeteria, no day care centers, there was nothing. And we rented the building, which I think was significant. We didn’t own the building.

I was head of the faculty union at the time. How it happened was so amazing. It’s like a *novela*. We had this wonderful leader of the student government, Dan Saunders. And he came to me, he said, “Gerry, this is disgusting, we have no space, we have no gym.” Across the street there was an empty building. Could we get that building for Hostos? And I said, let’s talk about it. In three months we got the building.

How did we get the building? We got the building because we struggled for it. We organized the students, we organized the faculty and we said, it’s an injustice. Why don’t we have what every other college has? Why are we the only college without a gymnasium? Why are we the only college that has no space? And we demanded equality, equal rights for our students at Hostos Community College. That is how it began. That was our demand, that we have equal rights.

We got buses. We went to the Board of Higher Education for the City of New York, with six, seven, eight buses. And there we had a demonstration, to demand space for the college. We had the union, we had the student government, we had the professors from the college and we had over 500 students in front of that building. The administrators looked out the window, they’d never seen anything like it in their lives.

Then we went to the community. We marched all the way up the Grand Concourse and all across 161st St, down

3rd Avenue, all the way down 149th St. Out of their windows, people shouted, ‘¡Luchando, luchando, Viva Hostos!’ And then we knew we had the community on our side, too.

We then went to the politicians. We said, we demand you give us help. We had teams, we went into the community. And we had a petition with thousands of names, a petition that people could sign to say that we had to have space for Hostos, we had to have a building for Hostos. In the process of this struggle, we went to Albany, and in Albany they passed a bill that gave the money to buy the building. What a victory for us, for the people.

But then, like a *novela*, it got a little more complicated. The building was there, and it just sat there. Nothing happened! Nobody ever went in; nobody ever went out. And it was becoming day by day clearer that they did not intend to do anything for us at all.

Then in 1975-76, there was a big crisis, a “*crisis fiscal*,” in New York City. And they said, “There must be sacrifice.” Who sacrifices? The poor sacrifice – only the poor sacrifice, the rich never sacrifice. The people who have no power, they stay powerless. The people with nothing, they take the food from them. They take the children from them. And the rich sit there and get more.

So now there has to be sacrifice. What’s going to be sacrificed? Hostos Community College. *I knew it*. I read in the paper, they said they’re going to have to cut the City University. That’s it, that’s us. Who else are they going to do it to? Us and the college of the African-Americans, Medgar Evers. That’s what they were going to cut. Always, always, always.

Our only defense is that there are a lot of us. But it doesn’t mean anything unless we are organized. If we’re not organized, it doesn’t mean anything at all. And if we’re organized and we don’t struggle, that also doesn’t mean anything, at all. But there are lots of us. We are the majority.

Now it became clear, that their intention, was to close the college. It wasn’t a question of not having a gymnasium. It wasn’t a question of not having a bookstore, it was a question of not having a college. And I must tell you, in that year, ’75-76, that struggle was one year, and we sacrificed everything to that struggle. It involved not only the students, [it involved] many of the faculty.

Also we went to the community. Because this is a community college. What does that mean? It’s supposed to have something to do with the community. Originally this college had a lot to do with the community. People knew that this was a hope, for them and their children, for something better in their life. And people were willing to struggle. They were not struggling only for buildings. They were struggling for an ideal, they were struggling for justice, they were struggling for their culture, for their rights.

What does “right” mean? If you don’t have an education, what rights do you have? To work for nothing your whole life? What are you going to get if you can’t go to college? To work? Where? For how much money? To be told what to do every minute, every hour, to have somebody over your shoulder, looking at what you’re doing, criticizing you? That’s your life? What kind of life is that?

Why do people have to have those choices? Because they’re poor? What kind of democracy is that, that can’t offer people equality of education? This is what we were struggling about. It was a wonderful struggle. I want you to know something, it wasn’t *la-di-da*, there was a lot of conflict, a lot of jealousy, a lot of envy, just like in the family, just like anything real. But ultimately the people who struggled, we won.

Probably the most important date of this college, is not



Internationalist photos



Gerald Meyer (above) speaking to a packed audience of students (left) at a Hostos Internationalist Club forum on the history of the struggle to save Hostos in the 1970s. Photos of the struggle were on display outside the student lounge.



the day it was born. It was April 6, 1976, when the Board of Higher Education officially closed this college. The Board of Education said the college is finished. And you know what we said? No. The most powerful word. “No” is a complete sentence. And we didn’t just say “no.” We backed that up with our own activities, our own action. We went to the people, we went to the community and we organized, organized, organized. Until eventually they had to say “maybe,” and then they said, “okay.”

You know, Thomas Jefferson said many beautiful things. His own life was not so good, his words were beautiful. And he said, the price of liberty is constant struggle. *El precio de la libertad, es lucha constante*. You don’t win liberty and have it forever. To keep it, you have to keep struggling. Because people with power, after you take it, they’re taking it out of your hands. You have to constantly struggle. That’s not such a nice reality. But that’s the truth.

We had saved the college. And what happened? Nothing. The building was still sitting there, nobody going in, nobody going out, nobody fixing anything, nobody changing anything. Why? Because there was a rented building across the street with a ten-year lease. The lease was signed in 1970 and in three more years Hostos would be closed.

So, what then happened was very dramatic. We met – teachers, faculty, students – and we decided that in order to save the college we had to take the building. And that’s what we did. We got into the building by a trick. The trick

* Gerald Meyer taught history at Hostos Community College for more than 20 years, and continues to teach courses there since retiring. He was an active participant in the struggle to save Hostos College during the mid-1970s when city officials sought to shut it down. His photos of the struggle are preserved in an archive in the Hostos College Library. He is on the editorial board of *Science & Society: A Journal of Marxist Thought and Analysis*. See also his article, “Save Hostos: Politics and Community Mobilization to Save a College in the Bronx, 1973-1978,” in *Centro Journal*, Spring 2003.



Scenes from demonstrations in winter 1975-76 to keep Hostos and Medgar Evers community colleges open.

was so interesting. The students said that they wanted to have a tour of the building just to see what the building was about.

The students got into the building. They hid inside the building, and when the guards left, they were inside the building. Then we had a meeting across the street, we had an *asamblea*, and we had a vote: "How many people want to take the building for Hostos?" And we came into the building. The students took the chairs and the tables from the other building and brought them into that building. Then the students began to clean the building, almost by instinct, because the building had been empty so long.

In the meantime, they called the police. Now the police came and they read out this edict that we were going to be arrested. Why? Because we were in the building illegally. That was true. But the second thing is, we were damaging the building. So we took the police and gave them a tour. The police saw that they were cleaning, everything, the bathrooms, everything.

And the police went back to the president of the college and they said, "Look, this is the South Bronx. We can't arrest these people. If you can get somebody to arrest them, get somebody. We're not going to arrest them." And the police went away.

Anyway, we were in the building. The teachers taught their classes. We brought literacy programs into the building, photographic programs into the building, we brought cultural programs into the building. And then ultimately, once again, the university said, "Okay, we'll get the money to fix the building." And really that was beginning of the security for this college.

But I just want to say to conclude this part of the story of the struggle at Hostos, that we were able to succeed because it was a mass movement. A mass movement of students. It involved the teachers. This is very important. Most students won't struggle so much if they see the teachers are not involved.

It involved the clubs. We created coalitions. We had a coalition with the student government, the Puerto Rican club, the Dominican club, we had a socialist club, we had a Christian club. We had many clubs of different nationalities, we had a science club. Later we had a gay club, we don't have this anymore. Why? I don't know.

[Voices from the audience: We do now!] Good, good!

I want to say one thing. The people who struggled, they sacrificed a lot. Sometimes

they couldn't go to class, sometimes they couldn't go home to take a shower. What's very interesting is, if you look at the biographies of the people who struggled, they are very successful people. Because by being involved in the struggle, you learn a lot. It makes you a bigger person.

So we really have to think when we look back at this struggle, it's to honor that. Because today we also need to learn how to struggle, and to succeed when we struggle, in order to protect what we have and to push forward to get what we need. As people in this country, we are ones who do the work, we are the ones who sacrifice, we are the ones who deserve in this so-called democracy to have what human beings are supposed to have.

Jan Norden Editor, *The Internationalist*

Gerry made a very important point, and that is that the very birth of Hostos College came out of the fight for open admissions. It was not a local fight in the South Bronx, it was part of a fight throughout the city. And in 1969, because of the action of the black and Puerto Rican students at City College, and the fact that this had a tremendous echo throughout New York City and in particular in the working class, they were able to overcome the resistance and the attempts to maintain a lily white institution.

Think about it, only 5 percent of the student population of City College at that time was non-white. CCNY was a segregated institution. This was part of a whole struggle against segregation, against racial oppression, throughout the United States. It came after the struggles in the urban ghettos throughout the country, and the ruling class in this city understood that if they didn't give in on these demands, there was going to be hell to pay.

So it came in that context, of the mobilization against the war in Vietnam, of mobilization for the rights of blacks

and Latinos throughout the country. That is what won, in part, the battle for open admissions in City College. In the end, although it was started by a very militant, very courageous sit-in at City College by the students there, the Central Labor Council of the city of New York came in and demanded that every person who graduated from high school would have a right to go to City University. And that's very important, it was presented as a right, and that right was won through the struggle of all sectors of the working people of this city.

Even though that was won, the powers that run this city were very much opposed to that from the beginning, and they have continued every since that time to try and roll it back. As soon as open admissions was won, something else happened: tuition was introduced. There was no tuition before. But as soon as black and Hispanic students were admitted in large numbers, and working-class students were admitted in large numbers, all of a sudden, they had to have tuition.

Oh, they had a "financial crisis." You know, this is the center of international finance, they have huge banks here who take in in one day, probably half a day, the entire budget of City University for five years. But they had their excuses, and therefore they would have to introduce tuition to soak the poor people, to soak the minorities, to soak the working people so they couldn't attend

school, and cut down the attendance.

The second thing they did, which Gerry was talking about, is they tried to close precisely the schools where minority communities were going. Hostos and Medgar Evers. Those were the two schools that were chosen to be shut down. And those two were schools that were set up essentially as a result of open admissions.

The third thing they did, more recently, in 1999, is they decided to eliminate the program that they called "remediation." And this was basically, in New York City today a majority of students in the city schools are immigrants. A majority of the students, 54% of the students in New York City schools are either born abroad or they live in families of first generation immigrants in which English is not spoken at home. In that situation, one of the things that the public schools have to do is be able to teach the students adequate English so that they can follow the courses. And, of course, to teach many other languages. There are over 100 languages spoken by students in the different schools in this city.

For a long time, they did not do this. They still don't do a very good job of this. My wife is a teacher of English as a Second Language in the city schools and also teaches at Hunter College. And she can give you many horror stories about this. I'll just give you one. She was teaching in Soundview [the Bronx neighborhood where African immigrant Amadou Diallo was shot by the police] to a group of immigrant students. And they had the Regents Exam. Now according to the new test schedules, all students graduating from high school have to pass the Regents exam. And so they have these students, many of whom had just come from the Dominican Republic, from Panama and so on. One of the questions was, "How did you feel the first time you saw a snowstorm?" Excuse me? What do you do if you never saw a snowstorm in your life? The funny thing was, on that day it snowed.

Another question was, "Describe the feeling that you have looking over the Grand Canyon." My wife commented, "You know, it would be more appropriate to ask them to describe the feeling that you have looking over the waste disposal plant in Mott Haven." These are culturally-biased questions which are guaranteed to ensure that the students fail, and on top of that many of them have wholly inadequate instruction in English.

For many years, this was made up for by programs in the City University. There are some programs here, CLIP is one of them. But there were other programs. Basically, everyone was able to attend English programs so that they would be able to improve their skills and fully benefit from a college education. This was eliminated. It was eliminated by right-wing

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Supporters of Miguel Malo came out amid driving rain to protest frame-up verdict, October 25, outside Hostos Community College in the Bronx.

Miguel Malo...

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Frame-Up Charges, A Rigged Trial, What's Next?

The trial proceedings took place before a packed courtroom filled with Miguel's supporters. This is the second trial that Malo, the former president of the Hostos Student Senate, has endured. (The first, in December 2003, ended in a mistrial.) After the verdict was read, the prosecutor vindictively demanded that bail be set at \$3,000, later reduced to \$500. This move, virtually unheard-of in campus protest cases, indicates that the prosecution intends to call for Malo to be jailed. His supporters posted bail, and he was freed some hours later. Miguel stated that he would appeal.

News of the verdict caused consternation among professors and students throughout the City University. The Hostos Student Senate, Hostos College Senate, Hostos chapter of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC – the faculty union) as well as the University Faculty Senate, University Student Senate, student governments on ten campuses and CUNY-wide PSC – indeed, virtually every representative body at CUNY – had all called, repeatedly, for the charges to be dropped. Many pointed out that the ominous verdict is a declaration of war on City University students, faculty and staff. Its purpose is to criminalize protest at CUNY.

The prosecution of Miguel Malo was an abomination. In the summations, Malo's attorney Karen Funk ripped apart the concoctions presented by the state. The prosecution pretended that 5'1" Miguel dragged a burly 5'11", 200-lb. campus cop 25 feet across the floor, supposedly threw himself face-first against a wall, then slid down the wall, landed face-down, flipped over onto his back, looked the officer in the eye, kicked him in the groin, then did it again. The campus cop supposedly only noticed this a half hour later, instead of immediately doubling over in pain. Medical tests on him at Lincoln Hospital turned up negative, showing no evidence of any injury whatsoever. This scenario is not only unbelievable, attorney Funk stressed, it is impossible.

Miguel was accused of violating a "public safety announcement" issued by the head of Hostos College security, Arnaldo Bernabe, banning any assembly inside the campus. Neither Miguel nor any other student or faculty ever saw this announcement at the time, and there is no such thing as an "assembly" of one person. Hostos professor Gerald Meyer testified that the atrium where Miguel was arrested was the "Times Square" of Hostos, where students and faculty traditionally handed out flyers and disseminated informa-

tion. This is precisely what CUNY authorities want to suppress with the aid of the courts.

A student witness, Aneudis Perez, testified that, contrary to the prosecution's ludicrous story, eight to ten campus security personnel surrounded Miguel, threw him to the ground, one cop putting his knee in Miguel's back, and dragged him off the floor. The arrest team, one of three that Bernabe had hidden in order to pounce on demonstrators, included members of CUNY's paramilitary "SAFE" team. Miguel simply held up a sign and began handing out flyers against cutbacks in bilingual classes and the imposition of a \$300 fee for ESL workshops. "They were only interested in arresting Miguel," Perez said. A photograph taken immediately after he was released from custody showed Miguel's back covered with welts.

During the trial, the prosecutor sought to intimidate the jury and observers, with six armed police and court officers who stood by menacingly. Three of Miguel's supporters were ejected. Experienced lawyers remarked they had never seen such a naked display of police power in such a tiny courtroom. The prosecution presented the case as a loyalty test. To believe Miguel Malo, the assistant district attorney argued, one would have to believe that the campus cop and head of security are "complete and utter liars." In fact, the prosecution's story was a total fabrication.

Amid an orgy of baiting, the prosecutor made it clear that the purpose was to stifle protest. "This is about a political agenda," she repeated, sneering at Malo and those who protested in August 2001 as people whose "priorities are not correct" and who seek to "change policy...by any means necessary." The prosecution ludicrously claimed that Miguel Malo *wanted to get arrested*. "He was trying to create chaos.... They had a lawyer on call... This is what they wanted to happen." So now contacting a lawyer is taken as a sign of criminal intent! Yet the only chaos was caused by the brutal arrest. And today Miguel faces up to a year behind bars.

Testimony during the trial revealed new and ominous aspects of the incident. Hostos security called in the CUNY paramilitary squad because they had received a "memo" about a possible demonstration. Just before the events of 15 August 2001, in turns out, CUNY security deputy chief John McKee came to Hostos, and with Bernabe decided to ban protest inside the campus. The prosecutor said that McKee was on the scene and observed everything, evidently lurking in the background during the arrest. Indicating the high priority given to the legal vendetta against Malo, Bronx D.A. Robert Johnson showed up in the courtroom on the first day of testimony.

So the entire crackdown on protest at Hostos Community College came straight

from the top, from CUNY security central, which has increasingly imposed police-state security measures, particularly on heavily minority campuses like Hostos. Now Hostos security chief Bernabe claimed in testimony that college authorities could "dictate" what protest would be allowed and where. Students and faculty should demand to know more about this sinister operation. Who sent the memo? Who authorized the protest ban?

Ever since CUNY security guards were turned into "peace officers" following the protests and building takeovers over budget cuts in 1991, and elite "SAFE Teams" (riot squads) were set up after the huge 1995 protests against a whopping tuition hike, "security" at City University has been aimed at persecuting student activists. The heads of CUNY security have been brought in from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and lately from the FBI Anti-Terrorism Task Force. Miguel Malo is their target today; tomorrow...

Anti-Immigrant Offensive at CUNY

In August 2001, the CUNY "peace officers" were on a rampage, but they were not "out of control." In fact, they were tightly controlled. College authorities had vowed not to be embarrassed again as they were that May when hundreds of students sat in at the president's office protesting cutbacks. CUNY security geared up for mass demonstrations, banning protests and flooding the campus with dozens of campus cops from the paramilitary SAFE team. Instead they found one student, Miguel Malo, standing outside the third floor cafeteria with a sign and some flyers. He was arrested to justify their overkill, and because he was protesting policies that amounted to a purge of immigrant students ordered directly by the CUNY chancellor's office.

Before Miguel Malo was tackled and handcuffed on August 15, three other students had already been arrested. One was a Hunter student who was arrested as he was leaving for asking the name of the officer who refused to let him enter the building. A second was arrested for holding up a sign, saying "Stop Arresting Our Students. Let Them Exercise The First Amendment of the Constitution." A third was arrested for asking why the second was arrested. The next day, a member of the University Faculty Senate Executive Committee was arrested for trying to enter Hostos. The head of the Professional Staff Congress was threatened with arrest should she try to enter.

It is important to understand that the persecution of Miguel Malo is no isolated event. The vendetta against Miguel is part of a broader attack on immigrants' rights, and of the drive to regiment universities and American society in general for imperialist war. The elimination of ESL and bilingual

courses, which Miguel was protesting, is part of an anti-immigrant reaction that intensified in the war hysteria after the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. But it didn't begin then.

At City University, there has been a relentless push by reactionary sectors to undo "open admissions" ever since it was instituted in 1969 following a militant occupation of CCNY by black and Latino students. Once everyone with a New York City high school diploma, or its equivalent, had a right to attend city colleges, they were transformed from lily-white institutions into a university with a majority of black, Latino and Asian students. This irked the racist elitists, who tried to shut down two community colleges (Hostos and Medgar Evers) created for the Hispanic and black populations of New York (see "The Fight to Keep Hostos Open," page 4).

Simultaneously, tuition was introduced in the mid-1970s in city colleges which had been free for more than a century. By continually jacking up tuition, CUNY trustees, the city and state governments managed to get rid of thousands of poor and minority students. Now they want to institute *yearly* tuition increases (see article, page 2).

By the late 1990s, the elitists were on the warpath to eliminate the last vestiges of open admissions. Immigrants were their prime targets. In 1997, more than 100 prospective graduates at the originally bilingual (Spanish-English) Hostos Community College were denied a degree by springing a last-minute punitive exam on them. Two years later the Board of Trustees under chairman Benno Schmidt (acting as hatchet man for NYC Republican mayor Rudolph Giuliani), required all students entering four-year colleges to pass an English test. In addition, 18,000 students from families receiving welfare payments were forced to drop out as part of the slave labor "workfare" program instituted by the Democratic administration of Bill Clinton.

Political appointees from the Giuliani administration were installed as heads of various colleges in the 18-campus CUNY system. The Board of Trustees was stacked with right-wing reactionaries so that by 2004 it looked like a Bush II remake of Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP). In the Spring of 2001, the administration of Hostos (staffed by flunkies of Giuliani ally Herman Badillo) moved to axe the few remaining Spanish-language programs. Bilingual mathematics and other courses were eliminated, and a \$300 fee for ESL workshops was sprung on students at the last minute. This was what Miguel Malo was protesting.

Since Miguel's arrest virtually all bilingual courses have been eliminated. English-language instruction for non-native English speakers has been relegated to non-credit



Protesters chanted: “¡Miguel Malo inocente!” and “¡Todos somos Miguel!” (We are all Miguel).

programs, and the enrollment of Hostos has shrunk substantially, as intended. Now they want to “finish the job” by locking up the student leader who had the courage to protest this racist anti-immigrant purge. Miguel Malo stood up for immigrant students, we must stand up for him!

The CUNY Internationalist Clubs fight for full open admissions, so that any high school graduate has the right to attend City University; for the elimination of tuition (and the provision of a living stipend to enable low-income students to attend); for the abolition of the Board of Trustees, and for student/teacher/worker control of the university. We also demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Imperialist War Abroad Means Police-State Repression “At Home”

The persecution of Miguel Malo is also intimately connected to the imperialist war on Iraq and Afghanistan, which is also a war on working people, minorities, the poor and minorities in the United States. Demonstrators at protests in defense of Miguel have repeatedly chanted, “War on Iraq, CUNY under attack!” The U.S.’ terrorist “war on terror” directly impinged on Miguel’s case as his second lawyer, renowned radical civil liberties lawyer Lynne Stewart, was no longer able to defend him after being convicted last February in a frame-up prosecution of providing material aid to terrorism by defending a client for whom she was the court-appointed attorney. Stewart now faces up to 30 years in jail, while the right to a lawyer is gravely threatened.

Imperialist wars have always been accompanied by an assault on civil liberties. During World War I, leftist opponents of the war such as Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs and the revolutionary syndicalists of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW – known as the “Wobblies”) were thrown into jail by the hundreds. In World War II, 28 leaders of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and of the Minneapolis Teamster locals that they led were prosecuted and jailed for “sedition” under the anti-communist Smith Act because of their revolutionary opposition to the second imperialist world war. During the Korean War, as the anti-Soviet Cold War was getting underway, the leadership of the Communist Party was jailed and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of CP members lost their jobs.

Immediately after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan, City University general counsel Frederick Schaffer decreed that undocumented immigrants would henceforth be treated as foreign students, even if they had lived in New York for years. This meant more than doubling their tuition with the effect of driving thousands of students out of school.

The Internationalist Group took the lead in organizing protest against this immigrant-bashing measure, calling a united-front protest of several hundred in November 2001. Due to the outcry, state law was later changed to partially roll back this immigrant-bashing measure.

Since 2003, the U.S. war on Iraq has deeply affected colleges and universities across the country. The government has sought to enlist academia in its program for “war without end.” When in 2004 an attempt was made to establish a Homeland Security program at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, we exposed this abomination. An article (“Abu Ghraib 101 at BMCC? ‘Fatherland Security’ Hits CUNY”) was pub-

rates have led the Pentagon to seek to entice students to enlist in the military. At Bronx Community College, the Revolutionary Reconstruction Club managed to keep military recruiters off campus for an entire month last Spring, driving off Army, Marines, Air Force teams and then holding a united-front protest jointly endorsed by the Christian Club, the Muslim Club, the Cheerleading Club and faculty members.

At City College, however, three students and a staff worker were arrested last March for protesting the presence of military recruiters at CCNY. The administration came down particularly hard on the staff employee arrested, Carol Lang, who is still being victimized, now facing a second suspension in addition to loss

Hostos and City University. One noted that in the Fall of 2001, shortly after his arrest, Miguel and another Hostos student were joint plaintiffs in a suit against the City of New York to recover \$19 million that had been withheld from community colleges by the Giuliani administration. This cutback violated a law that had been enacted to ensure that community colleges didn’t get shortchanged in hardball budget negotiations.

As a result of that suit, *Malo and Rivera v. Giuliani et al.*, roughly \$11 million was restored. The Hostos PSC chairwoman issued a leaflet titled “Hostos Heroes” saying, “Miguel deserves our deepest gratitude, not jail time.” As one faculty member remarked, usually when someone gets millions of dollars for CUNY they name a building after them. But not in Miguel’s case.

Letters from faculty and staff on behalf of Miguel show an acute awareness of what sending him to prison would portend for CUNY. A retired professor of history wrote: “I have a vivid memory of intimidation of students in the 1950s, when I was enrolled in City College, now also part of CUNY. Dissent was viewed as treason then, at a time when presumed traitors, like the Rosenbergs, were actually executed. We are not at such a stage now, but I fear that Miguel Malo’s treatment could be an early sign of a similar danger.”

From Hostos College itself at least 20 letters were sent to the judge. One professor quoted Martin Niemöller, Martin Luther King Jr. and cited the case of Rosa Parks (“arrested, convicted and fined \$10.00, plus \$4.00 in court costs”). “I personally know Mr. Miguel Malo,” the professor wrote. “He is a gentle person who tried to express issues that others were not able to express for themselves.”

If Miguel Malo is sentenced to prison, there should be a storm of protest from students, faculty and staff of the City University, as well as from working people, immigrants and all defenders of democratic rights. The guilty verdict is already an outrage, a jail sentence would compound the injustice. ***CUNY should be shut down by mass action over such an abomination.***

The CUNY Internationalist Clubs insist, along with many hundreds of others at the City University of New York, that ***Miguel Malo is innocent.*** Those who have committed a despicable crime are the CUNY administration, the Bronx District Attorney and the capitalist courts. They have given Miguel the same treatment they always give to those who fight injustice.

All out December 13 – Miguel Malo must not go to jail!

To contact CUNY Action to Defend Miguel Malo, call (212) 460-0983.

Solidarity with Miguel Malo from Brazil



The following motion was passed on the evening of October 24, the day the verdict against Miguel Malo was delivered:

We, second-year students at the Rio Grande do Sul Junior College, attending a forum on “From Zumbi to the Iraq War” sponsored by the Liga Quarta Internacionalista do Brasil (LQB – Fourth Internationalist League of Brazil), express our condemnation and indignation over the guilty verdict and possible jailing of CUNY student Miguel Malo, who is innocent.

This repression is directly linked to the Iraq war. It is repression by the impe-

rialist, bourgeois and racist justice system which is persecuting Malo because together with other students he has defended bilingual education at CUNY and fought against the recruitment of students for war at the university. We fight for the end of capitalism! Only under socialism will there be respect for all ethnic groups.

Long live socialism!
We demand immediate freedom for Miguel Malo and an end to the trials against him!

Down with racist capitalist justice!
Down with imperialism!

lished in *Revolution* No. 2 (October 2004) detailing the sinister program. This article was widely reproduced as faculty and students at BMCC raised an uproar. In the face of this outcry, the program was eventually shelved (see article, p. 11).

Currently, the escalation of repression at City University has focused on suppressing protests against military recruiters. As the U.S. runs up against manpower shortages for its colonial occupation of Iraq, falling recruitment

of pay. Carol has joined in protests for Miguel and attended his trial, while CUNY Action to Defend Miguel Malo has joined in efforts in defense of Lang.

All Out December 13: Miguel Malo Must Not Go to Jail!

In the flood of letters that have been sent to Judge Catherine Bartlett asking that Miguel not be sentenced to prison, many have emphasized his struggle to improve education at

Save Hostos....

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corporate education specialists who want to privatize the universities. These are the same people who are behind the Edison schools, privatized schools that are trying to replace public secondary education to make it a profit-making enterprise. In fact, the head of the City University Board of Trustees, Benno Schmidt, is also on the Board of Trustees of Edison Schools.

And so you have a layer in the ruling class, the capitalist class that runs this country, that sees higher education and to a certain degree secondary education as a new "profit platform." A lot of money can be made there. And they don't like the fact that a lot of tax money goes into schools. So they've been reducing the amount of the budget for public higher education. The amount of money going to CUNY goes down gradually, tuition goes up constantly, student aid goes down constantly. And they're trying to reduce the size of the different colleges. Hostos, for example, today has less students than it did 2 or 3 years ago. This is deliberate. It's part of an overall program of the bourgeoisie, the ruling class, internationally.

I'd like to call attention to a pamphlet that's put out by the faculty union here, the Professional Staff Congress, on *Globalization, Privatization and War – In Defense of Public Education in the Americas*. This was a colloquium that they held, and one of the talks was titled "Public Education is Not For Sale." Except unfortunately, that's exactly what is happening.

One thing that was pointed out in this pamphlet is that under the North American Free Trade Agreement, higher education was declared a commodity, to be bought and sold. One of the rules they have in NAFTA is that there should be no government subsidies for producers in one country, because that discriminates against the companies in the other country. And, of course, higher education is greatly subsidized by the government. So they're putting on pressure to eliminate these subsidies.

In addition, the World Bank, which is one of these international financial institutions – basically a cartel of the world's bankers – put out a report in 1998 when they called a World Conference of Higher Education. They said "the reform agenda of the 90s and almost certainly extending well into the next century is oriented to the market, rather than to public ownership or to governmental planning and regulation. Underlying the market orientation of tertiary [or higher] education is the ascendancy almost worldwide of market capitalism and the principles of neo-liberal economics" ("The Financing and Management of Higher Education: A Status Report on Worldwide Reforms" [October 1998]). So they recommended that governments around the world introduce mechanisms so that higher education would serve the market.

The market, that's an abstraction. What does this mean concretely?

Let me tell you. There was a strike in Mexico, in the National University of Mexico, that lasted for 10 months, a student strike, from May 1999 until February of 2000. One of the reasons for this strike was they tried to introduce tuition and cut back enrollment at the National University. The students in that strike got hold of a copy of the World Bank report I quoted earlier where it laid out what the consequences were of this movement toward the marketization of higher education. It said, "Radical change, or restructuring, of an institution of higher education means either fewer and/or different faculty, professional staff, and support workers. This means layoffs, forced early retirements, or major retraining and reassignment, as in: the closure of inefficient or ineffective institutions."



Workers defense guards of the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME) at the National University, July 1999. Banner says: "We Electrical Workers Support the Demands of the University Students – For Free Education!"

So that is what they're talking about concretely. They want to close down certain institutions that don't serve their needs. And what might those be? Well, we already saw, in the 1970s, when they had a fiscal crisis, what institutions they first sought to close: Hostos and Medgar Evers. So that is what we're talking about here in the concrete, attempts to shut down whole sectors of public education and transform them into institutions of private education in which the students have to pay enormous costs. Basically the way they do that is to get loans, and then they would be enslaved, having to pay back those loans for years.

So the students in Mexico City – we have a group down there, the Grupo Internacionalista, they participated in this – they had a strike. This university has 400,000 students, it's huge. The main campus has 250,000 students. During the strike which lasted for ten months, 40,000 students occupied the campus day and night. There were no police on campus. The government did not come in at all. The students lived there, they organized their cooking, they did everything on campus, insisting that there was going to be no tuition and no cutback in the enrollment.

So the government didn't like this, they had signed agreements with the World Bank, they were going to implement these programs and so on. So they threatened in July of 1999 that they were going to come in and remove the students if the students didn't get out on their own.

I want to raise this because one of the key points that Gerry was making in his talk is that the struggle to defend Hostos was part of a wider struggle. It would not have succeeded if it didn't have community support. I would add, it needs to have the support of the working class. Because this is a class society that's run by the people who serve the interests of capital. We are not those capitalists; we are the people that they exploit and our class brothers and sisters have to be behind us if we are going to win against these powerful forces.

So what happened in Mexico? Our comrades had been saying, "Look, students don't have the power on their own to defeat the government. The government has the army, the police, it has much more power than we do. So we have to go to the working class and get them to join with us. And in particular, we should approach the electrical workers, who have a lot of power. For one thing, they can turn the lights out. They also have a couple generating plants right near the university and we should ask them to help us form worker-student defense guards, to prevent the government from coming in and smashing our strike."

So people said, "Oh, that's a very nice idea, you Marxists, you know, communists, I thought that was all dead and gone." Whatever. But then, as the deadline approached,

people began to listen. "Oh yeah, that's right, they're talking about the army coming in on July 7th, what are we going to do?" So our comrades were finally able to prevail. The student strike committee voted to endorse the call for workers defense guards and to authorize representatives to go to the unions. So our comrades did. They went and talked to the unions, and it looked like there might be some positive acceptance.

Then came July 7. The students had scouts outside the main army base in Mexico City, the Campo Militar No. 1. And they got calls in the morning that the army was beginning to move. They were lining up what they call *tanquetas*, which are sort of light tanks on wheels instead of treads. A column was forming up and it looked they were about to move. So our comrades, along with some of the other people from the strike committee and some university workers decided, okay, this was it, they had to do it now. So they went down to the headquarters of the electrical workers in Central Mexico City.

One of them got up and said, more or less, "*Compañeros*, your children, your brothers and sisters, your parents are threatened. The army is mobilizing. We must resist. We are calling on you, *compañeros*, to form a committee, a worker-student defense group to defend the university."

Then one of the bureaucrats of the union came out, they explained the situation and the government ultimatum to him, and he said we've heard you, we've heard about your proposals at the plants, and we'll take it under advisement. So they called up from down there, and said, "Oh, it looks like we failed, it doesn't look too good." About 20 minutes later they got a call, saying "The SME [the electrical workers union] is going to be arriving at 5 o'clock at the National University with 150 workers to form part of the worker-student defense guard. Can you please organize a reception?" And so they did.

We have a pamphlet here on *Marxism and Higher Education*, that's worth getting. There is a picture of that worker-student defense guard. This is historic, the first time it had happened in decades in Latin America that I know of. They stood guard there for weeks. And the army didn't come. Because they understood that the electrical workers' move was not just the 150 workers that were there at any one time. They just have to pull the switch and power goes out all over Mexico City.

So that is an example of the tremendous power of the working class and how it can in fact be mobilized for the common struggle against a common enemy, because these workers were also facing privatization.

Another example from the strike. So this lasted for a while and

then the administration got fed up and they decided they were going to invade anyway. So they were again preparing to attack, but one night at 1 o'clock in the morning, all of a sudden several hundred metal workers showed up, and all around this campus which has a perimeter of about 15 miles they put up metal barriers, not fences, but metal sheets that extended for 5 miles on all of the main roads. So they would have to break through a solid wall of metal to get in.

So when we talk about the need for the students to ally with workers, this is something that is not pie in the sky. It can be realized, it can be carried out.

In the end, the army came in, they arrested more than 1,000 students. Altogether five of our comrades and supporters, and one father who was there with his son, were arrested. Many of the students stayed in jail for several months. But today there is no tuition at the National University and they were not able to cut back on the registration. So even though they had to face serious arrests, they were able to defend that.

Now on the basis of that, I want to make just a couple of general remarks about the struggle for public higher education and for the City of University of New York. And that is that this must be part of a struggle for workers revolution. This capitalist society is not going to defend higher education. Public higher education is a democratic right, but it's not going to be defended simply on a democratic basis. Because the people who rule this society are going to try and defeat it.

In order to fight for public higher education, at schools like Hostos and elsewhere, there has to be a struggle for open admissions, for student-teacher-worker control of the university, for abolition of the administration. Not just to elect other people, but to actually abolish who sits over on 80th St and decides the fate of this institution and replace it with a democratic administration of those in the university. For the expropriation of private universities, for police off campus. They represent the ruling class here, the armed first of the people who run this society.

A perfect example of that is Miguel Malo who is a student who was arrested here in August 2001 simply for protesting cutbacks in ESL and bilingual programs. His case is still in court; he faces up to a year in jail for protesting those budget cuts right here, just outside the cafeteria.

Finally, it has to be part of the struggle against both of the capitalist parties in this country, the Republicans and the Democrats who are all part of the attack on public higher education. It's about the fight to build a workers party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution. Karl Marx in the *Communist Manifesto*, written in 1848, talked about the need for a fight for free public education. But to this day, even though this is simply a democratic right, it is those who are fighting for revolution, for the people who labor to rule society, who are the only ones truly defending free public quality higher education and fighting to make this accessible to everyone. ■

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Venezuela...

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to Caracas. Caracas is located in a valley with the Cordillera de la Costa mountains to the north. These mountains are so high and steep that transport has to go through tunnels built during the 1950s. No matter which direction you approach Caracas from, what makes the biggest impression are the countless multicolored *ranchos*, impoverished slum dwellings built everywhere on the mountainsides especially around Caracas. They are very precarious and subject to deadly mudslides. This is where the Venezuelan army massacred two thousand poor people in 1989, setting the stage for everything that has happened since.

The moment we reached Caracas it was clear that the festival was underway. Everywhere, on street walls, light posts, along the expressway, and in metro train cars, there were bulletins and posters advertising the festival. Officially, it consisted of a week of events such as forums, concerts, sport events, and trips. But for the revolutionaries the most valuable things were not the organized forums, though we took part in those with sharp criticisms. Our main objective was to counterpose our Marxist politics to those of the Stalinists and nationalists, to lay the foundation for winning over serious young people and workers to fighting for a classless society where racism, sexism and poverty no longer exist.

The best way we saw to do this was by distributing literature at a fixed location. So we of the LFI set up base at the Teatro Teresa Carreño, which was the center of activities throughout the Festival. The Teatro was where most other delegations had set up their own tables.

Once we established our area of work, we arrived daily for an average of ten hours of non-stop work. Literally hundreds of people came by the table every day to look at the literature, chat and debate. We were engaging in discussions with everyone we could. The most interesting time came right after six o'clock. This is when Venezuelans coming from work would begin to file into the lower level of the Teatro, where our team was located. With the arrival of the Venezuelans our political literature would come into high demand, moving our team into high gear. One of my highlights is the older woman who stopped at our table to specifically ask for Leon Trotsky material. She did not leave until she had purchased an essay by Trotsky.

Our political literature contrasted with the mostly material goods such as jewelry offered by many delegations. (This included Brazilian Stalinists who are part of Lula's popular-front government and for several days did nothing but sell T-shirts of the Brazilian flag. There was also an incredible range of Che T-shirts, but this was not the cheap commercial use of the image we see in the U.S.: a lot of those wearing them want to be revolutionaries somehow.)

Time and time again we were approached by Venezuelans who wanted to know what we thought about Chávez and the process that was underway. We would explain the dangers of having illusions in Chávez's bourgeois populist government and offer an 8-page Spanish-language article on our appraisal of the situation in Venezuela. The headline was, "Workers to Power!" This became our most popular literature piece. (It's translated in the current issue of *The Internationalist*, No. 22.) There were other groups there which claim to be Trotskyists (like Militante, which is part of the tendency led by Ted Grant and Alan Woods in Britain), but the LFI was the only tendency which openly proclaimed its adherence to Trotsky's Fourth International, and the only one which didn't try to sidle up to Chávez. In fact, the Grantites tried to get us in trouble with security, but our Mexican

comrades defused this effectively.

Being from the United States, I used every opportunity to combat the illusions in the Democratic Party that some Venezuelans had, explaining how the twin capitalist parties of racism and war, the Democrats and Republicans, work together in "good cop, bad cop" fashion. Many were shocked to hear that during the 2004 presidential elections John Kerry proposed to wage a smarter colonial war of occupation by adding 40,000 troops in Iraq!

I mentioned that Kerry, as well as Bush, is hostile to the Venezuelan regime because it is not bowing to all the demands of U.S. imperialism. This was shown in Kerry's March 2004 statement that Chávez was becoming a dictator and that democracy in Venezuela was in danger. These Venezuelans knew very well that it was the U.S.-masterminded right-wing opposition that had launched a failed coup in 2002 against the country's democratically elected president.

Many Universidad Central de Venezuela students were interested in our CUNY paper *Revolution*. It was my comments on the fight for black liberation, as a revolutionary in racist capitalist America, that were in the highest demand from Venezuelans, once they found out that I live in New York City. These conversations were often sparked by the very popular Mumia T-shirts we had on our table, with a photo of the death-row black journalist and the text "Mobilize the Power of the Working Class to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!" in Portuguese, English, French, Spanish and German. Venezuelan youth would recognize Mumia and ask about his current situation.

I understood why there was such interest in the black question when I moved to a hotel in Caracas to avoid the two-hour trip from Ciudad Miranda. In the short time I was in the capital city I came across the racism of Venezuelan society. Late one night I was able to visit some commercial districts. The first was San Ignacio. It was almost all white, except for the people working the doors and the shops. Except for the fact that people were speaking Spanish, I would have thought I was no longer in Venezuela.

The second was Las Mercedes. The difference was notable. Las Mercedes at this time of night was a hang-out for poor teenagers; some as young as 13 were hanging out in front of music clubs. Las Mercedes could easily have been South Central L.A., whereas San Ignacio with all its money and yuppie crowd looked more like midtown Manhattan. Then there was my experience of being stopped by military police, for doing nothing other than walking around at night. They let me go only after discovering I was attending the youth festival. A block down I saw other military police harassing young "colored" men. Unfortunately for them they were neither with the festival nor living in the wonderful revolutionary paradise many festival-goers swore they were visiting.

It was in Caracas that I got access to television, where I saw how the privately owned media operate in Venezuela. They were flooding the airwaves with rumors that the Chávez government was paying our hotel and food expenses, and that many of us were actors paid by Chávez! Meanwhile the state-owned Venezuelan Television was constantly broadcasting images, delegate interviews and live feeds from the festival.

One reason the festival was held in Caracas was to give us a chance to see for ourselves how the Venezuelan people were standing up to U.S. political attacks and imperialist designs. Festival delegates were given the chance to visit schools, barrios, factories, and other states so that they could ask Venezuelans their thoughts on the unfolding events in this country, where there is a very sharp class polarization. Delegates also heard about the social programs that have made the Chávez government popular with the poorer

sectors of society. These programs, known as *misiones*, as well as the Chávez regime's close relations with Cuba, have earned it the intense animosity and blatant intervention (as in the 2002 coup) of the American capitalists, who have their own plans for Venezuela and the rest of Latin America. The LFI underlines that the attacks against Venezuela are part of a worldwide imperialist offensive. As well as insisting on the need to "Defend Iraq, Defeat U.S. Imperialism!" we defend Venezuela from the attacks of U.S. imperialism.

But as we wrote in our article, the missions of the capitalist government "don't alter the regime of private property of the means of production one bit. *They do not solve fundamental questions* like poverty and unemployment." Later on it notes, "in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the military commanders and judges persecute the peasants and protect the owners of the large estates." Chávez is the head of a capitalist state.

As we often pointed out, you can't end poverty under capitalism, and the capitalist state isn't going to convert to socialism. For all his talk of "21st-century socialism," Chávez is not talking about a socialist revolution of the proletariat. It will take a socialist revolution in Venezuela to address poverty, and that isn't something Chávez can decree: the socialist revolution requires the action of an organized working class led by a revolutionary Leninist party.

On the last day of the festival, the Poliedro de Caracas stadium was filled with thousands of youth from around the world. Chanting "*Uh ah, Chávez no se va,*" (Chavez won't go) given their Stalinist leadership many would leave as they arrived, uncritical Chávez supporters with no revolutionary program for real workers' solidarity with the people of Venezuela or real understanding of the political situation. With the racial divisions, deep-going poverty and constant military presence, I could not share the illusion of many festival delegates that Venezuela is already experiencing a socialist revolution.

Mexican Comrade at Caracas Youth Festival

"Confidence in the Bourgeoisie and the Military Only Leads to Defeats as in Chile, We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!"

One of the forums at the International Youth Festival in Caracas last August was on the topic of parties and political struggles in Latin America. The speakers spoke in vague generalities, but all made a point of their political support for Hugo Chávez.

Our comrade Samuel of the Grupo Internacionalista spoke in the discussion period. "I am a militant of the League for the Fourth International, of its Mexican section. All the speakers and participants have talked about socialism and revolution, but no one has defined what they are. We say that you cannot have socialism so long as the bourgeoisie has not been expropriated, which is what has to happen in Venezuela: mobilize the power of the working class. And for that we call for a genuine revolutionary workers party, that assumes the task of leading all the exploited and oppressed to expropriate the bourgeoisie."

At this point, the audience burst out in applause. Our comrade went on, emphasizing the need to fight for class independence from the bourgeoisie:

"One can't place any confidence in an alliance with the military. You only have to look at Chile and its experience with the Unidad Popular. Salvador Allende kept the working class disarmed and believed up to the last minute that the military would save his government. Then came the repression of the left. We have to arm the working class politically. We communists don't call for national unity, but for taking the class



Leon Trotsky in 1940.

What was clear to me was that under heavy U.S. imperialist pressure, many poor and working people in Venezuela have come to see the importance of organizing against imperialism and the local capitalist class which is dependent on the imperialists. They are proud to be resisting U.S. imperialism, and if Chávez calls this a "Bolivarian revolution," they accept the term (at least for now). It has been the willingness of the poor and working population to defend what gains they have made in the face of the mounting pressure from the U.S. that has shifted the Chávez regime's stance further to the left.

I left Caracas on the morning of August 16th, passing one last time through the mountains with all their *ranchos*, recalling the conversations I had with the many wonderful and radical youth I encountered. I was more convinced than ever that the solution for Venezuela is the same as for us here: socialist revolution. For that to happen we need to seize on the increasing class polarization in Venezuela to begin the urgent task of building the nucleus of an authentic Trotskyist party. ■

struggle to its ultimate conclusion. Confidence in the military and the bourgeoisie only leads to defeats. The working class has suffered many defeats in recent decades, and we can't afford new defeats."

This also met with applause. Comrade Samuel went on to answer a Mexican speaker who had talked of Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the Mexican Party of the Democratic Revolution: "It has to be said that López Obrador is no leftist, and the PRD is the party that during the nearly ten-month-long National University strike continually sent riot police to beat us. The PRD is a bourgeois party!"

He ended up stressing the international character of the struggle for socialism:

"The Soviet Union demonstrated that it is not possible to develop socialism in one country. To call for that today is ridiculous. That is why it is necessary to develop socialism across national boundaries. We say that the working class has no fatherland! For proletarian internationalism! Develop the socialist revolution internationally! Reforge the Fourth International!"

Again there was considerable applause from the audience. A Venezuelan youth came up to say that "your remarks went right to the point. You said what no one else dared to touch, the struggle for socialism and class independence." During the following days, a number of Venezuelan and Latin American youth approached our table to get Trotskyist literature and continue discussing. ■

Government and “Minutemen” Step Up Anti-Immigrant Attacks

Internationalist photo



Demonstrators picket Minuteman event in Babylon, Long Island, September 10.

by Erica Torres and Charlie Morán

With the pretext of making the borders more “secure” against terrorist attacks, George W. Bush has signed into a law a \$32 billion “domestic security” bill, aimed primarily at workers seeking to come to the United States. This bill will give the Department of Homeland Security \$82 million to “improve and expand Border Patrol stations” and \$70 million to “install and improve fencing, lighting, vehicle barriers and roads.” It provides \$3.7 billion for “immigration and customs enforcement so ‘illegal immigrants’ can be found and returned home,” while funding new immigration enforcement agents, criminal investigators and “2,000 new beds to detention facilities” (*Chicago Tribune*, 18 October).

This follows “Fatherland Security” chief Michael Chertoff’s call for “significantly strengthened” federal “border control efforts.” Last month, Chertoff and Bush tried to divert attention from the administration’s several crises with some cheap immigrant-bashing. Chertoff vowed to a Congressional committee to “return every single illegal entrant – no exceptions.” That’s an estimated

12 million people, overwhelmingly workers. If they actually tried to pull this off, the U.S. economy would nosedive.

This is the most recent of a series of attacks by the bourgeoisie against immigrant workers and their families. This is a bipartisan onslaught. Senators Dianne Feinstein (Democrat–California) and Jon Kyl (Republican–Arizona) author new anti-immigrant legislation; California’s “Governor” Arnold Schwarzenegger eggs on armed “Minutemen” who take aim at immigrants, while New York’s Senator Hillary Clinton, a Democratic presidential hopeful, is one of the main pushers of Homeland Security repression.

The Bush administration tested the waters for the draconian Real ID Act, and saw no real struggle to oppose it, so it feels empowered to continue the assault against immigrants in particular and the working class in general. The Real ID law, once implemented in the whole nation, is intended to prevent “illegal aliens” from driving. The law would prepare the way for a sinister national ID card, a police-state measure that many right-wing Republicans and liberal Democrats have long sought.

As everyone knows, immigrant work-

starters, strike committees should be elected now, at every CUNY campus. These committees should bring together PSC members, other campus workers and large numbers of students, mobilizing to shut the entire CUNY system down tight and bring in the power of the heavy battalions of NYC labor. A real fight for the right to education would get an enormous response from the multiracial, largely immigrant working class of this city.

Against the haughty diktats of the CUNY and NYU tops, we call for abolition of the administration, for student-teacher-worker control of higher education, and for open admissions, no tuition and a living stipend for students, to make education available to all. A struggle of this breadth and scope could simultaneously turn back the wave of attacks on the right to campus protest (as in the Miguel Malo and Carol Lang cases at CUNY), and drive out the recruiters for the U.S. war machine. These points must be part of a program for class-struggle leadership committed to breaking labor from the pro-war, pro-Taylor Law Democratic Party and building a revolutionary workers party.

As “Picketing 101” implies, a strike can be a powerful learning experience. Striking NYU students have gotten a taste of the class struggle. As the battle goes on, those who want to win it will begin to draw some broader conclusions. They should give us a call. We’re the Internationalist Group and CUNY Internationalist Clubs, and you can reach us at: Telephone: (212) 460-0983. E-mail: internationalistgroup@msn.com Web site: www.internationalist.org

ers are vital to the economy. Nevertheless they are doubly oppressed and super-exploited. They do the most strenuous work in wretched conditions – picking fruit and vegetables, working in sweatshops, cooking and washing dishes in restaurants and doing the most hazardous jobs in construction – for miserable wages. They are deprived of basic democratic rights as well as health insurance, pension and Social Security benefits.

They are constantly demonized by bourgeois politicians and their press as bleeding the economy dry, costing tax payers billions of dollars for education, medical coverage and public assistance. In reality, undocumented workers pay huge amounts for programs denied to them: for example, they contribute more than 7 billion dollars a year to the Social Security fund (“Illegal Immigrants Are Bolstering Social Security with Billions,” *New York Times*, 5 April).

The bosses exploit their labor and do not abide by the minimal labor laws gained during the mass mobilizations for the eight-hour work day in the late 1800’s, and during the heroic union organizing campaigns led by communists and other radicals in the ‘30s. The AFL-CIO misleaders long refused to organize them into unions, and for many decades the flag-waving labor bureaucracy whipped up chauvinist anti-immigrant propaganda.

Faced with a shrinking dues base, some unions began organizing undocumented workers in recent years. Revolutionaries participate in such campaigns (like the one at Burritoville reported in the previous issue of *Revolution*) while pointing out that they can be one only with a class-struggle program and leadership.

Anti-immigrant hysteria has given the opportunity to a bunch of right-wing and fascist groups to organize their own border patrols and vigilante squads. This is not the first time that such a vigilante project has been carried out, but this is a particularly sinister one. The group getting the most attention is

the Minuteman Project. The founders of this racist paramilitary group are busy trying to recruit members all over the U.S.

Long Island has been a center for anti-immigrant racism, with white “community groups” organizing against Mexican and Central American day laborers in towns like Farmingville, Farmingdale, Sachem and Brookhaven. In Farmingville, racist punks posing as labor contractors took Mexican day laborers Israel Pérez and Magdaleno Estrada Escamilla to an abandoned warehouse and attacked them with a knife, a shovel and a post-hole digger.

One of the assailants is covered from head to toe with racist tattoos, and these would-be killers model themselves after the Ku Klux Klan, founded to terrorize and murder black people after the Civil War abolished slavery. The fight for black liberation and the fight for immigrant rights are two parts of the same struggle.

When the Minutemen had a recruitment event in Babylon, Long Island, on September 10, the CUNY Internationalist Clubs joined the Internationalist Group contingent at a demonstration against them. Our banner called for “Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants! Forge a revolutionary workers party!” The demonstration was very lively: many of those present were high-school students (as well as a number of youth drawn to anarchism). A popular chant was “No Minutemen, no KKK, no fascist USA!” One of the things that we stressed to the youth at the demonstration is that *what is really needed is to mobilize the power of the working class to sweep away these racist thugs*. As the Internationalist Group has pointed out:

“The racist paramilitaries are dangerous because they are part of an across the board attack on immigrants, undocumented and those with legal papers alike. Their aim is to goad the federal government into launching an all-out round-up of ‘illegal’ foreign-born workers. And the feds are already embarked on a massive militarization of the borders.”

– *The Internationalist* No. 21 (September-October 2005)

The CUNY Internationalist Clubs encourage students to join us in our effort to build a revolutionary workers party that will be the champion of all the oppressed sectors of this society. Only a revolutionary class-struggle leadership can organize an effective struggle to defeat racist attacks, as part of the fight to overthrow capitalism by means of a socialist revolution! ■

NYU-CUNY...

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Particularly after all the PSC leaders’ talk of a “job action” and criticisms of other city unions’ giveback contracts, any concessions to CUNY’s takeback agenda would greatly undercut the union. Already, many counselors (who are heavily black and Latino) are up in arms, and rightly so, because the PSC tops have agreed to let college presidents reclassify them as HEOs (Higher Education Officers), meaning they would no longer be faculty and would be denied the right to vote on many matters. Many adjuncts, in turn, feel they are poorly represented by the union.

The PSC leaders said that if a “realistic framework” for a settlement was not reached by November 3, they would decide whether to hold a “referendum seeking membership support for a job action.” Efforts to mobilize members were stepped up to some degree, but the deadline came and went, while no serious push to win crucial student support has been made. Most fundamentally, the PSC leadership – while priding itself on its “progressive” credentials in contrast to the previous, blatantly reactionary leaders – operates within the framework of Democratic Party-chained “labor statesmanship.”

Facing a hard-line employer brandishing strike-breaking laws, an effective fight requires class-struggle methods and leadership. With NYU already on strike, a joint CUNY/NYU strike is clearly called for. For

Hunter Internationalist Club Nails Ferrer For Saying Diallo Murder “Not a Crime”

This November’s New York City mayoral elections pitted billionaire incumbent Mike Bloomberg, a former liberal Democrat turned “moderate Republican,” against Democratic candidate Fernando Ferrer. Predictably, Bloomberg broke new records in election-buying and purchased a second term. Ferrer banked on the Latino vote and sought support from labor and liberal groups, but lost support among blacks when he told a police group that the 1999 NYPD murder of Amadou Diallo, one of the most infamous racist crimes of recent decades, was “not a crime.” His overture did not go unrewarded: “The New York Police Department was the largest single source of contributors to Mr. Ferrer’s campaign for mayor” (*New York Times*, May 18).

On September 7, Ferrer made a campaign stop at Hunter College. He speechified about Executive Order 41 (a measure to “protect immigrants” in city services), teachers in the beleaguered NYC schools, and other themes pitched to the working-class, immigrant and minority student body.

Despite attempted censorship by Ferrer’s flaks, a Hunter Internationalist Club

member got the floor, and said:

“I’m one of the teaching staff who have been working without a contract at the City University of New York for a long time. You talked about [city programs] ‘bleeding,’ you talked about ‘taking it in the heart,’ you talked about Executive Order 41. The forty-one I remember are the 41 shots fired at Amadou Diallo, that killed him in the Bronx. What you said about that, when you were trying to curry favor with the police – as all the Democratic and Republican politicians do – was that this was not a crime. Well, for the people who work and study at CUNY, that *was* a crime, and we will never forget it, nor will we forget what you said.”

Greeted with heavy applause, the comments were reported in the *New York Post* and *Sun*.

By way of contrast, the International Socialist Organization intervened to ask the Democratic candidate to sign a petition against military recruiters in the schools. It’s no accident that it was we Internationalists, the revolutionary pole at CUNY, who forthrightly denounced the liberal apologist for capitalism’s killer cops. ■

Witchhunters...

continued from page 2

Then there is the deranged persecution of State University of New York professor Steve Kurtz, a member of the Critical Art Ensemble. Kurtz called emergency services when his wife died of heart failure. Cops saw “suspicious” items in an art project that questioned the “biotech industry” – and called in the FBI. As reported by *Art in America* (September 2004):

“Invoking a 1989 bioterrorism law and the Patriot Act, which grants the federal government unprecedented search-and-seizure powers, federal agents detained Kurtz for 22 hours; they searched his home for two days, as well as his office at SUNY-Buffalo, where he is a faculty member. The bureau confiscated his wife’s body, his house, car, equipment, computer hard drive, books, writings, correspondence, art projects and other items, even his cat.”

The raid involved “five regional branches of the FBI, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defence, the Buffalo police, fire department, and state marshall’s office” (London *Guardian*, 20 October). Desperate to make some kind of “case,” they brought Kurtz and University of Pittsburgh professor Robert Ferrell up on charges of “mail fraud”!

Hate Campaign Targets CUNY

Back at CUNY, administrators snapped to attention when the New York *Sun* and *Daily News* went after Brooklyn College professors last May and June. Sociology Department chairman Timothy Shortell was attacked by the *Sun* for writing the simple truth that “religion without fanaticism is a logical impossibility.” Education Professor Prya Parmar was targeted for showing *Fahrenheit 9/11* in class. Cringing, college president Christoph Kimmich wrote the *Sun* and *News* saying he found Shortell’s views “offensive” and that he had “convened a committee of high-ranking college officials and asked them to investigate the situation.” The smear campaign against Shortell led him to resign the department chairmanship.

In response, the Brooklyn College chapter of the Professional Staff Congress asked the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to investigate CUNY, since “These attacks have produced an atmosphere of fear and intimidation” (PSC *Clarion*, Summer 2005). In October, CUNY chancellor Matthew Goldstein made a show of endorsing a vague statement by university presidents in favor of academic freedom. But he didn’t lift a finger to defend Shortell, and his administration violated any semblance of academic freedom by summarily firing Yousry.

Moreover, at John Jay College a purge terminated the adjunct job of Susan Rosenberg, a one-time supporter of the Weather Underground. A backlash against her was organized by rightists at upstate New York’s Hamilton College. Rosenberg was forced to withdraw from a job at Hamilton after a hate campaign by *Front Page* that was joined by the president of the New York State chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates. In a craven December 2004 letter, John Jay President Jeremy Travis wrote that the CUNY college decided to terminate Rosenberg’s employment there after “protests” by “the law enforcement community.”

The CUNY administration’s arbitrary actions and its grovelling before the witch-hunters have not gone unnoticed. The AAUP launched an investigation of the Yousry affair, producing a report to its convention last June and a vote by the AAUP Council criticizing the “denial of due process protections to an adjunct faculty member at York College,” expressing concerns about “disturbing developments in other cases that indicate pos-

Militant Protest Sinks BMCC “Homeland Security” Program

At “CUNY Day” on March 23, Borough of Manhattan Community College students and faculty celebrated the demise of the “Homeland Security” program planned by the downtown Manhattan campus of the City University of New York. The sinister program was dropped because of the campaign of protest and exposure initiated by the CUNY Internationalist Clubs last fall.

To the strains of a trumpet playing a funeral dirge, members of the BMCC Student Government Association and the faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress, kicked off the CUNY Day events by marching into the campus cafeteria with a coffin bearing a sign saying: “SGA - PSC Say: R.I.P. Homeland Security Program.” SGA president Jason Negrón noted, “Normally a funeral is a sad event. This is a happy occasion. We killed the Homeland Security program, and now we’re burying it. We’re proud of that.”

Following the revelations published last October in *Revolution*, the newspaper of the CUNY Internationalist Clubs, students and professors angrily reacted to the attempt by the school administration to sneak in this program.* Planned courses included “interrogation techniques” and “technology for surveillance.” On December 9, a spirited protest marched through BMCC chanting

* See “‘Fatherland Security’ Hits CUNY,” *Revolution* No. 2, October 2004



Internationalist photo

“No ‘Homeland Security’ at BMCC.” Posters of the infamous photo of an Iraqi torture victim of U.S. “interrogation” at the Abu Ghraib prison asked, “Interrogation 101, Coming Soon to BMCC?” Two weeks later, a meeting of the BMCC Faculty Council erupted in what the right-wing *New York Sun* called a “firestorm” of protest, in which 15 students and professors indignantly denounced the program.

“‘Homeland Security’ Certificate Plan Is Dropped,” reported the *Clarion* (February 2005), newspaper of the CUNY faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress. This victory was also featured on the front page of the CUNY Graduate Center *Advocate*, which reported that BMCC President Anthony Perez told the paper “the college is no longer moving forward with the proposed certificate program” while extensively quoting the Internationalist Group on the fight against it.

A memo by CUNY University Student Senate chair Lauren Fasano reported that Perez had formally told her the “BMCC

administration would not be moving forward with the implementation of this program” and that reconsideration of the program “was very unlikely.” As Fasano notes, “both students and faculty were adamantly against the program being implemented.”

Perez’ slippery phrase about “not moving forward” with the program is certainly deliberate, leaving the door open to trying to resuscitate it later when no one is looking. So BMCC students and faculty held a funeral ceremony to drive the last nails into the

coffin of the “Fatherland Security” program and to make sure it stays dead and buried.

Vigilance and energetic protest were able to defeat this brazen attempt to draft CUNY into the U.S.’ imperialist “war on terror,” which is really an attempt to terrorize the world’s population into submission. Students and faculty at the BMCC campus of 19,000 students, located less than a mile from the World Trade Center, were not intimidated by the government-sponsored war hysteria. As speakers at the March 23 event noted, the war on Iraq is also a war on working people, students, minorities and immigrants here.

After the victory of shutting down the “Homeland Security” program, the CUNY Internationalist Clubs call on opponents of imperialism and the militarization of the universities to redouble efforts and mount a university-wide action to drive military recruiters off campus!

sible threats to academic freedom at CUNY,” and ordering “a new and broader inquiry into the conditions of academic freedom and due process at CUNY.”

The May 2003 *Front Page* smear piece made it clear that they were targeting the most basic rights of all CUNY students and faculty. Behind it all is racism. The article rails that CUNY, once a “shining symbol” of higher education, “degenerated” beginning “in 1970 when the system adopted a policy of open admissions.” In case anyone didn’t catch that by “shining” they mean lily-white, these unabashed racists add: “Fearing race riots from blacks and immigrants who felt excluded from the system, administrators threw out academic standards and opened the doors to all comers.” They quote the vicious Manhattan Institute think-tanker who referred to this as “racial pacification.”

The witch-hunting against faculty at CUNY and universities around the country should be a lesson. The persecution of Hostos student leader Miguel Malo is part of a broadscale assault on fundamental rights. The *FrontPage/National Review/New York Sun/New York Post* cabal is bombarding academia to soften it up for open government repression. And as the universities are regimented for war, CUNY tops are marching in lock-step. In order to resist this onslaught, it is necessary to wage a class struggle against America’s capitalist rulers who in order to subjugate the world must also lay waste to democratic rights “at home.”

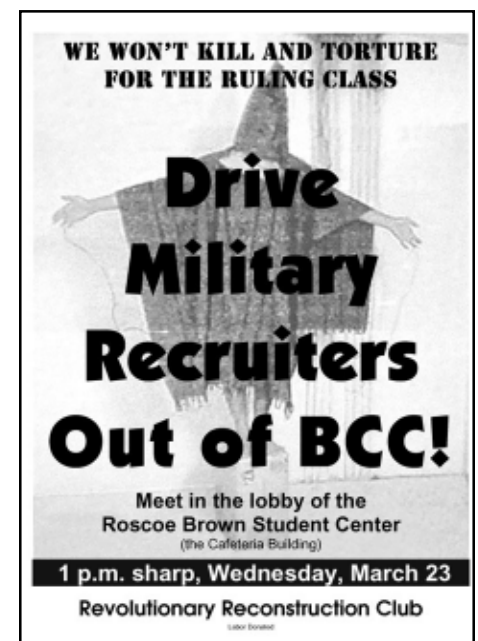
First they came for the communists... ■

Military Recruiters...

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nents of repression on the home front, in the name of “fighting terrorism,” are the likes of Hillary Clinton and other Democratic pols. “Random” searches on the NYC subway have ripped to shreds the Fourth Amendment’s protections against unwarranted search and seizure. This means racial profiling, whose deadly consequences were promptly shown with the racist police murder of a young Brazilian immigrant in the London subway. Meanwhile, the U.S.A. Patriot Act, with its vast array of repressive measures, was renewed by the “Republicrat” (Republican and Democratic) gang in Washington. And everyone remembers how 1,800 demonstrators, including many CUNY students, were locked up on the flimsiest pretexts in order to make New York City “safe” for the Republican National Convention last year.

On March 9, three City College undergraduate students were brutally arrested during a peaceful protest against the presence of military recruiters on campus and charged with everything from disorderly conduct to resisting arrest and assault. Two days later, theater department employee Carol Lang was seized by police at her workplace. Carol is still being persecuted by CCNY, vindictively suspended for an additional five



weeks and denied a contractual payment under the union contract. We demand that all measures against Lang be dropped and that she be given full back pay!

Join us in the fight for international socialist revolution!

To stop the military recruiters in their tracks and to bring the imperialist war machine to a halt, we must fight the capitalist system which sets them in motion. Above all, this requires a revolutionary workers party, part of a reformed Fourth International, to lead the fight for socialist revolution around the globe. The Internationalist Clubs and Revolutionary Reconstruction Club are working to win CUNY students to this struggle.

Defeat U.S. Imperialism!

For Militant Mass Mobilization to Drive Military Recruiters Out of CUNY!

by Aubeen Lopez

While the United States of American Imperialism continues its bloody occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, the manpower for its colonial crusade is being stretched to the limit. As opposition mounts to the slaughter the U.S. is carrying out in Iraq, the volunteer army is running short of volunteers. For four months in a row the Army failed to meet its quota. In May, even after lowering the quota by 17 percent, it still missed its reduced goal by 25 percent. Meanwhile, the Army reserve has been missing its monthly quota since October of 2004. Sectors of the ruling class are considering reinstating the draft that was ended three decades ago amidst the defeat of U.S. imperialism by the peasants and workers of Vietnam.

To make up for the shortfall the government is using increasingly aggressive measures. These include outright spying on high-school and college students. The Pentagon's "Joint Advertising Market Research Studies" division and a private contractor secretly established a data base of 30 million 16-to-25-year-olds. This includes their height, weight, Social Security numbers, grade point averages, e-mail addresses and phone numbers! The "No Child Left Behind" law orders schools to turn over information on all high-school students, unless their parents sign a waiver.

The Internationalist Clubs at Hunter and Hostos colleges, and the Revolutionary Reconstruction Club at Bronx Community College, have been fighting to drive the military and police recruiters off campus. We also exposed sinister plans for a "Homeland Security" program at Borough of Manhattan Community College, sparking protests which buried this plan for "Abu Ghraib on the Hudson."

At Bronx Community College last semester, our protests succeeded in running off recruiters from the Army, Marines and Air Force three weeks in a row. Protests at a job fair and outside the cafeteria – where recruiters troll for unwary students – were built with leaflets proclaiming: "We Won't Kill and Torture for the Ruling Class – Drive the Military Recruiters Out of BCC!" We stressed the need for a CUNY-wide



Internationalist photos

Revolutionary Reconstruction Club sparked protests that ran military recruiters out of Bronx Community College every week for more than a month. Above, March 17 demonstration.

campaign to mobilize masses of students, faculty and campus workers against the recruiters as a concrete blow against the imperialist war.

Among those joining the protests were students and staff with close relatives snared into signing up for the bosses' military and sent to Iraq. They spoke with indignation about the lies and false promises the military uses to rope in working-class, black and Hispanic youth in particular.

As revolutionary internationalists, we are for the *defeat* of the imperialists and the *defense* of the oppressed peoples they target in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world. The occupation army must be driven out of Iraq. Key to this is the fight for workers strikes against the war. Similarly, the power of the multiracial, multiethnic working class of New York must be brought into the struggle against the military recruiters.

Together with the Internationalist Group (the Trotskyist organization which is the U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International), we say: *Not one man or woman for the U.S. war machine – No to the draft and no to the "volunteer" armed forces.* This means fighting for a socialist revolution to

end the cause of these endless wars for world conquest: the capitalist system. This Marxist program is counterposed to the class-collaborationist "peace" coalitions pushed by a series of reformist groups who request that the rulers provide "books not bombs."

The cause of the past, present and future U.S. wars is not that the government has mixed-up "priorities," but that its very *purpose* is to uphold the interests of the social class that owns and rules this country: the capitalist class. The reformist organizations seek an "antiwar" movement tailored to Democratic Party and other bourgeois politicians like Ralph Nader who, far from opposing U.S. imperialism, merely seek more cost-effective ways of promoting its interests. Their complaint about the Iraq war/occupation is that they think it is a losing proposition. Most of them still support the war in Afghanistan, and want Bush to take a *harder* line against Iran and North Korea.

Imperialist war abroad means police-state repression "at home." It is no accident that the most gung-ho propo-

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Trotskyist Youth at Venezuela Festival

by Moises Delgado

From August 6th to 15th I was one of 17,000 people in Caracas, Venezuela, participating in the World Festival of Students and Youth. This was the 16th World Festival and the first in South America. The first festival took place in Prague, Czechoslovakia in 1948.

The festivals have been organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY). The WFDY is made up of Stalinist youth organizations from different countries around the world. The U.S. imperialists used to send teams of liberals under CIA supervision to mess around at these congresses. It was very interesting to be Trotskyists bringing our Marxist program to this event. The Stalinist organizers made their politics clear at this year's festival with their uncritical support for Hugo Chávez and his government.

I arrived at Simón Bolívar International Airport as a supporter of the League for the Fourth International (LFI), of which the Internationalist Group is the U.S. section. At the airport I was met by two comrades from the Mexican section of the LFI. We eluded the organizers, who wanted to send me to the Los Teques army base where the U.S.

delegation was assigned. Instead I took a bus with my comrades to the Ciudad Miranda apartment housing complex, about an hour and a half's drive from Caracas.

At Ciudad Miranda I met with the rest of the LFI team, which included people from Mexico, Ecuador and the United States. Our arrangement was the normal one at Ciudad Miranda: bunk beds, 3-4 beds to a room. With two days until the start of the festival, we traveled to other "villas" to meet delegates in search of other revolutionaries.

We met plenty of remarkable people this way. One was a young delegate from the Dominican Republic. He had founded his own union after he and his co-workers faced starvation wages and physical abuse at a foreign-owned textile factory. Many of our revolutionary ideas were new to him, but he saw a close link between our international efforts to end capitalism once and for all and his own efforts on a local level. After two days of making contacts in this way it was time to make my way to Caracas.

The LFI team took one of many buses that morning heading from our housing site

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Internationalist photo

Literature table and comrades of the League for the Fourth International at International Festival of Students and Youth in Caracas last August. LFI was only tendency present that fought for Trotskyism and did not give political support to Chávez regime, while defending Venezuela against U.S. imperialism.