

LETTERS

## CAMBODIA TODAY

Girls and women in Cambodia face discrimination in many areas of their lives: unequal access to an education, inappropriate and inadequate health care, limited options for jobs, little or no voice in public affairs, little involvement in the family or the society's decision making, and the high risk of being abused. Three common types of this gender-based violence are rape, human trafficking and domestic violence. Girls and younger women are especially at risk.

Cambodia has traditional moral codes for women (called *Chbab Srey*) and for men (called *Chbab Pror*) which were written in poetry form by Krom Ngoy (1865-1936), who is regarded as the father of Khmer poetry. His poem-codes have been taught at secondary schools across the country, and reinforced by parents and grandparents through the generations. The Law for Women suggests that women should serve and respect their husbands at all times, whatever the circumstance. Girls grow up believing that a man's violence is "normal" and acceptable and private.

Of late more and more survivors are gaining justice in the courts, which sends a clear indication that the violence against women and girls is indeed "abnormal" and wrong.

**T Jackson**  
*Phnom Penh*

## DAVID RESISTED GOLIATH

For three long weeks Israel bombarded the Gaza strip leaving behind blood, destruction and human bodies. Under these extraordinary conditions the fragile ceasefire translates into a clear violation of truce. The immediate aftermath of the ceasefire has been a re-establishing of the status quo. Arab allies of the US now face an acute problem as a result of Israel's political loss and moral victory for Hamas. Gaza's brave resistance points to a global tendency which is the consolidation of rebel forces. The governments of the West continue to co-operating with Israel as if nothing had happened. But people across the world need to provide direct human solidarity to the persecuted of Gaza tearing down the ghetto walls.

**Anti-Imperialist Camp,**  
*February, 2009*

## WHAT PROBLEM?

Albert Einstein once said "Problems cannot be solved at the same level of awareness that created them." From that perspective, there is no solution for workers to the current crisis in political economy. But it is not a problem to some. The American bankers have received a cool \$700 billion with no questions asked which they are now using to buy banks and other assets at fire-sale prices. Problem? What problem?

But this greatest robbery in history is a problem for millions who are now receiving a lesson in the class struggle. They will not soon forget their bitter experience. During the course of the Russian Revolution the revolutionary Lenin stated that the laboring classes of Russia had gained more in class consciousness in the space of a few months than in the entire previous generation. This process is at work now. Today, with the internet, satellite and all manner of electronic communications, Lenin's space of a few months can be reduced to a matter of weeks or even days.

**A retired postal worker, USA**