

Tasks before worldwide movement: END COLONIAL OCCUPATION OF IRAQ



Build solidarity to resist U.S.-UK imperialist offensive

By John Catalinotto

The horrible onslaught by the Pentagon war machine against Iraqi civilians and soldiers, and the heroic resistance of the Iraqi population, have put new questions before the worldwide anti-war movement.

Can this movement, which has mobilized tens of millions, really become a counterweight to the military might of the Pentagon? Can it become, as a New York Times writer characterized it on Feb. 16, "the world's other superpower"?

The direction this movement takes and its potential for future development will be determined by how it reacts to the momentous events taking place right now in Iraq.

Even without a recognized center or a clear, agreed-upon ideology, thousands of groups in countries all over the globe have, over the course of the last six months, begun acting like a worldwide movement of mutual solidarity. They grow more conscious of their role week by

week. Their organizers take great care to coordinate actions for maximum impact. They are driven to unify by the outrageous crimes and overbearing arrogance from Washington.

In the guise of meeting over an agreement regarding the six Irish counties still under British colonial rule, George W. Bush and Tony Blair held what was really a "war summit" on April 7 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. They assumed there would be little or no opposition.

But this new worldwide movement has a contingent in the Belfast area. "To have President Bush and Tony Blair talk peace to Northern Ireland politicians while plot-

ting the destruction of Baghdad and the occupation of Iraq is the ultimate in hypocrisy," the Irish Stop the War Coalition said in a news release announc-

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On April 5, more than 15,000 people came out in Oakland's first major anti-war protest. Pictured below is the South Asian contingent. Two days later, police fired wooden bullets as protesters tried to shut down war-profiteering, anti-union shipping companies.



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What price for truth?

By Leslie Feinberg

The U.S. war against Iraq is nothing like what the Pentagon said it would be. Is it any wonder, then, that journalists who report this are being killed by U.S. planes and tanks?

The war against journalists intensified on April 8, when Arab networks Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi TV, the only international channels with Baghdad offices, were blasted by not one, but two laser-guided missiles. Jazeera reporter Tariq Ayoub died; Iraqi journalist Zohair al-Iraqi was wounded.

Jazeera correspondent Majed Abdel Hadi called the attack a crime: "We were targeted because the Americans don't want the world to see the crimes they are committing against the Iraqi people."

The International Federation of Journalists, representing 500,000 members in more than 100 countries, also accused U.S. forces of deliberately targeting Al-Jazeera.

Reporters Without Borders sent a letter expressing outrage to Gen. Tommy Franks. Robert Ménard, secretary-general of RWB, stressed that Al-Jazeera's management had given Pentagon officials the exact coordinates of its offices and crews. And the building was draped with huge banners reading "TV." That was supposed to protect them, not make them targets.

On April 7, a clearly marked Al-Jazeera vehicle came under fire near Baghdad. On April 2, its Basra office had been shelled. And on March 29 British tanks had fired on one of its crews that was trying to film Basra food distribution by the Iraqi government. One crewmember was held for 12 hours by U.S. troops.

This is all eerily familiar. The network's office in Kabul was one of the first targets of Pentagon bombs during the war against Afghanistan.

Hours after the attack on Al-Jazeera, on April 8, a U.S.

tank fired an artillery shell into the Palestine Hotel, which television viewers around the world know is home to much of the international media covering the war.

Shooting the messenger

The explosion killed Taras Protsyuk of Reuters and Jose Couso of Telecinco. Four others were injured, two critically.

British Sky television's David Chater said, "This wasn't an accident. It seems to be a very accurate shot." (Reuters, April 8)

Pentagon brass claim their troops were under small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire from inside the hotel. Several journalists who had been inside say that's not true.

CBS news correspondent Lara Logan stated flatly, "No one was firing from this building." She added that "this is happening to Iraqi families all across Baghdad."

And, reporters add, the tank was so far away that neither a sniper nor a grenade could hit it.

"We don't target journalists," Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, spokesperson for U.S. Central Command, responded after taking fire for the military assaults on media. He said that correspondents "are inherently safe" if they are embedded with a Pentagon unit.

Embedded reporters are under heavy military censorship and are shown just what the Pentagon wants them to see.

This just underscores the critical need for an anti-imperialist source of news.

Workers World newspaper, its emailed articles and its very popular web site read around the world offer information together with revolutionary anti-capitalist analysis that combats the daily Pentagon double-speak.

Isn't it time to subscribe to Workers World, send gift subscriptions to your friends or to prisoners—and join the supporter program that keeps truth alive?

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Seventh Cavalry's 'glorious' history

Their first massacre was in 1868

By Mahtowin

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the big business media has made much of the spearhead role of the Seventh Cavalry. "Rich in glory and agony," read the New York Times' headline about its history.

The "agony" refers to the 1876 defeat of the Seventh Cavalry and its commander, Col. George Armstrong Custer, at Little Big Horn by combined Lakota and Cheyenne forces.

Many people know about this. But few know the rest of the "glorious" history and what preceded the battle at Little Big Horn.

Commissioned by Congress in 1866, the Seventh Cavalry is one of the oldest continuously serving regiments in the U.S. It was initially given the task of quelling Native uprisings and ensuring that pioneers were safe in the Midwestern states.

On Nov. 27, 1868, Custer led the regiment in a pre-dawn raid on a peaceful Cheyenne encampment on the Washita River in Oklahoma. It resulted in the massacre of hundreds of women, children and men. Cheyenne leader Black Kettle had already seen many of his people massacred in 1864 at Sand Creek. He had brought the survivors to Washita.

When Black Kettle once again saw his people slaughtered, he and his wife rode out, trying to meet Custer. They carried a white flag, hoping to stop the attack, but were shot on sight.

In the early 1870s, the Seventh Cavalry escorted surveyors, prospectors and others into the Black Hills to steal gold and land from the Lakota people.

It was a fine day, indeed, when Custer and many of his soldiers met their death at Little Big Horn in 1876.

Unfortunately, this was not the end of the Seventh Cavalry.

Wounded Knee massacre

In late December 1890, shortly after the murder of Sitting Bull, some Minneconjou and Hunkpapa Lakota left their reservations and headed toward the Badlands.

On Dec. 28, in the village of Wounded Knee at Pine Ridge Reservation, South



Members of Seventh Cavalry with frozen bodies of Native people they gunned down at Wounded Knee in 1890.

Dakota, the Seventh Cavalry arrested a group of Lakota led by Big Foot of the Hunkpapa Lakota. After disarming the Native people, the cavalry began the Wounded Knee massacre, raining fragmentation shells into the village at a combined rate of 200 or more rounds a minute. The 500 well-armed cavalry troops carried out the slaughter methodically.

Unarmed women, children and men were mercilessly massacred. A few ran as far as three miles only to be chased and put to death. Frozen bodies were strewn across the snow-covered land. Many were unceremoniously dumped into a mass grave by the cavalry.

At least 300 Lakota were massacred that day. Many said this was the "revenge" of the Seventh Cavalry for its defeat at Little Big Horn.

Twenty Congressional Medals of Honor were awarded to these troops for this "battle."

The Seventh Cavalry was exonerated for its conduct. Secretary of War Redfield Proctor said, "[I]t was impossible to distinguish buck from squaw. ... The bucks fired from among the squaws and children in their retreat. ... The Indians themselves were entirely responsible for this unfortunate phase of the affair."

Army Gen. Charles Brewster Schofield, in his report regarding the conduct of the

soldiers, said: "The evidence shows that great care was taken by the officers and enlisted men to avoid unnecessary killing of Indian women and children in the affair at Wounded Knee, and shows that the conduct of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry under very trying circumstances was characterized by excellent discipline and in many cases by great forbearance."

This kind of lie-filled public relations disinformation sounds just like what is now coming out of the Pentagon to cover up the U.S. military's killing of Iraqi civilians.

That was not the end of the "glorious" history of the Seventh Cavalry, however.

In 1950, the regiment slaughtered hundreds of defenseless civilians near the village of Nogun-ri, South Korea, a massacre covered up for many years.

During the Vietnam War in the 1960s, these latter-day cowboys caused many more civilian deaths.

Perhaps this "glorious" history of slaughtering civilians in wars of imperialist conquest makes the Seventh Cavalry ideally suited for a leading role in Iraq.

As if this history were not odious enough, subdivisions of the Seventh Cavalry have vilely appropriated the names of Native warriors and nations, using appellations such as "Crazy Horse" and "Apache."

The Department of Defense routinely

scavenges through Native heritage to give names to its tools of death and destruction. Assault helicopters have names like the "Apache," "Iroquois," "Cayuse," "Black Hawk" and "Kiowa." There is the "Tomahawk" cruise missile.

Naming these weapons of destruction and intimidation after Native warriors and nations is an insult.

Crazy Horse (Tashunke Witko, 1849-1877) was a great Lakota visionary and warrior who was among those who defeated Custer at Little Big Horn. Black Hawk (Makataimeshekiak, 1767-1838) was a great Sauk war chief from what is now Illinois. His eloquence and dignity, as well as his courage, were well known.

Why does the U.S. military use the names of Native people and nations? They say it is to give weapons names that are frightening or intimidating.

In that case, says Moonanum James, a Wampanoag Vietnam-era veteran, "They should name their tools of war after Bush, Cheney and their cohorts." □

Native peoples condemn war

Representatives of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas gathered in Ottawa, Canada, issued a statement March 25 condemning "the genocidal American invasion against the Iraqi people."

Calling the war "a crime against humanity" that "violates international law as well as human and legal rights," the statement said it "lacks any kind of legitimacy and cannot be justified as it violates all declarations to live in peace. It violates the self-determination and sovereignty of peoples and the consensus reached by most states represented in the United Nations. We encourage all the peoples of the world to maintain their unity and to strengthen their mobilization against this injustice, to show their love for peace, fraternity and intercultural dialogue." □

Yemenis in Western New York

Gov't threats force plea bargains

By Ellie Dorritie
Buffalo, N.Y.

Four of six young Yemeni men from Lackawanna, N.Y., charged with "aiding" the al Qaeda organization, have pleaded guilty. The others may, too. They have little choice.

Why plead guilty when their lawyers have reportedly said it is unlikely a jury would convict them?

Because the government has openly threatened to charge the six—all U.S. citizens of Yemeni heritage—with being "enemy combatants." That means they could be thrown into a military prison without trials or legal rights if they don't take the plea deals.

The government has also openly floated the "hint" that if the six choose jury trials, they might be charged with treason—which carries the possibility of execution.

Helping the government step up the pressure, the Buffalo News referred to the

six as "Western New York's al Qaeda connection" and alleged that "they kept to themselves information that might have spared 3,000 lives."

There has never been any claim by the Justice Department that the young men had any prior knowledge about 9/11 or any connection to attacks of any kind.

Their alleged crime is one of association, not of having committed any criminal act.

According to the government, the six attended camps in Afghanistan that the U.S. calls "al Qaeda training camps." Solely for the "crime" of attendance, the six were charged with providing material support to al Qaeda.

In their pleas, four of the Lackawanna Six stated that they did attend a training camp in Afghanistan. They went, they said, to learn how to fight for Muslim ideals and to renew their religious roots. They believed they might someday fight in Palestine or Chechnya. At the camp, they

heard anti-American rhetoric. They learned to use weapons. For this, they face prison terms.

Federal law experts Professor David Cole of Georgetown University Law Center and former judge and prosecutor Edgar Nemoier both say that this stretches the law too far. They believe the charge may be unconstitutional, and that this is why the federal government is pressuring the defendants to plead guilty.

There are real terror cells in upstate New York and around the country, but the Bush administration isn't generating a media campaign against them. They are the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi members who receive paramilitary training in white-supremacist, racist militia groups. The White House and Supreme Court have actually abetted the reactionary anti-abortion movement that relies on the threat of terror against abortion providers. People in Buffalo are very familiar with this,

because Dr. Barnett Slepian was gunned down here in 1998 by an anti-abortion terrorist.

Instead, this misnamed "war on terror" is directed against the Yemeni community in Lackawanna, an economically depressed mill town five miles south of Buffalo, and the large Arab and Muslim population in and around Buffalo as a whole.

Surveillance helicopters fly regularly over Lackawanna. The FBI makes publicized visits to Buffalo's Grover Cleveland High School, which has a large English-as-a-second-language program, to intimidate Arab and Yemeni students.

The constant racist fear campaign against Arabs, Muslims and South Asians, depicting them as "terrorists," is meant to build support for the Bush administration's Endless War. In this climate of hostility, defendants like the Lackawanna Six may well fear the risk of a jury trial. □

Oakland police fire on protesters, dock workers

Anti-war activists try to shut down profiteers

By Tahnee Stair
Oakland, Calif.

Hundreds of anti-war activists who blocked gates at docks here on April 7 were fired on by police, who used large wooden bullets, "beanbags" and concussion grenades to break up the protest against transportation companies that profit off the war on Iraq.

Among the wounded were nine dockworkers who had not been part of the protest, but were merely standing and watching the action. The unprovoked police violence caused many longshore workers to angrily walk off the job.

The day had started at 5 a.m., when the protesters set up picket lines at the APL shipping company. APL, formerly American President Lines, receives millions of taxpayer dollars every year to ship military cargo as part of the Defense Department's Maritime Security Program.

Picketers blocked six gates in total. A couple of hours into the APL picket, police started using concussion grenades to break up the line. Determined demonstrators then moved down to the gates of Stevedoring Services of America where, later, police used wooden bullets and "beanbags" to force them from the docks.

Demonstrators received bruises, welts and other wounds across their backs as they fled the police firing line.

At this point, the nine dockworkers were fired on by police. When International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 Business Agent Jack Haymond tried to approach the police to inform them that the workers were not part of the demonstration, he was removed from his car and arrested.

Haymond and Lindsey Parkinson, a young activist with the ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—coalition, spent 19 hours in jail before being released. Twenty-nine people were arrested.

Before being arrested, Parkinson had been knocked down by a motorcycle cop trying to leave the area. She had tire-tread marks on her leg and severe bruising and road burns from being run down.

Union-busting companies make millions off war

APL makes nine of its vessels available to the Department of Defense in order to move "ammunition and sustainment cargo." Several of these vessels have already been called up to service the military this year.

The picketers had blocked the three

gates leading to the APL lines before moving down to the gates of Stevedoring Services of America (SSA), a vehemently anti-union company set to profit from the war. Under the guise of providing humanitarian aid, it has signed reconstruction contracts worth \$4.8 million to manage the port of Umm Qasr.

Even Britain's chief military officer in the Gulf, Air Marshal Brian Burrige, told the British Guardian newspaper that the port should be run by Iraqis, not by U.S. corporations, since the occupying troops don't "want to seem imperialist invaders."

SSA is the dominant firm in the Pacific Maritime Association, which locked out West Coast dockworkers last year in an effort to bust their union.

Workers from the ILWU did not cross the anti-war protesters' picket lines at the APL or SSA gates. Without the labor of the dockworkers, cargo for the APL and SSA could not be loaded or unloaded. APL had to divert a ship that had planned to dock in Oakland.

"We are here to protest the war profiteers who are gaining from this illegal war and occupation," explained Natividad Carrera, a youth organizer with ANSWER. Demonstrators chanted, "War is for profit, the workers can stop it" and "APL gets

rich, U.S. soldiers die, SSA gets rich, Iraqi people die."

"The dockworkers and majority of truckers have respected our community anti-war picket today. The ILWU has sent workers home for the day. The support of the workers for this cause is our major victory," said Forrest Schmidt of Workers World Party. "The ILWU is an important pillar of the anti-war movement. This type of solidarity will not be chased away by wooden bullets or motorcycle cops running people down. We're here facing off against part of the war machine and we will not back down until the U.S. is out of the Middle East," he concluded.

Once forced from the ports, protesters proceeded to march to the Federal Building in Oakland where some demonstrators blocked an intersection.

The next day a militant crowd protested the police riot at Oakland's City Council meeting. Many demonstrators carried signs at the actions reading, "Stop the war, protest April 12 SF Civic Center." ANSWER and the U.K. Coalition to Stop the War have initiated an international day of protest on that date and major demonstrations will be held in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., London and other cities. □



Police said the wounds were like a 'bee sting.'

As cutbacks take effect

Service workers face a 'scary' future

By Heather Cottin

Linda C. is a member of SEIU Local 1199, the hospital workers' union. Along with 37,000 of her fellow union members, she rode from New York City to the state capital in Albany on April 1 to protest horrific cuts coming down in Medicaid and hospital care. It was the biggest protest ever held in that city.

Tulia, Texas: Being Black was a crime

It was 1998 and George W. Bush was governor of the state. An undercover cop in Tulia, Texas, put one-tenth of the town's Black population behind bars, charged with selling drugs.

They were pulled out of their beds at night and paraded before television cameras. There was no evidence, just the word of the cop, Tom Coleman. The people were poor and couldn't afford effective legal counsel. They went through a charade of a trial. Some were sentenced to 99 years in prison. Others, fearing similar treatment, pleaded guilty in exchange for less time.

Coleman was named Texas' "Outstanding Lawman of the Year."

Now, an appeals court has thrown out all charges against the 38 Black people sent to jail. Everything was a complete fabrication by Coleman, an openly racist cop who had stolen thousands of dollars on his previous job.

Bush has gone on to bigger things. He now sees "evildoers" all over the world—everywhere except in the Pentagon, or the police department of Tulia, Texas.

—Deirdre Griswold

"People are scared," she said. "They are going to have so many layoffs and one worker is going to have to do the work of three or four. People are under a lot of stress, they have to work a double shift. Did you know that hospital workers are sometimes forced to work from nine in the morning to midnight?"

Linda echoed the concerns of her fellow workers. "How can you give care to sick people if you are tired? There aren't enough health care workers now to give the kind of quality care people deserve.

"We are under enormous stress, and now they are threatening to cut our health benefits. They want to cut health coverage for our children over 18, but there aren't any jobs for our children, so now they won't have health coverage. They want to increase our co-pays for drug coverage and doctor visits."

She says that New York State Gov. George Pataki, whose re-election the union supported, "wants to raise tuition at the state colleges by \$1,200 a year. We can't afford that."

Public service unions are being hit hard by major cuts in funding for education, social services and health care. State tax structures mirror regressive federal "supply-side" taxation that steals from the poor and the workers in order to give to the rich.

Referring to the Albany rally, where union officials and politicians spoke, Linda says, "Not one single person speaking at that rally connected the cuts with the war. We would not have these problems if there was no war."

Linda represents millions of workers in the country who are fed up. They see how the wealthy pay proportionally lower taxes and how states have cut medical and educational support for the children of the working class. They see army recruiters in every poor neighborhood, ready to snatch their children and



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

Health care workers flooded Albany, N.Y., to try to stop state cuts in medical care.

train them to kill and die for empire.

And what choices do youth have? Unemployment is growing. The Labor Department says new jobless claims jumped to 445,000 for the week ending March 29.

Economic forecasters had predicted a loss of "only" 40,000 jobs in March, but the real number was 108,000, bringing the total job loss for the United States to 2.1 million since the recession began in 2001.

Unemployment benefits have run out for millions. The "exhaustion rate," a term indicating how difficult it is for workers to find new jobs, is at 50 percent, the highest level for any February on record. What will happen to these jobless workers?

They'll get cold comfort from this government of, by and for the rich. The new budget passed by the House will cut \$1.4 trillion in taxes on the rich while trimming \$265 billion from entitlement programs over 10 years. "About \$165 billion would come from programs that assist low-income Americans," reported New York Times columnist Bob Herbert on April 3.

A report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities shows that both Democrats and "compassionate Republicans" are cutting programs that provide food stamps, reducing them from 91 cents per meal to 84 cents. They are slashing school lunches, eliminating health coverage for 13.6 million children and cutting \$14 billion from veterans' benefits and student loans. These are the same "patriotic" politicians who have allocated hundreds of billions of dollars for a war machine that is killing thousands of Iraqis so big business can expand its empire.

Linda C. talked about the people on her bus coming home from Albany. After standing in the snow listening to the speeches, they were worried about their children, their jobs, the quality of health care. "They agreed with me that the union should make the connection between the war and Pataki and Bush and the cutbacks: the whole system. They told me I should have been up there talking, because they resented the fact that they paid for Governor Pataki's campaign and then were literally left in the cold." □

They claim to be 'liberators,' but

U.S., Britain imprison more Black men than ever

By Monica Moorehead

While the U.S. and Britain carry out their war to recolonize Iraq under the ridiculous and dangerous name of "Operation Iraqi Freedom," they are using many Black troops for the fighting. But there is no freedom for Black people inside these two imperialist countries.

In both cases, recently released figures show that Black men are being incarcerated at a greater rate than ever.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, an agency within the U.S. Justice Department, released numbers on April 7 showing that in 2002 there was a dramatic increase in the imprisonment of Black men between the ages of 20 and 34. An estimated 12 percent of all African American men in this age group are presently in jail. Only 1.6 percent of white men in the same age span are incarcerated. And 28 percent of all Black men will spend time in jail at some point in their lives.

Overall, the number of people behind bars in the U.S. rose last year, to exceed 2 million for the first time. There was a 5.4-percent increase in the number of people incarcerated in local and county jails.

Black people, as a whole, are still denied full political and economic equality in the U.S., except when it comes to fighting and being repressed. The military tells young people, "Be all that you can be," but, in reality, Black people are forced to join the military for economic survival. That is why, while Black people make up 12 percent of the population, they make up 21 percent of the ranks of the military. And in wartime, Black GIs suffer casualties in disproportionate numbers because they are more likely to be in the front lines.

While the U.S. media are busy showing "torture chambers" in Iraq, they fail to show the thousands of torture and death chambers that exist inside U.S. prisons. It is no wonder that, whether in civilian or military life, young Black men, especially, are becoming more and more an "endangered species."

The same is true in this country's "coalition partner," Britain. The March 29 Guardian newspaper reported that one in every 100 Black British adults is incarcerated. People originating from Africa and the Caribbean make up only 2 percent of the population but about 17 percent of all inmates in British jails. Since the Labor Party came to power with Tony Blair at the helm, the Black prison population has increased by 54 percent.

The racist war against the people of Iraq is also accompanied by a war inside the U.S. against people of Arab,

South Asian and Muslim descent. Along with other people of color, they are being denied their civil rights and liberties.

Despite this clear evidence of oppression at home, in figures supplied by these imperialist governments themselves, the U.S. and Britain act as though their role was to bring freedom and liberation to the world. And the media ask no embarrassing questions.

How do they get away with it?

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, writing in 1846 in "The German Ideology," explained what shapes the prevailing ideas of any period: "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it."

This was never more true than today, when the capitalists who control the big military contractor General Electric, for example, also control the NBC network and have part ownership of MSNBC, Arts & Entertainment, the History Channel, the Sports Channel, Bravo, the National Geographic cable channel, and many other media outlets. (Columbia Journalism Review online)

This is how a racist war to destroy the sovereignty of the Iraqi people gets presented to the public as "liberation."

Neither the U.S. nor the British imperialists really believe they are the "liberators" of the Iraqi people. They are very conscious that this is a war to liberate markets and make profits while intensifying super-exploitation and plunder.

They use the media to promote racism and demonize leaders like Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi people and people of color at home in order to maintain their stranglehold over U.S. society and brutally turn the majority of the world into their private empire.

There must be an independent fight-back against both kinds of racist war—at home and abroad. □

Racist repression in prisons is a national epidemic. Here, supporters of the Angola 3 at recent Critical Resistance conference to end the prison-industrial complex, held in New Orleans.



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

In Harlem, the 35th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was marked with an anti-war march and rally. "Our youth joined the armed services to escape poverty," Charles Barron, a City Council member, told the crowd. "Our youth joined the armed services to get better education, not to be some-



Harlem marches against war

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

body's cannon fodder for oil." Larry Holmes of the ANSWER coalition urged everyone to be in Washington on April 12 for a national protest demanding an end to the invasion, no occupation of Iraq, and bring the troops home.



WW PHOTO: PAT CHIN

Performers and supporters of Mumia at Brooklyn's House of the Lord Church.

Struggle to free Mumia continues

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal week was observed in the U.S. and worldwide from March 28 to April 5. Abu-Jamal is the award-winning, revolutionary African American journalist who has been languishing on Pennsylvania's death row for almost 21 years. Racist state and federal courts have refused to hear evidence proving that he is innocent of the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia police officer.

In New York, a March 28th event for Abu-Jamal was hosted by the Jericho Movement, which helps bring much-needed attention to the plight of U.S. political prisoners. On April 1, Pam Africa, leader of the International Concerned

Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, spoke to a standing-room-only crowd at the International Action Center. On April 5, the ICFFMAJ and the New York Free Mumia Coalition held a fundraiser in Brooklyn at the House of the Lord Church.

April 24 will be Abu-Jamal's 49th birthday and the seventh anniversary of the passing of the Effective Death Penalty Act, which severely restricts death row inmates' right of habeas corpus in federal appeals to challenge first-degree murder convictions. A mobilization calling for freedom for Mumia will be held in Philadelphia on that date.

—M.M.

Cuban 5 released from 'hole'

By Gloria La Riva

In a victory for the U.S. political prisoners known as the Cuban 5, a severe order of solitary confinement imposed on them in early March has been lifted, one month after U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft ordered them into the "hole."

Although new restrictions remain, it is a vast improvement over the total isolation they experienced for almost 30 days.

Attorney Leonard Weinglass attributed this victory to an international emergency support campaign that was launched for the five.

Between Feb. 28 and March 3, without explanation, the five Cubans had been rounded up by authorities in their respective prisons, handcuffed, and hauled off to tiny cells called "Special Housing Units," or SHUs. Antonio Guerrero was removed from the Spanish class he teaches at Florence prison, Colorado; Ramón Labañino was interrupted while playing chess with his cellmates in Beaumont prison, Texas.

Several days passed before these two, plus Gerardo Hernández, René González and Fernando González, were told that the Justice Department had deemed them a "national security" risk and ordered a Special Administrative Measure of solitary confinement to remain in place until February 2004. It could be extended endlessly.

They were denied Cuban consular and all other visits, were prohibited phone calls, letters and reading or writing material. Some were even denied shoes and clothing, except for underwear.

SHU cells keep the lights on 24 hours a day, have no windows and deny all human

contact or communication. This constitutes psychological and physical torture. Dr. Corey Weinstein, director of California Prison Focus and an expert on the effects of such confinement, says, "These SHUs are springing up all over the country and are a grave human rights violation."

Even in their isolation, the Cuban Five were never alone. Thousands of family members, friends and supporters struggled to get them out of the "hole." And they knew the entire Cuban people were behind them.

Among other actions, the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five issued an emergency memo, asking people to write Ashcroft and demand their release from solitary. Thanks to the Internet and the extensive network of Cuban 5 committees on every continent, messages flooded the Department of Justice.

Congresswoman Barbara Lee and former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney responded to the appeal. So did Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo, a Namibian freedom fighter and political prisoner for 16 years with Nelson Mandela in South Africa, who is currently minister of prisons in Namibia.

Messages came from the Congo, Senegal, Belgium, Brisbane and Sydney, Australia, Toronto and Vancouver, Canada, Buenos Aires and El Bolson, Argentina, cities across England, San Francisco, Miami, New York, Houston, Los Angeles, and more.

Finally, on March 31, the five were restored to the general population.

For more information on how to support their cause, see www.freethefive.org and www.antiterroristas.cu. □

More lies, more rebuttals

Truth crushed to earth rises again

By Greg Butterfield

On March 29, a missile crashed into the marketplace in Baghdad's Shu'ale district, killing 62 Iraqi civilians.

When news of the atrocity spread, U.S. and British officials denied any role in the attack. They said an errant Iraqi anti-aircraft missile was to blame.

An investigation by Robert Fisk, reporter for The Independent newspaper based in London who visited the bombing site, uncovered what were clearly the remains of a U.S. "smart bomb" manufactured by Texas-based Raytheon, including the weapon's serial number.

The Independent reported that its researchers ran the serial number through an online weapons data base. "Investigations by The Independent show that the missile—thought to be either a HARM (High Speed Anti-Radiation Missile) device, or a Paveway laser-guided bomb—was sold by Raytheon to the procurement arm of the U.S. Navy."

Presented with this evidence, the Pentagon and Raytheon both declined comment. A spokesperson for the U.S. Defense Department said, "We cannot comment on serial numbers which may or may not have been found at the scene."

"The identification of the missile as American is an embarrassing blow to Washington and London," noted The Independent, "as they try to match their promises of minimal civilian casualties with the reality."

No wonder that U.S. missiles are now targeting independent journalists in Iraq.

The war presented by compliant U.S. television networks, newspapers and radio stations is pure fiction. But elsewhere, those in the know can't help commenting on the ever-shifting sands beneath U.S. and British claims about the war's motives, progress and consequences.

So grievous are the Bush administration's lies that even the staid British Broadcasting Corp. complained about "false and misleading information" after it was forced to retract several stories supplied by the Pentagon and U.S. officials.

The BBC warned its journalists to clearly attribute any claims to military sources in the future.

An "unnamed senior BBC news source" interviewed by the Guardian newspaper admitted, "We're getting more truth out of Baghdad than the Pentagon at the moment. ... We're absolutely sick and tired of putting things out and finding they're not true."

"The misinformation in this war is far and away worse than any conflict I've covered, including the first Gulf War and Kosovo."



Few people in the U.S. have seen what U.S. bombs do to the children of Iraq. These are among the least gruesome photos available from Al Jazeera, the Arab news service, before its office was destroyed by a U.S. cruise missile.

CLAIM: U.S. and British forces are not targeting civilians.

What's the war's reality for Iraq's people—half of whom are under age 16?

"Red Cross doctors who visited southern Iraq this week saw 'incredible' levels of civilian casualties, including a truckload of dismembered women and children, a spokesman said Thursday from Baghdad." (Canadian Press, April 4)

Two days later, the Red Cross reported that the number of casualties in Baghdad was "too high to count."

"Fog of war shrouds the facts" headlined an April 4 Guardian Online report. Writer Stuart Miller cited as a key example the power failure that plunged Baghdad into darkness on the night of April 3.

British military sources told journalists that U.S. forces had targeted the city's power grid with a carbon fiber bomb. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, perhaps mindful of criticism of the bomb's use in Yugoslavia in 1999 that shut down hospital equipment and other vital human services, denied it.

When the British press published accounts of the "blackout bomb," Pentagon commanders blamed the Iraqi leadership for the power outage—much as they attempted to shift the blame for the market bombing.

Nobel Prize author Gunter Grass joined UN officials in condemning the continued use of U.S. cluster bombs that look like food ration packets, the French Press Agency reported.

The brightly colored bomblets are especially dangerous to children. In the town of Hilla, 50 miles south of Baghdad, a bomblet exploded in 5-year-old Nader's right eye while he was playing. A French Press Agency reporter interviewing Nader's mother April 2 saw six other children swathed in bloody bandages in the same room.

The Iraqi people aren't fooled. That's why they're resisting, arms in hand—to the shock of U.S. troops, who were told they would be welcomed as liberators.

Commenting on similarities between the Iraq and Vietnam wars, the April 5 Guardian cited reports of "frightened marines shooting up any taxi that moved" and "fresh-faced soldiers ... turning into scared, demoralized killers."



CLAIM: The war will bring democracy to Iraq.

What kind of government awaits a "liberated" Iraq under U.S. occupation?

The Bush plan: A U.S. military regime under Gen. Tommy Franks, and overseen by Jay Garner, a retired general who heads the Pentagon's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. (Associated Press, April 3)

Garner's proposed role is akin to a 19th-century colonial "governor."

What about his qualifications?



Garner is a friend of Israeli war criminal and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He's also currently under investigation for corporate misdeeds at home.

A pending lawsuit by DESE Research claims Garner used his military ties to unfairly secure contracts for SY Technology, a rival company he headed. (The Observer, April 6)

According to Ariel Cohen, a foreign-policy analyst for the far-right Heritage Foundation, Garner's role will be to "introduce a capitalist system where there's been a central-control socialism since the 1960s."

Iraq is not a socialist country, but it has used state ownership of its oil industry to fund the country's development and education, health care and housing programs, making it the most highly industrialized country in the Arab world before the 1991 Gulf War.

Garner's task is to facilitate the takeover of Iraq's oil fields by U.S. and British companies, and oversee the "reconstruction" of the country by Bush-friendly companies like Bechtel and Halliburton, the latter recently helmed by Vice President Dick Cheney.

Another front-runner, U.S. building firm Fluor Corp., is facing a multi-billion-dollar lawsuit for brutalizing Black workers in apartheid-era South Africa, reports The Observer.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz told Fox News April 6 that direct U.S. military rule would last a minimum of six months.

Ahmad Chalabi, head of the U.S.-funded Iraqi National Congress, who hopes to be the White House's hand-picked president of Iraq, foresees at least a two-year stay by U.S. troops. (Reuters, April 6)

CLAIM: Iraq has weapons of mass destruction.

In the war's first two and a half weeks, no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq—that is, if you discount those dropped from on high by the Pentagon.

But there have been plenty of allegations.

As Workers World Party said at the outbreak of the war: "It is already clear that U.S. special teams have been organized to produce justification for this war of aggression by 'finding' Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. What the UN could not find in years of inspections, the U.S. is sure to 'find,' one way or another."

"The minute it's made up, you'll hear about it," wrote The Independent's Mark Steel April 3, commenting on an alleged "chemical weapons factory" that turned



out to be an all-night gas station.

"Vials of white powder" discovered by U.S. troops on April 4 near the town of Latifiyah got lots of TV air time. But they turned out to be harmless, BBC World News reported the next day.

On April 7, U.S. forces in northern Iraq said they found barrels containing possible chemical weapons at an alleged "terrorist training camp." There was no independent confirmation of the barrels' contents, which a U.S. commander thought to be mustard gas and nerve gas.

He pegged the site as a "terrorist" facility because there was graffiti on the wall reading, "Palestine for the Palestinians." (New York Times Web site)

British Home Secretary David Blunkett confessed in an April 5 radio interview that he believed no chemical, biological or nuclear weapons would be found. (Al-Jazeera)

That WMDs were always just a pretext for the war was further confirmed in a revealing article by David E. Sanger in the April 6 New York Times under the headline, "Viewing the war as a lesson to the world."

"Shortly after Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld issued a stark warning to Iran and Syria last week, declaring that any 'hostile acts' they committed on behalf of Iraq might prompt severe consequences, one of President Bush's closest aides stepped into the Oval Office to warn him that his unpredictable defense secretary had just raised the specter of a broader confrontation," Sanger wrote.

"Mr. Bush smiled a moment at the latest example of Mr. Rumsfeld's brazenness, recalled the aide. Then he said one word—'Good'—and went back to work."

Sanger continued: "For a year now the president and many in his team have privately described the confrontation with Saddam Hussein as something of a demonstration conflict, an experiment in forcible disarmament. It is also the first war conducted under a new national security strategy, which explicitly calls for intervening before a potential enemy can strike." □

To rescue failed Rumsfeld doctrine

U.S. massacres Iraqi civilians

By Fred Goldstein

The U.S. military and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld promised a quick and relatively bloodless war in Iraq. Their plan was based upon a massive "shock and awe" campaign of initial bombing. It was supposed to produce the collapse of the government, defection of military officers and massive surrender of troops without any significant resistance.

The other part of the Pentagon's fantasy was that the Iraqi people would greet U.S.-British forces as "liberators."

The bombing took place. It produced only resistance. The most overpowering military machine in the history of humanity faced the heroic opposition of the Iraqi people from day one of the war. From city to city, they have fought against impossible odds to defend every inch of territory from the colonial invading forces.

So the Pentagon turned to its backup plan—a sea of blood and massive destruction.

In the much-heralded Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz scenario, there was not supposed to be a battle of Umm Qasr or a battle of Basra or An Nasiriyah or An Najaf or Karbala or Hilla or Kut—or any of the other cities of south and central Iraq. And above all, there was not supposed to be a battle of Baghdad, with thousands upon thousands of civilian dead and wounded and whole sections of the city in ruins.

High-tech precision bombing of "regime targets" was supposed to eliminate that. Thus it would be possible to execute "regime change" by overwhelming but "selective" and "surgical" military force, while at the same time keeping the political support of the majority of the population. This would allow conquest combined with social stability.

An imperialist dream. When the U.S. invasion force was greeted not with flowers but with mass resistance, this fantasy went up in smoke. Instead, the U.S. military visited the cities with bunker buster bombs, missiles, rockets, mortars, cluster bombs and depleted uranium artillery and machine gun shells.

Thousands of civilian deaths

The hospitals around the country, and particularly in Baghdad, are overwhelmed with wounded civilians. "The Red Cross," wrote the Washington Post on April 7, "estimated that hospitals were receiving hundreds of wounded each day. During some of the most intense fighting Friday, hospitals reported receiving 100 every hour."

Hospitals were running out of supplies. They were operating on generators because the U.S. military knocked out the power supply, which also cut off the water supply. According to aljazeera.info of April 9, Al Yarmuk Hospital in Baghdad was coping with about 100 wounded an hour and Mahmudiya Hospital south of Baghdad was no longer able to deal with war wounded.

At Al Kindi Hospital, one of two trauma centers in Baghdad, orthopedic surgeon Taleb Saadi had performed 12 surgeries, including two amputations. "They are hitting civilian houses, roads and cars," Saadi told a reporter. "They're hitting everybody." (Washington Post, April 8)

"Every few minutes, ambulances would tear into the parking lot, and attendants would rush over to pull out the wounded—and in some cases the dying—from the U.S.

assault on Baghdad," wrote the Los Angeles Times on the same day from Al Kindi Hospital.

"Dazed relatives, their clothing soaked in blood, watched helplessly as the nurses pushed their family member up the ramp into the receiving ward. Then the gurneys would be returned to the parking lot, hosed down and readied for the next.

"Many of the wounded civilians," continued the Times, "said they had been in the Doura district, which the U.S. forces passed through on their way to the presidential compound Monday morning. But others reported being injured in other parts of the city where the unrelenting American advance was felt."

The systematic campaign of destruction on the ground is carried out under the cover of a massive bombing campaign that goes on randomly 24 hours a day. Over 1,000 missions are flown every day. In addition, A-10 gunships, which fire thousands of rounds of 30-mm machine gun shells every minute, hover over the city ready to swoop down on the resistance fighters trying to push back or impede the advance of U.S. tanks and armored vehicles.

Resistance and heroism of the people

In the face of this overwhelming firepower, the Iraqis have fought with a tenacity never dreamed of by the Pentagon planners. When Gen. William S. Wallace said, "We never war-gamed for this," referring to the resistance in the south, he might as well have been describing the entire war.

A Washington Post dispatch from the outskirts of Baghdad, posted April 8, said that "after a day of advancing on the Iraqi capital inch by inch, Marines hunkered down tonight for a nerve-racking pause in a downtrodden neighborhood one Marine described as 'hell on earth.'" Other accounts, of large tank contingents being held up for hours by firefights with Iraqi soldiers and armed civilians, testify to the heroism of the people.

Descriptions of determined counterattacks to drive U.S. forces from fixed positions, of youths in T-shirts and jeans defending the Jurihaya bridge from the advancing infantry, are among the innumerable examples from Baghdad. But all over the country, the Iraqis have refused to surrender despite the overwhelming force of a colonial occupier.

It is this resistance that has caused the Pentagon to change its "rules of engagement" to open up on civilians and create as much terror as possible in the final push to take Baghdad. And it is only in light of this escalation of the war against the people of Baghdad that the coordinated attack on non-"embedded" journalists can be understood.

Keep world from seeing the truth

The bombings of the Abu Dhabi TV station and the Al Jazeera headquarters, in particular, were

Belfast protest against Bush-Blair summit.



March 5 rally of Iraqi women against U.S. war threats. Since then, thousands of civilians have been killed by U.S. and British invaders.

calculated to take off the air the pictures of massive destruction and civilian casualties that were being beamed not only to the Middle East but around the world. The shelling of the Palestine Hotel, which houses those reporters not completely directed by the Pentagon, was a message to the press to curb its coverage or leave town.

These attacks were meant to clear the way for the military to escalate its war crimes under cover of total military press censorship. As such, these actions were part and parcel of the war on Baghdad.

Now networks like CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, and the rest can sweep under the rug the massive numbers of civilian dead and wounded and the war crimes being committed right under their noses. Occasional pictures of civilian casualties can be flashed on the screen, followed by sobering discussions with military experts who assure the audience that the U.S. is doing everything it can to minimize casualties. Thus the subject is dispensed with.

After getting past the war crimes, the embedded mouthpieces for the war machine and the TV anchors at home can wax ecstatic over the "stunning" nature of the military operation. They can do this without mentioning that the Iraqis are up against a high-tech war machine backed up by a \$10-trillion economy and that Iraq has for over a decade been under the most complete sanctions ever instituted. They can suppress the overwhelming fact that, not only have the Iraqis been prevented from upgrading their completely outmoded military equipment, but they have been largely forced to disarm.



Years of bloody occupation ahead

Yet even as the U.S. military tightens its grip on downtown Baghdad, it is now confronted with the prospect of having to institute a harsh military occupation. For years to come, "retired" U.S. Army Gen. Jay Garner, the designated military ruler-to-be, and the Pentagon's exiled puppet-in-waiting will have to deal with millions of Iraqis who burn with hatred of the U.S. government—first because of the suffering and death caused by the sanctions, and now even more because of the invasion.

Millions of Iraqis live in neighborhoods with narrow streets where tanks cannot go. Thousands of them are armed. The prospect of the U.S. stabilizing any kind of regime after this brutal campaign is highly questionable.

The "stunning achievement" of Rumsfeld and the rest of the right-wing hawks in the Bush administration is that they were willing to unleash this war machine upon a relatively defenseless, small, impoverished country. They were willing to massacre civilians and bring havoc and destruction on the cities in order to overwhelm the heroic anti-colonial national resistance of the Iraqi people.

This hardly qualifies Rumsfeld as a great military strategist. On the contrary, it qualifies him and the entire Bush administration as war criminals.

But the Rumsfeld military strategy, which envisaged the rapid capitulation of the regime and surrender of the masses after the use of fine-tuned, high-tech military terror, has failed. The Pentagon has had to escalate its atrocities against the Iraqi people.

This has caused the Bush administration to lose the political battle.

In carrying out these war crimes, the Bush administration now stands before the people of the world as the new colonial occupying power of the 21st century. It has earned the undying hatred not only of the Iraqi people, but of the people of the world.

The fundamental flaw of the campaign was to discount the Iraqi masses' long tradition of opposition to colonialism, their pride as a people and their willingness to struggle against all odds.

If the U.S. military is able to consummate its victory, it will still have politically united the world against U.S. imperialism in a way that has never happened before.

The Iraqi resistance stands as an example and an inspiration to all the oppressed peoples of the world who yearn for liberation. This war will inevitably breed a new worldwide resistance to the new would-be emperors in the White House, the Pentagon and Wall Street.

A crucial arena of this worldwide resistance will be right here at home, against the warmakers and the capitalist system that drives them. □

Privatizing Iraq

The battle for the bucks

By Milt Neidenberg

Under the guise of aid and reconstruction, hordes of bankers, brokers, investors and corporate tycoons are circling Iraq like vultures, ready to pluck and plunder. They are joined by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and U.S. government institutions.

Their brutal objective, concealed so thinly as "Operation Iraqi Freedom," is to occupy and exploit Iraq with its immense oil reserves and water resources that are so strategic in the arid Middle East.

Umm Qasr, a town in southern Iraq with the country's main port, is now controlled by the U.S. military. The besieged population there has gotten more than a taste of the "liberation army."

The 354th Civil Affairs Brigade decided to initiate a capitalist project. Children were drinking from contaminated pools. As temperatures reach 100 degrees, many will die of disease and dehydration. So U.S. officers enticed a few truck owners to bring in desperately needed water—to sell. "We're permitting them to charge a small fee," a U.S. Army colonel confessed, admitting he did not know what a "reasonable" fee was. (New York Daily News, April 1)

This kind of treatment by the occupiers has led to heroic resistance by the Shiite population in the south, shocking U.S. and British forces who were told they would be welcomed by the people.

Right before the war, the Iraqi government organized an emergency distribution of food rations—adequate and free—to over 60 percent of the population. A New York Times editorial on April 5 admitted that the average Iraqi family had received enough food before the invasion to last until the end of April.

Privatizing the water in Umm Qasr is one example of the kind of "humanitarian" free market enterprise that the Bush administration and Wall Street have in mind for the entire country. Every public sector worker here knows that privatization means union busting, outsourcing jobs and mass layoffs.

Privatize Iraq—that's what this brutal, aggressive war is all about. It's not about weapons of mass destruction, ties to al Qaeda, Saddam the dictator, or any threat to the U.S. populace.

Making Iraq pay for U.S. destruction

In a commentary written for the Wall Street Journal of March 27, Robert McFarlane, a national security advisor to President Ronald Reagan who now owns his own global energy development company, and Michael Speyzer, the CEO of an international equity fund management company, described how Iraq will be privatized.

"Since Iraq is a relatively rich country in natural resources, particularly oil, it will be able to absorb the cost of rebuilding the physical infrastructure. But the revival of the economy—based on new investment, project development and job creation—will have to be led by the private sectors of the global economy. At a time when President Bush and other administration leaders pursue their vision for political reform and democracy in Iraq, we in the private sector should help create and implement the policy measures that will make an attractive investment climate in Iraq. ...

"In the oil sector, priority should be given to improved transparency and predictability to encourage the early involvement of private international companies."

They propose a "steering committee" to supervise and monitor the execution of these policies in Iraq.

The Pentagon has begun to set up this "steering committee." It's called the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. Humanitarian assistance for whom, may we ask?

It will be run by retired Army Lt. General Jay Garner, who will report directly to Central Command Gen. Tommy R. Franks and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld at the Pentagon. Rumsfeld's henchman, Paul Wolfowitz—an ultra-rightwing warhawk—is assembling the staff. It will include 230 retired

U.S. military officers and hard-line civilian officials.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, a State Department agency and CIA front, is deciding with the Pentagon which corporations will be selected for the early stages of the so-called reconstruction.

There are no differences between Colin Powell and Donald Rumsfeld over who gets the lucrative contracts. Bidding for them is secret and selective. Profits are already guaranteed. They will come from oil resources stolen from the Iraqi people, combined with an \$80-billion appropriation of U.S. taxpayers' money passed by Congress—only the first installment.

As the U.S. economy continues to slide toward deeper recession, the corporate and financial institutions will be at each other's throat for the billions involved in the reconstruction contracts. Fortune Magazine, March 26, put it mildly in describing the scramble: "No wonder it's creating controversy."

Union busters get first choice

Which corporations are first in line? They all have one thing in common. They hate unions. Bechtel is the top contender. The corporation is a political insider, loyal to the Bush warmongers and protective of government secrets and deceptions. It has a reputation for subversive and under-cover operations.

Privately owned, it was founded by John McCone in 1937. McCone made a hefty fortune during World War II, then left the company to accept numerous government posts: deputy secretary of defense, under secretary of the Air Force, director of the Atomic Energy Commission, and finally CIA director from 1961 to 1965.

A few years later, McCone became a key player in the 1973 overthrow of the democratically elected Allende government in Chile. He was then a director of International Telephone and Telegraph.

Bechtel thrives on government and intelligence contracts. It has received huge engineering contracts in the Middle East to build nuclear power plants, roads and bridges. Steven Bechtel was appointed to the Advisory Board of the U.S. government's Export-Import Bank from 1970 to 1973. The bank provided major loans to countries that then financed Bechtel-related projects.

Further illustrating the Bechtel-U.S. government connection, President Reagan got the company to release two of its board members, Caspar W. Weinberger

and George P. Shultz, so he could name them secretaries of defense and state, respectively.

Another beneficiary of the Bush administration is Stevedoring Services of America. The company is well known to the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the entire organized labor movement here and abroad. SSA, which has a monopoly on cargo operations in over 150 locations worldwide, was behind the infamous lockout of West Coast dockworkers last September. It conspired with the Bush administration to use the Taft-Hartley law to break the ILWU. The plan was soundly defeated.

SSA will receive a \$4.8-million contract, renewable to 2006, to run the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr.

Then there is Halliburton and its subsidiary, Kellogg, Brown and Root. This is Dick Cheney's baby. He took a \$40-million bailout from the company to run for vice president. Along with Bechtel, they will profit from the biggest construction projects because of the wholesale destruction of Iraq's infrastructure. These corporations will be operating under "cost plus" contracts yielding billions in profits.

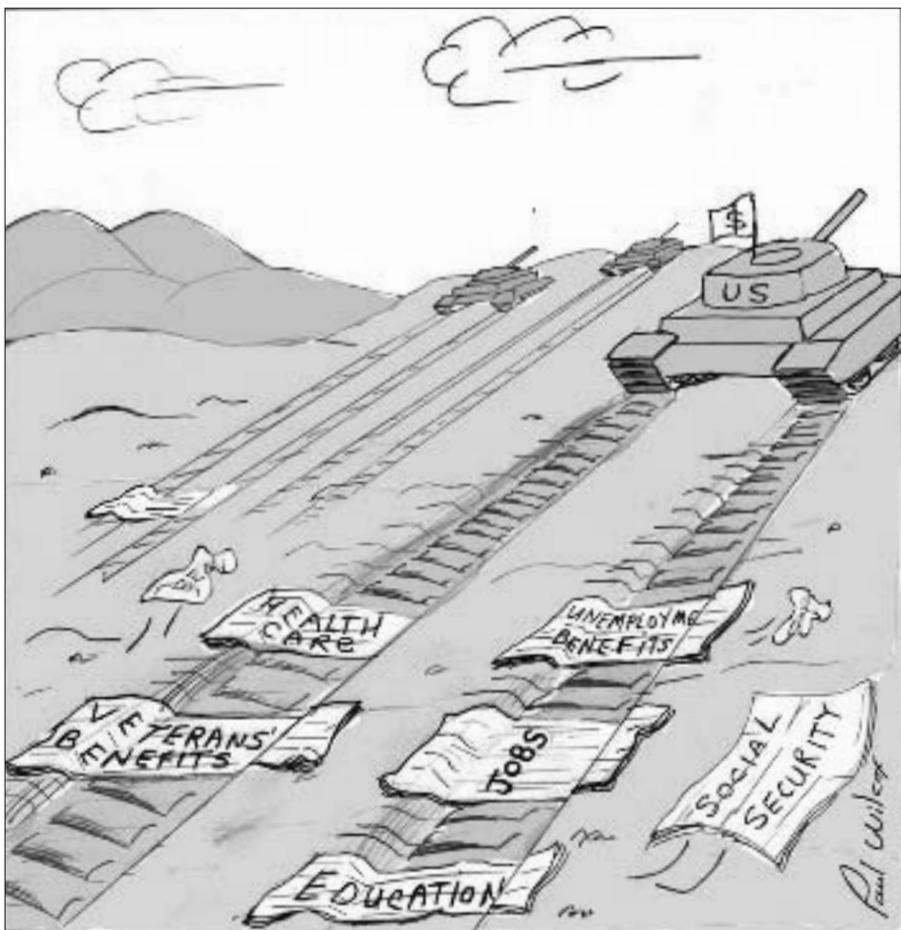
Meanwhile, in Iraq, battlefield casualties will continue to rise as more and more troops are put in the position of killing or being killed under conditions of overwhelming heat, exhaustion, and resistance from urban guerrillas in street fighting.

Many of the men and women are in the U.S. forces because the Reserves and National Guard provided the possibility of a college education or a much-needed source of income. They will be forced to stay in Iraq to protect the growing list of corporations selected to profit under the proposed U.S. military dictatorship.

They dream of home, family and loved ones. How long will they remain silent as they face injury and death?

For the workers and the oppressed nationalities here at home, it is only the beginning of more sacrifices as the economic crisis deepens and unemployment continues to rise at an alarming rate.

Their dreams and hopes will soon find common ground. These two powerful social forces will be in sharp conflict with the U.S. imperialist goal of global domination. A setback in Iraq, even a protracted struggle, will shake the very foundations of the capitalist system. The heroic resistance at Umm Qasr, Basra, Baghdad and smaller cities and towns will further inspire the powerful worldwide anti-war movement. □



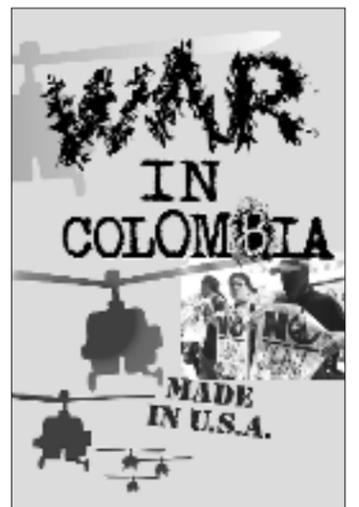
Bush's war on the Western Front

War in Colombia Made in U.S.A.

A new book from the International Action Center covers the struggle in Colombia from the perspective of trade unionists, human rights activists, and the FARC and ELN insurgencies. Authors include:

- ◆ Fidel Castro ◆ Ramsey Clark ◆ Rep. Cynthia McKinney ◆ Mumia Abu-Jamal ◆ Manuel Marulanda
- ◆ Stan Goff ◆ Teresa Gutierrez ◆ James Petras
- ◆ Roy Bourgeois ◆ Gloria Gaitán ◆ Senator Paul Wellstone ◆ Javier Correa Suarez ◆ Rebeca Toledo

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End colonial occupation of Iraq

Continued from page 1

ing a mass protest on April 7.

This news release immediately spread over the Internet and strengthened the resolve of millions of anti-war activists all over the world. By the morning of April 7 in New York, anti-war demonstrators on their way to jail in a police van mentioned the Belfast demonstration in a radio interview as if it were their own.

April 12: Fourth international day of protest

The response to a call for an international day of protest on April 12 was another sign of the growing consciousness of this worldwide movement. ANSWER in the U.S. and the Stop the War Coalition in Britain, plus representatives of the German anti-war movement, had put out a joint call on March 28 for the fourth worldwide protest day. By April 5 movements in 40 countries from all continents had agreed to support the call, from Seoul to Sao Paulo, Sydney to Copenhagen, Madrid to Manila.

Making April 12 an international day strengthens the actions overall. It especially helps mobilize in war centers like the U.S. and Britain, where imperialist propaganda still has a hold on large sections of the population.

Anti-war forces in several countries made an extra effort for the common good. For example, the International League of Peoples' Struggle in the Philippines had originally issued a call for April 9 actions in the Asian-Pacific region. But when its leadership learned of the international day, they took the exemplary action of changing the date of their protest to the April 12 international day. In a number of other countries where groups had some flexibility, they also adjusted their schedules to strengthen the international day.

Solidarity with the Iraqi resistance

Before the U.S. and Britain launched their aggression against Iraq, the popular movements in most of the imperialist countries had as the main slogan of their demonstrations: "Stop the war on Iraq before it starts." This slogan allowed the movement to put the greatest number of people in motion on a progressive basis.

There was also a pro-imperialist opposition to the U.S. war, especially from Washington's rivals in Paris and Berlin. These governments and the imperialist rulers they represent had nothing to gain and much to lose from U.S. domination of the Middle East. In addition, they faced mass resistance to the war in their own countries.

So the French and German govern-

Damascus, Syria, April 7. Teachers hold banners with photos of wounded Iraqi children.

ments, with some support from Russia, opposed the U.S. within the United Nations Security Council. In effect, their slogan was "Inspections, not war." They were for robbing Iraq of sovereignty but were against the current slaughter. Their refusal to endorse the war made it even more obviously illegal under international law.

Nevertheless, Washington launched its attempt to occupy Iraq and return it to colonial status. The Iraqis have answered this overwhelming military assault with heroic resistance under the most difficult conditions.

Now the situation is changed. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer's response to the new situation was that "the war should end as soon as possible," meaning that the Iraqis should surrender to colonial oppression. The German and French regimes are asking that the United Nations oversee an Iraqi protectorate, so their firms get a piece of the action rebuilding the country.

On the other side, important sections of the anti-war movement worldwide are grappling with the new situation. For example, anti-war organizer Angeles Maestro of Madrid wrote a paper April 5 urging the anti-war, anti-globalization movement to begin using a slogan calling for solidarity with the heroic Iraqi resistance.

Workers and oppressed nations

The point is far from being a rhetorical question for a movement debate. It is at the heart of developing real solidarity between the working class in the imperialist countries—Europe, North America, Australia and Japan—and the masses of oppressed peoples and nations of what has been called the Third World.

The oppressed want Iraq to win and repel the invaders. When hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in Multan, Pakistan, on April 4, they supported the armed resistance of the Iraqis and called for trials of Bush and Blair for war crimes. When 50,000 from trade unions, leftist, Muslim and women's organizations protested in Istanbul, Turkey, on April 6, they shouted, "Stop this bloody

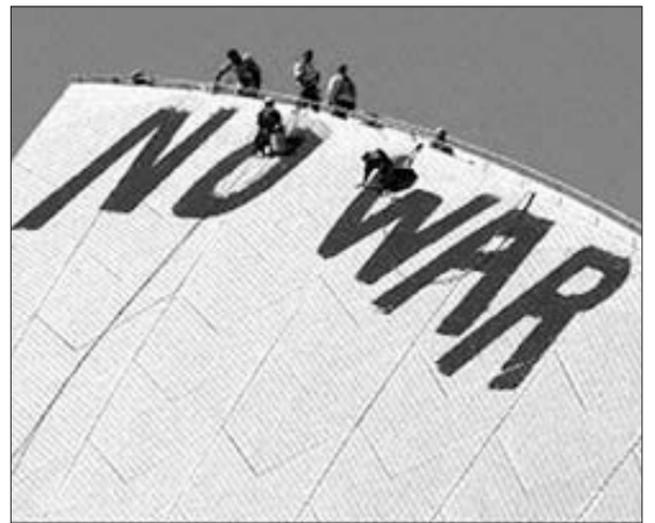


war" and "Imperialist USA out of the Middle East."

Volunteers from Arab and Muslim nations have gone to Baghdad by the thousands to fight alongside the Iraqis. Others from the West have gone either as "human shields" or as "brigades" to observe and report on the brutal assaults on the Iraqi people and their determination to defend their country. On April 7 word came that two more doctors from Medicine for the People in Belgium had joined their colleagues in Baghdad to help care for the many wounded.

Recently a Pakistani

A memorable photo of the famed Opera House in Sydney, Australia.



Where to get information

By John Catalinotto

It is hard to get good information about the war and especially about Baghdad these days. But those who check out certain alternative sources will at least find something a lot closer to the truth than the propaganda coming from the Pentagon's Command Center in Qatar.

A "brigade" of people from Spain and the Basque Country have been in Baghdad since before the U.S. invasion began. They give daily reports, both on the civilian victims of the U.S. bombs and the mood in the city. Here are a few items from their April 7 reports, after a major U.S. incursion into the city.

"The information distributed by the [Spanish press agency] EFE correspondent in Baghdad, Alberto Mazagosa, from the third floor of the Hotel Palestina, in the midst of a formidable sandstorm and without leaving his apartment, that the Republican Guard surrendered en masse, has no basis in truth.

"This new incursion could be one more like those the invading force has attempted in the last few days and, like all the others, could be withdrawn. In any case we remain certain that the resistance will remain firm, and that the Iraqis will not surrender."

The above reports unabridged can be found in Spanish, and some are translated into English, on the web site www.nodo50.org/csca.

Four doctors from the Belgium Medical Team of Medicine for the Third World got through the heavy bombing and fighting

progressive wrote an important article that made the following point: "The anti-war movement has also helped the Muslim masses in distinguishing between the people of the West and some of the jingoist governments. Similarly, it has narrowed the room for racists in the West." In other words, it has increased the chance for real anti-imperialist solidarity of the peoples.

Undoubtedly the anti-war movement should remain open to those who, repulsed by the war crimes of the U.S. and British against Iraqi civilians, merely want to stop the bloodshed.

But if the movement makes it clear that it refuses to accept the U.S., British or any other occupation of Iraq, and if it recognizes the Iraqis' right to resist the occupation, it can deepen the solidarity that the Pakistani comrade writes about. This would be a tremendous step forward in a time of great crisis. □

in Baghdad on April 7. Two had just reached the city after driving from Damascus. They were unable, however, to reach the hospitals that day to help with the hundreds of wounded Iraqis or to deliver the medicine they had brought from Brussels.

From the Sheraton Hotel, where they are staying, they witnessed the battle across the Tigris in the western part of town. In the afternoon, however, shops opened again, cars were driving around and life was more or less back to normal. "The Iraqi resistance troops remain visible in our part of town," one of them says. "Some are driving around cheering and waving flags of Iraq, just like after a victorious football match."

Look these up at www.irak.be/ned/index.htm for English, French and Dutch. They can also be reached through www.iacenter.org.

A site giving cold military assessments can be found at www.aeronautics.ru, which reportedly gets its analysis from contacts in Russian military intelligence. Again, from April 7:

"By the afternoon Iraqi actions became more confident.

"There is information that one of yesterday's air strikes severely damaged one of their communication and control centers and currently the Iraqi command has to control their units using VHF-stations and envoys, which delays battle-orders and commands.

"Today the American command had to admit that the fighting potential of Baghdad defenders is 'fairly high' and the rivals show no sign of demoralization." □



Heidelberg, Germany. Protesters place flowers for the massacred Iraqis in front of the Campbell Barracks of the U.S. Army headquarters.



Palestine and the Warsaw Ghetto

How do the war profiteers and their generals rope in working people, the downtrodden and disenfranchised, to go slaughter workers and peasants in oppressed countries like Iraq and Palestine?

Not with recruitment posters that say: Make the world safe for Halliburton and Unocal. Not with slogans like: Kill for Big Oil and the banks. Sacrifice your life for Wall Street. Money for carnage, not for health care, jobs and education.

This is where the Pentagon and the monopoly media raise propaganda to an art form: War is peace. Slaughter is saving lives. Occupation is liberation.

It may be easier to see the British Empire and the imperialist U.S. as aggressors in the oil-rich Middle East. But Israel is also a military power with its own imperial aspirations in the region, even though it still poses as a David battling Goliath.

The Madison-Avenue-style ad campaign to market the colonization of historic Palestine as palatable and righteous has been popularized over half a century by virtually every monopolized organ of media, education and entertainment—the Big Lie.

Perhaps no other rationalization for modern colonial occupation has demonstrated more contempt for the victims of genocide and oppression than that designed by Washington and London to garner public sympathy for the Israeli settler regime.

After World War II, the U.S. and Britain cynically exploited the horror, grief and terror generated by the systematic Nazi extermination of six million Jews to support the creation of Israel as a “Jewish homeland.”

Zionist ideologues and commandos, eager and willing tools, founded the garrison state in 1948 under the racist banner: “A land without people for people without land.” The settler regime aimed to make that lie a reality by driving Palestinians off their land, using weapons of lynching, expropriation, forced Diaspora and apartheid conditions.

But these weapons alone could not maintain the existence of the settler state in the Middle East. How could little Israel wage a constant state of war against Palestinians and invade neighboring Arab countries all by itself?

It couldn't. So the Pentagon and the military-industrial complex have armed Israel to the teeth, making it the world's fifth-ranking military power. The economy of Israel, not viable enough to stand alone, is bolstered by some \$3 billion to \$4 billion a year in official U.S. aid.

Wall Street, the White House and Pentagon demand and expect that Tel Aviv will line up with their overall strategic objectives and economic interests in the Middle East. If the government in Tel Aviv ever truly acted on its own, it would suddenly find itself revealed as a rogue state that really does have weapons of mass destruction and an indefensible human rights record.

Today, while the Coalition of Two has ringed Baghdad and Basra with steel and fire and calls it liberation, Israel is literally imprisoning the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza behind a concrete wall ringed with barbed wire. Every day brings news of more Palestinians killed by the Israeli military.

Yet Palestinians of all ages are a heart-beat of resistance, inspiring courage worldwide for standing up despite the terrible odds.

Isn't this the modern-day version of the bravery that walled-in Jewish adults and children displayed when they rose up in the Warsaw Ghetto to battle the Nazis 60 years ago this April? The Zionists today have no resemblance to those oppressed people who fought back against the highly militarized imperialist power of Nazi Germany.

The modern-day equivalent of those who fought fascist oppression are the heroic Palestinians of Jenin, who fought back with whatever was at hand, often nothing more than rocks, when Israel put them under siege one year ago.

Resistance in both Iraq and Palestine have ripped away the mask of propaganda and laid bare the ambitions of U.S. capital for world domination. Their struggles call out for solidarity.

Just as the Warsaw Ghetto uprising inspired Polish revolutionaries to smuggle arms and ammunition through the sewer system to the trapped combatants, and attack Nazi military units from the rear, the refusal by Palestinians to knuckle under to overwhelming firepower has inspired a world movement to rise up in their defense.

In the U.S., the indefatigable uprising of the Palestinian people has created a rising wave of solidarity, its numbers swelled by Jewish people of all ages. A “Divest from Israel” campaign has been sweeping across U.S. campuses.

Volunteers from the U.S. and around the world, including Jewish people of all ages, have traveled to Iraq and Palestine to defend Arab lives with their own bodies. Some, like Rachel Corrie from the U.S., have died facing down Israeli soldiers and bulldozers.

Inside Israel, Jewish youth are going to jail rather than be forcibly inducted into the army, and soldiers are balking at orders by the brass.

The Palestinian people have been fighting for their national survival for over 50 years, and show no signs of letting up. The U.S. imperialists may think they can spend another 50 years containing the anger in the Arab world generated by their high-tech assault on Iraq. But they have never been so hated. The heroism and sacrifice of both Palestinian and Iraqi martyrs will not be forgotten, but will inspire new generations to struggle—and win. □

After promising 'democracy'

Pro-NATO gov't arrests 7,000

By John Catalinotto

Since the assassination of Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic on March 12, the NATO-backed Serbian state has waged a terror campaign against the citizens of that country, especially against the remaining political opposition.

A state of emergency continues. Some 7,000 people were arrested, with 2,000 held in prison for investigation, say both European press accounts and dispatches direct from Belgrade. There can be no criticism of the government, no demonstrations or strikes. Not even public statements are allowed. The threat is now that parties will be forbidden.

Special police units stand in the streets, masked and heavily armed, with a license to kill. Two people were already shot dead by the police on March 26.

The government claims to be hunting down and breaking up organized crime gangs. And some of those arrested were apparently connected to these gangs. Organized crime has flourished since the overturn of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS)-led government in October 2000 and so many of the formerly state-owned industries were privatized.

Since the NATO-puppet Djindjic had his own connections with the crime gangs, it is reasonable to suspect that organized crime had

something to do with his murder.

But it is becoming more and more obvious that the main target of the government witch-hunt has been activists on the left. The ruin of the Serbian economy has aroused so much opposition that the current pro-NATO regime has to fear the consequences of any fair election, not to mention strikes by workers.

The regime has especially targeted those activists associated with former President Slobodan Milosevic, who has been so successful for over a year in contesting phony war-crimes charges in a NATO court in The Hague, Netherlands.

Vladimir Krsljanin and Bogoljub Blelica, who heads the group SLOBODA in Belgrade working for the defense of President Milosevic, were arrested toward the end of March.

Police also confiscated computers. Krsljanin has since been released, but Blelica was still being held as of April 5.

The regime has also brought charges against Mira Markovic, Milosevic's wife and formerly a leader of the Yugoslav United Left party.

Milosevic's defenders are concerned that the regime will put those in jail under enormous pressure to testify against the former president in the trial at The Hague, especially those who themselves might face charges there. □

Ex-Marine says protests saved lives

John Merson of Siasconset, Mass., wrote the following letter to the *New York Times*, which published it on April 8:

When I was a Marine infantryman in Vietnam, support meant a lot to me and my fellow grunts, but it didn't mean what most people thought. We wanted to come home alive. When we got wounded or sick, we wanted good medical help. We wanted rations that we could trade with the Vietnamese for real food.

We saw war protesters as allies, certain to save lives and bring us home sooner if they succeeded. Those

who advocated winning at any cost would only get more of us killed.

The worst kind of support came from those who voted for the war and against adequate medical care, rehabilitation and education for veterans. While patriotic talk is cheap, veterans prefer to survive and enjoy the tangible benefits they earned.

We didn't join the Marines for love of country. We joined to get out of the house, out of the city, off the farm, into a job, and because we were 18 and believed we were indestructible. Let's start treating our soldiers not as icons but as real people. □

Behind Pentagon lies about the Balkans war

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The truth about why the imperialists bombed Yugoslavia

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FRANCE

600,000 strike to protect pensions

By G. Dunkel

An estimated 600,000 workers throughout France held a 24-hour strike and demonstrated April 3 to protect their current retirement system.

Some 80,000 workers marched in Paris and at least as many in Marseilles; 10,000 in Toulon; 20,000 in Rhone-Alpes; 5,000 in Strasbourg; 20,000 in Bordeaux; 5,000 in Rennes. There was a protest in almost every city and town in France.

The strike was supported by about 20 percent of post office workers, 35-45 percent of teachers and support personnel in education, and nearly 80 percent of air-traffic controllers and railroad workers. This is because in France workers doing the same job may belong to different unions. The only railroad/subway service not strongly affected was the high-speed trains that took marchers to protests in Paris and Marseilles.

The focus of the one-day action was threats by Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin to privatize retirement. France is under pressure from the European Union

to cut state expenses.

In France's retirement system, workers collect a percentage of their final salary depending on how many years they have worked. Currently, public sector workers need 37.5 years for a full pension and private sector workers need 40 years.

According to a poll conducted by the newspaper *Le Parisien*, 72 percent of the people in France either were sympathetic to or supported the unions in this struggle. Even a majority in Raffarin's own conservative party reportedly supported the unions.

Other issues were raised at these protests, as well. In Marseilles, where a large number of workers have roots in North Africa, banners called for no war against Iraq.

Contingents included workers and students from high schools and technical schools in Marseilles who have been striking for weeks against projected cutbacks. A spokesperson pointed out that education is supposed to be a priority in the area, yet Raffarin wants to lay off 26,000 support staff.

Bernard Thibault, leader of the CGT, the most militant of France's major labor confederations, concluded, "We are heading for a hot May."

Some Mays in France's recent past have been very hot, indeed. □

Marseilles, France,
April 3.



Japanese farmers and workers march on Narita airport. At center is solidarity activist and reporter Lyn Neeley.

Japanese say: 'No airport and no war'

By Lyn Neeley
Tokyo

Japanese farmers, joined by students, labor unionists and anti-war activists, held a powerful protest at Japan's largest airport on March 30. Their demands ranged from "Stop the expansion of Narita Airport"—a longtime goal of the Sanrizuka-Shibayama Farmers League Alliance—to "Stop using the military airport for U.S. military action" and "Stop the war in Iraq."

Over 1,000 cops in full riot gear stood along a 12-foot solid-metal fence topped with barbed and electrified wires. Facing them were protesters wearing white or red hard hats, carrying huge red flags and placards. Many bore scars from past battles with police. Others sat on gunnysacks

in a freshly plowed field across from a narrow road encircling the airport.

After a rally, they held a militant march around the perimeter of the airport. Protesters chanted and threw their fists in the air. Three longtime activists were arrested.

In its 37-year militant struggle against the airport, the Farmers League has successfully stopped two out of three runways from being built and caused one runway to be shortened from the planned 8,250 feet to 7,200 feet. One existing runway is interrupted by two plots of land that the farmers have refused to relinquish.

In the 1970s and 1980s the farmers' league constructed two heavy steel towers, 198 feet and 132 feet high, on farms located at the end of landing strips under construction. The towers took two months to build and were completed just as the airstrips were scheduled to open. The sturdy towers penetrated the air space of incoming planes.

Japanese government forces engaged in a huge battle with the farmers and their supporters to lower the towers. They brought in a truckload of water mixed with tear gas, which still remains on the site. Some activists were jailed up to 16 years for their resistance.

At the March 30 rally Koji Kitahara, secretary general of the Farmers League, pointed out that the farmers' struggle against expansion of the military airport is linked to the worldwide fight against globalization and the war in Iraq.

During the Vietnam War the U.S. military used the Narita airport as a base to launch its warplanes. The fight against Narita is especially important now because it could be used in Washington's escalating attacks against North Korea.

Kitahara talked about the importance of building solidarity with groups in other countries leading movements against the Iraq war. A representative of ANSWER from New York gave a solidarity speech from the U.S. movement.

Yasahiro Tamaka, president of Japan's Labor Union of Locomotive Workers (Doro Chiba), described a successful three-day strike in which 500 union members stopped 600 trains from running. The union is fighting against privatization of Japan's state-owned railroad, the war in Iraq, and Japan's involvement in U.S. attacks on North Korea.

An invitation to participate in the worldwide anti-war protest on April 12 got a roaring response. □

La resistencia iraquí y la estrategia de Rumsfeld

Continúa de página 12

parientes quieren saber por qué los americanos se están demorando tanto. ¿Cuándo vienen?"

Estos son los colaboradores ideológicos y doctrinarios de Rumsfeld. Su mal cálculo se origina en una necesidad absoluta que esta estrategia funcione. Debe funcionar o la doctrina de dominación mundial se puede caer.

La doctrina militar Rumsfeld —la supremacía de poder aéreo, alta tecnología, y amenazas de "susto y asombro"— es una versión en el siglo XXI del siglo XIX de la diplomacia del cañón. Esto retrotrae a una era en que las masas del mundo estaban aisladas las unas de las otras sin acceso a tecnología moderna, medios militares, medios de comunicación, y experiencia histórica de lucha y organización. Esto nos recuerda la época en que los cañones británicos podían navegar hacia las costas de China o África y disparar sus cañones —de tecnología militar superior— y destruir un área de costa para someter a los dirigentes locales. O cuando Comodoro Matthew C. Perry "abrió" Japón en los años 1860 navegando su flota hasta el puerto, disparando amenazantes tiros de cañón, y demandando derechos de intercambio y otras concesiones.

Este fue el "susto y asombro" del siglo XIX, que está resucitando en el siglo XXI

con bombas guiadas con computadoras en vez de tiros de cañón.

El defecto fatal en la doctrina

Las dos presunciones principales interconectadas son que Washington puede lograr su objetivo amenazando gobiernos hasta someterlos o cambiando "regímenes" alrededor del mundo hasta establecer la soberanía absoluta y la dominación. Y que la gente del mundo son una masa inerte —son meros objetos suficientemente desorganizados e indefensos que no tienen que tomarse en cuenta como un factor fundamental en la historia mundial. Todo lo que se necesita es enviar "bombas inteligentes", misiles Cruise, helicópteros asesinos y tanques computarizados para garantizar la dominación de los EE.UU.

Esto es por supuesto una necesaria doctrina militar para cualquier facción de la clase dominante que sueña con establecer un imperio mundial. Esto significa que no tienes que utilizar millones de soldados para ir a matar y morir en un combate masivo. Esto significa que el papel de la infantería de marina es el de ir a "trapear" después de los criminales bombardeos y luego convertirse en una fuerza de ocupación para traer nuevos gobiernos títeres que obedecerán a Washington incondicional y servilmente.

Esto significa que la clase trabajadora que esta siendo enviada a las guerras de conquista no pasaran trabajo, no se rebe-

laran al ser usadas como tropas de choque para las corporaciones transnacionales, y las compañías petroleras. Esto significa que la clase dominante puede pasar por una "guerra sin fin" en el exterior y gozar de estabilidad en casa.

Pero el gobierno iraquí, que se ha convertido en una fuerza de resistencia nacional, y el pueblo iraquí en cada ciudad, pueblo y villa, ya han probado decisivamente que la estrategia de Rumsfeld, y la doctrina imperial de Bush, que supuestamente se iba a mantener, son falsas. Las fuerzas de este colosal poder imperial han tenido que pelear cada pulgada del camino contra un país pequeño y pobre, debilitado por 12 años de sanciones y bombardeo.

El peligro inmediato es que estos criminales de guerra para poder vindicar su estrategia de bancarrota pueden tratar de producir una victoria intensificando sus crímenes, ya suficientemente abominables, contra el pueblo iraquí. Ellos consideran que tienen suficiente poder militar para compensar sus cálculos increíblemente equivocados entorno a la resistencia, y pasarán por ríos de sangre para evitar la humillación de la derrota.

El movimiento mundial contra la guerra debe hacer lo posible para mostrar solidaridad total con el pueblo iraquí y hacer lo que sea necesario para detener esta guerra criminal. □

¡PROLETARIOS Y OPRIMIDOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNÍOS!

MUNDO★ OBRERO

La muerte de una doctrina ilusoria

La resistencia iraquí y la estrategia de Rumsfeld

Por Fred Goldstein

La resistencia heroica por el pueblo de Iraq a la incansable matanza con un poderío militar de alta tecnología ha inspirado al mundo entero, sorprendido al alto comando de del Pentágono y arremetido un gran golpe a las ambiciones de la administración Bush de expansión de su imperio capitalista mundial.

Millones de personas se han tomado las calles desde Indonesia a Bangladesh, desde Seúl a San Francisco, desde Siria y Morocco hasta las Filipinas, marchando hasta las embajadas estadounidenses y británicas y hasta las sedes de sus gobiernos, exigiendo un fin a la guerra criminal de agresión, los bombardeos contra ciudades y pueblos y la matanza de civiles.

El Pentágono ha llevado consigo suficiente misiles, bombas proyectiles, ametralladoras aéreas, tanques y naves armadas como para una guerra mundial. El ejército militar de los Estados Unidos ha destruido en Bagdad desde distritos obreros a mercados, sistemas telefónicos, hospitales de maternidad, estaciones de televisión y edificios gubernamentales. Este ha lanzado ataques sobre ciudades importantes y pueblos como Karbala, Najaf, An Nasiriyaj y Samawa. Los británicos han atacado a la ciudad de Basra de 1,5 millones de habitantes por dos semanas consecutivas, lanzando proyectiles y bombas en áreas civiles.

El pueblo iraquí ha respondido defendiéndose, preparándose para la batalla de Bagdad y comenzando una clásica campaña de guerra de guerrilla para impedir el avance de las fuerzas imperialistas.

Resistencia crea división en la militar de EE.UU.

La resistencia nacional del pueblo de Iraq contra la invasión y ocupación colonial ha revelado el fracaso de la estrategia de guerra del Secretario de la Defensa de los Estados Unidos, Donald Rumsfeld y abrió una profunda división entre los comandos de la máquina militar de los Estados Unidos y críticas contra el “plan de guerra”.

La prensa empresarial de repente se llenó de valentía pudo criticar la estrategia de Rumsfeld—pero solo porque esta hablaba por parte de un gran sector del alto comando militar que ha estado opuesto a esta estrategia por más de un año. La humillación de la máquina de guerra del Pentágono por las masas iraquíes determinadas a defender su país abrió un torrente de críticas de “yo se los dije” del ejército y la marina (infantería de la marina) sobre el fallo de proveer suficiente tropas y de confiar demasiado en el poder aéreo.

La división resultó cuando el General William Wallace, el comandante de la Fuerzas Armadas en el Golfo Pérsico, fue citado en muchas publicaciones el 27 de marzo diciendo: “El enemigo contra el que



Tareq Ayub del Al-Jazeera.

Bagdad, 8 de abril. Todos muertos, blancos del Pentágono, que quisiera ocultar sus crimines de guerra y la resistencia iraquí.

estamos luchando es un poco diferente al que nosotros imaginamos en nuestras prácticas debido a estas fuerzas paramilitares. ... Nosotros sabíamos que estaban allí, pero no sabíamos cómo iban a pelear.” (New York Times, 28 de marzo.)

El General Wallace dijo esto mientras visitaba la Base de Operaciones donde el comando Aéreo 101 estaba estacionado. Él estaba “diciendo en alta voz lo que muchos soldados han estado diciendo en privado,” continuó el Times. “El general dijo que durante la batalla de esta semana por el pueblo de An Najaf, al sur de Bagdad a orillas del Río Éufrates, los iraquíes en camionetas se enfrentaron contra tanques americanos y vehículos Bradley, solo armados con armas ligeras montadas en las tinas de las camionetas.

“Vehículos técnicos con armas de calibre .50—todo tipo de armas—encabezando el enfrentamiento,” dijo el general sorprendido. ‘Ellos se enfrentaron a los tanques y a los vehículos Bradley.’ Él le catalogó a esta acción como ‘algo raro’.”

Después pronunció la frase que produjo virtualmente una guerra civil dentro del alto comando. Wallace dijo, “Tengo que dar mi mejor opinión militar, dado el ambiente, las largas líneas de comunicación, y dado que hemos sacado nuestra larga línea de logística. Tenemos que darnos una pausa. Todavía estamos luchando contra el enemigo todas las noches.”

Esto fue resonado el mismo día por el jefe de la División de la Primera Marina [infantería de la marina—USMC], Coronel Ben Saylor. “Nos han peleado cada pulgada, cada milla que andamos.”

No es un accidente que el Ejército y la USMC han encabezado la crítica. Las tropas terrestres bajo estos comandantes tienen que enfrentarse a las masas iraquíes, tienen que sentir la furia de la resistencia nacional. Estas tropas terrestres no han sido preparadas para luchar contra una guerra popular. A diferencia de los oficiales pilotos que bom-



Jose Couso del Tele 5 del España.



Taras Protsyuk de Reuters.

bardean con impunidad y las fuerzas navales que están lejos de los campos de batallas y bien protegidas, la moral de las tropas de tierra está en caída, creando una situación difícil para el alto comando.

Ignoraron sus propias advertencias de inteligencia

Poco después de las declaraciones públicas de Wallace, una torrente de artículos exponiendo las largas e intensas luchas en el Pentágono sobre los planes de guerra comenzaron a aparecer en la prensa capitalista. Un largo y detallado recuento por Seymour Hersh, apareció en la revista New Yorker con fecha del 7 de abril.

Otro artículo extenso en el Guardián de Londres del 29 de marzo reveló que el General Tommy Franks, jefe del Comando Central, había enviado a Rumsfeld un plan pidiendo 400.000 tropas antes del comienzo de la campaña. “Un airado Rumsfeld regresó [la petición] tres veces,” escribió el Guardián, “en cada ocasión pidiendo un recorte en la cifra de soldados necesarios para el trabajo, tanta que al comienzo de la guerra, Franks había visto sus fuerzas reducidas a 250.000.” Y de esos 250.000, sólo 90.000 estaban en los campos cuando comenzó la guerra.

Más importante aún es la siguiente la revelación del diario Guardián, “El mes pasado, la CIA presentó un informe diciendo que unidades paramilitares leales a Saddam Hussein amenazarían los avances hacia Bagdad. Advertencias similares llegaron desde la Agencia de Inteligencia de la Defensa dentro del Pentágono meses antes de la guerra.”

De hecho, Orville Schell, en el San Francisco Chronicle el 31 de marzo, citó al Primer Ministro iraquí, Tariq Asís: “La

gente me dice, ‘Ustedes no son vietnamitas. Ustedes no tiene selvas pantanos.’ Yo contesto, que nuestras ciudades sean nuestros pantanos y nuestros edificios nuestros pantanos.” Él dijo esto a investigadores de la Universidad de Warwick hace seis meses.

¿Cómo puede ser que el Pentágono y la Casa Blanca no hicieron caso de lo que dijeron no solamente los iraquíes, sino la CIA y la DIA [la agencia de inteligencia militar de los EE.UU.], ambos con presupuestos enormes para descubrir esa clase de información? ¿Cómo es posible que Rumsfeld, su subsecretario Paul Wolfowitz, el vicepresidente Dick Cheney, y otro subsecretario de defensa Douglas Feith, quienes planearon esta guerra, pongan el esfuerzo militar de los EE.UU. tan alto riesgo frente a las advertencias de sus propias agencias de espionaje?

Lo más importante a destacar sobre la controversia del plan de guerra es que es enteramente superficial. Esta disputa se ha reducido a un asunto de juicio. Por cierto, no es solamente una cuestión de juicio pobre por parte de Rumsfeld. Es una cuestión ideológica y de visión del mundo que apoya este cálculo desastroso.

Doctrina de dominación mundial

La administración de Bush desarrolló su doctrina de dominación mundial, en un documento de Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional en septiembre del 2002. Esta es una evolución de la Guía de Planificación de la Defensa promulgado en marzo de 1992, autorizado por Wolfowitz y aprobado y modificado posteriormente por Cheney. Se ha actualizado y expresado en lenguaje de contraterrorismo. Pero básicamente establece el derecho del imperialismo norteamericano de intervenir y remover cualquier gobierno que Washington considere una amenaza. Este documento establece más adelante que ningún poder o combinación de poderes podría desafiar la supremacía mundial del Pentágono.

Tal doctrina política ultrajante, agresiva y enajenante que proclama la intención del imperialismo estadounidense de dominar el globo terráqueo y su población de seis mil millones de personas debe basarse necesariamente en una doctrina militar que pueda avizorar la conquista del mundo con los medios que posee el capitalismo norteamericano.

Richard Perle, recientemente depuesto de su cargo de dirección de la Junta Política de Defensa, que había sido nombrado por Rumsfeld, y arquitecto de esta guerra, le dijo a PBS el pasado 11 de julio que el gobierno iraquí era una “casa de cartas... el apoyo para Saddam, incluyendo dentro de su cuerpo militar, se caerá al primer tiro”.

Y Paul Wolfowitz, hablando a los Veteranos de Guerras Extranjeras el 11 de marzo, dijo que los contactos iraquíes en los EE.UU. le dijeron que “sus amigos y

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