

# Bush can't sell war for empire

By Fred Goldstein

As the Bush administration plunges ahead toward war, the apologists for imperialism are having great difficulty fashioning a coherent public justification for this obviously unprovoked war of aggression.

Is it about "regime change"? Is it about "weapons of mass destruction"? Is it about oil? Is it about empire?

The Bush administration demanded inspections. But with each new daily announcement by the weapons inspection team that they have found nothing and are getting complete cooperation from the Iraqis, the Pentagon dispatches more weapons, more troops and more commanders to surround Iraq and launches more attacks in the no-fly zones.

Bush says "we seek no empire" and that war is not inevitable. But at the same time the administration leaks its plans for the military occupation of Iraq, the seizure of the oil fields, and "war crimes" trials of the Iraqi leadership.

Most importantly, the glaring connection between the Bush administration's incestuous ties to the oil industry and Iraq's 112 billion barrels of oil reserves, the

second largest in the world, keeps looming larger and larger as the anti-war movement at home and abroad spreads the word.

As the war approaches, the propagandists and policy experts of imperialism are rushing to keep up with the government's conflicting and confusing explanations for its war drive. Doing its part to promote a fresh and bold justification for the war, the New York Times has opened the pages of its influential Sunday magazine section to a major piece by Michael Ignatieff entitled "The Burden." It was the cover story of the magazine's Jan. 7 issue, and was promoted in blazing red, white and blue letters as "The American Empire (Get Used to It)." Because of the source, this article will be read carefully in capitals and embassies throughout the world.

Ignatieff is the director of human rights of the Carr Center at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The Times, through the words of this propagandist of war, has floated an ideological trial balloon. It is toying with something that has not been attempted since the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise of the world national liberation movement: sanitizing imperialism.

### Admitting empire in order to praise it

Ignatieff takes the bull by the horns. He disputes Bush's claim that "we seek no empire." He attempts to deal with the obvious. "Yet what word but 'empire'"

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## Huge protests expected in D.C., S.F.

By Monica Moorehead

As the Bush administration and the Pentagon continue their massive military build-up in the Gulf region in preparation for a war against Iraq, anti-war forces in the U.S. are intensifying their organizing efforts for national marches and rallies in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco on Jan. 18.

Tens of thousands of GIs, women and men, are being forced to leave their loved ones to fight and possibly die or be wounded in a war for Big Oil profits. Anti-war forces say this is intolerable and will be taking to the streets to demand "Money for jobs and human needs, not to kill the Iraqi people."

The demonstrations could not have come at a more crucial time. Just nine days later, on Jan. 27, United Nations inspectors are scheduled to present their final report to the UN Security Council on whether they have found any "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq. The day after that, President George W. Bush will give his State of the Union address, which may be an announcement of U.S. military intentions or actions.

So far the inspectors say that their efforts, which began in early October, have not unearthed any substantial proof

of chemical, nuclear or biological weapons. However, the U.S. and Britain continue to accuse the Saddam Hussein government of harboring and developing such weapons.

The lack of evidence has not stopped the U.S. from mobilizing the largest deployment of troops and weaponry since the first Gulf War in 1991. An estimated 100,000 U.S. troops, along with the most technologically sophisticated aircraft carriers, airplanes, armored tanks and artillery numbered in the thousands, are in the area or making their way towards Iraq.

The world sees this as proof that the Bush administration has been hell bent to illegally overthrow the Iraqi government at all cost, and that the inspections have just been a smokescreen.

The International Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) coalition made the call for the Jan. 18 mobilization following anti-war demonstrations on Oct. 26 that brought out 200,000 people in Washington and 100,000 in San Francisco. January 18 coincides with the holiday weekend commemorating the birthday of the great civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Just a year before his assassination in 1968, Dr. King had made several impas-

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## MEDICARE

Look out, they're trying to 'reform' it!

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# Medicare in danger!

By Heather Cottin

Whenever the Bush administration talks "reform," workers had better watch out.

President George W. Bush is planning to eviscerate Medicare, the government health plan for the elderly that workers pay into all their lives. And he has the support of powerful Democrats in Congress. With millionaire Bill Frist now the Senate majority leader—he's part of a for-profit hospital dynasty—a bipartisan plan that would gut Medicare and force elderly Social Security recipients to pay more for health care is moving ahead.

Sen. Frist, a Tennessee Republican, is a surgeon. He has been getting a lot of publicity portraying him as a doctor who knows first-hand about the problems of the sick. It's more important, however, that his family owns Columbia/HCA, the biggest chain of for-profit hospitals in the country.

According to a 1996 New England Journal of Medicine article, when Columbia/HCA takes over a hospital, the result is less "charity" care for the poor, replacement of senior health professionals with less experienced and lower-paid workers, and sacrifice of quality service in the interest of profit.

"With the new Senate majority leader as a powerful ally, President Bush will propose sweeping, long-term changes in Medicare administration," reported the Jan. 3 New York Times. "Dr. Frist can explain and defend the Medicare proposals in a way that the previous Senate Republican leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi, never could."

These big-business politicians are once again extolling the virtues of the "market" for health-care services. At the same time, Bush attacks Medicare as a "program that's antiquated and likely to go bankrupt."

His plan, however, spells disaster for the elderly—on several fronts.

## 'Breux-Frist bill would destroy Medicare'

To begin with, Bush's "new" plan is just a rehash of the Breux-Frist bill, introduced three years ago by Frist and Louisiana Democrat John Breux.

Ron Pollack, executive director of the advocacy group Families USA, characterizes the Breux-Frist proposal as "a riverboat gamble ... likely to leave seniors, especially those with illnesses and chronic conditions, con-

Health care 'reform,' as proposed by Bush and his new sidekick Bill Frist, has been described as 'a voucher program that would destroy Medicare.'

siderably worse off than they are today."

In March 2000, an organization made up of unions and consumer groups examined the Breux-Frist proposal. "The Breux-Frist bill is a voucher program that would destroy Medicare," explained Diane Archer of the Medicare Rights Center. "This proposal is not about taking care of older and disabled Americans' health care needs; it's about charging them more money for less health care and taking away the core guarantees of Medicare."

According to the study, Medicare recipients would lose their choice of doctors and hospitals, be forced into HMOs, lose benefits for basic medical services, lose government accountability for any difficulty with delivery of medical services, and be faced with high prescription drug costs.

"Instead of preserving and improving Medicare, the Breux-Frist proposal dismantles Medicare as Americans know it and need it," said Vicki Gottlich of the Center for Medicare Advocacy.

So who gains? Drug companies and HMOs, which look for more profits from Bush's new program.

While the elderly make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for one-third of the nation's drug expenditures. (The Nation's Health, April 2001.) If Bush's "Medicare Modernization" legislation is passed, the drug companies stand to win big.

It's no wonder that, in testimony to the Senate, Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., senior vice president of corporate strategy and policy for Eli Lilly & Co., lauded Breux and Frist for their "efforts to bring the outdated Medicare program into the 21st century."

Bill Frist has been a great friend to Eli Lilly. There are reports that he helped the company avoid prosecution for its role in producing Thim-

erosal, a dilutant for vaccines that contains mercury and is suspected of being linked to autism in children. An amendment shielding drug companies from litigation over Thimerosal appeared mysteriously in the Homeland Security bill.

"Rep. Dick Arme, R-Texas, has denied reports that he wrote the amendment at the urging of White House officials. Arme's spokesman said it came from Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn," Sara Fritz reported in the Nov. 16, 2002, St. Petersburg Times.

According to "Medicare vs. Private Insurance: Rhetoric and Reality," a report of the nonpartisan Commonwealth Fund, people on Medicare "report fewer problems getting access to care, greater confidence about their access and fewer instances of financial hardship as a result of medical bills." The report concluded, "Medicare provides a level of security not typically found in employer or individual coverage." (Newsday, Dec. 17, 2002)

Bush's plan would push the elderly into for-profit health organizations.

For the average Medicare recipient, medical premiums under the Breux-Frist plan would fluctuate wildly. Since these premiums are deducted from Social Security checks, the income of the elderly and infirm would markedly decline. National spending for drugs has tripled in the past decade and is expected to further double by 2008. (The Nation's Health, April 2001)

Seniors who have been booted out of HMOs in increasing numbers would face more of the same.

What is needed in this wealthy country, of course, is to take the profits out of the delivery of health care through a national, government-funded program for people of all ages. The Bush "reform" instead slashes away at the limited government program that exists so that the billionaire HMO and pharmaceutical corporate vampires can suck the life blood from the elders of this country.

To Bush's war on Iraq, in which young people are expected to spill their blood for the oil and military corporations, must be added his war at home—in which the health and well-being of the elderly are to be sacrificed to enrich the medical profiteers. It will take a multigenerational movement committed to peace, justice and people's needs to fight this cynical, malicious attack on workers' rights. □

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**Mon., Jan. 13**  
 Protest against war criminals Henry Kissinger and Shimon Peres. 6-8 p.m. at Universal Studios. Gather at the corner of Lankershim Blvd. and the entrance to Universal Studios on the sidewalk closest to Universal's entrance. For info Los Angeles ANSWER (213) 487-2368.

#### SAN FRANCISCO

**Sat., Jan. 18**  
 No war on Iraq. Joint action with march in Washington, D.C. Gather 11 a.m. at Market Street and Embarcadero (Embarcadero

MUNI/BART). March to Civic Center. 1 p.m. rally for info (415) 821-6545 or on the Web internationalANSWER.org

#### WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Sat., Jan. 18**  
 National March on Washington, D.C. No war on Iraq. Assemble 11 a.m. at the West Side of the Capitol Building. Become a volunteer. Endorse. Help get the word out. Bring people to D.C. Send a donation to the mobilization. For info on the Web internationalANSWER.org or phone (202) 544-3389 in D.C. or (212) 633-6646 in NYC.

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## Bush's 'economic stimulus' plan

# Guns for the workers, butter for the rich

By Leslie Feinberg

Ask people cobbling together a living today what economic stimulus means and their first answer would most likely be: A decent job. Health insurance that doesn't compete with the ability to pay for groceries. Retirement savings that don't evaporate like a mirage. A secure nest egg for unexpected emergencies.

And a little left over for exciting recreation and a relaxing vacation.

Neither President George W. Bush's ballyhooed Jan. 7 economic "stimulus" program nor the timorous counter-proposal by the Democrats will bring this modest goal within fingertip reach for millions living from paycheck to paycheck, fretting anxiously over unpaid bills. And what about the millions who don't even have a job, who are mired in poverty in this, the richest country on the planet?

If the extent of this economic distress sounds hyperbolic, consider these statistics that represent flesh and blood lives.

Appeals for emergency food aid—an often arduous and tedious process for those with growling bellies—increased an average of 19 percent in 2002, according to a 25-city survey released by the U.S. Conference of Mayors on Dec. 18.

Almost half the urgent pleas for food came from members of families with children. And 38 percent of the adults needing meals were employed. Even with a job, they don't earn enough to put food on the table.

As housing costs outstripped incomes, requests for emergency shelter by those without a roof over their heads also rose by 19 percent in 2002, the sharpest rise in a decade. Twenty-two percent of homeless people in the surveyed cities were employed.

The steep increase in numbers of people shivering on cardboard boxes or taking refuge from rain under bridges was attributed in this poll to a dearth of affordable housing, lack of needed services for mental disabilities and addictions, and low-paying jobs.

And the services to support so many lives of quiet desperation are disappearing. Cash-poor states are bogged down in a morass of major budget deficits caused by economic stagnation and tax cuts for the rich and virtually bottomless spending. Now add to that the cost of the impending Pentagon invasion of Iraq and "Homeland Security."

California alone is facing a \$35-billion budget shortfall. (AP, Jan. 5)

As a result, in states from coast to coast, social service programs that could affect the quality of lives are on the chopping block. Last year, resources to meet the need for emergency food aid plummeted 52 percent in the cities where hunger was gnawing so deeply.

State, federal and municipal employees, who once hoped their jobs would be secure for a lifetime after having won unions and benefits like health care, are staring a major attack in the face.

In the private economy as well, more mass layoffs are looming. The latest shocker came from AT&T, whose bosses just announced that 3,500 workers are about to get the axe.

These workers face an "economic draft" into the already large army of the unemployed.

Even though they knew they'd eventu-



PHOTO: LAS VEGAS REVIEW JOURNAL

ally have to extend them, the House of Representatives allowed unemployment benefits to lapse for more than 750,000 workers on Dec. 28. Jobless workers' gooses were cooked when the politicians adjourned for holiday meals without legislating an emergency extension.

### A boon for billionaires

What's the solution?

There's President George W. Bush's "bold" approach, unveiled on Jan. 7. The price tag on his economic package—an estimated \$674 billion over 10 years—could go a long way if invested in the lives and working conditions of the class hardest hit by economic dislocation.

Instead, Bush sent his chief economic advisor, Stephen Friedman, and other top aides to Wall Street and Capitol Hill hawking the administration's own brand of snake oil: They claim that windfalls for the already wealthy are the antidote for what ails the economy.

Bush wants to rapidly relieve the richest from the burden of taxes. Of course, the average tax rate on the profits of the barons of big business has already plunged to a nearly six-decade low. (New York Times, Jan. 7)

The Bush administration had reportedly considered slowing down already-passed income tax cuts for the highest-income echelons "in order to deflect criticism" over new tax cuts on stock dividends he wants to give the rich. (Daily Southtown, Jan. 3)

However, reported The Cincinnati Enquirer, the idea of delaying this belated holiday gift to the affluent "prompted a storm of objections from conservative groups," and the White House caved.

A centerpiece of Bush's proposal is completely eliminating taxes on stock dividend income. In late December the White House floated the idea of a 50-percent cut in dividend taxes. But the rich and powerful squealed like pigs, so Bush agreed to abolish the tax altogether.

The donation to Wall Street of no more dividend taxes is aimed at boosting stock prices. It's a boon to the stock market—the central nervous system of the U.S. capitalist economy—in its third year of stomach-churning descent.

But the money will go into already deep pockets. The Tax Policy Center tabulates that about 64 percent of the benefits from abolishing tax dividends will go to the wealthiest 5 percent of taxpayers.

And merely giving big investors more cream off the top doesn't add up to capital investment or job creation. Businesses

slashed production so deeply in 2001 because they had unsold goods, not because they had no funds to invest with. Furthermore, the Federal Reserve Bank has lowered interest rates so much that it's practically paying businesses to borrow money and expand. But they're not doing it—because they know there are already more goods on the market than there are buyers.

"The animal spirits of business have been depressed," observed Jerry Jasinowski, president of the National Association of Manufacturers.

But there's nothing in the Republican or Democratic economic packages that will medicate this malaise.

### Guns and a pat of butter

After the GOP gavel opened the 108th session of Congress on Jan. 7, the Senate finally approved a five-month extension of unemployment benefits. It demonstrated their worries about the duration of the recession and their concerns about popular anger as the government goes to war.

The measure was also put forward "in order to quiet critics and improve the [budget] proposal's chances of congressional passage," noted several major news sources. (post-gazette.com)

The Democrats, with all eyes on the election horizon, claim to be fighting the Republican proposal tooth and nail. They're standing up for the "little guy," these politicians say.

Their "bailout" package for this year is timid—it offers only chump change to working people, like tax rebates of \$300 per individual and \$600 per couple.

It includes \$31 billion aid to states, but much of that is earmarked for "homeland



Capitalist paradox: Homeless camp out in Las Vegas while surplus jet planes are stacked wingtip to wingtip in nearby Mojave Desert.

security projects" that mean more police powers and more surveillance. (cnn.com, Jan. 7)

A couple hundred bucks, or a couple of thousand, would be a welcome temporary relief for many people scrambling to pay their bills. But in the overall game of mega-monopoly, it won't last long.

There's been a \$5 trillion drop in household net worth in the three years since the economic slowdown began, according to Mickey D. Levy, chief economist for Bank of America. (Washington Post, Jan. 3)

That comes to an average of about \$75,000 per household. No wonder so many credit cards are maxed out and people are struggling with second mortgages.

### Elephants, donkeys & an 800-lb. gorilla

The Republicans and Democrats are hurling demagogic accusations of "class warfare" at each other about their economic proposals.

"There is no question," intoned Daniel Mitchell, an economist at the right-wing, pro-Republican Heritage Foundation, "that the left will try to drag out the pagan god of class warfare and say this is just a sop to the president's rich friends." (enquirer.com, Jan. 6)

That's how far to the right the pendulum of the establishment is swinging—Mitchell is referring to the Democrats as "the left"! But the Democrats aren't going to filibuster for workers' rights, militate for a general strike that could flex the muscle of organized labor, rally the millions to surround Capitol Hill or call for mass encampments of the jobless and homeless on the White House lawn.

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## Killing the messenger

By Matt Schwartz

"The United States economy is growing again," President George W. Bush told the world in his holiday radio address from his ranch in Texas. "This economy is strong and it can be stronger."

But then the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics issued its monthly study about mass layoffs by U.S. companies. It revealed that employers carried out 2,150 mass layoffs in November affecting 240,028 workers. A mass layoff is defined as one involving at least 50 people.

What happened when this report contradicted Bush's claims? The truth was squashed.

One little paragraph in a press release issued on Christmas Eve said that funding for the program that tabulates mass layoffs has dried up. The Bureau of Labor Statistics can't find funding anywhere else, so these figures will no longer be made available. (San Francisco Chronicle, Jan. 3)

It makes one wonder what else the current Bush administration isn't telling the people and what other lies they are feeding the corporate media. □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal  
from death row



## The CUBAN 5 & 'Homeland Security'

Right now, the American Empire is girding its loins for a war, based at least in part on the alleged "threat" posed by a Third World adversary—Iraq. Few seriously view the Ba'ath state as a threat, but that's the rationale advanced to the American people.

What if there WAS a nation, one which was relatively close, and which not only had an avowed enemy, but one that had staged traceable acts of war against its people, that resulted in considerable loss of life and human suffering?

Well, the Cubans don't need to look far. Their "avowed enemy" is the Colossus to the North—the United States, which has not only threatened to do harm, but has done so, for virtually half a century.

The United States has admitted trying to kill the Cuban head of state, Dr. Fidel Castro, at least 11 times. It has invaded the nation, it has sown its soil with poisons and spread contagion among its livestock. Again, this is what the U.S. HAS ADMITTED TO DOING.

Recently five Cuban nationalists were imprisoned in Miami and charged with spying for Havana. In fact, the five were actively exposing and working to stop terrorist acts launched by Cuban exiles in Miami against their homeland. When they saw plots against their nation, they monitored them and reported back to their people what was happening.

The Cuban government promptly passed on the reports to the U.S. government, in a bid to stop the terrorism that has cost over 3,000 Cuban lives since the 1959 Revolution and until 1999. The U.S. responded to the reports by rounding up the five, charging them and treating them as spies.

They have been convicted of charges relating to their monitoring, and have been sentenced to terms of 15-years-to-life for defending their nation from terrorist attacks.

The U.S. insists that it has the right to stage a pre-emptive strike against a nation that has not attacked it (Iraq), and yet it is wrong to defend one's homeland from further terrorist attack. That is illogical.

So, for over 33 months now, five Cubans have languished in U.S. jails, separated like wheat from the chaff, all around the nation. They are more than the rallying cry, "the Cuban Five." They are real human beings: Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and René González. They committed no acts against the United States, nor monitored any American secrets. They entered the Miami exile community and observed the planning of acts of terrorism against the nation of their birth, and reported it. That is their "crime." Despite never participating in any terrorist acts, and indeed, preventing over 170 terrorist acts against the land of their birth, they have been consigned to U.S. gulags. One wonders, is there really a "war against terrorism"? For, if there is, how can it be furthered by the imprisonment of those who fought to stop terrorism?

As for those in the Miami Mafia, the "rabiblanco," as they are called (rabid anti-Castro Cubans), they have actively engaged in terror against the Cuban populace, but they have nothing to fear from the Americans, for the U.S. government indirectly supports and indeed funds their efforts.

People are organizing around the nation to demand Freedom for the Cuban Five. Please contact them, and help give life to this effort. By so doing, you will be opposing terrorism, for real, and supporting an anti-terrorist group of people who only want to defend their nation from foreign-backed aggression.

Free the Five! □

## Behind the walls with Labañino of Cuban 5

# 'I wear the prison uniform with honor, pride'

By Gloria La Riva  
Beaumont, Texas

Ramón Labañino would love nothing more than to be home in Cuba with his wife, Elisabet Palmeiro, and his three young daughters. He missed out on precious time with his mother, who died in 1998.

But Ramón gave up his personal life in Cuba to engage in an important but dangerous mission inside the United States: protecting the Cuban people from terrorist attacks coming out of southern Florida.

He moved to Tampa, Fla., in 1993 to protect not only his own family but the 11 million people in Cuba from the aggression and hostility directed against them from the United States ever since the Cuban Revolution.

Ramón was sent by Cuba to do what the U.S. government has refused to do for decades: stop the countless bombings and sabotage plots emanating from Miami.

For this heroic effort, he is serving a life sentence in the U.S. federal penitentiary at Beaumont, Texas. There is no parole in federal prison.

He and four others, known by their supporters as the Cuban Five, were arrested by the FBI in September 1998, prosecuted by the U.S. government and convicted by a Miami jury in June 2001. That says it all about the U.S. policy: The terrorists run free in Miami while the anti-terrorists are in prison.

I was privileged to visit Ramón in late December at Beaumont prison in eastern Texas. Joining me in the two-day visit was Houston activist Gloria Rubac, known to many Texas prisoners for her tireless defense of their rights.

## Appeal date set for April

April 7 has been set as the date for the Cuban Five's attorneys to file their appeal briefs in the 11th Circuit Court in Atlanta. The five will file in a joint action. At a later date, oral arguments will be heard.

This makes the struggle for public opinion on behalf of the five all the more urgent. The U.S. government prosecuted them. It will be up to the people of the United States and the world to free them. To get involved, contact the Free the Five committees at [www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org) or call (415) 821-6545. □

Gloria and I came away deeply moved by Ramón's personality, by the strength of his principles and by the optimism he shows despite prison life.

The first thing he said when we met was: "First, I want to let you know how deeply we, my four brothers and I, appreciate your solidarity and the support of all our friends in the U.S. Please let everyone know we thank them very much."

It was the midst of the holidays and Ramón was getting 10 to 15 letters a day. The letters, from as far as Argentina and Scotland, were a real morale boost. He laughed that some of his friends in prison say he is famous. They have come to realize he is a political prisoner and a hero to his people in Cuba.

Ramón was counting the hours until his family would come to visit. After almost six months of delay in receiving a visa from U.S. authorities, his wife, daughters and father will finally be able to embrace him in late January and early February, and share all the latest from back home.

In the middle of our visit, another prisoner had a sandwich delivered to Ramón. It was clear he is respected. When we reciprocated with soft drinks, his friend waved to his buddy, "big Medina." Ramón's official name in prison is Luis Medina, because that was his identity when he lived in Florida.

He had to live with an assumed name in Tampa. To operate openly would have put him in danger. On the opening day of the trial, he and the two Cubans who also had other identities—Gerardo Hernández and Fernando González—proudly revealed their real names.

In prison, he'd rather be called by his real name, but it is hard to do when he is officially Medina.

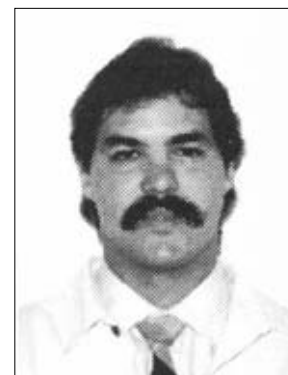
He nodded when we remarked how hard his last name is to pronounce. In the videotapes the support committee has produced about the Five, we've had to change narrators more than once because the "ñ" followed by "i" is a real tongue-twister. He laughed at that.

We told him Mumia Abu-Jamal had just written a column on the Cuban Five, urging support for his Cuban brothers in "a real fight against terrorism." Ramón was excited to hear the news and honored by Mumia's gesture. He asked us to convey his appreciation and solidarity to him.

Ramón works a day shift at the prison. He is an orderly and keeps the laundry room clean. Every free moment he is busy reading, writing letters to his supporters and preparing for his appeals.

### Punished for feeling free

He related to us the story of his transfer to Beaumont after his sentencing,



Ramón Labañino

and his interview by the prison staff, which is done with every incoming inmate. One of the interviewers thought he'd give Ramón a hard time. He wanted to drive the point home that he, Ramón, was a prisoner and he'd better get used to it. Ramón said sincerely, "To tell you the truth, I don't feel like I'm in prison. I am here for political reasons."

For a prisoner of conscience to feel free behind bars was too much for the prison employee. He ordered Ramón into solitary confinement for a week. To increase the punishment, he said that from then on, Ramón would have to report every two hours, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., to prison authorities.

The order still stands. No matter what he is doing, exactly every two hours he has to go to the guards on duty.

Ramón smiles when he recalls that he honestly thought for a moment it was a privilege and told the interviewer, "Please don't give me any special privileges, I'd like to be treated like the others." Ramón is not one to complain.

But even guards have come to know him and treat him with a certain respect. One of the staff read a book with the speech Ramón gave before sentencing, and was amazed by the boldness of his words in the courtroom.

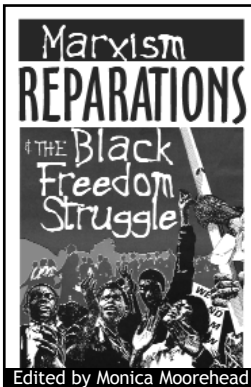
The book is entitled, "With Honor, Courage and Pride," and carries the inspiring and historic speeches of all five: Ramón Labañino, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio González, Fernando González and René González.

Ramón ended his speech at sentencing by saying: "If preventing the death of innocent human beings, defending our two countries from terrorism, and preventing a senseless invasion of Cuba is the reason I am being sentenced today, then, let that sentence be welcomed."

"I will wear the prison uniform with the same honor and pride with which a soldier wears his most prized insignia. This has been a political trial; therefore, we are political prisoners."

After our visit, Ramón walked back to his cellblock through the metal doors. We were reminded of his heroic words. And yes, he does walk tall and proud.

La Riva is national coordinator of the National Committee to Free the Five, [www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org). □



Edited by Monica Moorehead

- ◆ Racism, national oppression & the right to self-determination *Larry Holmes*
- ◆ Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery *Sam Marcy*
- ◆ Reparations & Black Liberation *Monica Moorehead*
- ◆ Harriet Tubman: woman warrior *Mumia Abu-Jamal (Guest Commentary)*
- ◆ Black labor and the fight for reparations *Bill Cecil*
- ◆ Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of slavery, sharecropping and segregation *By Consuela Lee (Guest commentary)*
- ◆ Black farmers demand justice *Monica Moorehead*

- ◆ Greetings from Mumia Abu-Jamal to the 3rd UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia & Related Intolerance
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## Jan. 11 protest in Los Angeles

# Mobilizing against racist round-ups and war

By Preston Wood  
Los Angeles

As the Bush administration rushes toward a war on Iraq, activists across Southern California are not sitting still. In recent weeks, they have been roused to protest by massive detentions of Muslim and Arab immigrants in this area—where the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II concentration camps is not forgotten.

Before that, unions responded with solidarity when the Bush administration threatened union busting in the name of “homeland security” if longshore workers walked out to get a contract.

Now these communities are preparing to mobilize on Jan. 11 in a rally that will address these issues in the context of the war drive. The rally is a kick-off to national anti-war marches on both coasts on Jan. 18. Bus tickets for the West Coast march and rally in San Francisco are selling like hotcakes here.

Initiated by the ANSWER Coalition in Los Angeles, the Jan. 11 demonstration is being jointly organized by four major anti-war formations in the area: ANSWER, the Coalition for World Peace, Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, and the Not In Our Name Project.

The rally will include such noted speakers as Miguel Contreras, executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor; actor and activist Martin Sheen; Ron Kovic, Vietnam veteran and author of “Born on the Fourth of July”; Michel Shehadeh, Free Palestine



WW PHOTO: J. LARIVA

Since this September march, the mass detention of immigrants has impelled more groups to organize new protests.

Alliance; James Lafferty, National Lawyers Guild; Gloria La Riva, National Committee to Free the Five Cubans Held in U.S. Jails; performers will include world-renowned singer Jackson Browne, spoken-word artist Jerry Quickly; the Burning Star band and others.

Labor unions, immigrant-rights and grassroots community organizations are among the many that have endorsed the demonstration and are actively mobilizing for it. They include the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates, Centro CSO, Service Employees Local 660, International Action Center, Korea LA Forum, Mindullae, Sweatshop Watch,

Garment Workers Center, BAYAN and SOL Foundation.

“The phones are ringing off the hook,” said Bobby Bastarache, one of the coordinators at the ANSWER organizing center “People are so happy that a major anti-war event is going to be happening in Los Angeles. They feel that we’re at a crossroads of history, and they want to look back and know that they did something to stop the war. January 11 in Los Angeles is the perfect kick-off event for the National Day of Demonstrations on Jan. 18 in San Francisco and Washington, D.C.”

Large contingents will include a broad array of immigrant-rights organizations,

a “Healthcare, Not Warfare” contingent by SEIU Local 600 and other health-care organizations, and a contingent of youths and students that is assembling at L.A. Trade Tech College and marching to join the main rally.

The march will assemble in Downtown Los Angeles at the corner of Broadway and Olympic Blvd. at 11 a.m. After an opening rally, the demonstrators will march through downtown to the Federal Building for a closing rally.

For more information, call ANSWER Los Angeles at (213) 487-2458 or go to [www.answerla.org](http://www.answerla.org) on the web. □

## Bush's 'economic stimulus' plan

Continued from page 3

The Democrats claim to be the party fighting on behalf of “just plain folks.” However, this society is divided into workers and bosses whose class interests are diametrically opposed to each other. The Democratic Party pretends it can resolve this irresolvable contradiction of capitalism. But the Republicans are right—this is a class war. And you can’t be on the side of the workers and be beholden to big business at the same time.

A relatively few ruling families hold in their hands ownership of the entire collectively built apparatus of production, by which all social wealth is created—from Microsoft to General Motors. The race for profits drives production at the speed of an Indy 500, resulting in periodic traffic jams of over-production. This abundance of commodities—this over-production—is the paradox at the root of the current unemployment, homelessness and hunger.

There is a class war raging, but it is still pretty one-sided. With more layoffs and budget cuts, more attacks on Medicaid and Social Security coming down the pike, the struggle will heat up. Both political parties are conscious of the potential for massive resistance by the working class and oppressed.

The problems of workers and the most downtrodden will be enormously exacerbated by the war. However, the Democrats fell right into line on the war vote for military aggression. They can’t lead the fight for better conditions at home when they are shackled by their support of imperial-

ist wars that are bleeding the treasury.

Bush can’t rely on war spending to pull this economy out of its recession. His father learned that the hard way when he failed to win a second term after the first Pentagon onslaught on Iraq, the 1990-91 Gulf War. That war created a wave of debt to the banks and helped pull the economy down in its undertow.

Today the terrible tank of Pax Pentagona is running roughshod over any obstacles to capitalist globalization. But its own internal contradictions are becoming more apparent.

This intensifying crisis has within it the seeds of reanimating furious class struggle.

Who is carrying the brunt of the economic crisis in this country today? Oppressed communities, working and unemployed people, immigrants, students, women, youth, elders, disabled and so many others vulnerable to the downturn in income and social programs.

They have a right to call for emergency grassroots meetings in towns and cities, reservations and communities and campuses across this country to discuss measures that will really help the people through this crisis.

They have a right to demand that the government turn over all necessary resources to hold these meetings—with no strings attached. Every armory, auditorium and other mass meeting place should be made available to the people free of charge to deal with this emergency.

First and foremost on the agenda of such meetings: the \$100-\$200 billion that the government intends to squander on the slaughter of the people of Iraq. □

## HARLEM, BROOKLYN

# Police gun down four youths

By Sara Catalinotto  
New York

War overseas, war at home.

In the first two days of 2003, four families here had to bury sons who died from police bullets. Anthony Reid, 21; Jamal Nixon, 19; and John Lagattuta, 35—all from Brooklyn—and Allen Newsome, 17, of Harlem received instant capital punishment for their alleged participation in non-capital crimes. The death of Lagattuta is being portrayed as an accident. The deaths of the three African American youths are being portrayed as “justifiable use of deadly force.”

If any grouping other than the police or military admitted to a series of killings, there would be a media frenzy. Instead, news reports have focused on Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly’s position that “There is no evidence the officers did anything wrong.”

The big question is, who gets to decide what is wrong? In the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, Jamal Nixon was shot in the back twice by police, who claim he was shooting a gun into the air just after midnight on New Year’s Eve and then pointed it at them.

Leaders of the Tenant Association at Seth Low Houses, where Jamal lived, told this reporter that most witnesses say

Nixon did not have a gun. The Youth on the Move organization is expressing its concern with a candlelight vigil for Nixon and other area youths lost to violence on Jan. 10. City Council member Charles Barron’s office is working on an independent investigation of the incident.

However the details of the case shape up, it should be clear that once again, grassroots community activists are seeking a safe and productive future for the youth while the city government hurts and insults those same youth in a racist manner.

Brownsville is the only Brooklyn school district without a high school. Indeed, the site proposed decades ago for a public high school now houses a juvenile jail, built over long and loud protest by the community. The youth jail and the shiny precinct across from it are about the only new buildings to go up in Brownsville in at least 20 years, as factories and businesses in the area have closed.

The basic role of the police in Brownsville, Harlem and other oppressed neighborhoods is to try to deny the community’s right to determine its own future. Those who struggle against military domination of oppressed countries such as Iraq, Korea, Somalia and Puerto Rico will recognize the pattern. □

## Ideology of empire is repackaged 'white man's burden'

# Old poison in new bottles

Continued from page 1

describes that awesome thing that America is becoming? It is the only nation that polices the world through five global military commands; maintains more than a million men and women at arms on four continents; deploys carrier battle groups on watch in every ocean."

But, says Ignatieff, the new U.S. empire "is not like empires of times past, built on colonies, conquest and the white man's burden. We are no longer in the era of the United Fruit Company, when American corporations needed the Marines to secure their investments overseas. The 21st century imperium is a new invention in the annals of political science, an empire lite, a global hegemony whose grace notes are free markets, human rights and democracy, enforced by the most awesome military power the world has ever known."

Before making the claim that U.S. imperialism no longer uses the military to protect its investments, Ignatieff would do well to consult his infamous war-mongering colleague on the New York Times, Thomas Friedman. Friedman openly proclaimed in his column on March 28, 1999, at the time of the bombing of Yugoslavia, that it takes the military contractor McDonnell Douglas to insure the safety of McDonald's around the world.

Ignatieff should listen to Credit Suisse First Boston oil analyst Mark Flannery, as cited in an MSNBC study of oil and Iraq: "If it's your tanks that dislodged the regime and you have 50,000 troops in the country and they're in your tanks, then you're going to get the best deals. That's the way it works. The French will have three men in a 1950s tank. That's just not going to work."

The same MSNBC study revealed that not only is Bush a former director of Harken Energy, Cheney a former executive of Halliburton and Condoleezza Rice on the board of Chevron Oil, but "the top 100 officials in the Bush administration have the majority of their personal investments, almost \$150 million, in the traditional energy and natural resources sector."

So much for Ignatieff's "new invention in the annals of political science." The Iraq war is not about United Fruit. But it is about ChevronTexaco, ExxonMobil, BPAmoco and the entire edifice of U.S. and British finance capital seizing the strategic oil reserves of Iraq, setting themselves up for further expansion in the Middle East and around the globe.

### Conquest to accomplish 'self-determination'

According to Ignatieff, this new, idyllic imperialism has nothing in common with the "white man's burden" of earlier imperialism and colonialism. He claims that "Iraq is an imperial operation that would commit a reluctant republic to become the guarantor of peace, stability, democratization and oil supplies in a combustible region of Islamic peoples."

The U.S. would bring "self-determination" and "create democracy in Iraq, then hopefully roll out the same happy experiment throughout the Middle East." Such a task is both "noble and dangerous—noble because if it is successful, it will finally give these peoples self-determination."

Ignatieff also declares that "the case for empire is that it has become, in a place like Iraq, the last hope for democracy and sta-

Apologists for Bush's war like Harvard Professor Michael Ignatieff admit to a 'new' imperialism, but argue that it 'would commit a reluctant republic to become the guarantor of peace, stability, democratization and oil supplies in a combustible region of Islamic peoples.' This is nothing more than Kipling's 'white man's burden' that inspired Theodore Roosevelt's imperialist conquest of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines.

bility alike." And he argues that "the moral evaluation of empire gets complicated when one of its benefits might be freedom for the oppressed."

Throughout the piece Ignatieff steadily propounds the "burden of the beneficent empire" thesis. What is this except an update of the ideology invented for the expansion of British colonialism and the emergence of rapacious, modern-day imperialism?

This is the 21st-century version of the ideology embodied in Rudyard Kipling's infamous poem, "The White Man's Burden," written at the time of the U.S. military seizure of the Philippines in 1899, during the Spanish-American War. Kipling, Britain's imperial poet, began this racist tract with the lines, "Take up the White Man's burden—Send forth the best ye breed—Go bind your sons to exile—To serve your captives' need," and so on.

Washington also colonized Cuba and Puerto Rico during the war and soon took over Santo Domingo and Haiti.

To promote the enslavement of India, where Kipling was born, as well as of Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, the British and U.S. imperialists resorted to the ideology of a superior white race with a "civilizing" mission. Theodore Roosevelt, secretary of the Navy and two-term president from 1901 to 1908, was one of the pioneers of U.S. imperialist expansion. He was an admirer of this poem precisely for its expansionist message.

This flagrant appeal to racism and white chauvinism concealed the fact that the European and U.S. imperialist ruling classes were plundering the peoples of the world under the guise of spreading "civilization."

Roosevelt delivered many racist tracts in justification of imperialist expansion. Typical was an address in 1909 at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. "There is one feature in the expansion of the peoples of white, or European, blood during the past four centuries which should never be lost sight of, especially by those who denounce such expansion on moral grounds," he said. "On the whole, the movement has been fraught with lasting benefits to most of the peoples already dwelling in the lands over which the expansion took place."

The slave trade, the butchery of the peoples of the Congo by King Leopold of Belgium, the conquest and enslavement of India and Egypt by the British, of North

Africa and Southeast Asia by the French, of Indonesia by the Dutch, of Southwest Africa by the German imperialists—all were carried out under the ideology of the "burden of empire."

Ignatieff's version of the "noble but dangerous" enterprise of spreading "democracy" to the people of Iraq and then to the Middle East is just a warmed-over version of the "serve your captives" ideology of Kipling and Roosevelt.

What have the U.S. oil companies, banks and multinational corporations really done in the Middle East with the aid of the CIA and the Pentagon? They have plundered the people of Iran under the dictatorship of the Shah; supported the Israeli Zionist regime in three wars against the Arab people and in their attempt to destroy the Palestinian national movement; propped up the feudal oil monarchies of the Gulf for decades; invaded Lebanon to crush its national movement; bombed Libya; and waged a brutal air and ground war against Iraq followed by sanctions responsible for over a million deaths.

Ignatieff and the New York Times have decided, in this post-Soviet period of the 21st century, to float the concept of a new beneficent imperialism in which the oppressors are turned into the liberators—all in the spirit of the paternalistic, racist founders of 20th-century imperialist ideology, Rudyard Kipling and Theodore Roosevelt. This Harvard professor does it, however, in language more suited to an era following a century of socialist revolutions and national liberation movements.

### Bolshevik Revolution and upsurge of oppressed

Indeed, it was the Bolshevik Revolution and the upsurge of oppressed peoples that forced the imperialists to restrain their racism and chauvinism.

Woodrow Wilson, the U.S. president from 1913 to 1921, had invaded or occupied Mexico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Panama, and sent U.S. troops into World War I, an inter-imperialist struggle to redivide the world. But then Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in the name of the workers and peasants. They published all the tsar's secret treaties with the other imperialist powers and declared Soviet solidarity with all oppressed peoples.

Wilson, the plunderer of the Caribbean and Latin America, then came forth with

a call for the "self-determination of nations." To openly proclaim imperialism had become inflammatory and dangerous for the Great Powers.

### Empire's Achilles' heel

In the wake of the collapse of the USSR and the setbacks for the world national liberation struggles, the Bush administration, Wall Street and the Pentagon are engaged in an attempt to solidify their absolute world domination. The war against Iraq is part of this effort.

It will soon be impossible to conceal the imperialist ambition of U.S. finance capital. Thus the attempt by the ideologists of imperialism, including Ignatieff, to fashion a political line to sanitize and promote the new, aggressive, world-conquering orientation of Washington.

But there is one worried note in Ignatieff's treatise that reveals the ultimate Achilles' heel of U.S. imperialism. He quotes Edward Gibbon's work, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," which attributed the fall of the empire to the fact that the emperors went "beyond the limits that nature seemed to have placed as its permanent bulwarks." Gibbons attributed this to "vanity or ignorance" on the part of the emperors. But in truth, the Roman emperors were driven beyond the "natural limits" of the empire because they needed slaves and loot to sustain it.

What Ignatieff does not say about the U.S. empire is that it flows from the lust and need for super-profits. This organic need of the giant monopolies, the banks, the industrialists, the military merchants of death, and the entire edifice of finance capital drives the expansion.

The drive to ceaselessly expand exploitation and plunder will be the undoing of the monied monarchs of Wall Street and their servants in the White House and the Pentagon as surely as it brought down the Roman slaveholders. But unlike the Roman ruling classes, the modern-day capitalist class in its imperialist stage has created a world-wide working class and peasantry—and they are not going to "get over it," as Ignatieff suggests. The struggles already underway in Colombia, Palestine, Zimbabwe, Korea, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and elsewhere show that expanded aggression by U.S. imperialism in the name of establishing "democracy and stability" will only galvanize mass resistance.

Profit lust drives not only expansion abroad but the intensified exploitation of the working class at home. This multinational working class, which includes millions of people from colonial areas as well as oppressed African American and Native people, is inseparable from the intended victims of U.S. wars abroad. And this working class is suffering growing poverty, layoffs and homelessness along with cuts in social services, healthcare, housing and all the necessities of life.

The same corporations and banks behind the war drive against Iraq are issuing pink slips to hundreds of thousands of workers, getting billions in tax breaks from Bush, destroying the environment, promoting racism and running roughshod over the labor movement.

Sooner or later there will be a great awakening and an upsurge. The ideology of a beneficent imperialism will be scorned as the people take up the struggle against Washington's war drive. □



## Huge protests expected in D.C., S.F.

# War moves spur on Jan. 18-19 mobilizations

Continued from page 1

sioned speeches calling for the U.S. military to withdraw from the genocidal war in Vietnam. King made the connections between the growing poverty at home and the U.S. war abroad.

### Growing poverty as billions are spent on war

King's words ring as true today as they did then. While the U.S. economy continues to deteriorate, the warmongers in the White House and Pentagon will be spending tens of billions of dollars for war.

All polls indicate that at least two-thirds of the U.S. population do not want a war with Iraq and view the loss of job security, mass layoffs, health benefits and other human needs as main priorities. These sentiments are being ignored and downplayed by the Bush regime, whose number one concern is to capture the Iraqi oil fields and deepen U.S. geopolitical hegemony in this strategic region.

In this political context, the Jan. 18 action has drawn support from a broad array of progressive forces. The opening rally at the Capitol will feature speeches by Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney; actors Jessica Lange and Mike Farrell; former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; Elizabeth McAlister of Jonah House and partner of the late Philip Berrigan; Brenda Stokely, president of District Council 1707 AFSCME; Bill Fletcher, co-chair of United for Peace; Peta Lindsay, a Howard University student and ANSWER youth and student coordinator; Rev. Herbert Daughtry of the House of the Lord church in Brooklyn; and Ron Kovic, Vietnam veteran and author of "Born on the Fourth of July." A taped message from political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal will also be played.

Representatives of the organizations that make up the ANSWER steering committee—such as Bayan, Free Palestine Alliance, Mexico Solidarity Network, Korea Truth Commission, Nicaragua Network, Partnership for Civil Justice, Muslim Students Association of the U.S. & Canada, IFCO/Pastors for Peace and International Action Center—will also be featured on the program. Cultural presentations will include Chumbawamba and Patti Smith.

After the rally, the huge crowd will march to the Washington Navy Yard, a large military complex located in the heart of one of Washington's working class communities.

Sarah Friedman, an ANSWER organizer based in Washington, told WW, "The response to the Jan. 18 mobilization has been growing by leaps and bounds since the end of the holidays. Our office is deluged with phone calls from all over the country, especially those very far away from D.C. For instance, an organizer who traveled to the Oct. 26 rally in Washington from Oklahoma is organizing several buses for Jan. 18. At least two buses are coming from Iowa.

"On Oct. 26, there was a local action in Denver. Now, 75 activists are planning to charter a plane from Colorado to attend the event here on Jan. 18. Two buses are being organized from Iowa. At least three cities in Texas are organizing for Jan. 18. So far, three buses are being organized out of Atlanta.

"On Oct. 26, one statewide bus came

from Florida. Now we hear that three statewide buses are being organized. There are more organizing centers throughout Michigan than before.

"This is just an amazing development when you consider how much money a bus and a plane cost someone who has to travel across the country to get to Washington. Some of these activists will be spending many hours, even days to come to D.C. It speaks volumes to how deeply the significance of this demonstration is being felt.

"People want to do everything possible to stop this war before it starts."

At this writing, over 150 cities in 40 states are organizing for the Washington and San Francisco actions. Protests are also planned in at least 18 other countries.

### Student and Youth March on Jan. 19

ANSWER youth organizers have issued a call for a youth and student march on Sunday, Jan. 19, that will gather at 11 a.m.

"at the Department of In-Justice (Pennsylvania Ave. between 9th and 10th NW) to protest the attacks against the Arab and Muslim communities, including the recent mass arrests in California. Many of these violations are taking place within our own schools as more and more universities are complying with FBI and INS efforts to gather information, interrogate, detain and deport thousands of people.

"March to the Presidential Palace (White House) for a Youth and Student Weapons Inspection. If George Bush believes that the UN weapons inspectors have the right to look into every building in Iraq, then we should have a right to check out his 'Presidential Palace.'

"It's our schools that have gone without funding and it's our social programs that have been cut to pay for the U.S. government's weapons of mass destruction."

The youth statement cites an estimate made by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences that a new war in Iraq

could cost the U.S. up to almost \$2,000,000,000,000—\$2 trillion—over 10 years if it disrupted world oil markets and prompted a recession.

"Let's see if Bush provides full and complete disclosure! JOIN US TO SAY: No War on Iraq! Disarm the Pentagon! Stop the attacks on the Muslim and Arab communities! SMASH war and racism," the statement concludes.

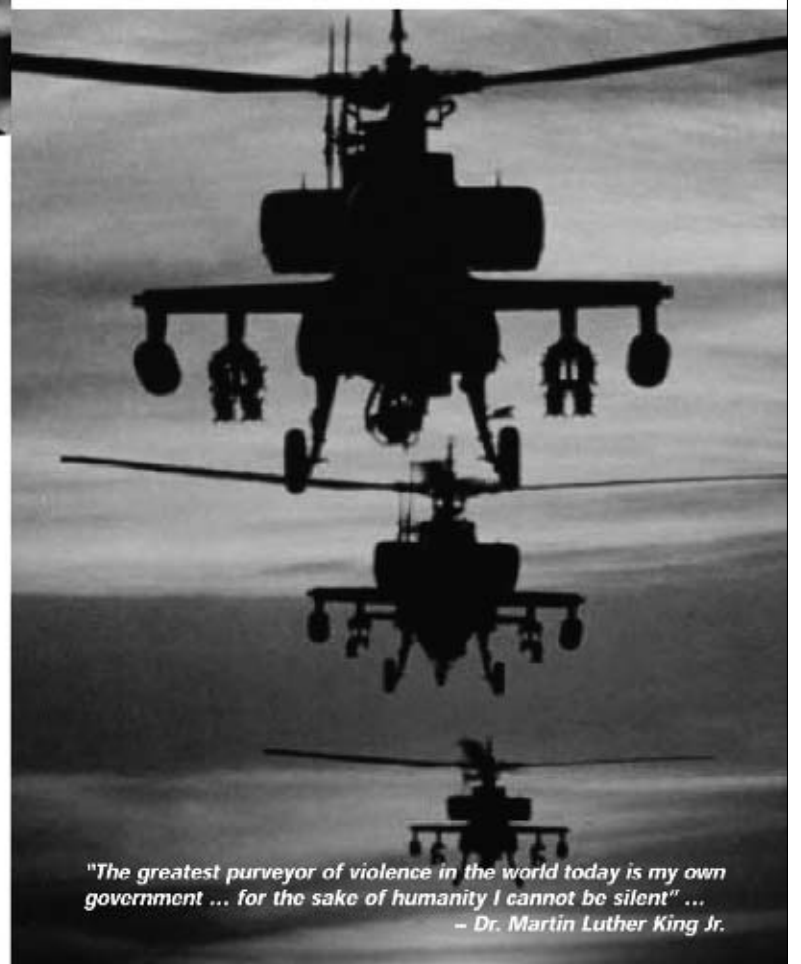
A planning meeting for the Jan. 19 action has been called for Saturday, Jan. 18 at 6 p.m. at the Church of the Brethren (4th St. and North Carolina Ave. SE), which is in walking distance from the demonstration. Snacks will be provided at the meeting.

Those interested in volunteering for tasks at these mobilizations, getting more information or making a financial contribution can call the ANSWER office at (202) 544-3389, download leaflets and updates from internationalANSWER.org, or email dc@internationalANSWER.org □



# NO WAR ON IRAQ

**SATURDAY  
JANUARY 18**  
On the Martin Luther King anniversary weekend  
and the 12th anniversary of the Gulf War



"The greatest purveyor of violence in the world today is my own government ... for the sake of humanity I cannot be silent" ...  
— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

# NATIONAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON DC

**ASSEMBLE 11AM AT THE WEST SIDE OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING**

**Volunteers  
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1199 SEIU • Black Voices for Peace • Women's Strike for Peace • National Lawyers Guild  
Dr. Hans Christof von Sponeck, former director of the UN Oil for Food Program  
San Francisco Labor Council (AFL-CIO) • Mumia Abu-Jamal • Women's Strike for Peace  
IFCO/Pastors for Peace • Free Palestine Alliance • Partnership for Civil Justice - LDEF • Nicaragua Network  
Bayan USA-International • Korea Truth Commission • International Action Center • Kensington Welfare Rights Union  
Middle East Children's Alliance • Muslim Student Association of the US/Canada • Mexico Solidarity Network  
Global Exchange • Not in Our Name Project • Ron Kovic, author (including "Born on the 4th of July")  
Charles Barron, NYC City Councilmember • Rev. John Dear • Howard Zinn • Patti Smith

# Anti-war protests around the globe

By John Catalinotto

On Jan. 3 Pakistanis demonstrated across the country in the tens of thousands in solidarity with Iraq, especially in the northwestern region near Afghanistan where there have been recent clashes involving U.S. troops.

The Pakistani government, led by President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has also reinforced its troops near the border town of Angoor Adda, and ordered the temporary closing of stores and markets, according to the Pakistani newspaper *The News*. Musharraf conferred by telephone with President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell after the incidents involving the U.S. troops.

The demonstrators, organized by anti-U.S. religious parties, chanted, "Down with America" and, "The Iraqis are our brothers." About 10,000 protested in Peshawar, where the crowd burned a U.S. flag and an effigy of Bush. Crowds ranged from hundreds to thousands in other cities.

Although Pakistan was the main backer of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, the Musharraf regime turned against its protégés soon after Sept. 11, 2001, and lined up with the Bush administration's so-called war on terror. He is increasingly seen—by both the Pakistani elite and the masses—as a tool of U.S. imperialism.

While Musharraf is apparently still in control, Oct. 10 elections in the northwest part of the country resulted in victories for fundamentalist parties that are hostile to U.S. domination of the region. There is also a secular and pro-socialist opposition to Musharraf and to U.S. imperialism, which held anti-U.S. demonstrations last year in conjunction with anti-imperialist groups in India.

Maulana Azam Tariq, whose group Sipah-e-Sahaba is called "pro-Taliban," was elected to parliament from jail. A court recently ordered him released.

On Nov. 19 the newly elected representatives held a prayer session in parliament for Aimal Kasi, a Pakistani executed in Virginia Nov. 14 for the 1993 murder of two CIA workers.

## U.S. troops in firefights

The demonstrations followed firefights between U.S. forces from occupied Afghanistan and opponents on or over the Pakistan border. There have been contradictory stories from the region regarding whether the opposition was from Pakistani border guards or an Afghan resistance.

A U.S. soldier received a head wound, and his unit called in a bombing raid. A 500-pound bomb dropped in the region destroyed a religious school. Another U.S. soldier had been shot in the region

just before Dec. 25.

After these fights, Maj. Stephen Clutter from the Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan explained that U.S. commandos would not let the Pakistan border stop their pursuit of enemies. This was apparently the reason for the discussion between Musharraf and Bush and Powell. Pakistan Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that the U.S. troops had no permission or right to cross the border.

In a global opinion poll run by the Pew Research Center, 69 percent of Pakistanis said they had a negative view of the United States. Only 10 percent had a positive one. Fifty-two percent of Pakistanis had a positive opinion of Saddam Hussein.

Turkey's population has a similar hostile opinion about U.S. plans to invade Iraq. Despite heavy pressure from Washington, the Turkish parliament is expected to refuse a massive deployment of U.S. troops in the country. Turkey borders Iraq; having troops there allows the United States to open a second front during an invasion.

Turkish Foreign Minister Yasar Yakis told the *Hurriyet* newspaper: "The likelihood of our public and of the parliament which represents that public to say 'yes' to such a decision is very remote. Public opinion in Turkey is not ready for a solution in which tens of thousands of soldiers would be deployed in or pass through Turkey."

In another U.S. ally, the small island country of Bahrain, hundreds took to the streets for a second straight week on Jan. 3 to show solidarity with Iraqis. "Iraq will be but the first step in a scheme ushering in U.S. occupation of the whole Persian Gulf region and control of its resources ... through the overthrow of some regimes," said Hassan al-Aali, a protest organizer.

## Europe, Africa, Australia

At the U.S. Air Force's Mildenhall base in Britain on Jan. 5, some 15 people from various Earth First organizations across England climbed over the barbed wire surrounding the base and sliced through the perimeter fence, using wire-cutters. They were arrested. They organized the protest to voice opposition to the impend-

ing war against Iraq, they said.

"USAF Mildenhall is a major military base, which we believe will be used to transport equipment for use in a war against Iraq," said Mandy Jones from Earth First.

In Western Australia, the presence of the U.S. aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln* and cruiser *Shiloh*, preparing for the attack on Iraq, provided the occasion for a protest demonstration. Some 6,000 sailors work on the ships.

Fremantle Anti-Nuclear Group spokesperson Scott Ludlam said the group would protest for a second time. The first was when the battle group arrived Dec. 22.

"It wasn't about a possible terrorist strike here but that the ship would soon target Iraqi civilians in a war. They can expect this time to be bigger and better because we are not going away," Ludlam said.

In Dublin, anti-war protesters hit the streets Dec. 31 to protest the Irish government's failure to condemn U.S./British threats of war on Iraq. (*Irish Voice*)

On Jan. 5, South African human-rights activist Archbishop Desmond Tutu added his voice to the anti-war movement, telling television interviewer Jonathan Dimbleby of ITV that he was "shocked" to see Britain "aiding and abetting" the United States in its action against Iraq. □



BAHRAIN



KOREA

## CIA torture

# Hideous business, but not new

By Michael Kramer

A front-page article in the Dec. 26 *Washington Post* has focused attention on the CIA's decades-long policy that permits and encourages the use of torture on anyone in its custody.

According to the *Post*, the CIA currently maintains interrogation facilities at the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, the British island colony of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and "other overseas interrogation facilities [that] are off-limits to outsiders, and often even to other government agencies."

Detainees "are sometimes kept standing or kneeling for hours, in black hoods or spray-painted goggles... At times they are held in awkward, painful positions and deprived of sleep with a 24-hour bombardment of lights—subject to what are known as 'stress and duress' techniques."

Also, "captives are often 'softened up' by MPs [military police] and U.S. Army Special Forces troops who beat them up and confine them in tiny rooms. The alleged terrorists are commonly blindfolded and thrown into walls, bound in

painful positions, subjected to loud noises and deprived of sleep."

These techniques were also used extensively against military personnel and civilians during the Korean and Vietnam wars. While the torturers maimed and killed many, they failed to break the steadfast resistance of the people of these countries to U.S. imperialism.

However, the torture did result in the psychological and emotional scarring of thousands of U.S. military veterans who were compelled to carry out the brutality. Today they continue to fill the drug and alcohol abuse outpatient clinics and hospital wards of the Veterans Administration.

The *Washington Post* quoted from speeches and congressional testimony of current CIA Director George Tenet and of Cofer Black, former head of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center. Most other sources are identified only as "intelligence specialists familiar with CIA interrogation methods," "national security officials," "one official who has supervised the capture and transfer of accused terrorists," "U.S. government officials, speaking on condition of anonymity," "Americans

with direct knowledge and others who have witnessed the treatment" and "Bush administration appointees."

These sources do not want their names revealed because they know very well that public support for the Bush administration's so-called war on terrorism could collapse. If that leads to a falling-out within the ruling class, it might result in criminal charges being filed against them.

They must also fear Pinochet-type secret indictments in foreign courts for violating international law. They don't want this possibility hanging over their heads for the rest of their lives whenever they travel overseas on official business or vacation.

Former U.S. Secretary of State and war criminal Henry Kissinger, who is now wanted for trial in several countries, as well as various government officials and active-duty and retired military officers in Israel, are forced to limit their travels because of this potential scenario.

## Uruguay, 1970

One of the most skilled torturers the CIA ever employed was Dan Mitrione, a former high-ranking Indiana police officer

described in the book "Killing Hope/U.S. Military and CIA Intervention since World War II," by William Blum.

Mitrione was stationed in Brazil and Uruguay during the 1960s. He was an instructor in the art of torture.

He "had built a soundproofed room in the cellar of his house in Montevideo. In this room he assembled selected Uruguayan police officers to observe a demonstration of torture techniques."

On July 31, 1970, the Tupamaros—a radical anti-imperialist Uruguayan group whose members had been regularly tortured by graduates of Mitrione's course—kidnapped him. A few days later he was executed. The Greek director Constantin Costa-Gavras popularized the incident in his excellent film "State of Siege." He also directed "Missing," about the U.S. role in the 1973 Pinochet coup in Chile.

CIA torture will not make the United States a more secure place to live. It will not provide a relaxed environment for U.S. citizens traveling overseas. It will have just the opposite effect. Furthermore, it can lead to disaster for those who fail to distance themselves from the gangster mentality and mindset in the CIA. □



# Rich vs. poor in Venezuela's 'Bolivarian Revolution'

By Andy McInerney

Venezuela's economic elite and their backers in Washington and Wall Street have struck a rock in their drive to topple President Hugo Chávez. That rock is the millions of poor and working people in Caracas and around the country who have mobilized to support their "Bolivarian revolution."

Chávez received overwhelming support in two elections, in 1998 and 2000, for his campaign to put political power in the hands of the masses of people.

In April 2002, the U.S. government backed a coup attempt against Chávez by the bosses' federation, Fedecamaras, along with elements of the military brass and corrupt sectors of the official trade union leadership affiliated with one of the previous ruling political parties. That coup was turned back by millions of workers who turned out to defend Chávez.

Since Dec. 2, the same forces have been trying to topple the Chávez government by economic strangulation. Under the guise of a "strike," the bosses have tried to shut down the state-run oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela. Most workers oppose this shutdown and are trying to keep the refineries open.

In the meantime, Brazil and Trinidad have sent shipments of gasoline to Venezuela to help the government weather the shutdown.

Facing the prospect that their show-down with the Chávez government could fail, the rightists have grown more desperate. On Jan. 3, they declared a "final battle" and attempted to lead a march to the Ft. Tiuna military base. The base is located in a working-class and pro-Chávez neighborhood that has been declared off-limits to the anti-Chávez forces in order to prevent confrontations.

The march was designed to be a provocation. Organizers called on the military unit to turn against Chávez—a clear call for a coup.

Thousands of "chavistas" mobilized to block the right-wing march. When the opposition march encountered the barricades, city police—under the control of opposition mayor Alfredo Peña—fired on the barricades. Two young Chávez supporters, Oscar Gómez and Jairo Morán,

were killed by the police.

That killing provoked tens of thousands to take to the streets of Caracas on Jan. 5. The demonstrators chanted "Not one more killing!" and "People's justice!" They called on the Chávez government to take action against the opposition.

Chávez himself was in Brazil, attending the inauguration of Ignacio Lula da Silva. He proposed creating a committee of "Friends of Venezuela" to help mediate the conflict—an idea rejected outright by the United States.

Still, the Chávez government has been soft on the opposition leaders, despite their open calls for overthrowing the democratically elected government. Only a few of the most blatant coup-plotters from the April coup are in jail. The media, owned by some of Venezuela's wealthiest families, organize openly against the government.

As opposition provocations mount, demands for decisive action against the plotters grow from wider sectors of the working class. Those actions will receive the support of progressive and working-class people around the world. □

## Solidarity with VENEZUELA!

*The following call for solidarity was issued by the Web site Rebelión (www.rebellion.org), in Spain.*

At the present time, a conspiracy by transnational oil companies and by at least the United States and Spain is underway in Venezuela. Assuring the submissive supply of oil and the interests of the local oligarchy, in line with the anti-people interests of the globalizing transnational companies and the Bush government, are the objectives of those who have seen the legitimate and constitutional government of Hugo Chávez as a thorn in their side.

They will not forgive him for trying to carry out independent policies, for questioning Bush's hypocritical anti-terrorism policies, for promoting an oil policy that will revive the price of oil, for combating large landholdings and for promoting the participation and the organization of the popular, dispossessed classes. ...



The imperialist news media seldom show images like this reflecting the support of Venezuela's majority for the Chávez government

They want to bring the government to its knees by economically strangling the government and the people, provoking starvation, chaos and civil war. In this way they are aiming at a foreign intervention.

We call on all progressive, democratic and revolutionary organizations and individuals to show their support for the Venezuelan people who peacefully and legally adopted a government and a constitution that for the first time they feel

takes them into account and promotes their active role. We also call for rejecting the national and international leaders who are leading the country to civil war.

Messages of support can be sent to the Venezuelan government at [msecretaria@venezuela.gov.ve](mailto:msecretaria@venezuela.gov.ve) and to the popular organizations on the Web: [www.puebloalza@aporrea.org](mailto:www.puebloalza@aporrea.org), [contacto@antiescualidos.com](mailto:contacto@antiescualidos.com), [opinion@soberania.info](mailto:opinion@soberania.info). □

## 'Privatize oil!' is cry of 'democrats'

A short article in Venezuela's daily El País on Jan. 6 speaks volumes on the goals of the opposition to President Hugo Chávez—especially the type of "democracy" they are advocating.

"Private participation proposed for PDVSA" is the headline on the article, referring to Petroleos de Venezuela, the state-run oil company.

"The Proyecto País of the [opposition] Democratic Coordinating Committee, headed by José Curiel, presented the agenda for reconstructing Venezuela, composed of 40 actions to be taken

in a post-Chávez future.

"Among the most notable aspects are those in the area of energy, where they propose: giving autonomy to PDVSA and changing from a State-Oil to a Society-Oil company, where there will be an opening for the democratization of capital from the hydrocarbon industry...

"They propose revising the position of Venezuela in OPEC, and opening to private investment in the energy sector and privatizing the electric companies."

—Andy McInerney

## Puerto Ricans want U.S. Navy out

# Bombing practice in Vieques reignites struggle

By Berta Joubert

While children on the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico played with toys received on the traditional Three Kings holiday on Jan. 6, the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt was heading toward the island from its base in Norfolk, Va., to begin military exercises. This practice for war had been scheduled for the latter part of January, but was suddenly moved forward so the battleship group could be deployed in the Gulf by the end of the month.

The announcement of the change, made in the middle of December, has incensed the people of Vieques and Puerto Rico, who have been struggling to get the U.S. Navy out. As soon as the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques heard of it, it sent a message saying in part:

"Comptuex 03-2: 13 Jan -10 Feb. 2003. That is the ominous title of the next war

exercises with which the U.S. Navy threatens our people during this Christmas-Three Kings period. We ask for peace and the Navy brings us war. We demand justice and the U.S. government—every day more militarized—imposes upon us a Navy dictatorship.

"At different moments over the next two months, warplanes, submarines and warships will attack us again—and our people will respond in defense of our right to live in peace. Our people will be in the firing range when Navy cannons shoot. Our people will be in the firing range when bombing from jets begins. Our people will be walking and working the disobedience on military roads while the Navy patrols during these next maneuvers."

Referring to encampments set up by the movement opposed to the use of Vieques as a huge firing range, the statement continues, "Entire Viequense families will be

at the Peace and Justice Camp, the Milivý Camp and the Luisa Guadalupe Camp. At Monte Carmelo, there will be constant action. In boats, our men of the sea will be 'fishing for dignity.'"

Since the announcement, preparations for actions repudiating the U.S. war moves have been in high gear in Vieques and in the rest of Puerto Rico. Civil disobedience training workshops are being conducted. In December, dozens of activists began staying at Cayo La Yayí, a key close to the firing zone. They have vowed to stay put after the exercises start. As an augur of things to come, in the early hours of the new year activists tore down close to 500 feet of the fence encircling the U.S. Navy's Camp Garcia Naval Base on Vieques.

Even Puerto Rico's governor, Sila Calderón, has written to President George W. Bush calling the plan "patently offensive" and saying she is "extremely disap-

pointed and concerned."

The Pentagon at this point admits that it is committed to leave Vieques in four months, according to spokesperson Dawn Cutler. However, the White House has sent no official, written response to the 48 members of the U.S. House of Representatives who have sent letters to Bush expressing their concern over the situation of Vieques and requesting his prompt, official action guaranteeing the U.S. Navy's departure from the island municipality by May 2003.

The people will continue the struggle until the Navy leaves. The Vieques committee's message ends: "We invite you all to celebrate with us the beginning of a new year with acts of love and against violence, actions for peace against war. Say no to war in Vieques! No to war in Iraq! No to war in Palestine-Israel! PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!" □



# Don't believe it

## Whoops.

That's how casually the FBI ended its manhunt for five Middle Eastern immigrants whose photographs it had posted on its Web site under the "war on terrorism."

Turns out it was fabricated. Just a hoax.

Bureau officials blame it all on a suspect they had in custody—a suspect—who they say concocted the tip. How can anyone confirm if that's a lie, as well? If the person does exist and did give them a false lead, were agents terrorizing him? Was he being tortured for information he didn't possess?

This is no innocent blunder. Photos of the five men of color were published in newspapers and broadcast around the world on television screens. They weren't computer simulations—they are real people put in harm's way by the FBI.

The incident ratcheted up racist profiling by the government, aimed at creating fear and suspicion of Arab people. Much hoopla was made in the media about doubling the police pres-

ence in Times Square on New Year's Eve based on the "lead" about these five men—who had done nothing.

Why should anyone believe anything emanating from White House, FBI front office or Justice Department media conferences? All progressive-minded, clear-thinking people need to be on a different kind of alert: Propaganda alerts.

If it sounds like war hype, don't swallow it!

When Bush and his generals are finally ready to launch a full-scale attack on Iraq, a "Gulf of Tonkin" pretext may appear everywhere in the media, reported as news. Dissenting voices will be drowned out in the blitzkrieg of lies to justify a war by the imperial power with the most weapons of mass destruction of any country in the world.

Don't believe anything they say. Instead, visit [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) for the truth, or the [www.internationalANSWER.org](http://www.internationalANSWER.org) website to find the anti-war protest nearest you. □

# To your health!

British doctors have stumbled on a secret that we think you Workers World readers already know.

Participating in organized protests is good for your physical and mental health.

Psychologists at the University of Sussex found that people who get involved in campaigns, strikes and political demonstrations experience an improvement in psychological well-being that can help them overcome stress, pain, anxiety and depression, reported Reuters Health on Dec. 23, 2002.

These doctors don't sound much like Bill Frist, the heart surgeon who is now Republican Majority Leader in the U.S. Senate and a point man for the pharmaceutical industry. No, these British docs are actually down with demonstrations!

"The take-home message from this research therefore might be that people should get more involved in campaigns, struggles and social movements, not only in the wider interest of social change but also for their own

personal good," said researcher Dr. John Drury.

Volunteers were asked to describe what it was about taking part in collective action that made them feel so good. They loved feeling a collective identity with fellow protesters and said they got a sense of unity and mutual support from taking part that stayed with them for a long time.

In this country, those who stay home glued to the television set by the end of the day have seen a gazillion murders, betrayals and sick brutalities. It's enough to drive anyone over the edge. They need the movement as much as the movement needs them.

"Empowering events were almost without exception described as joyous occasions," said Drury. "Participants experienced a deep sense of happiness and even euphoria in being involved in protest events. Simply recounting the events in the interview brought a smile to the face of the interviewees."

So let's get all our friends, neighbors and co-workers to Washington or San Francisco on Jan. 18. They'll thank us for it. □

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## Letters to editor

### Resistance to a draft

[Regarding proposals to restore the draft, draftees] need to know what they're fighting for. They need to accept and agree with it. If they don't, they will refuse to serve, in increasing numbers. And the courts will have only slight influence in curbing them. The resistance may clog the courts and the jails, and undermine military morale. But it won't stop.

That's the legacy of the Vietnam War resistance movement. More and more young people will get together chanting "Hell no, we won't go, we won't fight for Texaco!" Active duty troops will find their own ways to rebel, as they did in Vietnam. Many avoided combat; others got together in soldier unions or resistance support groups, and "struck" against commanding officers—refusing orders, protesting harsh and unfair treatment, and so on. Some went AWOL or deserted.

All these forms of resistance found support in the ever-growing anti-war movement. There were anti-draft counselors and anti-war GI support centers in every major city and near many military bases around the country and across the globe. Anti-war supporters in Canada, Sweden, France and other countries mobilized to assure hospitality and support for resisters who sought asylum in exile.

At home, many communities became sanctuaries for resisters. A huge gulf opened between official policies and the efforts of ordinary people to stop the war.

This will happen again if Bush insists on war in the Middle East. All the official justifications offered to date pale against the obvious desire of Bush and his cronies to control the Middle East oil resources, and use this control to secure their cherished world domination. It is a shameful, illegitimate and ultimately futile plan that will surely backfire. It will engender ever-increasing resistance.

Already networks of support are springing up to encourage and protect reservists and others who are questioning their orders to mobilize. In 1968, as the U.S. war effort against Vietnam was discredited, Richard Nixon rode to power with a "secret plan for peace" in Vietnam that turned out to be a criminal conspiracy to widen the war and terrorize the anti-war resistance into submission. Both these efforts failed, and Nixon was forced from office in 1974 before completing his second term.

It took almost three more years for the Vietnam-era war resisters—who Nixon characterized as criminals—to win amnesty. But amnesty was won, in the wake of widespread recognition that our resistance was justified and the war was wrong. Our closest allies in this recognition were the tens of thousands of anti-war Vietnam vets, who could testify from direct personal experience how wrong the war was.

And while many of us carry scars from our traumatic experiences of those years, we also carry a conviction and determination that the present generation of young Americans who are called to fight for an unjust cause will have the information and support they need to make the difficult decision to refuse.

Dee Knight  
New York

*Knight was a Vietnam-era war resister, co-editor of AMEX-Canada*

*magazine from 1968 to 1974, and a representative of war resisters in exile to the National Council for Universal & Unconditional Amnesty.*

### Strom Thurmond vs. Henry Wallace

Thank you for Monica Moorehead's wonderfully informative article regarding Trent Lott's praise of the arch-racist, segregationist 1948 presidential campaign by Strom Thurmond. Not only did you provide a detailed description of the "Dixiecrat" campaign, you also gave a detailed description of Trent Lott's many displays of his racist posture and policies.

In addition to Thurmond, Dewey and Truman, Henry Wallace also ran for president in 1948 under the banner of the Progressive Party. Wallace had been both agriculture secretary and vice president under Roosevelt before Truman was selected as VP in 1944. His campaign was directed against the oncoming Cold War against the Soviet Union and was supported heavily by the Communist Party. Campaign rallies typically included musical and dramatic presentations by Paul Robeson, which drew many thousands of people.

The Wallace campaign stood against segregation and for civil rights. The Wallace VP candidate, Sen. Glen Taylor of Idaho, was beaten up and arrested during a Wallace campaign rally in Birmingham, Ala., by the infamous Sheriff Bull Connor. Taylor's crime? The Wallace rally was attended by both African Americans and whites, which was illegal.

Of course, Thurmond never complained about this. But neither did Dewey or Truman utter one word against this attack. Wallace was a bourgeois politician. After this campaign, he reversed course. He supported the gruesome U.S. war against Korea. I guess some who capitulated to imperialism on that issue hoped to fend off the McCarthy campaign's vicious attacks. Of course, it didn't work.

Chris Fry  
Long Island, N.Y.

### WW's coverage of Korea

Too often my purpose for writing an email to a newspaper is to correct inaccuracies. I am very pleased to write you a letter congratulating you on the excellent article by Deirdre Griswold on the current tense situation on the Korean Peninsula. [WW, Jan 9, 2003, "Bush's real crisis in Korea: North and south, Koreans want U.S. troops out"] Kudos to all of you! The President of the Korean Friendship Association was recently interviewed on National Public Radio. You may be interested to hear the interview at [www.npr.org/ram-files/wesat/20030104.wesat.03.ram](http://www.npr.org/ram-files/wesat/20030104.wesat.03.ram).

FYI, the KFA in the U.S. is planning an art/photo exhibition about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the Albus Cavus Gallery [www.albuscav.us](http://www.albuscav.us) in New Brunswick, N.J., on Feb. 1. Email [info@albuscav.us](mailto:info@albuscav.us) for more information or directions. For international peace and solidarity,

Dominick Bruno Jr.  
Official Delegate for the USA  
Korean Friendship Association

LETTERS

## Prestige not the only disaster

# Oil spills, stretched crews and crowded sea lanes

By G. Dunkel

Oil from the Prestige, the tanker that sank off the northwest coast of Spain in late November, reached the French coast before Jan. 1. France is preparing a major and sustained effort to keep its shoreline clean.

Thousands of tons of oil have already fouled the beaches of Galicia in northwest Spain, destroying fishing and scenic attractions. More is to be expected because the Prestige is still spewing 125 tons of oil a day.

Some 90,000 jobs, most in fishing and processing, have already been lost in Galicia. France is still evaluating its losses, which are going to be heavy.

The Prestige was carrying 77,000 tons of oil from Latvia to Singapore, about twice as much as the Exxon Valdez was carrying when it went down. To clean up the Valdez spill cost \$ 2.1 billion and took 10,000 workers, 1,000 boats and 100 planes and helicopters over a year. Hundreds of thousands of sea birds, bald eagles and otters were killed as well as up to 22 killer whales.

Some Alaska beaches are still oily.

It is going to be harder to deal with the Prestige, because it sank in 12,000 feet of water, which makes it very difficult to cap or move.

European newspapers are filled with calls to force shipping companies to transport heavy oils of the kind that the Prestige was carrying in double-hulled ships, which are safer. This will be required in the U.S. after 2005.

This is likely to be fiercely resisted by the maritime industry.

Over \$100 billion worth of oil a day is transported between producers and consumers, according to The Times of London, and 7,000 tankers are currently in operation. Lloyd's Marine Intelligence estimates that 52 percent of tankers weighing more than 10,000 tons are single-hulled. Losing this much transport capacity is going to boost the cost of oil and/or cut the profits of the shippers.

If the European Union and North America prohibit the use of single hulls and enforce this ban, it is likely that such ships will be transferred to the trade between poorer countries. The ensuing spills will be less of a public relations problem for the imperialist governments, but will still cause grave environmental damage.

Besides the mistakes of the Spanish government, there is another problem lying in the background of the Prestige—a 26-year-old Japanese-built ship owned by a company registered in Liberia, managed by a Greek firm, registered in the Bahamas, certified by a U.S. organization, and chartered by a Swiss-based Russian trading company.

Shipping lane accidents are becoming more numerous. On Dec. 15 a Norwegian car carrier, the Tricolor, sank in the English Channel after colliding with the Kariba, a container ship from the Bahamas. Two days later the German-owned Nicola collided with the submerged Tricolor. Two weeks later, the Turkish-registered Vicky hit the same wreck.

The British maritime union NUMAST, commenting on the second accident, pointed out that cost-cutting by ship owners and poor crew training had made dis-

asters a matter of "when," rather than "if."

Its spokesperson said, "We have to look at how ship owners are sacrificing competent crews for cheap crews. Crew costs take up a vast part of running costs, and owners are constantly looking at ways to cut back costs." NUMAST also pointed out that many ships are undercrewed, making mistakes caused by fatigue more common.

Washington's preparations for a major war in the Middle East are also affecting shipping. With the Navy turning to mer-

chant vessels to move vast amounts of war materiel and oil to the Gulf region and to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, U.S. firms are recommissioning laid-up ships.

As the flow of materiel and oil grows, ships like the Prestige may not be directly involved, but the owners of these old ships will find it profitable to keep them running as newer ships are involved in supplying the U.S. war machine. The more that old, single-hulled ships are run, the greater the chance for Prestige-type catastrophes. □

## 41 YEARS AGO IN WORKERS WORLD

# Carrying blessings of 'democracy' abroad

*This article by Vince Copeland appeared 41 years ago in Workers World, on Jan. 29, 1962, when few people in the United States had even heard of Vietnam.*

United States planes are being used to spray poison on the crops of poor farmers in Asia.

Exaggeration?

Here are the details from the New York Times of Jan. 19, 1962:

"United States planes have sprayed jungle growth ... to remove foliage hiding Communist guerrillas ...

"The chemical mixture is supposed to kill all trees and brush, but the withering and dropping of leaves may take five days to three weeks ...

"A South Vietnamese official said today that defoliant chemicals would also be sprayed on Viet Cong plantations of manioc and sweet potatoes in the highlands.

"Tests have shown, he said, that manioc and sweet potatoes die four days after having been sprayed."

The average income of a Vietnamese is less than \$80 per year. But the U.S. is spending several millions just to destroy the sweet potato crop (only in the rebellious areas, of course!).

This is not all. Most Vietnamese do not have shoes. But the U.S. is planning to supply 500,000 radios by 1965.

Reason? So the U.S. bosses' propaganda can be heard by more people. The U.S. Agency for International Development has already provided \$1,500,000 for a seven-station radio network. And American military "advisers" trained in psychological warfare are teaching Vietnamese officers new propaganda techniques.

The U.S. is sending thousands of soldiers to Vietnam to help Vietnam's U.S. puppet army shoot down the long-suffering Vietnamese people. The U.S. has sent hundreds of millions in "aid"—civilian as well as military. But the civilian part of the aid never touches the shoeless peasants or the tribal hill people—not to mention the unemployed city dwellers. It is given mostly to the already wealthy Diem clique (of President Ngo Dinh Diem, who only keeps his job by virtue of U.S. support).

What kind of regime do the U.S. bankers and bosses intend to foist upon the suffering Vietnamese if they succeed in throttling this heroic people with their poison, planes and propaganda?

A small clue was provided by the Jan. 1 New York Times:

"Reports of a 'dictatorship' by President Ngo Dinh Diem are misleading, officials insist, because no basis for democracy exists yet. Attempts to hold village 'elections' would only favor a legal Communist takeover in many places."

Obviously, the kind of "democracy" the U.S. Army is bringing to Vietnam can only be established if the present majority of Vietnamese who would vote "the wrong way" in any election are either slaughtered into the silence of the grave or terrorized into submission.

Frederick E. Nolting Jr., U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, is optimistic about a successful slaughter, but he hinted to the press recently that the struggle should be viewed "more in the pattern of the fight against the Communist insurgents in Malaya, that lasted about 10 years."

Life and the revolution will prove the ambassador to be wrong—even if he gets his 10-year timetable.

The U.S. brass hats have only made what gains they have in South Vietnam because the Soviet Union and China have not responded to the aggressive moves of U.S. imperialism there in a military way—so far.

For China in particular, Vietnam represents a vital area to her own national self-defense (with virtually a common border) as well as a revolutionary obligation.

For the United States, Vietnam will be a "dirty war" and an international disgrace. Whatever temporary victories Nolting and Kennedy may gain from plant poisons and fire bombs, United States capitalism will inevitably lose in Vietnam—politically, morally and militarily as well.

## EXPANDING EMPIRE

by Vince Copeland

The global war drive of big business and the forces that will stop it.

Read it on the Web at:

[www.workers.org/cm/empire.html](http://www.workers.org/cm/empire.html)



## In support of Palestinian struggle

# Jews reject 'right of return' to Israel

*In a letter to the Israeli government, nearly 60 Jewish Americans have renounced their legal right to Israeli citizenship in order to dissociate themselves from Israel's "barbaric" policies towards the Palestinians. The letter originally circulated in England.*

*The text follows:*

We are Jews, born and raised outside Israel, who, under Israel's "law of return," have a legal right to Israeli residence and citizenship. We wish to renounce this unsought "right" because:

- 1) We regard it as morally wrong that this legal entitlement should be bestowed on us while the very people who should have most right to a genuine "return," having been forced or terrorized into fleeing, are excluded.
- 2) Israel's policies towards the Palestinians are barbaric—we do not wish to identify ourselves in any way with what Israel is doing.
- 3) We disagree with the notion that

Zionist emigration to Israel is any kind of "solution" for diaspora Jews, anti-Semitism or racism—no matter to what extent Jews have been or are victims of racism, they have no right to make anyone else victims.

- 4) We wish to express our solidarity with all those who are working for a time when Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip can be lived in by people without any restrictions based on so-called racial, cultural, or ethnic origins. We look forward to the day when all the peoples of the area are enabled to live in peace with each other on this basis of non-discrimination and mutual respect. Perhaps some of us would even wish to live there, but only if the rights of the Palestinians are respected.

To those who consider Israel a "safe haven" for Jews in the face of anti-Semitism, we say that there can be no safety in taking on the role of occupier and oppressor. We hope that the people of Israel and their leaders will come to realize this soon. □

IPROLETARIOS Y OPRIMIDOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNÍOS!

MUNDO OBRERO

# Obreros venezolanos desafían al bloqueo por derechistas

Por Andy McInerney

Desde el 2 de diciembre, la élite económica de Venezuela ha tratado desesperadamente derrocar al gobierno popular del Presidente Hugo Chávez. Las mismas fuerzas que lanzaron un fracasado atentado de golpe en abril del año pasado—los patrones de la federación Fedecameras, algunos líderes sindicales corruptos conectados a la vieja élite política y algunos sectores del ejército con el apoyo del gobierno de Estados Unidos, están ahora tratando de forzar a Chávez a que renuncie. Su objetivo principal ha sido la compañía petrolera estatal, Petróleos de Venezuela, la fuente de más ingreso del gobierno.

Ellos le llamaron a la acción una “huelga”. Pero en realidad es un intento de bloqueo por parte de los empresarios contra el gobierno de Chávez y los millones de pobres y obreros que él representa. Esta es la misma política que el imperialismo ha tratado de dictar contra Irak y Cuba.

Chávez ha prometido desde el comienzo sobrevivir la crisis. Gracias al apoyo popular y la movilización de los trabajadores en todo el país, junto con la solidaridad de América Latina, el gobierno popular ha podido resistir el bloqueo y sabotaje.

La prensa capitalista de los Estados Unidos han celebrado la oposición de la derecha, inflando las cifras de las manifestaciones de la oposición y no reportando las manifestaciones pro Chávez. Pero algunos reportes sobre el carácter de la llamada “huelga” han comenzado a salir.

El 24 de diciembre el periódico Philadelphia Inquirer publicó un artículo con el

titular, “Huelga en Venezuela divide la capital entre los que tienen y los que no tienen.” Seguido el artículo dice, “Miles de compradores de los días festivos llenaron las calles del occidente de Caracas, donde una huelga general diseñada para derrocar al Presidente Hugo Chávez parece una ficción. Mientras tanto, en el oriente de Caracas, lugar de los acomodados, el paro de labores es muy real, con las tiendas y restaurantes cerrados, las aceras en su mayoría vacías de transeúntes.”

En la industria del petróleo, los gerentes y ejecutivos organizan la “huelga”. Pero el gobierno de Chávez se ha ganado el apoyo de muchos trabajadores del petróleo, según reportó el New York Times el 29 de diciembre.

El reportero del New York Times reportó desde la refinería del Puerto La Cruz: “Casi un mes desde el comienzo de la desastrosa huelga nacional, todos los sistemas comenzaron a funcionar casi a su capacidad normal esta semana en esta refinería que abastece las demandas de gasolina a toda la región oriental del país.

“Los trabajadores del turno de la noche estallaban de orgullo.”

“Estamos más orgullosos más que nunca,” dijo Wilfredo Bastardo, un veterano de 17 años de trabajo, “Les hemos demostrado a nuestros supervisores que nosotros podemos trabajar esta planta sin ellos.”

Dirigiéndose a un mitin de obreros del petróleo, Chávez dijo, “Moveremos el cielo y la tierra, pero nunca dejaremos al pueblo en las manos de esta salvaje y traicionera oligarquía.”

Chávez también se beneficia de la meta de su política extranjera de promover la

solidaridad Latinoamericana. Tanto Brasil como Trinidad y Tobago han enviado cargas de gasolina para ayudar a Venezuela durante las protestas. La República Dominicana envió arroz.

Los obreros del petróleo en Colombia y Ecuador han ofrecido su experiencia para mantener abiertas la refinerías.

## Las masas se movilizan para defender a Chávez

Los opositores de Chávez le acusa de ser un dictador. Pero su gobierno ha mostrado un gran grado de tolerancia hacia los conspiradores que no sería posible en cualquier “democracia” capitalista, si se enfrentaran a tal interrupción de la clase obrera organizada. La élite en Venezuela usa su control sobre la prensa para difundir la propaganda anti Chávez. Oficiales militares rebeldes—una minoría dentro del ejército—se reúnen abiertamente en las áreas más adineradas de la capital.

Pero las exigencias crecen por parte de los millones de partidarios de Chávez de enfrentar a la oposición.

Más de 300.000 venezolanos han firmado peticiones pidiendo un referéndum sobre la suspensión de las concesiones gubernamentales a las estaciones de televisión privadas “que han violado su código de ética abiertamente distorsionando los eventos noticiosos de manera anti patriótica y de conspirar abiertamente contra la Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela.”

Miles de otros han firmado peticiones en apoyo al director de producción de Petróleos de Venezuela, Félix Rodríguez, quien sometió una propuesta a la Corte Suprema de declarar al paro ilegal. La

Corte Suprema hizo esto el 19 de diciembre, pero los oficiales del petróleo han continuado su paro.

La desobediencia de los ejecutivos contra la orden de la Corte Suprema ha provocado el despido de 90 de ellos por Chávez. El gobierno también está considerando el arresto de estos por daños ocasionados a la economía.

Los Círculos Bolivarianos, organizaciones de barrios se organizaron para defender a Chávez y su “Revolución Bolivariana,” han sido el centro de las movilizaciones populares contra los contrarrevolucionarios. Los círculos han organizado manifestaciones diarias en apoyo a Chávez.

Algunos sectores del movimiento Círculo Bolivariano se están preparando abiertamente para defender a Chávez contra cualquier otro atentado de derrocarlo. El 9 de noviembre la Prensa Asociada entrevistó a la Comandante Lina Ron, una de los líderes más militantes del movimiento Círculo Bolivariano.

Describiendo la avaricia de la clase dominante de Venezuela, Ron dijo, “Si así son las cosas, me estoy preparando para la guerra. Nosotros llevaremos a cabo una campaña de tierra caliente.”

Ron organizó una fiesta de Navidad en Caracas el 25 de diciembre, distribuyendo regalos para los niños pobres. El Vice Presidente José Vincent Rangel atendió al evento.

“Esta noche es una de entendimiento,” dijo él. Pero los aplausos más fuertes se oyeron con su próxima frase: “Pero esto no quita todas las posibilidades de una mano firme.” □

# Miles protestan redada del SIN

Por Scott Scheffer  
Los Angeles

Las detenciones de parte del Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización de cientos de hombres iraníes provocó en poco tiempo una manifestación enfurecida de más de 6.000 personas de la comunidad iraní más grande de la nación el 18 de diciembre igual que una demanda legal por una coalición de organizaciones en pro de los derechos civiles y los derechos inmigrantes. También impulsó una campaña para forjar un contingente a favor de derechos inmigrantes en una próxima marcha en contra de la guerra apuntada para el 11 de enero en esta ciudad.

La explosión de ira resulta del sentido de haber sido víctima de una emboscada cruel hecho por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos. Los hombres fueron arrestados cuando voluntariamente se presentaron según un directivo del SIN para imprimir sus huellas digitales, tomar sus fotos y ser entrevistados el 16 de diciembre. Muchas organizaciones comunitarias habían alentadas a los inmigrantes cooperar asegurando a ellos que la cooperación fuese la actitud correcta.

Gisroo Mohajeri, que tiene siete meses de embarazo, había urgida a su hijo de 16 años, nacido en Irán a participar. El día

después del último día para inscribirse, ella se sentó en la escalera del edificio federal en la parte céntrica de la ciudad llorando desconsoladamente, y dijo, “¿Porqué? Solamente quería obedecer la ley. Hice una equivocación. No debo hacerlo”. Su hijo ahora enfrenta la posibilidad de que será deportado.

La “inscripción especial”, como se conoce oficialmente es parte de un procedimiento nuevo de seguridad federal instituido durante la histeria anti inmigrante fomentado por la administración de Bush inmediatamente después del 11 de septiembre de 2001. Igual que el hijo de Mohajeri, muchos de los detenidos ahora enfrentan la deportación. Se cree que unos 500 adicionales han sido arrestados desde el noviembre pasado, cuando el directivo fue publicado por primera vez.

La manifestación, que fue producto de un anuncio en un programa de radio iraní, fue tan grande y creció tan súbitamente que pareció tomar el SIN y los medios de comunicación por sorpresa. Y por fin forzó que se publica la historia de los arrestos en los medios noticieros comerciales más grandes localmente aunque no se ha producido mucha publicidad sobre el asunto a nivel nacional.

El SIN dijo poco en respuesta a preguntas de periodistas, al fin declarando

que no había más de 227 personas arrestados y que fueron tratados en una forma humanitaria. Sin embargo, según Kayhan Shakib, un vocero de la Asociación de Abogados Iraní-Americana, “No sabemos cuantos. Calculamos que en el sur de California fueron arrestados entre 1.000 y 2.500 personas”.

Mientras detenidos, los hombres están sujetos a inspecciones al desnudo, centros de detención atestados sin siquiera espacio para sentarse, condiciones de frío, la falta de cobijas, zapatos y medias, la deprivación de medicinas necesarias, y ejemplos de brutalidad.

La mayoría tuvo permisos validos para trabajar y pagó impuestos en sus trabajos. Muchos había aplicado por la residencia permanente, y notificado verbalmente que la aprobación fue inminente. La mayoría de las infracciones fueron tan menor como el fallo de reportar un cambio de dirección.

Según la Unión de Libertades Civiles de América, ACLU por las siglas en inglés, cuando vence la fecha tope en el 13 de febrero, es posible que habrá 10.000 personas detenidas.

Ciudadanos nacionales de Irán, Irak, Libia, el Sudan y Siria fueron hecho blancos de esta redada y se cree que miembros de 13 nacionalidades más serán sujetos a las mismas medidas represivas durante

las próximas siete semanas. Todos conforman parte de tres categorías: países del Medio Oriente, países con poblaciones grandes de musulmanes, y países que se han defendido la soberanía contra los Estados Unidos, como por ejemplo Corea del norte.

Como parte de sus esfuerzos para neutralizar el movimiento anti guerra actualmente creciendo rápidamente, parece que la estrategia de la administración Bush tiene dos aspectos. Uno es de aterrorizar a la población inmigrante y prevenir que ellos participen, mientras demonizar a los musulmanes y gente del Medio Oriente.

Hamid Kahn del Red del Sur de Asia dijo, “Para justificar una guerra en el extranjero, tienen que crear un enemigo. El gobierno de los EE.UU. tiene una larga tradición de atacar a los inmigrantes porque faltan el poder político. Por supuesto los inmigrantes temen las consecuencias, pero esto no significa que no van a luchar para defenderse.

“Hemos estado en contacto con otras organizaciones de inmigrantes y estamos recibiendo una reacción muy positiva de gente de la comunidad coreana, latina y árabe en Los Angeles sobre el contingente en pro de derechos inmigrantes en la marcha del 11 de enero. La mejora forma de defenderse es de dejarlos saber que no somos solos.” □