

Worldwide protests say:
STOP THE WAR
NEXT: CONVERGE ON WHITE HOUSE MARCH 1



BLACK HISTORY MONTH
MALCOLM X
on: 'Violence—at home
and abroad' 3

Campaign to
stifle opposition
WAR, LIES &
AUDIOTAPE 6

Despite fire
from right
LABOR SAYS
NO TO WAR 4

State repression
COLOR IT
ORANGE 5

In the crosshairs
PALESTINE
AND IRAQ 8

By Leslie Feinberg

All told, millions are expected to pour into the streets of towns and cities across the United States and around the world on Feb. 15-16. Their clear, strong opposition to military violence against the people of Iraq has been ignored by the White House, Pentagon and Wall Street.

So they will raise their collective voices, and make their will to resist a material obstacle in the path of the war machine.

Now what's next? Where do progressive, clear-thinking individuals go in the days ahead to harness their horror and anger, with others, to pull this country back from the brink of full-scale war against the people of a small, largely disarmed, oil-rich country?

Just as the Commander in Chief and his brass are mustering their armies, the grassroots movement is feverishly organizing its forces to leash the dogs of war.

Circle March 1 on the calendar: Converge on the White House.

As hell-bent as President George W. Bush and his generals are in their rush to war, the anti-war movement here, bolstered by the support of the overwhelming majority of the people in the world, is determined to try and stop the

warlords in Washington before a full-scale assault can begin.

The International ANSWER coalition—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—is calling on every single person who possibly can get there to be in Washington on March 1 at noon in front of the White House—the Capital of War.

This emergency convergence of anti-war sentiment, two weeks after the Feb. 15-16 local and regional actions, is meant to keep up the pressure as Washington nears what is being described as the likely start date for a war of conquest.

'What if war breaks out suddenly?'

If war breaks out sooner, a "day after" emergency response is ready to be set in motion. To ensure no business as usual, a countrywide "walkout and stay-away" is called for the morning after. Be prepared to gather with your fellow workers and/or students and lead a walkout against the war.

Plans for protests at noon and at 5 p.m. that day are already taking shape in many cities. Check the ANSWER web site—www.internationalanswer.org. There's a cyber form that can be filled out so that your local plans are listed.

The stay-away: Everyone who can stay

home from work or school that morning is asked to leaflet all morning to bring fresh forces to the emergency noon and/or 5 p.m. rallies. Leaflets can be downloaded from the ANSWER Web site.

The walk-out: Those who do go to their jobs and classes are asked to leaflet there and encourage others to leave in time for noontime demonstrations.

'What else can I do?'

A call to make Black History Month a Black Protest for Peace month has gone out far and wide. [See related article, page 7]

The historic Feb. 15-16 rallies are a component of an entire week of anti-war picket lines, rallies and teach-ins from coast to coast.

This week of resistance, Feb. 13-21, culminates in a Coordinated Day of Resistance, including student actions. On Feb. 21, the 38th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X, anti-war youth will rally at the White House at 5 p.m. to say "Hell no! We won't go!" Some students plan a school walkout that day.

Finally, cast a vote against the war with a click of your computer mouse at www.VoteNoWar.org. Encourage others to do so, too. □



MILLIONS WORLDWIDE
Protests to span globe 8



PHOTO: ARBEITERFOTOGRAFIE.COM
Demonstration at NATO conference in Munich, Germany Feb. 8, protesting U.S. War Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's visit.

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The times they are a-changing

By Deirdre Griswold

It is times like these that reveal the true strength of the contending forces in society. Not just their strength in numbers, or their strength in weapons, but their strength in conviction, purpose and belief in their vision of the future.

The Bush administration has been preparing for its war on Iraq as though nothing in the world can stop it from going ahead. It has very big plans. Besides having a completely grandiose view of achieving U.S. global supremacy, it is trying to carry out a restructuring at home at the same time. It is hacking away at what remains of social programs for the poor, privatizing government workers in a direct attack on unions, raising racism against immigrants to a new level, outlawing dissent, and trying to create such a climate of fear that opposition to its lunge to the right will crumble.

It certainly has unequaled material resources for what it is doing, both financial and military. But it has a very, very big problem. The more that the people find out what is coming down the pike, the more they are against it.

Bush never had a mandate for his right-wing policies. The Supreme Court decided he should be president after the debacle in Florida. He wasn't swept into office on a flood of reaction, like the desperate times in Europe during the Great Depression when fascist movements rallied huge crowds by attacking the system, and took over promising radical reforms to a ruined people—only to line them up for a war to defend capitalism while channeling their anger into racist and anti-Semitic scapegoating and redbaiting.

This is a right-wing takeover from the top, carried out through the established political organizations of the capitalist class, which exist on lobbyists' generous contributions. And big business isn't exactly popular right now, to put it mildly. Not many workers are looking at the Kenneth Lays and other millionaire executives as saviors for society's ills.

There is a new sense of the power of the masses, a new sense of what it means to be in solidarity with hundreds of millions around the world

Bush may pose as the cowboy—another word for “man on horseback”—who can ride roughshod over his opponents and whip the herd in line. His billionaire backers like that. But does he really have the tools for it? Isn't he relying on the acquiescence, at the very least, of tens of millions whose lives will be profoundly changed for the worse by what he is doing?

The confidence Bush exudes on stage—for his “public” appearances amount to nothing but acting—is carefully scripted and rehearsed. Everything is predictably phony. But behind that confident exterior, when he puts his feet up, don't doubts seize him as he nibbles his pretzels?

Certainly his class—known rather unscientifically as the “business class” in popular parlance—is showing extreme anxiety right now. Every Bush speech pushing his war program has also pushed down the stock markets. His promises that the war will be a pushover and that the reconstruction of Iraq—meaning setting up a political structure for the methodical plunder of its massive oil resources—will be quickly accomplished have not won them over. There is a lot of gloom and doom in the boardrooms and markets these days, totally the opposite of the euphoria on Wall Street in the early years of the Vietnam War, when the markets hit new highs with every escalation of the war.

No matter how ideological they are, the politicians in the Bush camp have to be feeling this, for these are their class brethren.

In the anti-war camp, however, the mood is different. There are political struggles, of course, and

the clarifying of many misconceptions as the movement goes forward. But the mood among the people is upbeat and strong. There is a new sense of the power of the masses, a new sense of what it means to be in solidarity with the hundreds of millions around the world who so much want a change in the relation of forces, so much want the political pendulum in the United States to swing to the left, to the workers, and away from the insatiable class of exploiters who will never be rich enough.

Each new lie from the government—whether it's on Iraq's “weapons of mass destruction” or a fiendish plot by immigrants to “destroy America”—immediately stirs up a legion of indignant people determined to seek the truth and rebut the disinformation. Informed, thoughtful responses race around the Internet.

And these are not office-chair activists. They are marching, organizing teach-ins, riding buses through the night to national protests, getting on street corners and letting everyone know where they stand.

They have a strong, deep feeling that they are building a movement that will change the world, and not in the way George W. Bush intends. They have a passion for what they are doing that is based on self-sacrifice, giving for a greater cause—the very thing that some columnists complain Bush is afraid to ask for. He has to lie to the people that this war will be easy—because, on the bottom, those hired to carry out his commands have no enthusiasm for what they are doing.

Looking at all these factors, the playing field is not so unequal after all. □

This week ...



★ **National**

Stop the war 1
 The times they are a-changing 2
 Malcolm X on Black people and war. 3
 Mumia on When did you vote for empire? 3
 Solidarity march for Peltier 3
 Labor's anti-war stance draws fire from right 4
 Federal gov't criminalizes medical marijuana 4
 Bush budget is war against poorest. 5
 Color-coded scare tactics are run-up to war 5
 Protest calls for low fares, no war 5
 War, lies and audiotape 6
 Call to action by Black leaders 7
 Black Protest for Peace Month 7
 Four anti-war coalitions respond to Lerner 8
 Health workers opt out of vaccine program. 10

★ **International**

Cuban 5 case gets world attention 3
 Iraq war aimed also at Palestinians 8
 Broadest protests yet expected Feb. 15 9
 South Africa takes clear anti-war stand 9
 U.S. relies on pawns in new NATO. 11
 Brussels protest backs Filipino leftist 11
 France and U.S. maneuver over Ivory Coast 11

★ **Editorial**

Simple math. 10
 Korea wants peace 10

★ **Noticias En Español**

Arrastrando el mundo a la Guerra 12

WW CALENDAR

NATIONWIDE

Feb. 13-21
 Week of anti-war resistance. Teach-ins, rallies, pickets. Coast to coast coordinated rallies on Feb. 15. For info on the Web internationalANSWER.org or phone (212) 633-6646 or (202) 544-3389 or (415) 821-6545 or (213) 487-2368 or (617) 522-6626.

SAN FRANCISCO

Sun., Feb. 16
 Stop the War Against Iraq: Gather at Embarcadero Plaza at 11 am and march to Civic Center for rally at 2 p.m. Demonstration co-sponsored by the International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition, Bay Area United Against War, Not In Our Name, and Bay Area United for Peace & Justice.

Sat., Feb. 22

African-American History Month Celebration: Clayborne Carson, director of the King Papers Project, will be the featured speaker at event. Other speakers will include Larry Holmes, of the International Action Center; Dr. Ted Frazier, NAACP-SF Chapter, Leilani Dowell, ANSWER youth organizer; Jean Damu, NCOBRA; B.J. Jennings, It's About Time; and hip hop artist Mr. Lif. 7 p.m. Sponsored by the S.F. African-American Historical Society and International Action Center. At African-American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton St. For info (415) 821-6545.

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Malcolm X on Black people and war

On Nov. 10, 1963, the revolutionary Black nationalist Malcolm X (Al Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) gave a powerful speech directed to a predominantly African American audience in Detroit. Entitled "Message to the Grass Roots," it focused on different forms of revolution. This was almost two years before the United States widened its military presence in Vietnam and Southeast Asia and also before Malcolm's historic 1964 trip to Mecca and Africa. Later, on his return to the United States, Malcolm began to develop a worldwide class view toward racism and imperialism, but he was assassinated in 1965. Here are some excerpts from Malcolm X's 1963 talk that ring as true today as they did almost 40 years ago.

—Monica Moorehead

Look at the American Revolution in 1776. That revolution was for what? For land. Why did they want land? Independence. How was it carried out? Bloodshed. ... The French Revolution—what was it based on? The landless against the landlord. What was it for? Land. How did they get it? Bloodshed. Was no love lost, was no compromise, was no negotiation. ...

The Russian Revolution—what was it based on? Land, the landless against

the landlord. How did they bring it about? Bloodshed. You haven't got a revolution that doesn't involve bloodshed. ... As long as the white man sent you to Korea, you bled. He sent you to Germany, you bled. He sent you to the South Pacific to fight the Japanese, you bled ... but when it comes to seeing your own churches being bombed and little Black girls murdered, you haven't got any blood. ...

How are you going to be non-violent in Mississippi, as violent as you were in Korea? How can you justify being nonviolent in Mississippi and Alabama, when your churches are being bombed, and your little girls are being murdered, and at the same time you are going to get violent with Hitler, and Tojo, and somebody else you don't even know?

If violence is wrong in America, violence is wrong abroad. If it is wrong to be violent defending black women and black children and black babies and black men, then it is wrong for America to draft us and make us violent abroad in defense of her. And if it is right for America to draft us, and teach us how to be violent in defense of her, then it



Malcolm X (Al Hajj Malik El-Shabazz)

is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country. □



By Mumia Ab-Jamal
from death row



When did you vote for empire?

“ [T]he attitude of the United States of America is a threat to world peace.”
—DR. NELSON MANDELA, 2002

Anti-war rallies are bubbling up all across America, from Iowa to Indiana, from Minneapolis to Maine. They swell the streets of Paris, of London, and Berlin. They burst through the souks and casbahs of the Muslim world. They reflect, if anything, widespread opposition to the jingoism and bellicosity of the Bush Regime.

Yet there is the sneaking suspicion, the deep gut feel, that these demos may not be enough to stay the hand of the Bush White House, which seems perilously poised for a deadly strike into the Iraqi homeland, no matter the human cost.

Which raises an interesting question: If the government ignores the wishes of a majority of its citizens, how can that government be called “democratic” (small “d”)? If the White House isn't listening to the will of the People, who is it listening to? Who decides?

Is it following the wishes of the defense industries, the oil companies, the military-industrial networks of extreme wealth and power that routinely feed on the carcass of war?

Time will answer that question—and apparently soon. The recent public departure of France and Germany from the pro-war club seems to have put a chink in the U.S. loincloth of developing a “coalition” against Saddam.

However, no sooner had these two European powerhouses left the tent, than was sparked the retort from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld that they represented “old” Europe, and that the U.S. didn't really need them, preferring instead the assistance of “new” Europe, like Poland and perhaps the Czechs.

Empires, it seems, can be as petulant as teenagers. Petulant though it may have been, it revealed the desire for Europe, “old” or “new,” to back their play. It also revealed how desirous empires are for others to bow to their self-evident glory.

What seems indispensable for all empires is arrogance. But the question remains: How did we get here? How did the nation that boasted of its “democratic principles” emerge as an imperial force in the world? Who voted for this thing?

A recent column in the Washington Post suggests that the U.S. became a global empire as an “accident.” It quotes a senior Bush regime official defending the position of the U.S. assuming “an almost imperial role” in the world. The short rationale? There's no one else. Period.

It is presented as if this is but the inevitable fruit of the tragedy of 9/11. As if the U.S. somehow grudgingly accepts its terrible burden, because it alone is strong enough.

This is a misreading of the last half century of history, if ever there was one. Remember Vietnam? Remember the ridiculous “domino theory”? How many millions around the world were sucked into that imperial nightmare?

It is easy, and somewhat cheap, to lay all of the present madness at the feet of the present president; but this is also misleading. The imperial parameters of the United States may be seen in every American administration, from Truman on down to the present office-holder. They may not have used the words, but they certainly acted as if the whole wide world was but the plaything of the Empire, and if a leader arose who dared not know his place, he was toppled.

Have we forgotten Mohammad Mossadegh? Patrice Lumumba? Salvador Allende? Rafael Trujillo? Suharto of Indonesia? Americans may not know these names, but much of the world does. They know that the American Empire isn't some kind of “accident” of history. They did it the old-fashioned way: through assassinations, destabilization, spycraft and military domination. Just as Rome did.

Who voted for this abomination? This edifice of terror? Did you? Well, if not, then you must seriously question the notion that this is a democratic state; for if you had no say in these extremely serious matters, when has your will been respected? Some democracy, huh? An imperial democracy ain't no democracy at all. □

As judge turns down appeal

Cuban 5 case gets world attention

By Gloria La Riva

From Porto Alegre, Brazil, to Los Angeles, the political struggle to win freedom for the five Cuban political prisoners in U.S. jails is gaining momentum as knowledge of their case spreads.

The political campaign to raise mass support is more critical than ever, especially given the negative court decision passed down Feb. 10 in Miami federal district court.

Federal Judge Joan Lenard denied a motion for a new trial filed by appeals lawyer Leonard Weinglass on behalf of the Cuban Five.

Despite new evidence of the federal prosecutor's misconduct during the original trial—in arguing against a change of venue outside Miami—Judge Lenard refused to grant even a hearing on Weinglass' motion.

The next legal battle comes with

appeals to be filed in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals on April 7. The National Committee to Free the Cuban Five has called for people to mobilize for a public rally in Atlanta the weekend of April 5-7.

On Feb. 10, a special reception in Beverly Hills for attorney Weinglass was attended by well-known filmmaker Haskell Wexler, Hollywood producer Robert Greenwald, State Sen. Kevin Murray, Tom Hayden and actor David Clemmon. Thousands of dollars were raised for the work of the national committee. Next on the committee's agenda is a full-page advertisement in the New York Times.

Worldwide, over 100 committees are fighting for the freedom of the five. Many will demonstrate at U.S. embassies in their countries on April 7 to raise the level of awareness on this case.

Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando

González and René González had infiltrated fascist organizations like Alpha 66 and Omega 7 in Miami to stop their terrorist attacks directed against the island. These organizations have been trained, funded and encouraged by the U.S. government.

Support for five in Brazil

At the recent World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a Cuban delegation of over 200 representatives of labor unions, women, youths, cultural and other institutions spoke out in many workshops and forums to urge solidarity with the Cuban Five.

It was an illustrious delegation, including Che Guevara's daughter Aleida Guevara March, Cuban Women's Federation President Vilma Espin, Cultural Minister Abel Prieto, economist Orlando Martinez, Union of Communist Youth First Secretary Otto Rivero, little Elián González' father Juan Miguel González, and world boxing champion Teofilo Stevenson among its members. They spoke on the Cuban Revolution's social achievements and the need to defend those heroes engaged in the vital mission of protecting Cuba.

Women family members and other supporters of the political prisoners held an impromptu action at a university to protest their imprisonment. When over 150 members of a Black Brazilian coalition marched into the same area to demand reparations and equality for the Black communities of Brazil, they joined in chanting: “Freedom for the five Cuban prisoners! Long Live Cuba!”

U.S. actor Danny Glover, who met with the family members in Porto Alegre, said: “I pledge my support to the Cuban brothers. You can count on me now and in the future.” □

Solidarity march for Peltier

By Jim McMahon
Tacoma, Wash.

Marking the 27th anniversary of Native warrior Leonard Peltier's capture and imprisonment, 500 people marched on the federal courthouse here Feb. 8 to demand his freedom.

The cops, the city of Tacoma and the courts had all overruled the Tacoma Leonard Support Group's application for a march permit. News media outlets declared the Leonard Peltier march canceled beforehand. But the demonstrators overcame this racist “Homeland Security” style intimidation.

People came from Washington and Oregon for the biggest turnout in the

Northwest in years.

Peltier remains imprisoned for “aiding and abetting” the murder of two FBI agents, even though his legal defense team disproved the government's case against him two decades ago. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals stated at that time that it had no evidence directly connecting Peltier to the death of the FBI agents at the Pine Ridge Reservation. But the government has blocked off avenues to a new trial.

Peltier was standing in defense of Native people against an FBI-organized reign of terror on Lakota land and against the theft of Lakota land by the transnational energy companies. □

Labor's anti-war stance draws fire from right

By Milt Neidenberg
Retired Teamster

As the Bush administration continues to assemble weapons of mass destruction against the Iraqi people, the labor movement is mounting an anti-war opposition that is growing by leaps and bounds, fueled by the catastrophic capitalist crisis of war and recession.

This crisis has endangered many union contracts that provide health and pension benefits for their members and retirees.

More than 2 million jobs have been lost since March 2002, according to the Labor Department. Almost 1.9 million people who are still actively job hunting have been unemployed for at least six months. That is triple the number of two years ago.

Since last June, the number of adults who have dropped out of the labor force has jumped by more than 1 million. (New York Times, Feb. 6)

"Since November, AOL Time Warner, Boeing, Dow Jones, Eastman Kodak, Goodyear, J.C. Penney, McDonald's, Merrill Lynch, Sara Lee and Verizon announced layoffs," the Times reported. "Manufacturers of durable goods like computers, furniture and steel have made the deepest cuts."

The Bush administration is well aware that the union movement has begun to confront its plans for a "pre-emptive strike"—against organized labor and against the Iraqi people. The class struggle is heating up and the anti-war labor movement is growing.

Bush and his Wall Street collaborators have begun a campaign to stop it. They want to convince the public that the labor movement is "unpatriotic." And they hope that repressive laws like the "Patriot Act" will free them to pursue imperialist objectives under the guise of national security.

This tactic was demonstrated in the Feb. 8 New York Times under the headline "Patriotism of Labor Called Into Question." The Times reported that last month Tom DeLay, the powerful House Republican majority leader from Texas,

signed a letter charging that union "bosses" use "national emergencies" to "grab more power."

The fundraising letter was written by the National Right to Work Legal Defense and Education Foundation, a well-funded union-busting organization with connections to the Bush administration.

The letter said strikes are a danger to the government. It cited a machinists' union strike at Lockheed-Martin last year. The workers build F-22 fighter jets and C-130-J military transports. Their strike was characterized as an example of "shamefully exploiting the nation's critical war needs."

The letter described other unions—including firefighters, 343 of whom died in the World Trade Center attack, and longshore workers—as unpatriotic and a "clear and present danger to the security of the United States."

The letter falsely accused the International Longshore Workers Union of shutting down West Coast ports recently. That was, in fact, a lockout by the bosses. The progressive record of this proud union, one of the first to lead and build the anti-war labor movement, is the real reason for this attack.

DeLay is an ultra-right, imperialist war hawk, dubbed "the Hammer" in Congress. He has been at the forefront of reactionary, racist, anti-union, and anti-lesbian/gay legislation. He supported South African apartheid. He is known to be up to his eyeballs in the corrupt and criminal activities of the oil and gas tycoons. And his career was inextricably tied to Enron and its former CEO, Kenneth Lay.

Along with President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, not to mention Gen. Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, DeLay has espoused the transnational oil interests of ExxonMobil, Halliburton, Chevron/Texaco and British Petroleum—all plotting with the military for the takeover of Iraqi oil following a pre-emptive attack.

But DeLay had to reverse himself and claim he had never signed the letter. He

reportedly did so after he got an indignant response from Teamster President James Hoffa, who scolded DeLay for questioning "the patriotism of myself and a particular affront to our Teamster Brothers and Sisters who are called to active duty."

DeLay would only backtrack on orders from the Bush administration. Hoffa, a favorite at the White House, recently became a founding member of a group called "The Committee for the Liberation of Iraq." He has developed close ties to Rumsfeld and Cheney, who sit on the committee's board along with executives from Lockheed-Martin, Lehman Brothers, Bechtel and Charles Schwab. They weren't about to antagonize this important labor contact.

Hoffa is looking over his shoulder at Teamsters Local 705 in Chicago, the second-biggest Teamster local and the biggest truck driver and warehouse union in the country. Recently the local passed an anti-war resolution by 399 to one stating, "We value the lives of our brothers and sisters more than Bush's control of Middle East oil profits."

Hoffa may not want to get isolated from rank-and-file Teamsters and the emerging progressive development in the labor movement. He may yet have to back off from the White House war criminals and their oil and gas conspirators.

The White House gang was embarrassed when Hoffa exposed their machinations. DeLay fumbled the campaign to link strikes and unions as unpatriotic.

Chalk this one up for the young but growing anti-war labor movement.

Birth of a movement

The young anti-war movement in labor's ranks began when Bush started the war against the Afghani people. Unionists joined the tens of thousands of anti-war demonstrators who responded quickly to that war. They brought their experiences back to their union sisters and brothers and, as a result, anti-war labor resolutions began to emerge.

As the war threats against Iraq accelerated, anti-war protests grew. Organized by

the International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—Coalition, coordinated protests on Oct. 26 and Jan. 18 attracted millions of anti-war and anti-racist activists in Washington, D.C., San Francisco and many other cities in the United States and around the world.

Unionists, many of them inspired by Black leaders, helped swell the ranks of these protests. AFSCME District Council 1707 President Brenda Stokely and Clarence Thomas, an officer of ILWU Local 10, spoke from the podium at the massive anti-war demonstrations. Thomas brought the impressive ILWU drill team all the way from San Francisco to the Oct. 26 rally in Washington, D.C. They led the march, which attracted a substantial number of union workers.

As anti-war labor resolutions were passed across the country—by local unions, central labor councils and state federations too many to list—it was clear that an anti-war movement in the progressive sector of labor was being born. And it was becoming more effective and influential, reaching the highest levels of the AFL-CIO.

Most important, the texts of the anti-war resolutions had a common thread. They connected the war to the economic crisis, attacks on labor, layoffs, budget cuts, and threats to civil liberties and civil rights. The resolutions reminded the public that it is the sons and daughters of working-class families who bear the brunt of war and recession.

Most of the resolutions attacked the hundreds of billions of dollars handed over to the Pentagon, Office of Homeland Security and military-industrial empires—Lockheed-Martin, Boeing and others—leading to shortchanging Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and the discretionary spending so desperately needed by poor and oppressed communities.

Expectations are high that on Feb. 15, a day of national and international anti-war rallies, labor will demonstrate its resistance to war and recession in even greater numbers. □

Defying science and voters

Federal gov't criminalizes medical marijuana

By Preston Wood
Los Angeles

The scientific evidence is in, and the conclusions are clear: Marijuana, used for medical purposes as prescribed by a doctor, can relieve pain and ease the suffering of those who are sick. Study after study has verified that the herb reduces pain and wasting syndromes for people with AIDS or cancer, and helps those dealing with glaucoma.

The people have spoken, too: In California and eight other states, voters have overwhelmingly approved state ballot initiatives that allow the medical use of marijuana.

The U.S. government, on the other hand, through the Drug Enforcement Agency, continues to treat the medical use of marijuana as a crime.

Ignoring the will of the people, the Bush administration is actively conducting raids on homes and facilities where marijuana for medical use is cultivated.

On Jan. 31, a federal jury convicted Ed Rosenthal of Oakland, Calif., of conspir-

ing to cultivate marijuana and maintaining a grower's warehouse. Rosenthal, 58, faces up to 85 years in prison when sentenced June 4.

His arrest last year was one of a string of DEA raids on medical marijuana suppliers in California. Under strict orders from U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer, Rosenthal was never allowed to tell the jury that he was growing marijuana as an officer of the city of Oakland's medical marijuana program.

Subsequently, all nine jurors have denounced the trial, apologized to Rosenthal and vowed to take part in an upcoming news conference to express their solidarity with him.

Oakland's program and similar ones throughout California were authorized under a 1996 voter referendum known as Proposition 215. Eight other states also allow the sick and dying to smoke or grow marijuana with their doctor's recommendation.

But federal authorities do not recognize these laws. "There is no such thing as medical marijuana," said Richard

Meyer, a DEA spokesperson. A 2001 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the federal government's position that medical marijuana is merely part of illegal drug trafficking.

Meanwhile, on Feb. 4, the traditionally conservative San Diego City Council approved medical marijuana guidelines that allow sick people with a doctor's note to possess a pound of marijuana.

Cruelty, plain and simple

In Los Angeles, David Basford, who has for a long time used the herb to reduce the wasting syndrome and nausea that come with AIDS, may find himself homeless soon. He is going to be evicted from his tiny one-room apartment for breaking federal policy on medical marijuana.

Basford's apartment is provided by Community of Friends, a non-profit organization that receives federal dollars to operate housing for homeless, disabled and low-income people. Based on federal guidelines, Basford's tiny crop of marijuana plants could jeopardize fund-

ing for the program. So he faces eviction.

The Bush administration spends billions of dollars on war. It ignores the lack of medical care for millions of workers in the United States and sends its DEA attack dogs to break up medical marijuana projects around the country.

In arrogant disregard for the will of the people, who have again and again expressed care and compassion for those who are suffering from cancer and AIDS, the U.S. government reveals its contempt for real democracy, and for a program that has scientifically been shown to help those who are suffering.

When it comes to upholding the racist death penalty, Bush screams loudly about "states' rights." When voters approve state mandates seeking to alleviate suffering, he sends in his federal shock troops from the DEA.

Those who are sick and suffering are asking only for their universal right to comfort and care.

For Bush and his buddies, such concepts do not compute. □

Now school lunches are suspect

Bush budget is war against poorest

By Monica Moorehead

At the same time that the Bush administration is spending untold billions of dollars in preparation for a genocidal war against Iraq, it has widened tax breaks for the super-rich and launched a war against poor and oppressed people inside the United States in the form of criminal budget cuts.

Bush's proposed \$2.23 trillion budget for the 2004 fiscal year would relieve the federal government of responsibility for billions of dollars in federal spending on vital social programs such as unemployment benefits, health insurance, housing subsidies, school lunch programs and Head Start—a preschool program that since the 1960s has provided affirmative action in educational opportunities for poor children.

Instead, Bush will substitute “block grants”—effectively washing his hands of any federal responsibility to meet bare minimal requirements to insure that the most marginalized sectors of society have some of their human needs met.

In essence, this decentralization promotes the reactionary “states’ rights” position advocated by pro-slavery Confederate states that voted to secede from the Union during pre-Civil War days in order to maintain the enslavement of Africans.

Proponents of Bush's nearly \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts unabashedly admit this is a windfall to the wealthy. The rationale is

that the benefits will trickle down to low-income people and stimulate the economy. But tax cuts won't translate into capital investment in this period of capitalist economic stagnation. The wealth that the rich grab will stay in their pockets.

Bush's budget is really a scheme to protect the huge assets, capital gains, interest and dividends of the wealthiest people from being taxed. This safety net for the rich, at the expense of the workers and the poor, means that the gap of inequality has widened.

According to the Census Bureau, from 1989 to 2001 the income level of the richest fifth of society rose at a rate six times faster than the poorest fifth.

And this growing gap between rich and poor has occurred over the course of both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Cuts based on demonizing poor

The Bush administration is skilled at the art of diversion. When it wants to recolonize the oil-rich region of Iraq, it demonizes its president, as though Saddam Hussein is the only person in Iraq who will be affected by a war.

Bush rationalizes his proposed cuts in the National School Lunch Program by claiming “error” and “fraud”—code words for demonizing the poor.

A reported 28 million children, half of them from low-income families, receive a lunch paid for by the federal govern-

ment. The Bush administration now wants to require that all families show proof of income—pay stubs or tax returns—as part of a stricter requirement for eligibility.

Service providers say this will result in a dramatic decline of the number of children in this program, including the children of immigrant workers who risk deportation if they lack the proper papers.

The Pentagon can waste hundreds of dollars on a toilet seat and not be penalized. If a poor family, however, does not fill out a form correctly, or is caught understating income, it is grounds for a child not receiving a meal—possibly the only meal that day. This adds to growing numbers of malnourished children in the United States.

Those who provide the lunches would be forced to police the poor instead of feeding them.

The vice president of the American School Food Service Association, Barry D. Sackin, said that the Bush plan “would turn us into accountants and auditors and take us away from what we should be doing: serving nutritious meals to children.” (New York Times, Feb. 5)

The Bush budget also calls for gutting the federally funded Section 8 housing program that has provided rental assistance to low-income tenants since the 1930s.

Bush would also require that those who

Bush's 2004 budget is welfare for the super-rich and the military and cuts for the poorest. It shows why the movement must demand, 'Money for jobs and human needs, not war'

remain on welfare work longer hours for their measly checks.

And he wants to put the Medicaid program, which has been a jointly funded federal-state health insurance program, under the control of the states—which are already reeling under huge budget deficits. It is estimated that at least one-third of the 44 million impoverished people now eligible would lose vital health-care services.

Anti-war activists must connect the struggle against poverty and unemployment on the domestic front with the channeling of wealth to the military machine. Bush's 2004 budget, a welfare program for the super-rich and the military, shows why “Money for jobs and human needs, not war” must be the battle cry for this movement. □

Bush counts on media hype

Color-coded scare tactics are run-up to war

By Leslie Feinberg

From banana yellow to citrus orange—just one shade below tomato red. The Bush administration is camouflaging state-sponsored repression with color codes.

Attorney General John Ashcroft, FBI Director Robert Mueller and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge proclaimed a “Code Orange” alert at a Feb. 7 news conference. They declared that the United States faces high risk of terrorist attack.

“As in the past,” reported the Feb. 8 Trenton Times, “officials said they had no information regarding specific terrorist threats and no indication of a time, place or manner of any attack.”

Yet just 72 hours later, a federal judge upheld New York City officials' refusal to allow anti-war protesters to march past the United Nations on Feb. 15.

Citing “this time of heightened security,” U. S. District Judge Barbara S. Jones ruled, “The city's restriction on marching is not a restriction on pure speech, but rather a restriction on the manner in which plaintiff may communicate its message.”

Pure double-speak.

Lawyers for anti-war activists argued that City Hall had granted permits for other mass marches, including the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

“National security” is the code word. The mission is to beef up the state and dismantle hard-won civil rights and liberties.

Arab, Muslim and South Asian people

in the United States are the first to feel it. Immigration and Naturalization Service-forced “registrations” of these immigrants of color is reminiscent of the roundup and internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Today's mass “disappearings” have caught undisclosed numbers in their dragnet.

In the glow of Code Orange, U.S. police agencies are using Cold War spy tactics against Arab people. And they have arm-twisted Canadian cops into joining them. “Spy agencies from both countries are

conducting physical and electronic surveillance, wiretaps and planting agents in universities to gather information,” according to the Feb. 10 London Free Press.

“As part of the raised alert, several diplomats based in Ottawa and the United Nations in New York City have been placed under surveillance to prevent them from agitating émigrés should the U.S. attack Iraq, U.S. police said.”

In the United States, the article continued, more than 1,000 Iraqi nationals are being monitored. Police are “interviewing” 50,000 Iraqi immigrants, “in hopes

someone will blow the whistle on possible terrorist activities.”

Cynical pretexts

On Feb. 5, Secretary of State Colin Powell tried to line up Washington's allies at the UN behind its war against Iraq.

The next day, the U.S. State Department warned of a growing threat of terrorists attacking with chemical or biological weapons.

One day later, Code Orange.

Top cop Ashcroft also floated the idea

Continued on page 6

Protest calls for low fares and no war

Protesters disrupted a New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority hearing about a fare hike and service cuts in midtown Manhattan on Feb. 5.

The delegation from the International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—coalition charged that the fare hike is “a war tax.”

They pointed out that 1 percent of what the Pentagon plans to spend on the war against Iraq would cover the MTA's supposed deficit. Not only that—it could actually pay for lowering the fare, and without service cuts.

Police presence—uniformed and plain-clothed—was heavy. Cops tried to quickly remove protesters. The demonstrators also demanded free trains and buses on Feb. 15 for the mass anti-war rally.

—Photo and story by Anne Pruden



War, lies and audiotape

By Fred Goldstein

With millions around the world expected to take to the streets on the weekend of Feb. 15-16 in the growing movement against a war on Iraq, the Bush administration is waging a carefully orchestrated, full-scale campaign to overcome the opposition.

The latest phase began with Gen. Colin Powell's presentation of unsubstantiated accusations, falsifications and distortions at the UN Security Council on Feb. 5.

Then came the "Code Orange" scare announced by Homeland Security czar Tom Ridge.

Next came the Senate Intelligence Subcommittee testimony by FBI Director Robert Mueller and CIA Director George Tenet about the growing threat of terrorism at home and the link between Al-Qaeda and the government in Iraq.

This was topped off by a government-encouraged media barrage about an alleged new Osama bin Laden audiotape. Each segment was punctuated by aggressive assertions by Bush.

In Secretary of State Powell's performance, much acclaimed by the big business media, he repeatedly cited unnamed sources, pointed to photographs and drawings that showed nothing, and made assertions that contradicted the findings of the UN inspection teams headed by Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei. To top it off, Powell offered as "evidence" the findings of a special British "intelligence report" that it was soon discovered had been plagiarized from a British postgraduate student's 1990 article in the Middle East Review of International Studies and two other articles in Jane's Weekly.

Glen Rangwala, a lecturer on the faculty of Social and Political Sciences at

Powell's UN talk, Code Orange and the scare testimony by the FBI and CIA are not about truth. They're not about facts. They're about creating war hysteria.

Cambridge University, gave a preliminary analysis of Powell's speech. Powell had showed photos of the al-Taji munitions facility with a small shed and a truck adjacent to the bunker, claiming they were a "signature item" for chemical bunkers. This is "wholly implausible," pointed out Rangwala, "because a picture of a truck and a shed reveal nothing about the contents of the adjacent bunker." (www.casi.org.uk)

Powell played an audiotape that he said was a conversation between Iraq officials about covering up nerve agents. According to Rangwala, the person said, "remove the expression nerve agent," referring to a report, not to nerve agents themselves.

Powell spoke of tons of the chemical VX now in Iraq that could fall into the hands of terrorists. Iraq admitted in 1995 that it had produced 3.9 tons of VX before the Gulf War, but said it had since unilaterally destroyed the 1.5 tons that remained. UNSCOM inspectors have visited the sites where Iraq said it disposed of the chemical and reported in January 1999 that "traces of VX were found in samples taken from the sites." It found no evidence of any recent production. According to an International Institute of Strategic Studies dossier of September 2002, "Any VX produced by Iraq before 1991 is likely to have decomposed over the past decade."

Powell based his claim that Iraq has produced missiles with a range greater

than 1,000 kilometers on development at the al-Rafah/Shahiyat liquid-propellant engine static test stand. "These sites have repeatedly been visited by UNMOVIC inspection teams since the very first day of inspections," says Rangwala, and the UNMOVIC report of January 2003 stated the site was "still abandoned."

Powell's claim that Iraq has mobile biological weapons production facilities was based upon the testimony of a defector, Adnan Saeed al-Haideri, who never mentioned such facilities in his first press conference in December 2001. He only did so after a debriefing by the U.S. and a three-week debriefing by a representative of the Iraqi National Congress, the puppet exile organization being promoted by the Pentagon. Many of the sites named by al-Haideri were inspected and found not to contain weapons.

There are numerous other examples in this preliminary critique that show Powell's speech to be completely fraudulent. But this did not stop the monolithic media machine from reading from the script about how Powell "made his case," "hit a home run," "was quite convincing," etc., etc., ad nauseam. Commentators on all the networks and cable channels, as well as the editorial page writers, ignored the fact that the presentation was based entirely upon the unsubstantiated assertions of an imperialist government official whose obvious task was to manipulate public opinion in order to smooth the

increasingly bumpy road to war.

U.S. in open violation of international law

To be sure, the U.S. government, as well as all the states that collaborate in the so-called "disarmament" of Iraq, are violating the fundamental right of a formerly colonial people to self-determination, sovereignty and the right of self-defense against imperialist intervention. The U.S. government, by attempting to overthrow the Iraqi government, is openly violating international law, the UN Charter, as well as the right of a people to be free of imperialist oppression.

It would make perfect sense for the Iraqis to maintain whatever defense capability they could hold on to in the face of the extraordinary threat that they are now under. But the repeated claims by the U.S. war makers that somehow the people of the world have to fear Iraqi weapons of mass destruction is nothing but a big lie.

It is in the same vein that the Code Orange and the scare testimony by the FBI and CIA should be viewed. This is not about truth. It is not about facts. It is about creating war hysteria.

Whether the Osama bin Laden tape is authentic or not, Powell knew about it and departed from previous government policy by encouraging the networks to broadcast it. This switch in government policy is based on the calculation that, since the speech was opposed to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Washington could claim ties between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. By implication, Hussein would be linked to Sept. 11 or to a future attack.

Powell, having read a transcript of the tape, knew that the speaker, presumably bin Laden, denounces Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath Party as "socialists." But he was relying on the media machine to minimize this detail and find a way to further demonize the Iraqi leader by association with bin Laden. This has become a propaganda trump card for an administration desperate to bolster the sinking support for its unprovoked war of aggression against the Iraqi people.

In fact, in his testimony Feb. 11 to the Senate intelligence committee, CIA Director Tenet changed his line on the connection of Iraq to Al-Qaeda, which he previously had declared to be non-existent. This indicated that he, like Powell, is now fully on board with the war. He even included Iran as a base for Al-Qaeda in his testimony. This is in line with Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech, and is a threat to Iran.

The one overriding fact that Powell, Tenet and Mueller left out of their testimonies is that the U.S. ruling class is absolutely determined to wage this war against Iraq, regardless of nuanced differences over how and when to do it. That is the one truth that explains all the lies, the deceptions and the demagoguery of not only the Bush administration, but the entire capitalist media establishment, the leadership of both parties and most of its think tanks.

But there is an even broader truth that explains the tempestuous split between the U.S. imperialists and their rivals in Germany, France and Belgium. This attempt to go to war is about oil profits, oil as a strategic resource, and conquering Iraq. But it is also about a lot more than Iraq.

This is about subordinating the European imperialist rivals to the will of the U.S. ruling class and the Pentagon.

U.S., NATO and Turkey

The struggle to get NATO to send arms to Turkey was deliberately precipitated by

Scare tactics are run-up to war

Continued from page 5

that the Muslim holy period of the hajj creates a domestic threat to the United States. How exactly would the five-day pilgrimage to the Saudi city of Mecca by some 2 million Muslims affect apartment buildings, hotels, bridges, tunnels and national parks in the continental United States? He didn't say.

Instead, the thought police rely on racist profiling, ratcheted up to the level of official domestic policy.

For example, a "wanted poster" picturing and describing a "manhunt" for Pakistani-born immigrant Mohammed Sher Mohammad Khan appeared in newspapers across the country with the announcements of Code Orange.

But this was buried in the sensational coverage: "The FBI clarified in a statement

that it has no specific information on Khan, but it still wants to locate and question him." (The Straits Times, Feb. 10)

Muslim prisoners being held unlawfully by the Pentagon and CIA at Guantanamo are evidently being tortured, according to a widely circulated Washington Post article.

A crying need for anti-racist solidarity

Many organizations that oppose the war in Iraq see the heightened police measures as aimed at intimidating the masses of people.

Carla Collins of San Jose summed up what many are muttering in lunchrooms and on shop floors, unemployment lines and picket lines. She is "very concerned they're trying to instill fear in the public to

justify the war." (Mercury News, Feb. 8)

Unions add that a big target of "Homeland Security" is the workers' right to organize and fight back against rampant big business. On Jan. 27 the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor passed a resolution assailing the USA Patriot Act and Homeland Security Act for serving "to undermine labor's right to organize and fight anti-immigrant attacks by expanding the government's ability to detain non-citizens, to conduct telephone and Internet surveillance, and to carry out secret searches."

The Center for Public Integrity has obtained the full-text draft of the Bush administration's "Patriot Act II," which reportedly aims to give the government broad, sweeping power to increase its domestic spy network and muscle up its repressive arms. (publicintegrity.org)

Ashcroft has already intervened in court cases across the United States—even over prosecutors' objections—to call for applying the death penalty.

Immigrants, documented and undocumented, are finding themselves in the cross-hairs at increasingly militarized U.S. border crossings.

But when all those threatened by this repressive blueprint close ranks, shoulder to shoulder, this racist and reactionary law of the land can be quashed like old Jim Crow.

And nothing will create more good will around the world than seeing people across the United States stand up to the racist warlords in Washington. □



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the Pentagon. It demanded that NATO take a position on the question prior to the Security Council showdown over the timing of the war. Instead of working out the matter bilaterally, Bush, Rumsfeld and company demanded that the French and Germans vote in favor of the U.S. war plan.

Washington made the commitment to send arms to Turkey and then handed it to the Europeans as an obligation. This was an attempt to underscore that NATO is a mere adjunct to the U.S. war machine, and that if the French or German imperialists have any idea about changing that, they will have to confront the Wall Street-Pentagon superpower.

Adding to the antagonism, the French and German governments put forward a proposal to have their spy planes fly over Iraq. In other words, they wanted to establish their military presence and the right to do their own aerial spying on Iraq, without having to be at the mercy of military and intelligence information doled out by the Pentagon from U.S. satellites and U-2 or Predator spy planes.

The Iraqis have rejected this encroachment by the so-called "friendly" imperialists.

Right now the French have 3,000 troops in the Ivory Coast and the Germans have several thousand in Afghanistan.

Goal of war goes far beyond Iraq

How can one explain the extreme aggressiveness, impatience, intolerance and determination of the Bush administration to ride roughshod over everyone in its race to war? Because it regards this war as a vital new stage in expanding and rendering unchallengeable its world domination. Iraq is a step in the restructuring of the entire Middle East under the rule of U.S. imperialism.

The present U.S. leaders plan an outright colonial military regime in Baghdad. They have already taken over Afghanistan and put bases in Georgia, Uzbekistan and elsewhere throughout southwest Asia. They are on the borders of Russia and China and surround the oil- and gas-rich Caspian Sea.

Columnist William Pfaff, writing in the International Herald Tribune on Feb. 11, gave a glimpse into the Bush administration's thinking on the current outbreak of rivalry between Germany, France and the U.S.

"The neoconservative theory that currently governs official thinking in Washington identifies Europe as the principal future rival and potential challenger of the United States. And Germany, whatever its current difficulties, is the most powerful economy in the European Union, and will remain a leader of Europe no matter what happens," writes Pfaff.

The refusal of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to curb criticism of the U.S. and to back down to Washington is a new effort by German imperialism to break the stranglehold of containment by the U.S. overlords, who have dominated Germany ever since the defeat of Hitler in World War II.

"What Schroeder has done," Pfaff continues, "is all the more dangerous to Washington because he reflects popular opinion across Europe." The Bush administration is worried that "the core European states might conduct a common policy, with France and Germany at its center. Washington sees this as a threat. ... This explains why the Bush administration is determined to crush Germany's dissent on Iraq."

This determination to "crush" the development of a rival center in Europe must be put in the context of the Bush administration's National Security Strategy document issued last Sept. 20.

The document asserts the right to preemptive military strikes, virtually declares that national sovereignty is an outmoded concept for oppressed nations, and goes on to make its fundamental assertion: "Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing or equaling the power of the United States."

The German and French imperialists have been working through the European Union to build up a rival force—monetarily, politically and ultimately militarily—to challenge the U.S. To this end they proposed a common European weapons procurement agency that could operate independently of the U.S. This has been frowned upon by Washington.

To the extent that this split among the thieves can be deepened, it is to the benefit of the Iraqis and the anti-war struggle. But just as the Iraqis are preparing to defend themselves while trying by every means to expose the U.S. war makers, so the anti-war movement must not forget for one moment that this falling out among thieves cannot deter the empire builders in Washington and the board rooms of Wall Street from pursuing their predatory goals, and that they see the war against Iraq as an essential step in that process.

The Soviet Union, despite all its mistakes in relation to the Middle East, served as a genuine deterrent to imperialist aggression. Since its collapse, the Iraqis, like all other colonial and formerly colonial peoples, have had to rely mainly on the futile tactic of maneuvering between the imperialists to avoid war.

But the rapid and determined growth of the worldwide anti-war movement, which has arisen in defiance of slander, demonization, intimidation and threats, is bringing about a new day of international solidarity capable of consistently opposing the war aims of Washington. □

Call to action by Black leaders

A call to "Maximize Black participation in the peace movement" was initiated in New York in early February by the Rev. Herbert Daughtry and others and already has hundreds of signers. Below are excerpts.

A call to action

People of African ancestry have a unique role in the growing movement to stop President Bush's war on Iraq. If war comes, it will be Black soldiers who will bear the brunt of the fighting and dying. The Black community will bear more than its share of deprivation as a result of massive funds invested in war, money that is robbed from healthcare, education, nutrition, and jobs programs. War is the epitome of everything that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. fought against his entire short life. And stopping the war on Iraq is a matter of life and death for everyone, especially people of color. In the coming days and weeks, let us work to insure maximum participation from the Black community in the peace movement and in all the important protests, especially the International Day of Protest for Peace, Feb. 15.

Take a stand for peace

We thank all the organizations and influential people in the Black community who have taken a strong public position against the war. We encourage those who have not to add their voices to the opposition.

Make Black History Month—Black Protest For Peace Month

February is Black History Month. We encourage everyone who is planning a

Black History Month program in February, whether at school, or a religious institution, or the community center, the union hall, or in the streets, to devote their program protesting the war. Black history is nothing if not a history of struggle against what Dr. King called the three evils: racism, poverty, and militarism. All the things that we recall and commemorate during Black History Month can be connected to the need to stop this war. Let us turn Black History Month into "Black Protest for Peace Month."

Support GIs who refuse to go to war

Many of us have family members in the military. Young African Americans often join the military to find the jobs and educational opportunities not available to them in civilian society. Our protest is not against Black soldiers, it is against an unjust war. Indeed, we protest in the hope that we can save the lives of U.S. and Iraqi soldiers and civilians. Let us also open our arms with moral support and practical assistance to those soldiers, women and men, who decide they cannot in good conscience participate in this unjust war.

REMEMBER MALCOLM X Support the student protest on Feb. 21

On Friday, Feb. 21, anti-war students across the country will commemorate the 38th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X (Al Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) by leaving classes to protest the war. We encourage students, faculty, and the community at large to participate in this important day of protest and help to make it truly massive and powerful. □

New York City Council proclamation

Black Protest for Peace Month



A proclamation from the New York City Council making February "Black Protest for Peace Month" was presented to the ANSWER coalition at a City Hall press conference on Feb. 7.

The proclamation was co-sponsored by council members Bill Perkins and Charles Barron. Perkins has also introduced an anti-war resolution to the City Council, but it is still in committee.

Barron and Perkins were joined at the press conference by the Rev. Herbert Daughtry of the House of the Lord church;

the ANSWER coalition's Larry Holmes; Gail Walker of IFCO/Pastors for Peace and the ANSWER Coalition; Pat Chin of Brooklyn Bedford-Stuyvesant for Peace; Monica Moorehead of Millions for Mumia; and Kevin Mohammed of the Nation of Islam.

The proclamation reads in part, "Black history is nothing if not the history of struggle against what Dr. King called the three evils: racism, poverty and militarism; these social and societal ills, which are firmly in our thoughts during Black History Month, can all be connected

to the very real need to stop this war."

Accepting the proclamation, Holmes said, "The New York City Police Department as of this date is refusing to grant a march permit for the Feb. 15 mass march and rally for peace. But we're here today to say that on that day, Black leaders are going to march, ANSWER will be there, and the rest of the peace movement will be there—permit or not."

—Story and photo by
Deirdre Griswold

Iraq war aimed also at Palestinians

By Sara Flounders

One of Secretary of State Colin Powell's justifications for a devastating U.S. attack on Iraq is that country's support for the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and a homeland.

In his 90-minute presentation to the United Nations Security Council Feb. 5 Powell said: "Iraq and terrorism go back decades. Baghdad trains Palestine Liberation Front members in small arms and explosives. Saddam uses the Arab Liberation Front to funnel money to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers in order to prolong the intifada. And it's no secret that Saddam's own intelligence service was involved in dozens of attacks or attempted assassinations in the 1990s."

Powell's effort to paint the Palestinian struggle as a foreign-funded terrorist organization is meant to politically delegitimize the long, heroic Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

This labeling of the Palestinian resistance as terrorism is no accident. Powell was presenting the U.S. justification for destroying Iraq. By including Iraq's support of the Palestinian struggle against

Israeli occupation among the charges, Powell demonstrated U.S. imperialism's broader strategic goals in the region.

Much more than seizing Iraqi oil is at stake. It is clear that U.S. imperialism's goal is to pacify and politically transform the entire region.

The Bush administration intends to use the war against Iraq as an effort to eliminate every form of resistance in the Middle East.

What is the greatest impediment to U.S. plans to conquer the entire region? It is the fact that millions of people throughout the Arab and Islamic world deeply support and identify with the Palestinian struggle. This struggle has survived the most onerous conditions, and it has inspired generations of militants to resist imperialist control. Since the 1958 overthrow of the U.S./British-backed Iraqi monarchy, Iraq has supported the Palestinian struggle.

Every Arab government gives at least nominal support to the Palestinian struggle, because the Palestinians' heroic resistance is a living issue among the masses. In order to gain compliance among Arab states for the 1991 U.S. war against Iraq, Washington promised to broker an historic compromise that would lead to at

least a nominal Palestinian state. This came to be known as the Oslo Accords.

Despite years of talks and a few minimal gains for the Palestinian movement, Israeli settlements doubled. Constant land confiscations and repression led to a new Palestinian uprising, or Intifada, that began in September 2000.

Today, Israel's colonial-style occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has strangled the Palestinian economy. Through a system of road closures and walls, the whole population is locked down into ghettos.

Now U.S. imperialism has signaled the Israeli government of war criminal Ariel Sharon that the war against Iraq is an opportunity for new, possibly far worse repression and expulsions of Palestinian people.

The real terrorists

Even with murky slides and dubious audiotapes, Powell's war talk at the UN presented little that was new or even original. The "irrefutable and undeniable" evidence that supposedly represented the latest declassified secret revelations from U.S. and British sources was actually a plagiarized cut-and-paste rehash of years-old academic articles posted on web sites.

While Powell and President George W. Bush reiterated their charges that bombed, sanctioned and surrounded Iraq has weapons of mass destruction, the Feb. 2 New York Times described the blitzkrieg of more than 3,000 bombs and missiles that would rip into Iraq in the first 48 hours of a U.S. attack.

One Pentagon official said: "There will not be a safe place in Baghdad. The sheer size of this has never been seen before, never contemplated before."

The plan for destruction is called "Shock and Awe."

One military planner explained, "You have this simultaneous effect, rather like nuclear weapons at Hiroshima, not taking days or weeks but in minutes." This description was printed three days before Powell's UN talk charging new evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Labeling the Palestinian resistance as terrorism is the same upside-down reality as Washington claiming that Iraq threatens the world with weapons of mass destruction. It is Israeli military forces—funded, equipped and politically supported by Washington—that are today inflicting a campaign of mass terror on the Palestinian people. Scores of Palestinian leaders have been victims of Israeli targeted assassinations from U.S.-supplied Apache attack helicopters. This is publicly acknowledged and accompanies a policy of mass arrests, torture and closures.

Palestinians living within the 1948 borders of Israel, although nominally Israeli citizens, are denied the right to buy land or work at many jobs. They are paid far less and are forced to live under constant scrutiny and discrimination. They are the remnants of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians driven out of historic Palestine through a campaign of systematic terror and land expropriation.

While declaring Iraq to be in material breach of UN resolutions, the United States has never proposed any action against the state of Israel for flouting literally hundreds of UN resolutions passed over the 55 years since the mass expulsion of Palestinians from their land in 1948.

But as U.S. oil and military corporations lay out their plans for a longterm occupation of Iraq and its fabulously rich oil fields, they should look again at the Israeli army of occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. Even using the most brutal tactics of mass deportations, uprooting and imprisoning tens of thousands of people, they have never been able to destroy the Palestinian determination to resist.

The strains of keeping an Israeli army of colonial occupation mobilized have created deep divisions and growing opposition within Israel—even within the military. And there is no end in sight.

In the past two years of the new Intifada, the Palestinian struggle for justice and self-determination has gained wider support, including among many Jews. Millions of young people in the United States, Europe and Latin America now identify deeply with the resistance.

Bush faces massive world opposition on the eve of war. U.S. occupation in Iraq will prove even more costly and divisive. The thin and wavering support will crumble as millions of people come to understand the enormous cost of U.S. imperialism's reactionary plan for the entire region.

The broad world movement that has mobilized to oppose the criminal U.S. war against Iraq will be strengthened by linking up and defending the Palestinian people's decades-long struggle for justice and self-determination. □

Set the record straight

4 anti-war coalitions respond to Lerner

By Leslie Feinberg

Virtually on the eve of the massive Feb. 15-16 demonstrations against Washington's plans to unleash war against the Iraqi people, a political attack was launched on one of the leading forces in the anti-war movement.

The Nation magazine features an article titled "The Banning of Rabbi Lerner" in its current issue. The blurb explaining the article—which is the lead item on The Nation web site—reads: "How revolutionary socialists were able to censor the anti-war message of a prominent progressive." (Newsstand date: Feb. 24)

The article is penned by David Corn, Washington editor for The Nation magazine and a paid consultant with the Fox News Channel—media mogul Rupert Murdoch's virulently pro-Pentagon cable station.

Corn is already familiar to many in the movement for his red-baiting broadside following the massive Oct. 26 anti-war rally

in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. ("Behind the Placards: The Odd and Troubling Origins of Today's Anti-War Movement," L.A. Weekly, Nov. 1-7, 2002) That McCarthyite article attacked the International ANSWER coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism), which organized the protests, as a front for Workers World Party. The article drew many rebuttals from activists in the coalition and the broader anti-war movement.

In his most recent article, Corn slams ANSWER because Lerner is not on the speakers' list for the Feb. 16 San Francisco rally, which is being organized by a united front of four anti-war coalitions: Not in Our Name project, United for Peace and Justice, ANSWER and Bay Area United Against War.

All four coalitions issued the following joint public rebuttal on Feb. 11, and ask all progressives to distribute it far and wide:

"We would like to clarify the misunderstanding regarding Rabbi Michael Lerner's perception that he was 'banned' from speaking at the peace rally. His charges are untrue, and we wish to set the record straight.

"As the Bush administration continues its relentless drive toward war, the mass mobilizations in cities around the world on the weekend of Feb. 15-16 have taken on great significance. Millions of people are expected to demonstrate in cities around the world in what may be the last opportunity to stop a new war on Iraq before it starts.

"In the San Francisco Bay Area, four coalitions—each comprised of many organizations and individuals—have come together to sponsor a broad and united anti-war march and rally on Sunday, Feb. 16. The four coalitions—Bay Area United Against War, Not In Our Name project, United for Peace & Justice, and the International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) coalition—have been working together successfully for the last several weeks to maximize the turnout on Feb. 16.

"One of the first agreements that was

made between the groups organizing the Feb. 16 anti-war protest was that none of the coalitions would propose rally speakers who had publicly attacked or worked to discredit one of the coalition groups. When members of the Tikkun Community, who have actively participated in the organizing meetings for Feb. 16, suggested to Bay Area United for Peace and Justice that it propose Michael Lerner as a speaker, it was explained by members of UFPJ that since he had publicly attacked ANSWER in both the New York Times and Tikkun community email newsletters, his inclusion in the program would violate the agreement among the Feb. 16 organizing groups.

"It was this issue—Michael Lerner's public attacks against one of the anti-war coalitions—that resulted in his not being formally proposed as a speaker on Feb. 16; his views on Israel and Palestine had nothing to do with it. Within the anti-war movement, there is a wide spectrum of diverse and opposing views regarding Israel and Palestine, and those views will be heard on Feb. 16.

"On that day, two rabbis, David Cooper and Pam Frydman-Baugh, both of whose views are similar to those of Michael Lerner, will be speaking. To reiterate, the fact that Michael Lerner was not invited to speak on Feb. 16 was not the consequence of a veto by the ANSWER coalition. None of the coalitions have veto power over the Feb. 16 program

"We strongly abhor all forms of racism and bigotry, including anti-Semitism. At the same time, we don't believe that criticism of Israeli government policies should be labeled as anti-Semitism any more than criticism of U.S. government policy should be labeled as anti-American.

"On the eve of a terrible war, we call upon everyone to join together in making Feb. 15-16 a massive and powerful statement for peace and justice. We are heartened by the broad range of participation that is developing for Feb. 16, including within the Jewish community, and encourage one and all to join with us in our efforts to stop the war on Iraq." □

A Jewish Voice for Peace

This message clarifying what happened in San Francisco was sent to many public lists on the Internet by Liat Weingart of A Jewish Voice for Peace:

Rabbi Lerner was not banned at all from speaking. A Jewish Voice for Peace is having a speaker at the same demonstration, and two other rabbis from San Francisco are also speaking. Marisa Handler, a representative from Tikkun, was present at the meeting of United for Peace where it was decided that Michael would not speak. She was asked three times if she was comfortable having someone else speak, and she said that she was, again and again. A week passed after this meeting, without incident, and then Michael decided to send a press release, stating that he was banned because of his views. This is patently false and has been tremendously destructive. We have been overloaded with trying to right this wrong, and it has distracted us from our work of organizing for this Sunday's demonstration. I urge you to please set the record straight.

—Liat Weingart

10 million worldwide

Broadest protests yet expected on Feb. 15-16

By John Catalinotto

Feb. 15 is expected to be the most widespread and massive day of anti-war protests in world history.

Mass demonstrations totaling up to 10 million participants will clog hundreds of cities, including the capitals of at least 60 countries.

They will reach from Cape Town to Cairo in Africa, include Ramallah and Tel Aviv in historic Palestine. They will close capitals in the European NATO countries, spur resistance in Eastern Europe, reach deep into Asia, Latin America, Oceania and the Pacific islands, and spread across all of North America.

Should the Bush-Rumsfeld-Cheney gang continue their arrogant plans to conquer Iraq, the U.S. leaders may turn a sea of human dissent into a tidal wave of resistance.

Even as this new world movement was catching its collective breath the week before the international day of protest, the struggle against the gathering U.S. war on Iraq continued.

In Jakarta, Indonesia, on Feb. 9, some 100,000 people marched to the U.S. Embassy and chanted, "Stop the war, save Iraq." In nearby Malaysia, an anti-war petition campaign collected 1 million signatures.



Madrid, Spain, Feb. 5

On Feb. 8 in Munich, Germany, where U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld tried to whip the other NATO powers into line behind U.S. plans for aggression, some 30,000 people protested. Keynote protest speaker Tobias Pflueger was arrested for calling on members of the German armed forces to desert rather than obey unconstitutional orders to fly AWACS planes or otherwise back U.S. aggression against Iraq. He was released after three hours.

Direct action starts

Demonstrators moved toward direct action. At the port of Antwerp in Belgium some 250 people with the Stop USA coalition dodged police lines to confront U.S. elite military troops and equipment ready for shipment to the Gulf. "Hell no, don't go, don't kill for Texaco" and "Yankee go home" could be heard on the docks.

In the nearby Netherlands, a woman wielding a sledgehammer smashed a NATO satellite dish near the airbase at Volkel.

On the other side of the world, in New Zealand, anti-war protesters carrying ladders and mock metal detectors tried to climb a six-foot-high gate to storm the U.S. Embassy in Wellington. They said they were checking for "weapons of mass destruction owned and operated by the United States."

In West Australia, some 75,000 workers in nine key labor unions have promised a campaign of industrial actions, including strikes and rallies, at the moment of a military strike on Iraq.

Greece's powerful progressive movement, which showed its strength opposing NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia in 1999, is poised for rallies in dozens of cities on Feb. 15. The All Workers Militant Front has called for

Feb. 9 demonstration in Jakarta, Indonesia, opposes U.S. war against Iraq.

a four-hour work stoppage on Feb. 14 to mobilize for the next day's action.

Eight NATO minesweepers are to arrive in the Greek port of Patra from Feb. 28 to March 8. The local committee of the Greek peace movement has called for a general uprising in the region, so that Patra doesn't become a base of operation for NATO.

The call for the Feb. 15 actions originated in Europe and was then endorsed by an international conference in Cairo. Some of the strongest protests will take place in the countries whose governments have expressed their support for and subservience to U.S. imperialism.

Up to a million people will march in London and more in Glasgow, Scotland. Rome is expecting an equally big crowd. Protests are planned in about 18 cities in the Spanish state.

Rebellion in the 'new Europe'

In the Eastern European countries where U.S. puppets and clients now rule, protesters are also raising their heads and being counted. Actions on Feb. 15 are set in Warsaw, Poland, and Prague, Czech Republic. In Budapest, Hungary, the police are trying to deny protesters the right to demonstrate.

On Feb. 6 the Slovakian regime in Bratislava tried to allocate funds to send 75 soldiers to fight alongside the Pentagon against Iraq. Communist Party deputies blocked voting in parliament for most of the day, and communists joined a picket by striking railroad workers to demand that the funds be used for the railroads



instead.

Protests led by communists and other left forces are also expected also in Kiev, Ukraine, and Moscow, Russia.

Mass actions are also set throughout South America and the Caribbean, from Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo to Kingston, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. In Kingston, the protesters are warming up by picketing a Jamaica-U.S. soccer match at the National Stadium.

In Asia, protests are expected in at least 35 cities, including Tokyo and Seoul, South Korea, where many U.S. soldiers are based.

In what could be an important political development for China, a group of well-known Chinese scholars, writers and artists has initiated a petition against the war that is being widely circulated on the Internet. It firmly opposes "the adoption of any resolution by the UN Security Council which may give rise to the appearance of UN endorsement of this war of aggression" and calls on Chinese everywhere "to stand united against this war in the best anti-imperialist and anti-hegemonist tradition of the Chinese people, and join the rising tide of the global anti-war movement." □

South Africa takes clear anti-war stand

By Andre Powell and Johnnie Stevens

Statements strongly critical of the United States by the former and current presidents of South Africa continue to reverberate as the mobilizations for Feb. 15 international protests against war with Iraq gain momentum.

Former president and political prisoner Nelson Mandela's said in a speech on Jan. 30: "All Bush wants is Iraqi oil. Why are they not seeking to confiscate weapons of mass destruction from their ally Israel?"

"If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the U.S. They don't care for human beings. Fifty-seven years ago, when Japan was retreating on all fronts, they decided to drop the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and killed a lot of innocent people. Some are still suffering the effects of those bombs."

He continued: "Those bombs were not aimed against the Japanese, they were aimed against the Soviet Union to say, 'If

you dare oppose what we do, this is what is going to happen to you.' Who are they now to pretend that they are the policemen of the world? To want to decide for the people of Iraq what they should do with their government and their leadership?"

"I am happy that the people of the world—especially those of the United States—are standing up and opposing their own president."

These words from such a revered figure as Mandela have drawn the ire of the U.S. government and its corporate-controlled media, some of which tried to take credit for his freedom by falsely stating that the United States supported anti-apartheid sanctions. Just to set the record straight, the United States held out as long as it could on sanctions against the racist apartheid state. It finally honored them only because of the peoples' struggle, the same kind that now fights to stop Bush's oil war.

South African President Thabo Mbeki

has also called on his country and the international community to put the brakes on a U.S.-led military invasion of Baghdad. He said, "War would be devastating, not just to Iraq but also to the whole of the Middle East and to other countries." Both Mandela and Mbeki, however, have supported United Nations inspections in Iraq.

Mbeki is chair of the newly formed African Union that represents the economic interests of 32 countries. On Feb. 4 it condemned the U.S. and British war threats against Iraq at a meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The African National Congress is organizing South Africans to participate in a Stop the War coalition. Protest marches are scheduled for Cape Town and Johannesburg on Feb. 15. On Feb. 19, protesters in the capital of Pretoria will march to the U.S. Embassy.

The South African Communist Party has signed the Cairo Declaration against the war on Iraq and in solidarity with

Palestine, which was adopted on Dec. 18 at an international meeting chaired by the first president of Algeria, Ahmed Ben Bella.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions says: "Global and civil society has rightly concluded that what drives Bush in Iraq are the oil interests of the large U.S. corporations that bankroll his administration. Bush's inability to provide credible leadership to the American people, particularly his hopeless performance on the economy, is yet another reason for a fresh military campaign." The trade union confederation concluded: "COSATU, our government, the people of South Africa, and all progressive people across the world stand united in declaring: No blood for oil."

Powell and Stevens were members of an International Action Center delegation at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa □

Simple math

A capitalist economic crisis means lean times for those pounding the pavement hunting for work, or who have just given up trying to find a job, or even those still hanging onto a 9 to 5. But it's hunger and want amidst plenty.

The wealth of goods and services that workers in this country produce through their labor now exceeds \$10 trillion every year. \$10 TRILLION. The sum is boggling. Do the math: that's more than \$30,000 a year for every single person, from infants to centenarians, in the United States. At least \$125,000 for a family of four. Should even one person be in need when there is such abundance?

Some would hasten to argue that the state machine needs a big chunk of that for sanitation, Homeland Security and military preparedness and other "social services." It certainly does take more and more of the social surplus that used to provide services like libraries and subsidized school lunches and siphons it into burgeoning police agencies and the war machine. But even taking that into consideration, it is obvious that there is no excuse for poverty in the U.S.

Of course, merely re-dividing the wealth among individuals is no long-term solution. Anyone who has ever

played Monopoly knows that when the property on the board has been bought up, the banker is flush and the loser is busted.

Private ownership of all the collectively built tools and generators of production continues to channel the lion's share of the wealth to those who don't do the work.

How relatively easy it would be to meet the needs and desires of all in a well-planned economy that was free of capitalist dictates. There's way more than enough of everything already to make life comfortable for all. Social ownership and control of the wealth would mean that planning for real human needs—including a clean environment and the development of culture—could begin in earnest.

How quickly real reparations could be extended to all who have suffered most from exploitation and tyranny.

Just because it's easy, however, doesn't mean it's simple. The opulent owning class stands in the way, shielded by the cops and court system, prisons and Pentagon, all a barrier to profound economic and social transformation.

But the key is consciousness, the glue is solidarity and the solution is revolutionary mass action. In the words of poet Percy Bysshe Shelley: Ye are many—they are few! □

Korea wants peace

In this topsy-turvy world, soldiers are peacekeepers and invaders are liberators—if they come from the few rich capitalist countries that control most of the globe's wealth. North Korea is not capitalist or rich. It is half of a country that has been the target of invasion and exploitation for a century, first by imperialist Japan and then by the imperialist United States. So it gets called a "rogue state" and part of an "axis of evil" while the really evil rogues try to starve and threaten the Koreans into submission.

Korea hasn't sent an army to conquer Iraq or any other country. It doesn't have bases around the world, or nuclear submarines prowling the seas, or U-2 planes taking spy photos all over. It doesn't even have one nuclear bomb. That's why it has to have a large standing army—because it is constantly threatened by the power that has all these things, and has kept 37,000 troops on its border for half a century.

Now, because it has said that it won't abide by an agreement that the U.S. has already broken—the 1994 Agreed Framework—it risks having UN sanctions imposed on it. Imagine that! Because this small country is refurbishing a civilian

nuclear reactor to produce electricity that could also provide a small amount of plutonium, the great nuclear weapons agency IAEA has declared it "noncompliant" with nonproliferation agreements.

Hello? Doesn't the IAEA read the newspapers? Doesn't it know that Washington is considering using nuclear weapons against Iraq—so-called "bunker busters"? That the Pentagon has decided it has the right to strike first anywhere—mainly because nobody else has the thousands of nuclear weapons it has? That it has been threatening the North Koreans with nuclear annihilation for years? As the political humor magazine *The Onion* has suggested, those looking for weapons of mass destruction should be trying to get into North Dakota, not North Korea. They'll find thousands stashed away there.

The South Korean people don't want the U.S. there, and have been showing it in mass demonstrations. They're not afraid of North Korea. They know that the real threat to peace on the Korean peninsula is in Washington. It's never too late for the anti-war movement here to demand: U.S. troops out of Korea! Let the Korean people determine their own future. □

Resist war propaganda ploy

Health workers opt out of vaccine program

By Sharon Eolis, R.N./N.P.

The Bush administration's smallpox vaccination campaign is part of the drive to mobilize the country for war against Iraq. This plan is facing resistance from hundreds of hospitals and thousands of nurses and doctors who are refusing to participate.

Administration officials had assumed that 500,000 health care workers would immediately step up and volunteer to take this vaccine. According to the Centers for Disease Control, only 687 people in 16 states volunteered in the first two weeks of the program.

A *New York Times*' national survey of state health officials, published Feb. 7, found that more than 350 hospitals were refusing to participate and many others had not made a commitment. Nurses' unions in California, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Texas have advised their members not to volunteer.

Beverly Hiestand, CWA Local 1168 chief steward for Nurses United, in Buffalo, N.Y., said that a Feb. 7 memo put out by the union's national leadership reported that there continues to be a lot of concern about the program among health care workers.

In a letter to President George W. Bush on Jan. 23, CWA President Morton Bahr, representing 100,000 health care and public safety workers, called for a delay in the federal vaccination campaign.

"Critical concerns brought to light by experts in the American medical community, health care workers and medical scholars regarding the National Smallpox Vaccination Program raise serious doubts about the safety and effectiveness of the civilian inoculation plan," said the letter. "In that regard, I urge you to delay the program until all concerns have been adequately addressed."

The New York State Nurses' Association has demanded that the hospitals negotiate terms for compensating nurses who may get sick and lose work hours as a result of the vaccination.

The Bush administration has decreed that the drug companies making the vaccine are exempt from having to pay compensation to

victims and families who may suffer side effects and even death.

The vaccine has more risks than many others because it is made from a live cowpox virus. The period of contagion is long—up to three weeks. In this period of exposure, healthcare workers who are vaccinated are endangering themselves, their patients, families and co-workers.

The last time smallpox vaccine was used, in the 1960s, there were 52 life-threatening complications and two deaths per million people. (*New York Times*, Feb. 7)

Today more than 50 million people are at higher risk because they have immune suppression from cancers, HIV/AIDS, lupus, organ transplants and skin disorders. They should not get the vaccine or be exposed to those who have.

Dr. Nadia Marsh, organizer of Doctors and Nurses Against the War, said, "A campaign to vaccinate millions of people in the U.S. is unnecessary. It's a cynical effort by the Bush administration to create fear and paranoia in the population."

She continued, "From a public health perspective it neither makes sense nor addresses the real medical problems faced by a growing number of working-class people in this country. Instead of spending millions of dollars on a disease that does not currently exist, a large segment of the health care community is demanding that the funds being used for this vaccine campaign instead provide health insurance for the 41.5 million people who are uninsured."

Hillel Cohen, a doctor of public health who is an organizer of opposition to the Bush vaccination plan, explained, "The smallpox vaccination scheme imposes a military and police agenda on public health. The bio-terrorism preparedness program as a whole provides a cover for military research and development of biological and chemical warfare agents and undermines the credibility of legitimate public health efforts."

More information on opposition to the smallpox vaccination campaign—including a pledge by health care workers not to get or give the vaccine—can be found at www.healthworkers.org. □



"If we can put enough of a scare into 'em, we can take everything they have, and send their kids off to war"

Don't forget to subscribe

U.S. relies on pawns in new NATO

By Heather Cottin

If the United Nations won't lend its legitimacy to Washington's plan to commit genocide against the people of Iraq, the Bush administration will try NATO. In 1999 NATO gave the cover for the U.S. bombing assault on Yugoslavia.

For now, the French, German and Belgian governments see no gain from backing U.S. and British adventures. Washington is looking to the new U.S. client states in Eastern Europe, seeking these countries' youth for cannon fodder and their treasuries to pay for weapons bought from U.S. military industries.

NATO expanded from 16 to 19 countries in 1999 with the entrance of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Other former socialist countries, now capitalist semi-colonies, are lining up to join. The U.S.-dominated military alliance stretches now from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and has begun to reach from Kosovo to Kazakhstan.

To overcome the French, German and Belgian regimes' reluctance to follow the U.S. lead in invading Iraq, Washington has reached out to others whom War Secretary Donald Rumsfeld calls the "new Europe."

The Portuguese government said it would allow the United States to use a military base in the Azores archipelago.

Italy's media magnate and right-wing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said, "We are standing behind the United States." He granted the Pentagon use of its airfields, troops and weapons in Italy for the war.

Spain's Premier Jose Maria Aznar has also jumped in the U.S. camp with both feet.

The regimes in Norway, Denmark and The Netherlands say they are ready to back the U.S.-led war.

Along with the above rightist governments, Washington looks to the new pro-capitalist regimes in Eastern Europe to strengthen U.S. hegemony over its imperialist rivals within NATO. And one after another these Eastern governments have beefed up their military spending, squeezing their populations to buy munitions and adding to their already heavy debt.

As each former socialist nation joins NATO, it must increase military spending. NATO Secretary General Lord George Robertson ordered the new NATO nations last year to increase their military spending to 2 percent of their shrinking gross domestic product.

Poland just ordered \$3.8 billion worth of Lockheed-Martin fighter planes, although its economy suffers 18 percent unemployment. Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski pledged full support for the U.S. assault on Iraq, even without a UN mandate. (Financial Times,

Feb. 3) Lithuania is on board, too.

Romania will do what America says in the event of a U.S.-led war on Iraq, pledged Romanian President Ion Iliescu.

Every new or aspiring NATO member, and most of the old ones, have endorsed war against Iraq. Czech President Vaclav Havel is allowing hundreds of U.S. troops to be stationed in the Czech Republic and is making Czech airspace available. Hungary's government is allowing the Pentagon to train thousands of Iraqi exiles at a military base in the south of the country. Slovakia has pledged 75 troops for war in the Gulf.

The governments of Slovenia and Georgia say they want to join in the attack on Iraq, while the Bulgarian government is preparing an air base on the Black Sea coast for U.S. use.

The leaders of these new client states, anxious to shore up their unstable regimes, are eager to do U.S. bidding, including giving support for U.S. war plans

A demonstrator at a NATO airbase in Geilenkirchen, Germany on Jan. 25



But the people of Europe are another story. Recent polls show the majority of people in the Czech Republic and Hungary having deep opposition to taking part in a war, as do 57 percent of Slovaks.

And the call for Feb. 15 anti-war protests has aroused responses in Budapest, Hungary; Warsaw, Wroclaw and Poznan, Poland; Prague, Czech Republic; Sofia, Bulgaria; Tallinn, Estonia; and Vilnius, Lithuania. □

Brussels protest backs Filipino leftist

In Brussels, Belgium on Feb. 5, demonstrators at the European Council headquarters protested the European Union's placing of Philippine revolutionary Prof. Jose Maria Sison on a list of so-called terrorists. They presented petitions with 27,600 signatures to that effect.

The protest was part of a Day of Action organized by the Initiative Committee to Defend Filipino Progressives in Europe. It included a forum that was well attended by members of the Filipino communities

in Belgium and the Netherlands as well as labor unionists, members of the Workers' Party of Belgium and others.

Sison has been the chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines during 10 years of peace talks with the Filipino government. However, following Washington's direction, in 2002 the EU listed the NDFP and other organizations involved in national liberation struggles as "terrorists."



—John Catalinotto Jose Maria Sison

France and U.S. maneuver over Ivory Coast

By G. Dunkel

While the Ivory Coast itself grows poorer, and renewed violence threatens to burst out into a civil war, the imperialist governments of France and the United States are both colluding and colliding over this African nation.

The current crisis began in September 2002, after a failed coup attempt led to fighting and rebel movements took over the northern and western parts of the country. These movements recently united and now form a national opposition to the government of President Laurent Gbagbo.

In September French forces, from their bases in Africa, and U.S. forces, from a transit base in neighboring Ghana, arrived quickly. The pretext was moving French

and U.S. citizens to safer quarters.

Le Pays, a newspaper published in Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast's northern neighbor, pointed out that the dispatch of these troops "confirms the neocolonial designs of France." It's impossible to even imagine, wrote Le Pays, that "the Ivory Coast might send its troops to France to save its citizens who are being mistreated there." This goes double, of course, for the United States.

The French troops then turned their attention to propping up Gbagbo's regime and stopping the rebellion's advance. But the rebellion and the opposition to both Gbagbo and the French had deeper roots and more support than the French had counted on.

In areas they controlled, the opposition mounted a number of anti-imperialist demonstrations against the French. Opposition forces also had some fairly sharp military skirmishes with French troops, blocking their advance.

So France decided it would hold a "national conference of the Ivoirean people"—with a French politician as chair—in Marcoussis, a rugby arena near Paris, Jan. 23-26.

The agreement that came out of Marcoussis proposed a unity government in which the main rebel group would supply the head of the national police and the army, while Gbagbo would remain president.

After the agreement was signed, the French got United Nations Security Council Resolution 1464 passed, unanimously endorsing Marcoussis. This resolution also authorized the presence of French troops, with a contingent from the Economic Community of West African States under French command. Both the United States and Britain voted for this resolution.

Once the details became known in the Ivory Coast, Gbagbo's faction organized huge demonstrations outside the French Embassy and the French barracks in Abidjan. Protesters waved Ivoirean and U.S. flags and carried signs in English saying, "USA: we need your help."

After the demonstrations, the French brought in reinforcements and the United States also sent in a small contingent of soldiers. (Ottawa Citizen, Feb. 6)

The situation in the Ivory Coast is still very fluid.

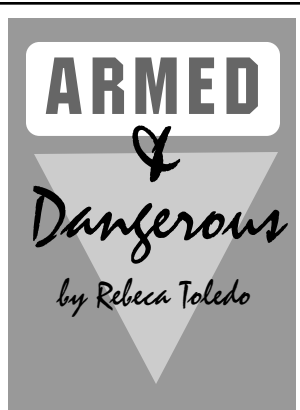
The Ivory Coast, with a diversified economy and the world's largest cocoa production industry, has been the most profitable of the French neocolonies in West Africa. However, U.S. imperialism is taking advantage of popular anger at the former colonial power to try and take a major step in supplanting France in Africa. It is doing so at a time when Washington has also been leaning heavily on France, demanding support for Bush's war on Iraq, so far without success. □

Read why the Pentagon declared war on lesbians and gays

Author Rebeca Toledo lays bare the real meaning of the fight for gay rights in the armed forces—and shows why it's a key battle in the ongoing struggle to end oppression, exploitation and war itself.

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Arrastrando el mundo a la Guerra

Estados Unidos alinea a gobiernos pero no al pueblo

Por Fred Goldstein

4 de febrero – Gobierno tras gobierno ha declarado que si el Secretario de Estado Colin Powell hace un caso convincente a favor de la guerra contra Irak en su presentación del 5 de febrero en el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU, entonces pueden suscribirse a la guerra. Pero si no lo hace, entonces se va a necesitar más tiempo para preparar un caso convincente a favor de la guerra. Traducción: imperialismo estadounidense está intentando arrastrarnos a una guerra de agresión no provocada contra una nación pequeña que sin embargo tiene reservas petroleras codiciadas por los monopolios petroleros. Pero si levantamos la mano sin haber sido dado “evidencias” suficientes con las cuales justificarnos, nuestro propio pueblo pueda rebelar y botarnos.

En el caso de los regímenes francés y ruso, su problema adicional es que básicamente se los está diciendo a ellos que tienen que ayudar al Pentágono hacer la guerra que no solo es en contra del pueblo iraquí, sino es en contra de ellos mismos. Ellos han firmado acuerdos con el gobierno actual de Irak por concesiones petroleras enormes. Si sucede que está exitosa una invasión de fuerzas estadounidenses y británicas todo va a caer en las manos de un gobierno militar estadounidense y cualquier régimen que sea instaurado.

París y Moscú están en la posición de tener que escoger entre perder todo o aceptar los términos de Washington. Además, la vasta mayoría de sus poblaciones están opuestas a la guerra.

Es importante comprobar la diplomacia de intimidación de la administración de Bush y la vacilación angustiada de parte de los gobiernos más débiles sujetos a los sobornos y amenazas de Washington. Entre menos éxito encuentre el gobierno de los EE.UU. en su campaña de promover la guerra, lo más aislado vuelve, y lo mejor para el mundo.

Pero la diplomacia obstruccionista de regímenes que tienen miedo de la guerra jamás contrarrestará a los cientos de aviones de guerra, los miles de tanques y la enorme armada naval siendo desplegado en anticipación de una guerra total. La clase dominante en los Estados Unidos o pasivamente o activamente ha aprobado a la guerra, no importa si algunos preferían ver a la cobertura de la ONU y otros les gustaría ver más evidencia incriminadora de los inspectores.

Confiar en Powell fue una ilusión

Muchos de los elementos más cautelosos entre la clase dominante de este país, así como sectores de las clases dominantes de Europa y todos los regímenes del Medio Oriente, originalmente esperaban que las fuerzas detrás de Colin Powell iban a desviar el afán hacia la guerra en inspecciones de larga duración y negociaciones diplomáticas, evitando últimamente la invasión desastrosa y destabilizadora que ahora se está acercando. Esto se reveló como una ilusión inútil.

La verdad es que la única cosa que separa la paz y la guerra es el movimiento popular mundial todavía creciendo, y particularmente el movimiento que está creciendo con rapidez en los Estados Unidos. La farsa de diplomacia hipócrita de la ONU con voces que suenan suaves y razonables hablando de inspectores pacíficos buscando armas tiene que ser descartada por completo en los cálculos del movimiento. Solamente las movilizaciones y la resistencia van a parar a la guerra.

Si el Consejo de Seguridad realmente estuviera buscando evidencias contundentes de armas de destrucción masiva abrirían todos los arsenales del Pentágono, con las 7.000 ojivas atómicas y muchas armas de guerra química y biológica.

Si el Consejo de Seguridad fuera opuesto a la agresión y los crímenes contra la humanidad, investigaría de inmediato los reportes que Washington está planeando dejar caer una tormenta de 3.000 o más misiles contra el pueblo iraquí durante las primeras 48 horas de la guerra en “un esfuerzo con la intención de dar un golpe duro y aislar a las fuerzas militares iraquíes y rápidamente preparar el terreno para un ataque de tierra para derrocar a un gobierno en estado de conmoción.” (New York Times, 2 de febrero)

Esta táctica conforma parte de la estrategia de “Dominación Rápida” desarrollado por Harlan Ullman y James Wade en 1996 por la Universidad de Defensa Nacional del Pentágono. Su libro fue intitolado “Susto y Temor”. Estos planes son de la misma corte del bombardeo de Guernica en España por Hitler en 1937, cuando el Luftwaffe dejó caer 100,000 libras de bombas durante la noche sobre un pueblo pequeño, matando la tercera parte de la población.

También es en el espíritu del bombardeo atómico de Hiroshima y Nagasaki. En ambos casos, Guernica y el bombardeo atómico de Japón tuvieron la intención de aterrorizar a los adversarios con una demostración de no hacer caso de vidas civiles en un grado monstruoso.

Amenaza de EE.UU. de utilizar armas nucleares

Si el Consejo de Seguridad quiere frenar la utilización de armas nucleares, debe publicar una orden de “cesar y desistir” al Pentágono después de leer lo que reveló el Los Angeles Times del 3 de febrero sobre un programa de los EE.UU. de \$1,26 mil millones para desarrollar armas nucleares tácticas llamadas “reventadores”.

“El Pentágono ha lanzado un programa para desarrollar computadoras que ayudarían cuando armas nucleares pueda ser utilizadas para destruir a refugios profundamente subterráneos”, reportó el periódico. Mientras que atemoriza a la población acá con referencias al programa no existente de Irak, los Estados Unidos está planeando a todo vapor para utilizar su arsenal nuclear, si ellos lo consideran necesario, en contra de los refugios subterráneos de Irak.

El Consejo de Seguridad y los regímenes



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clientes alrededor del mundo siempre se refiere como la “comunidad internacional”. Washington debe contenerse de invadir, se dice, siempre que no aprueban una segunda resolución a favor de la guerra. Pero esta supuesta “comunidad internacional” está permitiendo a Powell, ahora el vendedor principal de una guerra de agresión sin disfraz, a venir y monopolizar 90 minutos del tiempo del Consejo ante una audiencia mundial para presentar una masa de “evidencia” inventada.

Si este grupo fuera realmente representando la comunidad internacional hubiera invitado a Nelson Mandela, uno de los luchadores por la liberación legendarios del siglo XX. El de verdad representó el conocimiento y los sentimientos del pueblo del mundo entero la semana pasada cuando hizo una acusación a Washington, hiriente en lo más vivo refiriéndose a sus “atrocidades alrededor del mundo” y su impulso de “empujar al mundo en un holocausto”.

La idea que el Consejo de Seguridad representa a “la comunidad internacional” es tan fraudulenta como la aseveración hecha por la administración Bush de que tiene el apoyo de “Europa” porque obtuvo el firmado de siete llamados líderes en una declaración de la unidad con los EE.UU. Esta declaración de “unidad”, publicado en la prensa capitalista por todas partes en Europa y los EE.UU., fue familiar al Secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld, a lo mejor, cuando él denunció a Francia y Alemania como la “Europa antigua” y alabó a la “Europa nueva” en el este.

Entre los firmantes fue, por supuesto, Tony Blair, el socio menor en crimen de Washington que representa los sueños de recuperar un fragmento del antiguo imperio británico por agarrar a los faldones de los nuevo emperadores de Wall Street y Washington.

Entonces fueron los gobiernos de España y Portugal, de una grandeza colonial desvanecida, imperialistas dependientes y bancarrotas, los más débiles de Europa y más sujetos a la manipulación. También firmó Silvio Berlusconi, despreciado multi millonario derechista y presidente de Italia, otro poder imperialista

desvanecido. Firmó también Dinamarca, cuyos aviones actualmente están bombardeando actualmente a Afganistán.

Y finalmente fueron los gobiernos de Polonia, la República Checa, Eslovaquia y Hungría, la “Europa nueva”, o sea las nuevas colonias del imperialismo estadounidense, alemán y francés, las que fueron ingeridas después del colapso de la Unión Soviética. Al tomar cargo de estos clientes, Washington mostró a los franceses y alemanes que aún los países que están supuestamente dentro de sus esferas de influencia están bajo la dominación política de los Estados Unidos. Esa fue el estallido de Rumsfeld sobre la “nueva Europa”.

Los gobiernos no representan a los pueblos

Pero en realidad, aún si Bush hubiera podido hacer que los gobiernos de Europa firmaran, ellos solo representan a la Europa de una minoría de empresarios y banqueros. La real Europa, la Europa del pueblo, ha estado en las calles protestando en contra de la guerra y se espera que lo haga de nuevo el 15 de Febrero en una masiva muestra de oposición a la guerra.

Los reales representantes de la comunidad internacional, la comunidad de trabajadores y pueblos oprimidos y progresistas de todo el mundo, en todas las formas de la vida, es el poderoso y creciente movimiento anti guerra mundial.

El Consejo de Seguridad es dominado por los imperialistas y capitalistas que representan a los explotadores y opresores del mundo. El dejar la cuestión de paz o guerra en contra de una nación oprimida en manos del Consejo de Seguridad o a cualquier otro grupo de imperialistas y sus subordinados es dejarle la decisión a los creadores de guerras.

Solo las masas populares—aquellos quienes tendrán que matar y morir, quienes serán forzados a pagar por la guerra y aquellos a quienes se les negará sus derechos por los intereses de la guerra—pueden consistentemente oponerse a la guerra y tener la posición estratégica social de montar el tipo de resistencia necesaria para parar a los creadores de las guerras. □