

Not seen on prime time

Mass anger rises in Iraq

Pentagon brings in its puppets, guns down protesters

By Deirdre Griswold

April 16—The “post-war” colonial occupation of Iraq has barely begun and already U.S. troops have fired into crowds in the streets in Mosul, killing up to 19 people. In the north and the south, evoking the courage of Palestinians who defy Israeli tanks with nothing but stones, huge crowds demanding “U.S. get out!” have faced off with Marines carrying automatic weapons, while U.S. fighter jets screamed overhead.

A long-planned meeting of “future leaders” of Iraq, hand-picked and flown in by the Pentagon, had to be held on an air-base, away from the thousands demonstrating against them in Nasariya, the closest city.

Meanwhile, the horrors of the war continue to take their toll on the people. Residents of Baghdad and other major cities still lack water and electricity. Fires still burn in buildings looted under the eyes of the occupying forces. Food is scarce in many areas. The few hospitals left standing are overflowing with wounded. And new injuries are sustained every day in clashes with U.S. forces and from exploding cluster bombs scattered around the streets.

And just to be sure that as few people as possible around the world learn what is really happening in Iraq, U.S. forces have again attacked a hotel full of journalists in Baghdad.

Troops fire on crowds in Mosul

The firing on crowds in Mosul, a multi-ethnic northern city of over 600,000, completely exposes Washington’s claims that it wants to turn over political control of the country to the Iraqi people. The Marines fired on a crowd protesting the imposition of a new governor by the U.S.

On April 11, right after the Pentagon captured the city, a dozen special forces tried to take over the governor’s office, but were driven back. Four days later, according to the Pentagon, a hostile crowd of thousands gathered as about 130 Marines tried again to occupy the building. The Pentagon claimed its troops were fired on before they shot into the crowd. But Iraqis disagreed.

“Wounded Iraqis in the city’s general hospital on Tuesday gave a different version of events,” reported the April 16 New York Times. “They said an Iraqi opposition leader, Mishaan al-Jabouri, started speaking to the crowd and hailing the arrival of American forces in Mosul.

“It was unclear how Mr. Jabouri, who has been in exile in Syria and whose record includes charges of corruption and theft, got into Mosul. On Monday he told French journalists that he had been appointed the new governor of Mosul, a claim denied by American officials. But his message angered the crowd, Iraqis said. ‘They began throwing stones,’ said Fateh Tata Abed, a 32-year-old man shot in the chest and upper arm. ‘And the American forces started shooting at us.’

“Sadullah Ghanal, 39, who was also shot, gave roughly the same version of events. ‘After we threw stones at Mishaan Jabouri,’ he said, ‘the Americans started to fire on us.’”

Gulf Daily News of Bahrain had a reporter at the scene who interviewed a doctor at the city hospital, Ayad Al Ramadhani. The doctor said there were “perhaps 100 wounded and 10 to 12 dead.” U.S. news sources, reporting figures given by the Pentagon, said seven were killed. Later accounts by the French press agency AFP said 15 had died. There were no U.S. injuries.

The next day, U.S. troops again fired into a crowd in Mosul

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Protesters in Washington, D.C., April 12.

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'Must I kill to get an education?'

Youth of color rally to defend affirmative action

By Julie Fry
Washington, D.C.

The U.S. Supreme Court on April 1 heard oral arguments in two cases that could decide the fate of affirmative action at universities and colleges throughout the country.

Outside the court building, more than 50,000 demonstrators, primarily Black and Latino youth, gathered to defend affirmative action and fight for their right to quality education.

The demonstrators—college and high school students, union members, teachers and professors—came from all around the country. Some of the largest delegations came from states that have already experienced the effects of eliminating affirmative action, such as California, Florida and Texas.

Students from these states spoke about the devastating impact on youth of color. Erica Dowdell, a student at UCLA's law school, spoke about the alarming drop in student-of-color enrollment at the top universities in California since the implementation of Proposition 209—the state referendum banning affirmative action.

She explained that as a result, only two Black students are graduating from the UCLA School of Law this year. Black students now represent less than 1 percent of the student body. According to BAMN (By Any Means Necessary), the organization that initiated the demonstration, Black students accounted for 10.3 percent of students at UCLA law school in 1996, the year before the proposition was instituted.

At Boalt Hall, the elite law school at UC-Berkeley, Filipino enrollment has dropped from an average of 13 students per year to just three. The number of faculty women in the entire UC system has fallen by 22 percent since Proposition 209.

The elimination of affirmative action in other states has had similar effects. Latino enrollment at the University of Texas law school has dropped by half. The results were the same in Florida, where Gov. Jeb Bush banned affirmative action.

Racism: alive and well

Some of the most disturbing speeches at the April 1 rally were from the few students who have managed to gain access to institutions where affirmative action is now banned.

They spoke about the racist isolation and harassment many of them face at their schools. The elimination of affirmative action has apparently been used as a license for racists to openly bully and harass the remaining students of color. Lacking a support network, many of these students have dropped out. Others have been too discouraged to enroll.

Black and Latino high school students at the rally spoke about the institutional racism they are subjected to at their schools. Students from Cass Tech, a high school in Detroit—in one of the poorest and most segregated school districts in the country—described a rat- and roach-infested building with ancient books and crumbling walls. Yet the over-

Why is this resister in a war zone?

By John Catalinotto

Those who oppose this criminal war in Iraq should recognize the courage of Spec. Gabriel Johnson of Killeen, Texas—home to Fort Hood.

Johnson recently requested that his status be changed to that of conscientious objector. Army regulations state that soldiers who claim CO status are to be assigned to military duties which "minimally conflict with their stated beliefs" until the review of their claim is completed.

Instead, the Army shipped Johnson to Iraq on April 7. He's with the 104th Military Intelligence Battalion of the 4th Infantry Division, so he is most likely in Tikrit, Iraq, now.



Protester outside Supreme Court, April 1.

whelmingly white suburban schools nearby are among the richest and most highly regarded public schools in the country.

The University of Michigan recruits more of its Black students from Cass Tech than from any other high school. Right now, U of M admits about 80 students from Cass Tech every year. University officials predict this number will fall to 16 if they are forced to eliminate affirmative action.

Fighting racism—here and abroad

The ANSWER coalition, which has been organizing large anti-war protests, sent a contingent to the April 1 demonstration that was very well received by the demonstrators.

Many recognized that the elimination of affirmative action would force even more youth of color into joining the military and fighting racist wars.

Protesters carried signs with messages such as "Send us to school, not to war" and "Must I kill for Uncle Sam to get an education?"

As George Bush proceeds with his racist aggression on the Iraqi people, he has also found time to get involved in the racist assault on affirmative action, sending his minions at the Justice Department to the Supreme Court on April 1 to support the lawsuit against the University of Michigan.

But the people's movement is capable of fighting on two fronts, as well.

A decision is expected in this case by July. The anti-war movement should be prepared to take up this struggle and fight the racist agenda of the ruling class at home and abroad. □

Tod Ensign, Johnson's attorney and director of Citizen Soldier, explained: "The Army is violating its own rules by sending Gabe into a war zone. His CO claim can't be judged fairly by commanders in the heat of battle."

Johnson's supporters are urging friends to telephone or send letters of inquiry to the commanders listed below, demanding that Johnson be sent back to Fort Hood pending his CO status review and that he have access to his attorney:

Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz, Commanding General, III Corps, Ft Hood, TX 76544, phone (254) 287-6854, fax (254) 288-6854; Lt. Col. Daniel Baggio, email daniel.baggio@hood.army.mil. □

Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

'Embedded press' or just 'in bed'?



In times of war, or other great, emotional issues, the nature of the press is always evident. One need only read, watch or listen to the cadences and rhythms of speech, to learn what slant the media is placing on a story (and there is always a slant!).

In this war, the slant is as obvious as old Jimmy Durante's nose. Every reporter who wants to keep his job must bury all of her serious misgivings or questions about the war, or risk what happened to Peter Arnett, an award-winning veteran reporter of the first Gulf War.

Arnett, on assignment for the latest Gulf folly—er, I mean "War"—for NBC, MSNBC and the National Geographic magazine, got fired for daring to go on Iraqi TV and to speak his honest mind about what he saw, and heard, and thought about the war he was covering.

Arnett, aired by fuzzy Iraqi TV, offered the opinion that Americans misjudged the stiff resistance they would receive in Iraq, and offered the view that the bigwigs had to rethink how to wage the war.

His bosses promptly pulled the plug on his performance, and for a moment, Arnett seemed contrite, telling one broadcast audience that he "clearly [made] a misjudgment."

Before nightfall, however, the New Zealand-born naturalized U.S. citizen had signed onboard London's Daily Mirror, a paper not known for softening its positions to praise the Bush-Blair war aims. Credentialed by the Mirror to work as Baghdad correspondent, Arnett's tone hardened: "I report the truth of what is happening in Baghdad and will not apologize for it." (USA Today, April 1)

While the Mirror is certainly to be commended for a great catch, the real story is the ease and speed with which the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist was dispatched from his former posts.

Clearly, Arnett had violated the "rules." What rules? Don't suppose for a second that it is somehow anathema for a reporter to have, and occasionally to express, one's opinions. Journalists do such things every day. Does anyone seriously think that Arnett would've been canned had he opined that the war was a glorious attempt to "liberate" the oppressed Iraqis from the dastardly clutches of the evil tyrant Saddam?

Arnett wasn't fired for expressing an opinion; he was fired for expressing an opinion that was critical of the U.S. Imperial Army; one that did not accord with the wishes of the White House.

He broke an unwritten, yet still potent rule; and you'd better believe that every journalist under 40 years old understood it with fear and trepidation.

The rule? Know which way your bosses feel—and don't piss them off.

The sub-rule? Don't dare go against those in power, for your career may be crippled. Luckily for Arnett, he is a rare commodity. He is a Pulitzer Prize winner. Luckier still, the Mirror is editorially opposed to the Iraqi adventure.

Even still, you can bet that Arnett had his moments of gripping fear, and not from Iraqi Scuds or fedayeen suicide squads, but from the bosses of the media outlets that he worked for.

Have you heard any protests from his "fellow journalists," who feel that their colleague should be entitled to speak his mind, on occasion? Don't hold your breath.

Witness the "embedded media"—reporters who travel, eat, live with and dress like the soldiers. Under such conditions, while they may get pictures and stories, their very proximity insures that they will not be able to truly be objective, for they will over-identify with their daily associates, and their stories will be tainted by their associations.

The "embedded media" is a prize for the government; but for viewers, readers and listeners of the media, it is but the latest form of Pentagon-approved propaganda. News in form, but not in content. For the very essence of news has historically been the critical questioner of those in power.

Ask yourself, how much critical questioning have you seen since the bombs began to fall? How much cheerleading? And that's the point.

Peter Arnett questioned the status quo, and because he voiced a position contrary to government dictates he was



shown the door. A chill rolls through the press corps. They get the message. The tragedy is that the American people won't. □

WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD
News about Mumia's case is severely censored. Street rallies have been an important venue for airing the video of Arnold Beverly, who confessed to the killing Mumia was convicted of. For updates on his case, visit millions4mumia.org, mumia.org and iacenter.org.

Spoils of war

U.S. bosses make grab for oil, contracts

By Greg Butterfield

Beneath Iraq's surface lie the world's second-largest oil reserves. For most of the 20th century these oil fields were dominated by companies from the U.S., Britain and other Western capitalist powers.

But in 1972—as demoralized U.S. forces were on the verge of being driven out of Indochina—Iraq's government nationalized the oil fields. Big Oil was kicked out.

It was not socialism. There was still a significant Iraqi bourgeoisie in control of the economy and the state. But instead of going mostly to imperialist oil companies, a large part of the petroleum revenues was used to build up Iraqi industry, agriculture, education, health care and military power.

Today, with tens of thousands of U.S. troops occupying Iraq, the oil companies and other corporations are salivating at the prospects of again profiting mightily at the Iraqi people's expense.

The U.S. plans to run Iraq's oil industry for an indefinite period, Reuters news agency reported April 11, until an "Iraqi interim authority can formally take it over."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other White House spokespeople have said it will be between six months and two years before that happens—assuming that Iraqi opposition to the occupation can be crushed in short order.

Until Washington feels it can establish a stable, compliant government in Baghdad, the country is to be ruled by Gen. Tommy Franks and retired Gen. Jay Garner, the latter acting as a 19th-century-style colonial "governor."

Reuters reported, "The Defense Department is considering putting in place an advisory board of former U.S. oil industry executives to help run Iraq's oil industry, the head of which is likely to be Philip Carroll, a former chief executive of Shell Oil Co., sources said."

As far back as Sept. 15, 2002, the Washington Post had reported that, "A U.S.-led ouster of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein could open a bonanza for American oil companies long banished from Iraq, scuttling deals between

Baghdad and Russia, France and other countries, and reshuffling world petroleum markets, according to industry officials and leaders of the Iraqi opposition." This prospect "fanned concerns by non-American oil companies that they will be excluded by the United States."

Former CIA head R. James Woolsey, the Post noted, had warned Russia, France, Germany and other countries that they would be shut out of the spoils of war unless they backed a U.S./British attack.

The U.S. House of Representatives formalized this imperial arrogance early this month with a resolution demanding that companies from France, Germany, Russia and Syria be excluded from bidding on lucrative U.S.-controlled contracts for rebuilding Iraq.

And on April 14, U.S. and British forces announced that they controlled all of Iraq's oil fields.

U.S. domination over Iraqi oil has global implications. It gives Washington power to drive down world oil prices at the expense of other petroleum-producing countries, especially rebellious ones like Venezuela.

Vice President Dick Cheney declared that Iraqi oil would pay for the reconstruction of the country's infrastructure by U.S. firms, leading OPEC countries to fear a flood of oil from Iraq that would undercut their industries. (Arab News, April 11)

Cheney, President George W. Bush, and many of the administration's top advisors are former oil company executives.

White House tightens screws on rivals

Millions around the globe have protested the U.S./UK slaughter in Iraq, and powerful anti-war movements have grown up in countries like Germany and France.

But these movements should not be confused with the opposition to the war shown by the German and French imperialist governments and the counter-revolutionary regime in Russia.

The German, French and Russian governments opposed the war not because they stand for Iraqi self-determination,

but because they had much to lose from U.S. occupation and domination of Iraq.

In the late 1990s, when it seemed that global opposition would finally wear down the U.S./UN sanctions on Iraq, these governments made contracts with Baghdad for oil exploration, drilling and rebuilding of infrastructure damaged by the 1991 Gulf War and further degraded by the sanctions' prohibition on materials for upkeep and repair.

Iraq also has between \$60 billion and \$200 billion in foreign debt, by the imperialists' reckoning.

Under other circumstances, a poor country in this position would be ordered by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to use its oil sales to pay off these debts at the expense of jobs and social programs to benefit the people.

But Iraq is different. Washington is flexing its muscles and overruling the standard procedure—but not to benefit Iraq's people.

No, the Bush administration wants its rivals to forgive Iraq's debts—so the oil money can go straight into contracts for U.S. companies and finance the occupation.

At a mid-April summit, the Group of 7 imperialist powers—including France and Germany—gave their approval to the U.S. plan, CBS News reported, in exchange for Washington's backing of a face-saving UN Security Council resolution calling for a "global effort" to rebuild Iraq.

The winners in this plan are U.S. companies like Halliburton, formerly headed by Vice President Cheney. Its Kellogg, Brown and Root subsidiary received a military contract worth up to \$7 billion to fight oil-well fires in Iraq.

Esso, an ExxonMobil subsidiary, secured a \$48-million contract to supply U.S. military vehicles during the occupation.

Don't forget the military industry, which views the battlefield "as a showcase." (Washington Post, April 1) Wall Street analysts fingered several big winners among weapons makers—notably Raytheon, manufacturer of "Tomahawk"

cruise missiles; Lockheed Martin, maker of the Patriot PAC-3 missile; and M1 tank contractor General Dynamics. (Reuters, April 13)

Already on April 2, Raytheon and the U.S. Navy were planning to speed up production of a new generation of cruise missiles "after two weeks of war in Iraq depleted stocks of the existing model." This will cost up to \$2 billion. Raytheon said it would now lay off "only" 200 workers instead of the planned 300. (Associated Press)

The losers are the people of Iraq—already victimized by 12 years of sanctions, two horrible wars targeting civilians, and an indefinite colonial occupation—as well as poor and working people here.

Joblessness and bailouts

On April 12, Congress passed an \$80-billion emergency war spending bill, which Bush was eager to sign.

Some 108,000 U.S. workers lost their jobs in March as the war began. Since the war buildup began in earnest last fall, Corporate America has been shedding jobs at an ever-increasing rate.

The lack of jobs, social services and even food for millions is a real national emergency. But instead of passing a real "homeland security" bill to create jobs and ease the suffering, Congress and the White House teamed up to give an extra \$80 billion to the Pentagon and police agencies, above and beyond the record-setting budgets passed earlier this year.

Tacked onto the war bill is yet another \$2.9-billion bailout for the airline industry. Since October 2002 the airlines have also gotten \$1 billion in corporate welfare to move troops and supplies for the U.S. military.

At the same time airlines like American and United are crying bankruptcy and demanding wage and benefit concessions from their workers.

What's clear is that the attempted U.S. takeover of Iraq is not benefiting poor and working people in either country. It's a war for super-profits for the wealthy elite who are Bush's true constituency. □

Workers strike against giant war contractor

Some 4,000 members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers shut down the Lockheed Martin plant in Fort Worth, Texas, at 12:01 a.m. on April 14 as their contract expired. The company is this country's largest war contractor.

The workers are striking for higher wages and better medical insurance. Bosses have only offered them a scanty wage increase.

Lockheed Martin builds the Raptor and other fighter planes that poured death and destruction on the Iraqi people. The Pentagon spent an estimated \$10,000 per second on the war. Much of these blood-stained profits were pocketed by this top military producer.

Workers also set up pickets in Bethesda, Md., where 15,000 are employed. The company has threatened to run its operation around the clock. This anti-union attack needs the support of the labor and anti-war movements.

—Milt Neidenberg

'Solidarity and commitment'

By Adrian Garcia
Hollywood, Calif.

More than 7,000 protestors marched in the streets through the heart of Hollywood on April 13 to join the worldwide condemnation of the murderous U.S. campaign against the people of Iraq and the Middle East.

The demonstration, initiated by the ANSWER coalition, was co-sponsored by the Coalition for World Peace, Not In Our Name, the Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, and the Global Women's Strike.

Protesters carried signs that read "Occupation is not liberation" and "U.S. out of the Middle East."

"CNN, NBC, tell the truth on TV!" the marching crowd chanted in reproach of the shameless propagandist manipulation of the media.

The front of the demonstration was predominantly Arab and Muslim, including many Palestinians.

John Parker of ANSWER-Los Angeles opened the rally with a call to continue the struggle against imperialist war and occupation. "We must stand in solidarity with all those who have been victims of U.S.



Los Angeles, April 13.

WW PHOTO: JULIA LA RIVA

aggression and racism—here and around the world."

Rally speakers and hand-made signs made clear that working people here and around this country need jobs, education and health care—not imperialist war. State budget cuts here have already forced the closure of health clinics and have placed in jeopardy the jobs of thousands of teachers in an already hard-hit public

education system. This is not unique to the state of California.

Preston Wood, a march organizer, stressed that the most impressive feature of the April 13 protest was the "commitment to solidarity and the clear understanding that this is a new phase of the struggle to oppose U.S. wars—whether against Syria or Palestine, Iran or Korea. It was very moving." □

30,000 in D.C. declare:

'Occupation is not liberation'

By Monica Moorehead
Washington, D.C.

"Occupation is a crime—from Iraq to Palestine" was a recurring political theme during the April 12 protest here in the capital of the U.S., organized by the International Act Now to Stop War & End Racism coalition.

On less than three weeks' notice, 30,000 people found their way to D.C. The crowd of tens of thousands—multinational and largely youth—turned out after many had already participated in half a dozen major mobilizations in less than six months.

A pre-march rally commenced at Freedom Plaza, part of the National Mall. The rally was co-chaired by Howard University student activist Peta Lindsay; Larry Holmes from the International Action Center; Macrina Cardenas from the Mexico Solidarity Network; and Chuck Kaufman from the Nicaragua Network. All are members of the ANSWER steering committee.

Steering committee speakers also included Riya Ortiz, Bayan; Mahdi Bray, Muslim American Society; Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, Partnership for Civil Justice; Ismail Kamal and Leina Hashem, Muslim Student Association-U.S./Canada; Jennifer Wager, IFCO/Pastors for Peace; and Yoomi Jeong,

Korea Truth Commission.

Youth and student voices at the rally included Sarah Friedman, Deni Alarcon, Caneisha Mills and Alicia Keesler.

Laila Al-Arian, a Georgetown University student, talked about the plight of her father, Sami Al-Arian. He is a Palestinian professor in Florida who has been illegally detained by the U.S. government for speaking out against the occupation of Palestine.

Huwaida, a Palestinian woman representing the International Solidarity Movement, read excerpts from a message of solidarity written by the family of U.S. activist Rachel Corrie, killed by an Israeli bulldozer on March 16.

Speakers denouncing the billions of dollars being stolen from social programs in order to feed the monstrous U.S. war machine included Galen Tyler from Kensington Welfare Rights Union; John Riley, an activist representing NY ACT-UP; Kim Denmark, an advocate for poor people's rights; and Dr. Alan Schwartz from Doctors and Nurses Against the War.

Reverends Graylan Hagler from Washington, D.C., and Herbert Daughtry from Brooklyn fired up the crowd with words of wisdom. Other speakers included Damu Smith, Black Voices for Peace; Gene Bruskin, U.S. Labor Against War; Efa Nwagaza, Not In Our Name; Sara Flounders, Iraq Sanctions Challenge; Adam Carroll,

Islamic Circle of North America; and Jeff Winder, School of the Americas Watch.

Two major highlights of the rally were the presence of Vernon Bellecourt, leader of the American Indian Movement, and former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. An audiotaped message from political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was also played.

Musical selections were provided by Movement in Motion—an ANSWER hip-hop, spoken-word collective; D.C. artists Pam Parker, Jobari Parker Namdar and Richard Kelley; and the Mahini Movement, a multiracial women's trio.

Unprovoked attacks by D.C. police

The permitted march followed a route that purposely passed by the offices of corporations that will profit off the war on Iraq. These included Halliburton, Bechtel and the Carlyle Group.

The march also passed by the offices of the Washington Post and the Fox News affiliate to expose the pro-war bias of the big-business media. Protesters also raised their angry voices when passing by the White House, Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

From the beginning to the end of the march, the D.C. cops harassed, attacked and arrested a number of demonstrators. They used pepper spray and clubs on

defenseless activists who were attempting to march against endless war and repression. A cop threatened this reporter with arrest if she did not get off of "his" corner.

Despite the omnipresence of the police, the spirit and morale of the march was at a very high level. ANSWER organizers provided the protesters with vital information on where and how to safely get back to their buses and also offered legal advice to those who witnessed police violence.

Brian Becker, a member of the ANSWER steering committee, told WW, "What happened in Washington, D.C., and simultaneous demonstrations in other countries on April 12 is politically significant.

"A great majority of these activists clearly understand that war is more than dropping thousands of bombs and slaughtering unarmed civilians—which just occurred in Iraq. War is also about colonialism, a clear violation of a people's right to sovereignty."

Becker concluded, "The turnout on April 12 is a reflection of the fact that there is a conscious leap forward unfolding in terms of this movement—not just being against war in general—but understanding what constitutes an imperialist war; an endless war for empire. And today's turnout here and worldwide shows that this kind of movement will continue to expand." □

Despite downpour, thousands demand: U.S. out of Iraq!

By Brenda Sandburg
San Francisco

Despite a constant deluge of rain, 6,000 people marched through the streets of San Francisco April 12 to protest the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq.

People gathered at the Civic Center during the harshest part of the storm. Buffeted by gusts of wind and rain, they found shelter under the awnings of nearby buildings as thunder rumbled and lightning flashed. It wasn't clear how large the crowd was until marchers took to the streets.

Determined and militant, people marched two miles through Hayes Valley, the Haight and into Dolores Park in the Mission district.

The demonstration was called by the International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—coalition and coincided with anti-war actions around the world.

At the opening rally, a protester toppled a handmade statue of President George W. Bush, evoking cheers from the crowd. Far more people were present for the toppling of Bush's likeness than those present during the U.S.-orchestrated media event in Baghdad when U.S. soldiers tore down a statue of Saddam Hussein.

The determination and resolve of the protesters was evident as they stood in the rain through the entire two-hour closing rally. Speakers pointed out that the true intent of the Bush administration is to take over the resources of Iraq and recolonize the Middle East through military occupation.

"U.S. soldiers haven't secured the hospitals. They haven't secured the water supply, they haven't secured the food supply," said Hatem Bazian, of Al Qalam Institute. "They have only secured the Ministry of

More than 6,000 people in San Francisco march from Civic Center to Dolores Park in driving rain on April 12 to say 'no U.S. occupation of Iraq.'

Oil, which is the reason they invaded Iraq."

Eyad Kishawi, of the Free Palestine Alliance and ANSWER, stressed, "The United States is now threatening to bomb Syria and North Korea and to reoccupy the Philippines for one purpose—to make George Bush and his cronies even more wealthy than they are."

Richard Becker, West Coast coordinator of the International Action Center and a member of the ANSWER national steering committee, noted that Britain and the United States were the colonial rulers of Iraq 45 years ago, at which time Iraq owned zero percent of its oil. "What is going on right now is the exact opposite of liberation," Becker emphasized. "The plans for the privatization of Iraq's oil are going forward and the contracts are being given to U.S. companies. And the new government of Iraq is being assembled in Kuwait.

"The overall boss of this government-in-waiting is Army Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, who reports to the chief of the Central Command, Gen. Tommy Franks, which makes it an operation of the Pentagon," Becker said. "In this government, Timothy Carney, former ambassador to Sudan, will head the Ministry of Industry; former ambassador to Tunisia Robin Raphael will



WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

head the Ministry of Trade; Kenton Keith will head the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the leading candidate to lead Iraq's new Ministry of Information is none other than former CIA director James Woolsey, who recently called the Iraq war the start of World War IV.

"This is occupation. This is colonialism." Gloria La Riva of the Northern California Media Workers Union/Typographical Sector and ANSWER said the United States is now sharpening its knives against Cuba. "The U.S. media hides the existence of the Cuban 5, who are imprisoned in the United States for fighting terrorist attacks against Cuba," La Riva explained. "At the same time all the U.S. media are denouncing Cuba for defending

itself against counter-revolutionaries. Cuba has a right to defend its sovereignty."

Other speakers and performers at the rally included Stephen Funk, a GI conscientious objector who refused to go to Iraq; Desert Storm veteran Robert Davies; Colombian labor unionist William Mendoza; beat poet Michael McClure; Mario Santos of BAYAN and ANSWER; Zulma Oliveras of Comite '98; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco Labor Council; Eliot Grossman, lawyer for Mumia Abu-Jamal; and spoken-word artist Red Guard. ANSWER organizer Leilani Dowell and Miguel Molina, of KPFA Radio and the National Chicano Human Rights Committee, emceed the rallies. □

Mass anger rises in Iraq

Pentagon brings in its puppets, guns down protesters

Continued from page 1

from rooftops, killing another four people, according to eyewitnesses interviewed by the AFP.

Colonialist charade at Tallil

Meanwhile, in what the U.S. and Britain called the “first step in turning over Iraq to the Iraqis,” a colonialist charade was taking place in an air-conditioned tent set up under heavy security at the southern air base of Tallil. A carefully selected group of Iraqis, many flown in from Doha, Qatar, for the occasion, met with U.S. officials and Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, now the Pentagon overseer of Iraq, to rubber-stamp the U.S. plan for the country’s “democratic” future.

“We have no intention of ruling Iraq,” Zalmay Khalilzad, a U.S. special envoy and former oil company consultant, reassured the group. “We want you to establish your own democratic system based on Iraqi traditions and values.”

The group then did what they had been brought to do—endorsed the U.S. plan. “Only the opening and closing portions of the long meeting were open to the media,” wrote Marcella Bombardieri in the April 16 Boston Globe, adding that “it was not clear if the 13-point statement was drafted in advance by U.S. officials.”

At the same time, in nearby Nasariya, a center of this Shiite area long opposed to the national government in Baghdad, thousands were marching in the streets, chanting, “No to occupation” and “No, no Saddam, no, no U.S.”

As the U.S. and Britain bring back corrupt puppets who have been living the life of pampered exiles on the payroll of imperialist governments and oil companies, the anger of the Iraqi masses only grows.

One of the first to be flown in was the Shiite cleric Abdul Majid al-Khoie, a prominent exile living in London with access to Prime Minister Tony Blair. Al-Khoie and Haider al-Kadar, another Shiite cleric who had been appointed to his position by Saddam Hussein but switched his loyalty once the Pentagon took over, were to join hands on April 10 in a symbolic meeting with the Shiite community that would also provide a media event for the Western press.

But the Pentagon had figured it wrong.

The Associated Press reported on April 10: “The U.S. military had been eager to display the meeting at the shrine of Imam Ali, considered by Shiites the successor to the prophet Muhammad. The military flew two helicopters of journalists to the holy city of Najaf to see it. But the group arrived at the site too late to witness what happened.”

What happened was that when al-Khoie urged the crowd in the mosque to cooperate with U.S. troops, there was pandemo-



nium. Then al-Kadar, according to witnesses, drew a gun, but was quickly disarmed by the lower-ranking clerics. Within minutes, the two had been hacked to death by the crowd.

General Garner’s photo op was over.

Blowing apart Iraqi cities with thousands of laser-guided missiles and bunker-buster bombs dropped from attack planes based hundreds of miles away is one thing. Putting together a stable colonial administration, disguised as a “democracy,” that will facilitate the looting of Iraq’s vast oil resources and pool of skilled labor by U.S./British capital is another—as the Pentagon is finding out.

Nor does it help that the only real ally Washington could come up with for this brutal war is British imperialism—the same colonial power that the Iraqis rose up to throw out half a century ago.

Only someone mesmerized by the daily Pentagon press briefings and the cocky demeanor of both George Bush and his war secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, could believe that this war has gone well for them. Of course, they have unlimited military power. That has always been a given. But their ability to at least neutralize, let alone win over, enough of the Iraqi population to rule over the country effectively is what is in question.

Children maimed by cluster bombs

No end is in sight for the suffering caused by this war. The U.S. Central Command finally admitted on April 14 what many Iraqis had been saying all along: that the Pentagon had fired cluster bombs at targets in Baghdad. Many human rights groups say these weapons, which scatter bomblets over an area the size of a football field, constitute a war crime when used in an urban environment.

More and more children are being admitted to Baghdad hospitals with severe

injuries caused by cluster bombs. This Newsday account appeared on April 15:

“The little boy wailed and moaned and squirmed on the hospital bed stained with his own blood. A doctor struggled to hold a gauze bandage over the boys’ eyes, which no longer existed.

“Ali Mustapha had found a small cylindrical object on the street near his Baghdad home Monday morning. He picked it up. He played with it. He had it in his hands and the object—a live explosive—literally blew up in his face.

“At Kadhymia Hospital, Dr. Ausama Saadi’s diagnosis was blunt: ‘He will be blind for the rest of his life.’ Ali is four.

“Although combat in Baghdad is virtually over, carnage continues as civilians are cut, gouged and killed when unexploded munitions in city neighborhoods suddenly detonate, often in the hands of people who don’t know what they have innocently picked up. An alarming number of Iraqis being injured and killed are children, who are drawn to the small, grenade-like explosives that can look like toys, said doctors and parents.”

Coming on top of the health crisis caused by 12 years of sanctions, it is no wonder that medical workers in Iraq are virtually unanimous in their fury at the U.S. rulers.

The “war on terror” is, in fact, a war OF terror. But even the Pentagon’s “shock and awe” high-tech assault has not intimidated the Iraqi people, who keep telling and showing foreign journalists what they think of the U.S. and the military occupation. So the U.S. troops have a new enemy: the journalists.

Marines storm journalists’ hotel

Early in the morning on April 15, U.S. Marines stormed into the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad, where foreign journalists stay.

“The marines had keys to the rooms, but in cases where the doors were bolted, they



As horrors of war and imperialist occupation mount, Iraqi anger grows.

kicked them down, rousting journalists from their beds and pointing M-16s in their faces, footage from Associated Press Television News showed.

“Marines were seen guarding suspects in a hall; interrogating a man who claimed to be a cameraman; and breaking down a door to get to the roof.

“Four Iraqi men who did not have proper identification were detained in the raid that began at about 7 a.m.” (Christian Science Monitor, April 15)

This is the same hotel where two journalists had been killed a week earlier when a U.S. tank deliberately fired a shell into the side of the building.

The rah-rah “news” channels like Fox, MSNBC and CNN just ignore these stories so damaging to imperialism’s image, while pumping up patriotism with frequent references to “the enemy,” glitzy flag images and heavy-beat martial music. However, the more cosmopolitan and nuanced big-business media have to deal with what the rest of the world is hearing, and they are going through contortions trying to find the proper spin.

The New York Times, for example, ever trying to find some way to justify the occupation, put this headline on its April 16 article about the anti-U.S. demonstrations in Mosul and Nasariya: “Now Free to Protest, Iraqis Complain About Americans.”

“Protests against the American forces here are rising by the day as Iraqis exercise their new right to complain—something that often landed them in prison or worse during President Saddam Hussein’s rule,” began the article.

Worse than being shot and killed?

U.S. troops still have not found Saddam Hussein or any weapons of mass destruction. His name comes up now only when Bush, Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell and the Pentagon brass need an excuse for their new threats against Syria.

And what is going on in the minds of those young people from the United States who were told they should leave their families and risk their lives to liberate the Iraqi people—and now are being told that you can’t tell an ordinary Iraqi from “the enemy”? □



First phase: theft of Iraq's cultural treasures

Looting is what this war is all about

By Deirdre Griswold

Pumped up by the awesome destructive power of their technology, the U.S. military forces that took control of Iraq's major cities immediately presided over a spree of looting and desecrating of libraries, museums and other national buildings that held the most cherished artifacts and treasures of the area known as the "Fertile Crescent"—regarded in the West as the cradle of civilization.

It was the most calculated and crude assault on the national pride not only of Iraq but of the entire Arab world. Julius Caesar's burning of the great library in Alexandria was minor by comparison.

Moreover, it is clear that this looting was long planned by profiteers in the military and civilian life who knew the great value of Iraq's cultural treasures. In the 1991 Gulf War, scores of regional Iraqi museums were looted and some 5,000 valuable objects stolen. Many turned up later on the art market in Europe and the U.S. (USA Today, April 15)

This is but a foretaste of the wholesale looting of Iraq's oil resources planned by the White House and the Pentagon, along with British imperialism's willing participation—all in the name of "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

U.S. troops were in control

The planned character of this looting was described by Robert Fisk of the London Independent in an April 14 report from Baghdad:

"Iraq's scavengers have thieved and destroyed what they have been allowed to loot and burn by the Americans—and a two-hour drive around Baghdad shows clearly what the U.S. intends to protect. After days of arson and pillage, here's a short but revealing scorecard.

"U.S. troops have sat back and allowed mobs to wreck and then burn the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Irrigation, the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Information. They did nothing to prevent looters from destroying priceless treasures of Iraq's history in the Baghdad Archaeological Museum and in the museum in the northern city of Mosul, or from looting three hospitals."

The looting of the museum was described in greater detail in an April 13 New York Times article by John F. Burns.

"The National Museum of Iraq recorded a history of civilizations that began to flourish in the fertile plains of Mesopotamia more than 7,000 years ago," he wrote. "But, once American troops entered Baghdad in sufficient force to topple Saddam Hussein's government this week, it took only 48 hours for the museum to be destroyed, with at least 170,000 artifacts carried away by looters."

Burns said it was "likely to be reckoned as one of the greatest cultural disasters in recent Middle Eastern history." Among the artifacts looted were 5,000-year-old clay tablets containing what are believed to be the world's first written words.

"This is one of the most important museums in the entire world," said Zainab Bahrani, professor of ancient Near Eastern art and archaeology at Columbia University. "It's part of our global cultural heritage—it's important for all of us. ...

"We gave [the Pentagon] a list of things to protect; we gave them maps and the coordinates of sites and museums; we gave them a list of cultural-heritage priorities to protect the minute they got into the country; and at the top of the list we said, 'Place guards at the museums.'"

Giving the coordinates to the Pentagon was like asking the fox to guard the chickens.

Art collectors lobbied

Even before the looting started, it was reported that at a meeting in January, a group of art collectors had lobbied the Bush administration to make it easier to sell Iraqi art in the U.S.

"Dominique Collon, assistant keeper in the department of the ancient near east at the British Museum, said today that alarm bells had been set ringing by reports of a meeting between a coalition of antiquities collectors and arts lawyers, calling itself the American Council for Cultural Policy (ACCP), with U.S. defense and state department officials before the start of the war. The group offered help in preserving Iraq's invaluable archaeological collections, but archaeologists fear there is a hidden agenda to ease the way for exports post-Saddam.

"The ACCP's treasurer, William Pearlstein, has described Iraq's laws as

'retentionist,' and the group includes influential dealers who favor a relaxation of the current tight restrictions on the ownership and export of antiquities.

"Dr. Collon said: 'This is just the sort of thing that will encourage looting. Once there is American blessing they have got a market for these antiquities and it becomes open season.'" (The Guardian, London, April 10) And so it did.

U.S. troops protect oil ministry

Robert Fisk points out that, while U.S. soldiers did nothing to stop the looting of museums, libraries and most government ministries, the Pentagon kept iron control over some buildings.

"The Americans have, though, put hundreds of troops inside two Iraqi ministries that remain untouched—and untouchable—because tanks and armored personnel carriers and Humvees have been placed inside and outside both institutions. And which ministries proved to be so important for the Americans? Why, the Ministry of Interior, of course—with its vast wealth of intelligence information on Iraq—and the Ministry of Oil. The archives and files of Iraq's most valuable asset—its oilfields and, even more important, its massive reserves—are safe and sound, sealed off from the mobs and looters, and safe to be shared, as Washington almost certainly intends, with American oil companies."

Tikrit, the city in northern Iraq where Saddam Hussein spent his childhood, fell after heavy aerial bombardment. A Reuters report from Tikrit in the April 14 New York Times described the scene: "U.S. soldiers and crowds of Iraqi scavengers descended on the palace by the banks of the Tigris River Monday after Tikrit, the last major stronghold of Saddam's forces, fell to an attack by Marines backed up by warplanes and attack helicopters.

"In the lush palm gardens around the opulent sandstone buildings, Marines washed, shaved and used the flowerbeds as toilets. ... Inside, behind the palace's large wooden doors, was a scene of devastation."

Much is made of the "opulence" of Iraq's presidential palaces. But the same could be said for every nation-state. They all have state buildings—where guests are received, state functions take place and gifts from foreign leaders are displayed.

Britain, Washington's "coalition" part-

ner, has the ornate Buckingham Palace and many castles scattered around England, Ireland and Wales for the royal family.

The U.S. has the posh White House, of course, plus an "informal" presidential retreat at Camp David. Despite its rustic surroundings, Camp David is not just a few modest cabins in the woods. It is a 125-acre luxury retreat in the mountains of Maryland surrounded by a high-security fence and sporting its own heliport, golf course, swimming pools, stables and bridal paths, shooting range, tennis courts, conference rooms and library. And that's just what is above-ground. In deference to the presumed democratic character of the U.S. government, no expense is spared in making all this appear as folksy as possible.

The U.S. government also has secret, high-security locations for its leaders—remember Dick Cheney's many disappearances?—that cost the taxpayers many billions of dollars to build and maintain.

U.S. television has reported on the devastation in Iraq with a tone of satisfaction. It speaks of "inequality" and the masses getting "revenge"—with no indication at all that these "masses" may include mercenaries and agents of huge art dealers.

What would its coverage be like if the masses in the U.S. were to take revenge on the super-rich here? The gap between rich and poor is greater in the United States than in any other country in the world.

The business magazine Forbes compiles a list of the world's billionaires. The most recent, for 2001, included nine U.S. billionaires whose wealth came from media ownership. They were John W. Kluge, \$10.5 billion; Anne Cox Chambers, \$10.1 billion; Barbara Cox Anthony, \$10.1 billion; Sumner M. Redstone of Viacom, \$8.1 billion; Charles Ergen, \$6.2 billion, satellite TV; Rupert Murdoch of News Corp., \$5.7 billion; Samuel I. Newhouse Jr., \$5.0 billion; Donald E. Newhouse, \$5.0 billion; and Robert E. (Ted) Turner, \$3.8 billion, cable TV.

Many of the looted art treasures of Iraq are sure to find their way into the private collections of billionaires like these media moguls.

You won't see that on TV. □



Pentagon staged statue's fall

By Heather Cottin

One of the "most memorable images of the war" in Iraq was the footage and photographs showing a crowd of Iraqi people pulling down the statue of Saddam Hussein in Fardus Square in Baghdad on April 9, after U.S. armed forces invaded the capital.

The BBC hailed the photos and video as recording a "momentous event," with the media "a witness to history." Bush declared it "a historic moment." For Donald Rumsfeld, these images were "breathtaking."

This image was staged.

The spin-doctors of the U.S. media and the Pentagon produced a close-action video of the destruction of the statue that was supposed to be proof of a massive civilian uprising against the Iraqi government.

A Reuters photojournalist exposed this

media event as a sham in the revealing photograph right: The Marines had cleared out the area and ringed Fardus Square with tanks. A hand-picked group of Iraqis, with some Marines, were allowed into the sealed-off area. It was a Pentagon vehicle that pulled down the statue.

Fardus Square is located across the street from the Palestine Hotel, where many international journalists covering the war were staying. Just the day before the faked "spontaneous event" in Fardus Square, a U.S. tank had fired an artillery shell into the hotel, killing two members of the media and injuring four others.

The Pentagon wants embedded journalists, drafted to publicize the Pentagon's rationale for the war. They want these reporters to sell this occupation as "liberation" to people in the U.S. and around the world.

The United States Armed Forces psy-

chological operations motto boasts: "Win the mind, win the day!"

The wrecking of the statue of Hussein was part of this psy-ops media campaign. □



'No' to occupation!

2 million protest in 60 countries around the world

By John Catalinotto

The worldwide anti-war movement is alive, combative and in ever deeper solidarity with the resistance of the Iraqi people. Despite the Pentagon's victory on the military front, nearly 2 million people in 60 countries on six continents demonstrated April 12 that this movement would keep up the political battle to free Iraq from colonial domination.

Main slogans in most areas shifted to demanding an end to the U.S.-British occupation of Iraq, and called attention to the war crimes of the imperialist aggressors and the suffering of the Iraqi people.

In some parts of the world—notably in South Asia—demonstrations were at least as big as they had been when they were aimed at stopping U.S.-British aggression against Iraq.

In Dacca, Bangladesh, for example—the largest protest held in the region April 12—some reports estimated the march to be as large as 300,000. Protesters shouted "Down with U.S. imperialism," "America get out of Iraq," and "Heroic people of Iraq go ahead, we are with you."

At Sea World in Jakarta, Indonesia, protesters unfurled an anti-war banner underwater. Five thousand marched in Yogyakarta April 13.

The Sri Lanka Islamic Students Movement (SLISM) and other groups organized anti-war protests of 3,000 in Colombo and a total of another 20,000 in three cities of the country's eastern province on April 11. In Colombo, students and young people formed a human chain in front of the Maradana mosque near the city center.

Anti-war protests also took place in Kalmune, Sammanthurai and Akkarai-pattu, where demonstrations of 7,000, 8,000 and 5,000 took place, respectively. Protesters held hand-written placards and chanted slogans including: "Bush and Blair swim in Iraqi blood" and "Today it is Iraq, tomorrow it will be North Korea, Iran or Syria."

In Calcutta, India, on April 11, about 1,000 disabled people held up traffic for over an hour. "We are against the war in Iraq as it will make thousands of people disabled. We know how much this hurts," said one man in a wheelchair. The entire protest, numbering in the thousands—including about 1,200 cars, some bearing

white flags—blocked roads and honked their horns for over an hour.

In New Delhi, thousands of protestors from secular Indian organizations marched to the U.S. Information Services office April 12, denouncing the "U.S.-led occupation of Iraq and the suppression of Iraqi people and their nation."

G.N. Saibaba, secretary of the All India Peoples Resistance Forum (AIPRF), accused U.S. and British forces of trying to establish their long-term rule in Iraq by encouraging lawlessness and trying to divide Iraqis along communal and sectarian lines.

The protesters in New Delhi and the northern Indian states of Punjab and Haryana wore "No War" shirts. Their banners read "American invaders get out of Iraq" and "Boycott U.S. products."

In India and Pakistan, and in Manila in the Philippines, demonstrators burned effigies of President George W. Bush.

Militant demonstrators clashed with police in Seoul, South Korea, and Taipei, Taiwan. South Koreans also protested at what they called a U.S. plot to start a war



Seoul, South Korea

with North Korea following the aggression against Iraq.

"Down, down USA, Bush is a terrorist."

London: no occupation, no war

Hundreds of Kenyans took to the streets of Nairobi on April 11, carrying placards condemning Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair and shouting:

In London, 200,000 anti-war protesters marched past the Houses of Parliament holding aloft an effigy of Blair.



Dacca, Bangladesh



Rome, Italy



Cairo, Egypt



Santiago, Chile

Chanting slogans and waving banners under a bright blue sky, the protesters shouted: "No justice? No peace! Troops out of the Middle East." Placards read "No occupation, no war."

Hundreds of thousands of people protested in both Barcelona and Madrid, with up to a half-million in all demonstrating throughout the Spanish state. In neighboring Portugal, 3,000 people formed a human chain through central Lisbon and then rallied at the U.S. embassy.

Up to a half-million people demonstrated against war and occupation in Rome on April 12 despite the corporate and government media boycott, disruption of train service and pouring rain that didn't let up until that morning. At the same time, activists targeted Esso gas stations throughout Italy, shutting down eight of them.

In France, 100,000 people demonstrated in 80 cities; 20,000 rallied at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin; 800 protested at the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus. There were smaller demonstrations also held in Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Poland, and Russia, where tens of thousands had demonstrated earlier in the week.

The largest Latin American demonstration was in Mexico City, where children lead 50,000 marchers from the Monument to the Revolution to the Zocalo. The demonstration included leaders of political parties and labor unions.

A separate march by the Zapatistas led 6,000 from the Zocalo to the U.S. Embassy. The Zapatistas did not want to march with senators who had voted against Indigenous rights. There were also 10 other anti-war marches in the country.

There were also protests reported in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Puerto Rico and Venezuela on April 11, 12 or 13.

A massive peace concert was held in Toronto and demonstrations took place in dozens of other cities across Canada.

About 1,000 anti-war demonstrators marched through Auckland, New Zealand, protesting biased media coverage of the war. In Australia, 10,000 marched in Sydney and 5,000 in Melbourne on April 13. □



Seville, Spain

Organized and financed from Washington

Cuba foils plot against revolution

By Gloria La Riva

The Cuban government has arrested and tried 75 people on charges involving treason and collaboration with a foreign power. Prosecutors produced evidence that the 75 were paid agents of the United States, working under direction of the CIA and its representatives in the U.S. diplomatic mission in Havana.

After four days of proceedings, the trials ended on April 7 in convictions.

The defendants have been characterized in the U.S. capitalist media as independent journalists and dissidents oppressed by the Cuban government simply for speaking the truth and wanting a peaceful oppositional role in Cuban society.

But the evidence presented showed that their objectives and deeds were far more ominous, aiming for a counter-revolution that would undo the social achievements of the Cuban Revolution. Even more damning is their direct link to the U.S. government, particularly the chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, James Cason.

Since his appointment as top U.S. diplomat in Havana last year, Cason has brazenly called for the disparate reactionary forces on the island to unite with their right-wing counterparts in Miami to "bring democracy and freedom to Cuba."

In Iraq, thousands have just died in a war waged by the U.S. supposedly for democracy and freedom. The survivors now face the looting and occupation of their country. Around the world, the promise by any U.S. representative to bring "democracy and freedom" is seen as a serious threat.

With imperialism's knives now being sharpened against Syria, Iran, North Korea and others, Cuba, too, is alert to plots against it being shaped in Washington.

Added to U.S. attempts at internal subversion is a recent spate of violent hijackings in Cuba—seven in seven months. Many Cubans feel there is a coordinated effort by Washington to set off a crisis and create a pretext to cancel the 1995 immigration agreement between the U.S. and Cuba.

Cuban foreign minister responds

James Cason became chief of the U.S. Interests Section last fall. He has spent much of his time rallying tiny groups of right-wingers on the island.

What he didn't expect was that some of the Cuban counter-revolutionaries whose cause he championed were actually Cuban double agents, men and women who infiltrated the right-wing groups in defense of their country. Their intelligence work struck a blow at U.S. designs and provided much of the evidence at the trial.

On April 9, two days after the trials ended, Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque held a press conference with dozens of Cuban and foreign journalists. Citing the evidence presented in the trials, he gave a blow-by-blow account of criminal acts carried out by the defendants and described their ties with the U.S.

Cason organized and attended a series of meetings in Havana with some of the counter-revolutionaries, beginning on

Feb. 24 of this year.

Cuban President Fidel Castro spoke out on March 6 about Cason's actions, saying Cuba would "calmly take all the time needed to decide on its course of action regarding this bizarre official. Perhaps the numerous U.S. intelligence agents working at the Interests Section could explain to him that Cuba can easily do without this office, a breeding ground for counter-revolutionaries and a command post for the most offensive subversive actions against our country."

On March 18 and 19, the 75 Cubans were arrested and charged with violations of Cuban law, among them Article 91 of the Cuban Penal Code, Law 62 of 1987, which prohibits anyone from carrying out "an action in the interest of a foreign state with the purpose of harming the independence of the Cuban state or the integrity of its territory."

Law 88, described by Pérez as an antidote to the U.S. Helms-Burton law of 1996, prohibits someone who "gathers, reproduces, disseminates subversive material from the government of the United States of America, its agencies, representative bodies ... to support the objectives of the Helms-Burton Act, the blockade and the war."

Conceived and financed by Washington

The trial revealed that virtually all of the actions undertaken by the right-wingers were thought up, financed and organized by Washington. One such anti-Cuba campaign is the so-called Varela Project, lauded by U.S. officials as providing alternative "freedoms" to Cuba, like a market economy. It reportedly collected 11,000 signatures of supporters, and its supposed founder, Osvaldo Payá, has toured Europe and the U.S., receiving numerous awards for his "courage." Groups like the International Republican Institute have funneled large amounts of money to the counter-revolutionaries as "awards."

But the real architect resides elsewhere. Pérez read a series of letters from a Carlos Alberto Montaner, who wrote from Spain to Osvaldo Alfonso Valdés of Todos Unidos, one of the counter-revolutionary groups. Valdés was one of those tried and convicted. Montaner has long been identified as working for the CIA.

A March 22, 2001, letter says, "Dear Osvaldo, a friend you know has been kind enough to get these 30,000 pesetas to you.

Very soon you will receive a call from some high-level Spanish friends to talk about the Varela Project. I recommended five names to found this new idea: Payá, Alfonso, Arcos, Raúl Rivero and Tania Quintero."

The money was provided, the project and name created, and the people to head it were hand picked by the CIA. Cuba's overwhelming response to the Varela Project was a referendum organized last July in which 99.7 percent of the population signed on to declare Cuba's socialist system "irrevocable."

Twelve Cuban double agents—including Odilia Collazo, Néstor Bager and Manuel David Orrio—revealed their true identities at the trial. Accounts of each agent were reported in Granma, the daily newspaper.

For 11 years, Orrio pretended to be one of the "independent" journalists, writing on themes selected by the U.S. Interests Section. Orrio said, "I could have said no (to the mission), but I thought of the outrageous manner in which the Yankees have tried to asphyxiate us, and then I thought of my son Miguel, from whom I took the pseudonym. I said to myself, 'Let's get on with it,' but I never imagined we would come so far."

The big-money media reports a wave of condemnation, ranging from the ultra-right in Washington and Miami to the liberal U.S. establishment, for the recent actions Cuba has taken in its defense.

But Cuba's overriding priority is its sovereignty and self-defense. The real freedoms that the revolution has guaranteed to the 11 million Cubans—free education and health care, the right to a job, and control over their own land and resources—would be crushed if the counter-revolution were to triumph.

In Pérez Roque's words, "After more than 40 years of an ironclad economic, financial and commercial blockade, of aggressions, terrorist acts, more than 600 assassination attempts on the life of the Cuban President—on top of all that, our people have had to contend with the obsession of U.S. governments to fabricate an opposition in Cuba.

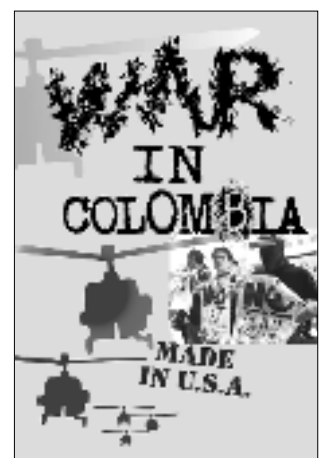
"One plan after another has foundered against the unity of our people, against the moral authority of the Cuban Revolution, against the unquestionable fact that the overwhelming majority of the Cuban people support and defend the revolution."

To read Pérez Roque's complete transcript, see: www.granma.cu. □

WAR IN COLOMBIA MADE IN U.S.A.

A new book from the International Action Center covers the struggle in Colombia from the perspective of trade unionists, human rights activists, and the FARC and ELN insurgencies. Authors include: Fidel Castro, Ramsey Clark, Javier Correa, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Gloria Gaitan, Raul Reyes, Manuel Marulanda, Stan Goff, Teresa Gutierrez, James Petras, Sen. Paul Wellstone, Roy Bourgeois, Garry Leech and others.

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NYC budget bomb

Billionaire New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has translated Washington's brutal military aggression against the Iraqi people into ruling class economic aggression against the workers on the home front. As President George W. Bush was signing a bill authorizing \$80 billion in additional war spending, Bloomberg was announcing plans to cut the jobs of 10,000 workers who provide city services.

The capitalist economic crisis driving these cutbacks, and causing the shortfalls in local budgets, can't be overcome by the standard racist practice of squeezing the most oppressed and already impoverished. So Bloomberg has had to target a larger sector of the working class.

Already cut or on the chopping block are health care, education, many already minimized social services, libraries, museums, zoos. In other words, everything that makes New York tolerable for those without the enormous incomes required to supply these needs privately.

It is the domestic reflection of the conquering army that cuts the water supply and electricity, allows libraries to burn and encourages the looting of 10,000 years of human history in Baghdad.

Regarding health care, 1199 SEIU—New York's Health and Human Service Union—says, "Under the proposed cuts, hospitals will be forced to cut back services and curtail essential programs; many nursing homes may be forced to close; homecare services for New York's homebound elderly and disabled may no longer be an option."

With a \$1.6 billion cut in Medicaid, as many as 48,000 health-care jobs may be eliminated.

The city government has even proposed cutbacks to the Fire Department, with eight stations already set to be closed and another 30 on the chopping block.

Bloomberg is demanding sacrifices from teachers, social workers, from the people who take care of the parks, from those who maintain the shelters for the homeless. Meanwhile there are no plans to increase taxes on the corporations or banks and all those who grow rich by exploiting the city's workers.

This is taking place in New York, but it is the same story in virtually all U.S. cities.

The mayors are all following the lead of the Bush economic plan, which plays only one note: take from the poor and give to the rich. Now an ever greater proportion of workers are becoming victims. It cries out for resistance.

The encouraging news is that resistance is beginning.

Right now many of New York City's unions, with initiative from AFSCME District Council 37 municipal workers, are mobilizing for a demonstration on April 29 in the city and again on May 3 in Albany, the state capital.

These protests are expected to mobilize tens of thousands of city workers and residents, moving them from passive acceptance of a bitter pill into struggling to fight back in the streets. They are steps toward the struggle that will be needed across the country in order to turn this situation around. □



Washington, D.C., April 12.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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Israeli troops gun down

U.S.-backed Tel on Palestinians,

By Leslie Feinberg

While the eyes of the world are focused on the crimes of the Pentagon in its war of conquest against Iraq, Palestinian officials accuse Tel Aviv of quietly escalating its siege against the Palestinian people.

Statements by Israeli officials themselves back up that charge. "I hope that in the era after the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime, the Palestinians will understand that the world has changed," Israeli "Defense" Minister Shaul Mofaz said. (Reuters, April 10)

President George W. Bush, trying to quell roiling Arab rage about the U.S.-led colonial occupation of Iraq, is paying lip service to a "road map" to a Palestinian state by the year 2005.

How seriously does this administration take this proposition? According to a senior U.S. official, Secretary of State Colin Powell privately told European leaders in Brussels in early April, "Please understand that it can't just be issued and magical things happen, and it's not going to be just imposed." (Al-Jazeera, April 4)

Washington has appointed retired Gen. Jay Garner to rule as its colonial warlord in Iraq. He is a strong supporter of the Israeli garrison state and Ariel Sharon's government. Garner has ties to the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, which liaisons between Pentagon officials and the Israeli military.

Garner was one of more than 250 retired U.S. military officers who traveled to Israel on a JINSA junket. He once signed a pro-Israeli statement that charged the Palestinians with filling their children with hate. (The

Scotsman, April 10)

And while the White House is talking peace and waging war, it is looking the other way as Tel Aviv is carrying out this virtual state of siege against the Palestinian population. The all-war, all-the-time monopoly media scarcely seems to notice this military aggression.

Forced diaspora in slow motion

Terror has been the hallmark of the Israeli apartheid regime since its creation in historic Palestine in 1948. But efforts to force mass expulsions of Palestinians have ratcheted up in the last two years, and pressure is being exerted now to hasten the pace.

More than 100 people have already signed onto a petition being circulated by Faculty for Israeli-Palestinian Peace that states, "What has actually been taking place since the beginning of the 35 years of occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but at an unprecedented rate for the last two years, is a systematic process of demolition of Palestinian private and public property, and mass expropriation of Palestinian land on behalf of settlers."

The petition lists the methods used in Israel's territorial expansion and efforts to drive the Palestinian population into a mass expulsion: huge-scale harassment, prolonged curfews, road blocks, humiliations, creating fearsome ghettos, poverty, beatings, military invasions, detention of thousands without trial under sub-humane conditions and obstruction of access to work, medical care, schools and universities.

Frequent military terror raids are a form of short-term occupation. Many feel this is a dress-rehearsal for more long-term occupations and mass "transfers"—that is, expulsion—of the population.

On April 9, for example, residents in the refugee camp in Tulkarm, just inside the occupied West Bank, awakened to the crack of gunfire, boom of stun grenades and thunder of helicopter warships. One thousand male residents aged 15 to 40 were driven from their homes, taken to a nearby school, searched and reportedly warned they would be shot if they returned home in the next two days. (Scottish Sunday



Above, British activist Thomas Hurndall minutes before he left for a protest at which he suffered a gunshot wound to the head, Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, April 11. According to another International Solidarity Movement activist, Israeli soldiers shot him, right, as he tried to protect Palestinian children in the line of fire. He was declared clinically dead at a Gaza hospital.



solidarity activists

Aviv regime steps up war supporters



Israeli soldier menaces Palestinian family.



New York, March 22.

WW PHOTO; G. DUNKEL

Herald, April 13)

The Herald reported, "The sweeping raid provoked a renewal of the 'war crime' allegations leveled at Israel over last year's Operation Defensive Shield, which led to the bloody battle of Jenin and the attacks on Palestinian President Yassir Arafat's headquarters."

"We urge the international community not to allow Israel to continue exploiting the war with Iraq to achieve its end goal," stressed Palestinian cabinet member Saeb Erekat.

"Israeli left-wingers were equally critical," the Herald noted. Yossi Beilin, chairperson of the Shahar movement, said the Tulkarm mass round-up "conjures up some chilling memories."

Resistance still burning

The Israeli government assassinated senior Hamas member Said Arbid in Gaza City on April 8. Arbid and two of his associates were killed by a missile fired from an F-16 fighter jet. And a helicopter gunship fired a missile at onlookers who gathered near the wreckage. Seven Palestinians were killed and 48 wounded. (The Guardian, April 10)

President Yasser Arafat denounced the April 8 air strike, characterizing it as "a massacre and an unforgivable crime. This crime is a challenge for Palestinians," he said, emphasizing that "Israel is taking advantage of the war on Iraq to cover up its daily massacres against Palestinian civilians." (Xinhuanet, April 9)

The following accounts, which support this charge, are only a few of the attacks by Israeli military forces since April 7 that resulted in Palestinian deaths and injuries.

Israeli troops killed four Palestinians in a predawn raid on the southern Gaza

refugee camp of Rafah on April 10. The army sparked resistance when it brought in 40 tanks and a number of military bulldozers. Mahmoud Shaath was killed by an Israel tank shell. Wissam Al Shaar and Ibrahim Shaluf died after being struck by a missile fired from an assault helicopter.

Also on April 10, the army shot a 14-year-old boy to death in the West Bank town of Qalqilya and killed a man in Nablus. And Iyad Alyan was killed by tank fire east of Jabalya. Eight other Palestinians were injured, two critically. (Al-Jazeera, April 13)

Their deaths brought the number of Palestinians killed to 2,350 since the Intifada against Israeli occupation began in September 2000. Less than a third as many Israelis have been killed in the same time period, further revealing the Goliath vs. David character of the high-tech war waged by the Pentagon-backed Israeli garrison state against a people without an army.

And in an act of extra-legal lynching, a Zionist death squad group calling itself "Revenge of the Babies" claimed responsibility for an April 9 explosion in a school in Al-Jarba, a northern West Bank village six miles south of Jenin, that injured 29 Palestinian children, four seriously. (Middle East Online)

But Palestinian resistance and solidarity with it has not been crushed by this overwhelming military force.

More than 4,000 Palestinians marched through the streets of Rafah in a demonstration called by Fatah on April 7 that characterized the Pentagon-led war against Iraq as a "new occupation in the region." (French Press Agency, April 7)

The same day in Gaza City, marchers took to the streets against U.S. military aggression in Iraq in a demonstration



Above, resistance visible on apartheid wall. Israelis are creating this prison fence along the entire 225-mile length of the West Bank.



Left, Little child takes on U.S.-supplied Israeli tank with a stone.

called by the Arab Liberation Front.

Doctors and health workers protested on World Health Day, denouncing "U.S. and British aggression against the Iraqi people, their land and infrastructure."

More than 150 activists from Israel, the Occupied Territories and a dozen countries marched through the town of Mas'ha on April 6 to protest the Israeli construction of a 225-mile, 25-foot-high apartheid wall along the entire length of the West Bank. They characterized the wall, which further encroaches into Palestinian-held territory, as a land grab for Zionist settlements and "part of the Israeli government policy of 'encouraging transfer' (ethnic cleansing)."

The wall would sever Mas'ha's access to 97 percent of its farmland, greenhouses and olive groves—the source of income for its 2,000 inhabitants. (International Solidarity Movement report, April 7)

The protesters caught the army unprepared by setting up a Peace Camp to block construction of the wall. Despite being menaced by settlers moonlighting as security guards, army brass and military bulldozers, the activists held their ground and the standoff continues.

"Peace tents" were also set up in the village of Bidia. Palestinians, Israelis and international solidarity activists have been occupying that ground day and night to stave off the bulldozers. (Yediot Aharonot, April 10)

In the spirit of Rachel Corrie

International Solidarity Movement activists have witnessed violence against the Palestinians.

For instance, on April 10, members related the details of an undercover operation in which Israeli forces, dressed as civilians and traveling in a mini-van with Palestinian plates, assassinated two people and injured four in Tulkarm. The same day they reported the shooting of two civilians—teenaged brothers—in their home in the Jibna area of Rafah. (ISM report, April 10)

As a result, ISM activists are being increasingly targeted by the Israeli military. An ISM spokesperson stated: "It now seems like it is open season on international peace activists. They just want us out so they can get on with their business without international observation."

ISM activist Tom Hurdall from Manchester, England, was shot in the head April 11 by Israeli troops in the Rafah refugee camp. Hurdall was trying to help two little girls and their mother get out of the line of fire. He was declared clinically dead.

There had been no earlier exchange of gunfire between Israelis and Palestinians that day, reported the April 12 Guardian.

"A group of ISM people were trying to set up a small protest tent alongside the road used by the army. The soldiers opened fire," said ISM member Khalil Abdullah.

On March 16, U.S. activist Rachel Corrie was also killed in Rafah—deliberately, witnesses report—after a long standoff with an Israeli military bulldozer that was attempting to raze a civilian home.

ISM activist Brian Avery from New Mexico was seriously injured by soldiers on April 5 in the Jenin area. The military had locked down the area in a curfew for two days. No Palestinians were reportedly on the street.

Avery and other internationals were confronted by two Armored Personnel Carriers. They raised their hands over their heads and stood without moving for about 10 minutes. They were wearing fluorescent red vests with reflective white crosses on the front and back.

Abruptly, troops fired a burst of high-speed bullets from a machine gun at the ground in front of them. Under the Israeli army's own rules of engagement, soldiers are only allowed to fire warning shots from hand-held weapons pointed away from their target, not from mounted weapons.

Danish ISM member Lasse Schmidt was wounded in the leg by shrapnel. The left side of Avery's face was virtually shot off. When a specialist at the local hospital recommended Avery be immediately transferred to a hospital in Afula in Israel, the military refused to allow his ambulance safe passage for more than an hour. (ISM news release, April 7)

Maria Santelli, an organizer with the New Mexico Network, said Avery had just written home "about Rachel Corrie. He was just letting people know back home what happened and that people were standing in her name and continuing her work." (AFP and AP, April 5) □

Enérgica réplica de Cuba a Estados Unidos en Ginebra

Por Juan Diego Nusa Peñalver, enviado especial de la AIN

Ginebra, Suiza, 14 abr (AIN) Cuba replicó hoy enérgicamente a los ataques de Estados Unidos en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos, y puso al desnudo el doble rasero de la fracasada política seguida por Washington contra La Habana.

El diplomático cubano Rodolfo Reyes respondió a Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, jefa de la delegación norteamericana al 59 período de sesiones de la Comisión, quien atacó las medidas adoptadas por la Isla para defenderse de la subversión interna fomentada y financiada por Washington.

Al intervenir en el tema 17 referido al análisis de la promoción y protección de los derechos humanos, Kirkpatrick intentó evadir la responsabilidad de la

administración de George W. Bush en el aliento a la emigración ilegal en el Estrecho de la Florida.

Reyes señaló que esas palabras de la representante estadounidense son coherentes con la doctrina y práctica neofascista, que imponen hoy quienes se han hecho con el poder en Washington.

En la más refinada técnica goebbeliana, en un discurso repleto de falsedades, se ha intentado presentar a mercenarios pagados por la súper potencia como supuestos defensores de los derechos humanos, apuntó.

También expuso que la Isla comprende la rabia e impotencia de la Casa Blanca con la desarticulación de su plan subversivo contra el pueblo cubano, al cual dedicaron tanto esfuerzo, dinero y tiempo.

Ironizó Reyes el ridículo del gobierno estadounidense con las revelaciones de

varios supuestos disidentes fabricados por Washington, y los que resultaron ser dignos patriotas y revolucionarios cubanos.

Ellos presentaron al mundo pruebas irrefutables de la actividad de espionaje y subversión contra Cuba, subrayó.

El diplomático mencionó como el colmo de la desvergüenza que la Casa Blanca exprese preocupación por el derecho a la vida y al debido proceso, cuando ellos son los culpables de la muerte de cuatro millones de vietnamitas y de decenas de desaparecidos en América Latina.

Denunció que el gobierno norteamericano es el responsable, además, de la ejecución sumaria de cientos de civiles iraquíes, de periodistas europeos, y recordó que en Estados Unidos se les aplica la pena capital a cientos de personas cada año, sin un debido proceso.

Se refirió al limbo legal de los talibanes, arbitrariamente detenidos en la ilegal Base Naval de Guantánamo, o a los más de dos mil detenidos en territorio de la Unión, en el contexto de su campaña contra el terrorismo, a quienes ni siquiera se les conoce sus nombres.

Reyes dijo que Washington es el responsable de la muerte o mutilación permanente de más de cinco mil cubanos, consecuencia de su línea de promoción y amparo al terrorismo contra la Isla caribeña.

Fustigó la manipulación política de la emigración contra la Mayor de las Antillas, que ha provocado acciones terroristas y violentas, como las ocurridas en los últimos días.

Ante tales designios, Reyes afirmó que el pueblo de Cuba responde con unidad, defensa de la verdad, la justicia y la disposición al combate. □

Aislamiento de EE.UU en Ginebra

Ginebra, Suiza, 14 abr (AIN) Una respuesta enérgica de Cuba a los ataques lanzados por Estados Unidos y el humillante aislamiento sufrido por esa potencia en la votación de una resolución sobre Palestina, marcaron hoy las sesiones de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos que sesiona aquí.

El diplomático cubano Rodolfo Reyes replicó enérgicamente a Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick, jefa de la delegación estadounidense, quien al intervenir en el tópico 17 dedicado a la promoción y protección de los derechos humanos, efectuó un burdo ataque contra Cuba.

Kirkpatrick trató de evadir la responsabilidad del gobierno de Washington al estímulo a una emigración ilegal y la fabricación de supuestos disidentes en la Isla.

Una fuerte polarización ocurrió en el

proceso de aprobación del texto sobre la situación en la Palestina ocupada, presentado por Arabia Saudita, que recibió finalmente el voto favorable de 51 miembros, uno en contra (Estados Unidos), y una abstención, la de Guatemala.

El gobierno de Washington sufrió un duro golpe con un humillante aislamiento en este órgano de la ONU, al no ser secundado por la Unión Europea en los intentos de proteger a su fiel aliado mediorientista Israel.

En ese documento, la comunidad internacional reafirma el derecho de los palestinos al inalienable, permanente e irrestricto derecho a la libre determinación y el establecimiento de un Estado independiente. La Comisión de Derechos Humanos aprobó en la sesión de hoy el proyecto de resolución presentado por

Cuba contra el mercenarismo.

Titulada Utilización de mercenarios como medio de violar los derechos humanos y obstaculizar el ejercicio de los pueblos a la libre determinación, fue coauspicada por 33 naciones, indicativo de su amplio consenso.

El texto recuerda todas las resoluciones que condenan a los Estados que permiten o toleran el reclutamiento, financiación, entrenamiento, concentración, y el tránsito.

También el empleo de mercenarios con el objeto de derrocar a los gobiernos de Estados miembros de la ONU, especialmente, de países en desarrollo.

Como elemento nuevo pide que ejerzan el máximo de vigilancia contra todo tipo de reclutamiento, entrenamiento, contratación o financiamiento de mercenar-

ios por empresas privadas.

Alemania, en nombre del grupo occidental, al estar en desacuerdo con el documento solicitó votación nominal, proyecto que finalmente fue aprobado por 37 votos a favor, nueve en contra y siete abstenciones.

Llama la atención que del bloque occidental, en el que figura Estados Unidos, se desmarcaron Francia, Irlanda y Austria, países acogidos a la abstención.

Previamente, fue aprobada por consenso un proyecto sobre la cuestión colonial del Sahara Occidental, que reafirma la responsabilidad de las Naciones Unidas en el arreglo de ese conflicto.

Además, fue sancionada una cuarta resolución, propuesta por Paquistán, sobre la lucha contra la difamación de las religiones, a la que expresaron su adhesión 32 Estados miembros de la Comisión, 14 se opusieron, incluido los occidentales, y siete se inclinaron por la abstención.

Durante esta jornada concluyeron las deliberaciones sobre el tema 13 referido a los derechos de los niños, que dio paso a los debates de los puntos 14 y del 16 al 20 de la agenda.

Mañana continuarán las deliberaciones en torno a los temas 14 y del 16 al 20 y se procederá a la votación de proyectos bajo el punto ocho, referido a la cuestión de la violación de los derechos humanos en los territorios árabes ocupados, incluida Palestina.

Ello augura nuevos enfrentamientos en la Comisión. □



Nunca antes en la historia tuvo lugar una confrontación similar. Ella opone un sistema de poder económicamente muy poderoso y militarmente hegemónico a la abrumadora mayoría de la humanidad, representada por el inmenso ejército sin armas que en cientos de ciudades de Europa, América, Asia, África y Oceanía toma las calles el 12 de abril para advertir que las cosas no pueden seguir así. Aquí, Córdoba, Argentina.