

Washington launches slaughter of Iraqi people

Join protests to demand: Bring the troops home now!

We urge you to join the March 22 anti-war demonstration in New York and other similar actions across the world to demand: Stop Washington's slaughter in Iraq! All

EDITORIAL

imperialist forces out of the Mideast! Bring the troops home now!

In his March 17 war speech, U.S. presi-

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Iran, too, is in U.S. rulers' crosshairs

BY PAUL PEDERSON

U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell has ratcheted up Washington's drive towards war against Iran with further accusations that Tehran is close to becoming a "nuclear

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Workers in Detroit back fight to stop Calero's deportation

BY DON MACKLE

DETROIT—During a visit to this city in early March, Róger Calero built solidarity with his fight against deportation at a campus rally protesting Washington's drive to an invasion of Iraq, and at several other events, including an evening public program and a luncheon meeting with meat packers at their workplace.

Calero is an editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*. He has faced the threat of deportation since December 3, when he was seized by agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at Houston Intercontinental Airport. At the time, he was returning to the United States from reporting assignments in Cuba and Mexico.

The March 5 peace action at Wayne State University involved some 200 students. After talking to protesters about his case, Calero was invited to the Student Center to speak at an Antiwar Café. Ben Duell, a campus activist who helped to organize Calero's tour, introduced him and encouraged participants to build support for the defense campaign.

In his presentation Calero described the facts of the case, and explained that many other immigrant workers also face victimization. The agents who detained him, he said, cited his plea-bargain conviction in 1988 for selling one ounce of marijuana to

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In one of the most cynical statements in the history of imperialism, U.S. president George Bush told Iraqi children and other civilians that his army "will deliver the food and medicine you need" after it launches a massive slaughter in their country. The White House chief made this statement in his war address to the nation the evening of March 17. This is the same White House that has denied millions of Iraqi children food and medicine for the last 12 years, causing hundreds of thousands to die.

The Democratic and Republican parties

NEWS ARTICLE

immediately closed ranks behind Bush as he gave Iraqi president Saddam Hussein an ultimatum to leave his country within 48 hours or face the "full force and might of our military."

Likewise, the parliament of the United Kingdom voted overwhelmingly March 18 for war. By a 396 to 217 margin, British legislators rallied for Prime Minister Anthony Blair's proposal to join Washington in the full-scale military assault on Iraq and against an "antiwar motion."

Bush's March 17 televised speech fol-

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Join the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists over the March 22–23 weekend in campaigning to bring the troops home now! Take part in the New York antiwar march Saturday, March 22. Volunteer your labor to help ready new offices for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and new editorial facilities for Pathfinder Press. Talk politics with socialist workers from across the U.S. who, in face of war and depression, will meet to discuss joining with fighting co-workers to find ways to resist the bosses' offensive at home, abroad, and along the borders.... *...and on Sunday, March 23, come to a program to discuss:*

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Hundreds rally to support Tyson strikers



Militant/Betsy Stone
Several hundred workers and their supporters rally on March 16 in Jefferson, Wisconsin, in solidarity with Local 538 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union on strike against Tyson Foods. The walkout began February 28 after the union voted to reject Tyson's demands for concessions in wages, health-care costs, pensions, and more. The next plant-gate rally is set for Saturday, March 29. For more information on the strike contact www.tysonfamiliesstandup.org

Cuban revolutionary in U.S. jail is deprived of rights in 'hole'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Gerardo Hernández, one of five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in U.S. jails, is undergoing the strictest form of isolation in what is called "the Box" in the federal prison at Lompoc, California.

Hernández has been in the "hole" since February 28. It was around the same time

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Bethlehem Steel terminates benefits

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The bosses of Bethlehem Steel Corporation announced February 7 that they plan to terminate health and life insurance benefits for virtually all the company's 95,000 retired workers and their dependents.

The announcement nearly doubles the number of workers whose health benefits have been eliminated following liquidation of bankrupt steel companies. LTV Steel Corp. ended medical insurance for its 85,000 retirees and their dependents after that company went belly-up one year ago.

Bethlehem, which filed for bankruptcy in October 2001, said the benefits would end March 31 as part of a deal for a buyout by the Cleveland-based International Steel Group. The bosses cited rising pension and health-care costs as the reasons for dumping workers' medical coverage.

Today the company employs 12,000 workers, down from 300,000 at its peak.

"Expectations of lifelong benefits were made during an era when health-care costs were lower and the company's financial condition was stronger," stated Bethlehem chief executive Robert Miller.

Leo Gerard, the president of the United Steelworkers union, blamed "illegal imports and unfair trade" for the wave of bankruptcies in the industry. The union's website calls for government subsidies to the U.S. steel bosses so that "American steelworkers can receive the same kinds of protections" that their counterparts in Europe, Asia, and Latin America "have enjoyed for years."

More than 30 U.S. steel companies have gone broke since 1997, including Bethlehem, National Steel, Wheeling-Pittsburgh, and LTV, reported *Fortune* magazine on July 8 of last year. Over the past two decades the number of workers in the U.S. steel industry has shrunk from nearly 300,000 to 151,000.

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As Washington launches its war against Iraq, dozens of FBI spy aircraft fly over cities across the United States. At the same time, U.S. warplanes may be patrolling New York City.

New York police officials have drafted a "security plan," named "Operation Atlas," that involves combat aircraft flying overhead. The cops will request the Defense Department dispatch the planes and the Federal Aviation Administration will supposedly limit patrols to the airspace over Manhattan, according to the *New York Times*.

More than 80 FBI spy aircraft are already flying the U.S. skies. They are equipped with electronic surveillance equipment that allows agents to snoop on people while driving, walking the street, making cell phone calls, or standing inside buildings.

Several planes, dubbed "Nightstalkers," are outfitted with infrared equipment that enables agents to follow people and vehicles in the dark. The aircraft, which include helicopters, also fly "photography missions," according to the Associated Press.

As part of the snooping operations,

agents plant bugs or listening devices in cars, buildings, and along streets.

The planes are propeller-driven civilian models designed with an "unobtrusive appearance" to fly at low speeds. While the spy agency will not reveal where the planes are being used, they have been observed snooping on individuals. In Bloomington, Indiana, for example, "residents spotted a Cessna aircraft flying overhead at roughly the same times every day for more than a

Chicago janitors protest job cuts



Militant/Betsey Stone

Chanting "Unity yes! Equity no!" hundreds of workers marched in Chicago March 15 to protest a 20 percent job cut by Equity, one of the largest landlords in the area. The members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1, whose contract expires April 6, are demanding paid sick days, prescription drug coverage, and a wage increase.

FBI increases use of spy planes for domestic snooping

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Congress approved a \$20 million increase for the FBI's aviation budget this year in which nearly 90 percent of its flights are spy missions.

The FBI has been using spy planes since 1938. In 1975 the agency organized a major snooping operation using the aircraft during its assault on Native Americans at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Over the last year, however, spying by plane has jumped.

week," CNN reported March 15. After initially denying the spy operation, local FBI agents claimed they were involved in a "terrorism investigation."

No warrants are legally required for the FBI to snoop on people from the air. An unnamed FBI official insisted the aircraft are used to target specific individuals for whom the agency has a warrant to spy on cell phone calls, rather than spying on random citizens.

The 'Militant' announces staff changes

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

The *Militant* staff has two additions. Argiris Malapanis has been named editor of the paper and Sam Manuel is joining the writing staff.

Sam Manuel will serve as the *Militant*'s new Washington, D.C., bureau chief. Working out of Washington, he will be providing *Militant* readers with coverage on developments both there and in the broader Southeast region. Manuel's reporting in

recent years has ranged from struggles by farmers in the South to the fight for women's rights to demonstrations against Washington's war moves in the Mideast. Manuel will continue to build the socialist movement in Washington, D.C.

Manuel, 53, has been active in the socialist movement since 1970. Over the past year he worked as a garment worker in the Washington area and was a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE); he previously worked there in a meat packing plant. In the 2002 elections he was the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Washington, D.C., where he gained ballot status, spoke in candidate debates, and won a broad hearing. Last fall he was actively involved in organizing a speaking tour for Cuban revolutionary leaders Victor Dreke and Ana Morales throughout the South.

We are welcoming back Malapanis to the *Militant* staff. He has moved from Miami, where he helped build the socialist movement for the past three years, working as a meat packer. In Miami he was, among other things, active in work in defense of the Cuban Revolution. He has also been part of Young Socialists delegations

to meetings and gatherings of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, collaborating with anti-imperialist youth organizations from around the world. In the 2000 elections he was the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida.

As a *Militant* field correspondent, Malapanis covered political developments in Florida, from the campaign to free five Cuban revolutionaries locked up in U.S. prisons to struggles by garment workers. He also led international reporting trips, such as covering the events in Yugoslavia following the October 2000 popular upsurge that brought down the Milosevic regime. Last July he headed a reporting team to Venezuela to provide firsthand coverage of the sharply polarized events there.

Malapanis, 44, previously served on the *Militant* staff from 1991 to 2000, and edited the paper for several years. He has also traveled to the Balkans, the Middle East, Korea, Cuba, and other parts of South America to cover political developments for the paper. Martín Koppel, the previous *Militant* editor, remains the editor of the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial* and a member of the *Militant* staff.

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THE MILITANT

U.S. troops out of Korea!



Washington is driving towards war with north Korea, threatening Pyongyang with bombers and keeping a force of over 37,000 troops to divide the Korean peninsula. The 'Militant' explains the roots of Washington's war moves and stands with the workers and farmers of Korea as they fight to reunite their country.

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Palestinians resist Israeli attacks in Gaza

U.S. student killed by Israeli bulldozer as she defends Palestinian houses

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Israeli forces have taken more than 50 Palestinian lives in a series of bludgeoning attacks in the Gaza Strip beginning mid-February, and have moved to entrench themselves in the territory's northern tip. The offensive came as Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon—the head of a new coalition government stamped by parties that have called for stronger measures against the Palestinian resistance—reiterated his support for a U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

On March 16 in southern Gaza Rachel Corrie, 23, a student from Washington State, was crushed and killed by an Israeli bulldozer as she tried to stop it from destroying a Palestinian house. Corrie was one of a group of international solidarity activists.

As the Israeli forces repeatedly attacked, Washington restated its support for the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, as long as it comes into being on U.S. imperialism's terms. The announcement by U.S. president George Bush was aimed at dampening popular anger against Washington among the majority Arab nations in the Middle East and northern Africa, as U.S. imperialism headed toward war on Iraq.

"A Palestinian state must be a reformed and peaceful and democratic state that abandons forever the use of terror," Bush said. "The government of Israel, as the terror threat is removed and security improves, must take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable and credible Palestinian state and to work as quickly as possible toward a final status agreement." Bush said his administration will unveil its "road map" towards such a Palestinian-Israeli settlement once the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) confirms the appointment of a prime minister. This new PNA officer will serve alongside Yasir Arafat, the PNA's president. Both Bush and Sharon have stated they refuse to hold further talks with Arafat.

Meanwhile, using the cover of "antiterrorism," Tel Aviv went full steam ahead with its offensive in the occupied territories. The day of Bush's press conference, Israeli forces shot dead five Palestinians in the city of Jenin, bringing to 10 the number of Palestinians killed in the northern West Bank in less than 24 hours. In the Gaza Strip, Israeli assaults spread.



International Solidarity Movement
Rachel Corrie talks to bulldozer driver in Rafah March 16, trying to persuade him not to destroy a Palestinian home. Moments later the bulldozer crushed her, wounding her fatally. The Israeli military stated that Corrie was "in a combat zone."

Home to 1.2 million Palestinians and 7,000 Israeli settlers, Gaza covers 360 square kilometers (139 square miles), less than one-fifteenth the area of the West Bank. Tel Aviv has built a security fence around it. Although Israeli armed forces have staged frequent attacks, until this recent escalation they had not targeted the impoverished area for the same kind of systematic occupation that has been seen in the West Bank.

Israeli officials claim that the trigger for the Gaza offensive was the destruction of an Israeli tank by fighters belonging to the Muslim organization Hamas. Four soldiers died in the February 15 strike.

On February 19, Israeli forces killed 10 Palestinians. Two weeks later, on March 6, another incursion took 11 lives—eight in a single explosion. Witnesses said that a tank had fired a shell at a crowd watching firefighters douse a blaze in a furniture store.

That night Israeli forces began entrenching themselves in the Jabalya refugee camp and the adjacent town of Beit Lahia, home to thousands of Palestinians. Officers declared the "security zone" would prevent rocket attacks from the area. The forces would remain, said commander Col.

Yoel Strick, "until the Palestinians understand this launching has a very high price."

They have also cited the March 5 suicide bombing in Haifa, on Israel's northern coast, to justify their escalation. That explosion killed 16 people.

Israeli officials have also vowed to continue their campaign of assassinations. "No terrorist chief, with the emphasis on Hamas, will be immune," said Israeli defense minister Shaul Mofaz. He spoke the day after helicopters blew up a car in Gaza, killing four people, including prominent Hamas member Ibrahim al-Maqadma.

Destruction of Palestinian homes

The devastation of the occupied territories by such attacks was registered in a report by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. In the two years prior to October 2002, Israeli assaults demolished or damaged beyond repair a total of 639 houses in the Gaza Strip, said the UN report.

The impact of such destruction is compounded by the economic collapse in the occupied territories. According to a World Bank study, 60 percent of Palestinians, or almost 2 million people, are living on less

than \$2 a day. More than half of the Palestinian population is unemployed. A UN study reported that many Palestinians have turned to subsistence farming to survive.

The onset of a capitalist depression, and the war, is also taking a toll on the Israeli economy. Tel Aviv announced March 11 that average wages had dropped 5.6 percent. "Wages fell in every sector of the economy and all four quarters of the year," noted the *Ha'aretz* daily. Employment in construction and food declined by 4 percent.

The "economic crisis...is ripping Israeli society apart," said Sharon during negotiations to form a coalition government. "The differences between us are dwarfed by the murderous hatred of the terror organizations," he said, and "by the threat of war in the gulf and strikes against Israel."

With 68.5 percent of eligible voters casting ballots, the January 28 election had the lowest turnout in Israeli history. Sharon's Likud Party increased its haul from 19 to 37 seats, while the Labour Party, whose representatives had walked out of the previous government, precipitating the election, dropped from 25 to 19.

Likud's coalition partners include the National Religious Party, which calls for expanding the settlements in the occupied territories.

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that "some leaders of the ultranationalist National Union Party"—another coalition partner—"advocate annexing the West Bank and forcing Palestinians into Jordan."

Sharon himself has frequently spoken in support of just such a "solution," describing Jordan as the future "Palestinian state."

The threat of the "transfer" of whole populations—the time-honored answer of the Israeli colonial-settler state to the inhabitants of Palestine—"hovers over all the discussions" among Palestinians, wrote Israeli journalist and former Knesset member Uri Avnery in a March 8 report for the *Gush Shalom*, or Israeli Peace Bloc.

Palestinians: Israel will use Iraq war

Avnery observed that many Palestinians are convinced that the Israeli rulers will use a U.S.-led invasion of Iraq to try to deal them a more lasting blow. Palestinians talk about the threat of being forced into Jordan, he said, or of being deported from "one part of the occupied territories to another."

The Sharon government has backed the U.S.-led march to an invasion of Iraq, as well as Washington's preparations for war against Iran. According to an article in the February 27 *New York Times*, the Israeli defense minister stated that "after Iraq, the United States should generate 'political, economic, diplomatic pressure' on Iran. The article continued, "Israel regards Iran and Syria as greater threats and is hoping that once Saddam Hussein is dispensed with, the dominoes will start to tumble."

U.S. officials have said that they would allow Tel Aviv to retaliate if an Iraqi missile strike were to take Israeli lives, reported the March 7 *Los Angeles Times*. "The American shift" on the issue, Paul Richter wrote, is a sign "of how much more closely the U.S. and Israel are coordinating in the buildup to an increasingly likely war than they did the last time around."

U.S. interrogators torture Al Qaeda suspect

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. officials are using methods of physical and mental torture in their interrogations of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, accused by U.S. officials of being the "terrorist mastermind" of Al Qaeda.

Mohammed, who has been demonized in the U.S. media, was captured by Pakistani cops during a March 1 raid in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. U.S. officials allege that as Al Qaeda's "operational commander" he planned "the September 11 attacks on the United States," according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Officials told the *New York Times* that "they expected the Central Intelligence Agency to use every means at its disposal, short of what it considers outright torture, to try to crack him." Mohammed's "American captors are likely to use tactics like sleep deprivation and psychological manipulation in trying to pry information from him," reported the big-business daily on March 4.

Other Al Qaeda members have been treated with similar methods, it noted, including keeping them "in awkward physical positions for hours."

Amnesty International stated on March 5 that "despite claims to the contrary by U.S. officials, the use of sensory deprivation (hooding), prolonged physical restraint (shackling) and denial of needed medical care are all characteristic elements of torture, and like psychological torture, are prohibited under international law."

Such tactics, supposedly falling short of "outright torture," are in regular use at the U.S.-controlled Bagram air base in Afghanistan, reported the *Washington Post* last December.

The paper's sources said that prisoners are held in metal shipping containers and subjected to "stress and duress techniques"

that include forcing them to stand or kneel for hours with black hoods over their heads or spray-painted goggles covering their eyes, and bombarding them with lights for 24 hours while depriving them of sleep.

Two inmates who were beaten while in U.S. custody at the air base died last December. The autopsies concluded that both were homicides, and that "blunt force trauma" was involved in the deaths. One of the prisoners died of a heart attack and the other of a blocked artery in the lungs.

Currently there are 3,000 "terrorist suspects" imprisoned at the Bagram air base and elsewhere. Washington has sent some of them to Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan, whose governments are notorious for using torture. "I am allowed to use all means in my possession" to force confessions, a senior Moroccan intelligence official told reporters. "You have to fight...resistance at all levels.... We break them, yes."

Democratic senator John Rockefeller of West Virginia told CNN that he "wouldn't rule out" sending Khalid Shaikh Mohammed to one of the countries where torture is legal. "I wouldn't take anything off the table where he is concerned," he said.

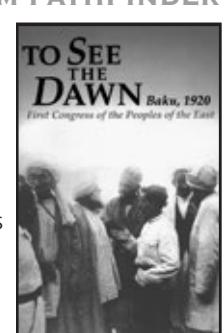
Amnesty International has also raised criticism of the abuse of inmates at the U.S. prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. One detainee at Guantánamo tried to commit suicide March 3—the 20th such attempt since the U.S. government began bringing captives there.

Most of the 650 people incarcerated at Guantánamo, which is illegally sited on Cuban land, were captured during Washington's war on Afghanistan. They come from more than 40 countries. Many have been jailed for more than a year, subject to interrogation by the military without charges, trial, or access to lawyers.

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U.S. Supreme Court upholds California's 'three-strikes' law

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld California's "three-strikes" law, rejecting appeals by men sentenced to 50 years and 25 years for petty theft. The ruling "shows the absolute inhumanity of the highest court of the land," Geri Silvasaid of the Los Angeles-based Families to Amend California's Three Strikes (FACTS) told the UK *Guardian*. FACTS organized a 250-strong protest on March 8, three days after the rulings.

Two challenges to the constitutionality of the 1994 legislation were involved in the 5-4 decisions. One was brought by Leandro Andrade, who had been sentenced to 50 years without parole for stealing children's videotapes. The other was filed by Gary Ewing, who got 25 years for taking some golf clubs. The two men charged that their convictions violated the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, barring "cruel and unusual punishment."

Ewing had previously appealed unsuccessfully to the California Court of Appeals. In Andrade's case, on the other hand, the Ninth Circuit appeals court in San Francisco had ruled in the convicted man's favor, stating that the sentence was "grossly disproportionate."

The California district attorney, William Lockyer, a Democrat, argued before the Supreme Court that this decision violated provisions of the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which had narrowed the grounds for allowing such appeals to cases where "lower-court judges have unreasonably applied a clearly established federal law," reported the *Christian Science Monitor*.

"Two consecutive terms of 25 years to life," wrote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in the majority opinion, is "not an unreasonable application of our clearly established law." The approach to sentencing, she added, "is generally a policy choice to be made by state legislatures, not federal courts."

How is it justice?

"Every year since March 7, 1994, we've held a march and rally to protest this law," Gail Blackwell, FACTS director of operations, told the *Militant* in a phone interview. "How is it justice to give someone 50 years for stealing videotapes?"

"We have on our database lists of people whose 'third strike' includes being charged for stealing milk for their babies," she said. "One person's 'third strike' was a charge of falsifying his DMV [Department of Motor Vehicles] registration."

In opposing the decision, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California called for "voters...to take

responsibility for fixing" the law. A statement from the ACLU, which was co-counsel in Andrade's legal defense, said the organization was working "for three strikes reform at the ballot box" that would limit its application to "violent offenders."

These laws were enacted in the 1990s as part of a wave of "get-tough-on-crime" legislation. In that period the federal government and 26 states approved legislation mandating prison sentences of 25 years to life for third convictions.

In 1996 U.S. president William Clinton bragged before an audience of the Fraternal Order of Police, "We passed the three-strikes-and-you-are-out law. We are indicting people, convicting people under it." His administration also sponsored bills in 1994 and 1996 that restricted the right of appeal for prisoners, and rolled back Fourth Amendment protections from illegal search and seizure.

The legislation also extended capital punishment to include 60 federal crimes. "We expanded the death penalty," Clinton told the same crowd.

More than 7,000 people are serving 25 years or longer under California's three-strikes law. They include more than 300 inmates whose third strike was a misdemeanor. Some inmates have been locked up for 25 years to life for pilfering a bottle of vitamins, a magazine, or some other cheap commodity.

The laws have been applied dispropor-



Members of Families to Amend California's Three Strikes hold protest on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January 21 to protest 'three-strikes' law.

tionately to working people, particularly Blacks and Latinos. In California for example, African-Americans, who are 7 percent of the state's population, comprise more than 31 percent of its prisoners, and 44 percent of those locked away under the "three-strikes" legislation.

"Blacks and Mexicans get 25 years for possessing crack cocaine the size of your finger tip while a white person would get one year or even probation for being caught with much more cocaine powder," Blackwell told the *Militant*. "Many people jailed for petty offenses don't have the money to hire a lawyer to get them out" and clear their name, she said, "so they cop a plea and wind up with a police record."

"My brother was put away for half a gram of cocaine. He was an addict, but he had a job, a family, and he never hurt anyone," said Jose Verdugio, a warehouse worker in California, in an interview with *FreshAngles*, an online magazine. "Now he is buried alive, and he won't get out until he is 80."

The three-strikes laws and other legislation have resulted in a ballooning U.S. prison population, now standing at more than 2 million. In 2001 some 6.6 million people were caught up in the prison system, whether on probation, behind bars, or on parole. At 3.1 percent of the adult population, that makes Washington the world's top jailer.

U.S. farmers demand government relief

BY WENDY LYONS
AND BILL KALMAN

ANAHEIM, California—At the closing session of the annual National Farmers Union convention, held here from February 28 to March 3, delegates passed a resolution urging the government to launch a plan of action to address the "social and economic crisis" in rural America.

The gathering drew several hundred farmers. The larger capitalist farmers who prevail in the leadership of the National Farmers Union (NFU) dominated the proceedings. At the same time, a layer of working farmers, who are largely dependent on the labor of themselves and family members, also attended.

The NFU has 300,000 members in 26 states. It concentrates on lobbying efforts, and on assisting farmers to take measures to protect their incomes from the fluctuations of markets and weather. NFU assistance to farmers include obtaining insurance and setting up cooperatives. The organization is most strongly based in Okla-

homa, the Rocky Mountain region, North and South Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana.

The California Farmers Union, which hosted the convention, was formed by activists in the California Dairy Campaign, which organized several milk dumps in the past to protest the low prices they receive from milk processors.

Increasing concentration of capital

Statistics made available at the convention show the increasing concentration of capital in the countryside.

While farms with annual sales of more than \$100,000 are only 16.2 percent of all units, they account for more than 57 percent of total farm acreage.

Small-scale cattle and hog producers are under pressure from large corporations and their factory farms. Cattle feedlots with a capacity of 1,000 or more head account for 83 percent of the U.S. total.

The number of hog farms "has fallen steadily since 1980," reported a bulletin of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Some 75 percent of hogs are now held in farms of 2,000 or more animals, it added.

USDA statistics show that while the average prices received by farmers for their outputs have slightly decreased over the last decade, the average prices paid by farmers for their inputs during the same time period have increased by more than 25 percent.

Farmers who produce different commodities, including dairy, raisins, livestock, poultry, corn, and wheat, used most of the formal and—especially—the informal sessions to discuss the worsening conditions they face. Many described living and working on a razor's edge, threatened by the loss of their land as they are squeezed between the high cost of inputs they must purchase from capitalist monopolies, and the low prices they receive for their produce from processors and marketers.

Farm crisis in California

Scott Magneson, a dairy farmer from Merced County, California, said, "The price I get for cheese has fallen below a dollar—that's about \$8 per hundredweight. A few years ago we were receiving \$16 per hundredweight. My full cost of production is \$13 per hundredweight."

Magneson said that western dairy farmers are forming a new organization, the American Dairyman's Federation, to try to get more control over processing and marketing. The new organization will not allow processors on the board of directors, he said.

"The governor of California should declare a state of emergency in Fresno County, to allow federal loan programs for raisin growers," said a raisin farmer from the San Joaquin Valley, who asked that his name not be used. "One-third of the state's 5,500 raisin growers have gone out of business, and another third will go under within two years."

"Our income is less than \$1,175 an acre, down from a high of \$3,500 an acre and less than half the cost of production," he said. "What growers need is protection from creditors and lenders until we can work this through."

"Four thousand agricultural workers have lost their jobs," he added.

Herman Coleman, a retired Black farmer from Arkansas, whose family still farms cotton, rice and soybeans, said that the government's Farm Bill, signed by President Bush on May 13 last year, "benefits the largest farms, run not by family farmers but by business interests. The government is deliberately forcing not only Black farmers out of business, but also white farmers," he said. "All farmers must unite, or the biggest corporations will pick us off. Black farmers have just been the easiest targets."

Proposals for protectionist measures and American nationalist themes were prominent topics in the convention agenda and in speeches by NFU leaders. The convention called for the implementation of "country-of-origin" labeling of food.

Another resolution advocated restrictions on the import and use of milk protein concentrate (MPC), a powdered milk product that is often used as a substitute for fresh milk by large food processing companies.

According to the NFU, "imported MPC displaces the domestic milk market and depresses milk prices."

Wendy Lyons is a meat packer in Vernon, California. Bill Kalman works in a meat processing plant in San Lorenzo, California, and is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 120.

From Pathfinder

In New International no. 6

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Larry Seigle

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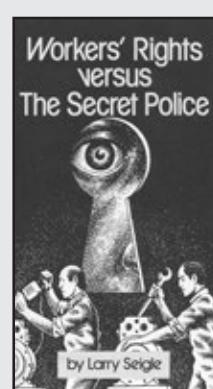
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U.S. professors press for visas to Cubans

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The U.S. State Department has delayed granting visas or refused entry into the United States to a number of Cubans scheduled to participate in academic exchanges this month. Two Cuban students who have been invited to speak on campuses around the country, and nearly all of the 103 Cuban scholars who were planning to attend the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference at the end of March in Dallas, have not yet received visas.

Eugene Ruyle, Professor of Anthropology at California State University in Long Beach, who is coordinating the visit of the two Cuban youth leaders, reported that he has asked other professors who invited these students to their campuses to call the State Department and demand the visas be granted right away. Organizers of the LASA gathering have organized a similar campaign.

Ernesto Fernández Sánchez, a member of the National Secretariat of the Federation of University Students of Cuba, and Estela Zulueta Valdés, a law student at the University of Havana, were set to arrive on March 19. They have received invitations from 29 professors to speak to students at campuses around the country under the auspices of the Committee for U.S.-Cuban Academic Exchange based at California State University in Long Beach.

During their month-long visit, the two students are scheduled to speak on campuses in Washington, D.C., and a number of states, including California, New Mexico, Iowa, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Texas.

"It's really crucial to have interchange between Cuba and the United States, in spite of the U.S. embargo against Cuba," said Eugene Ruyle, who chairs the academic exchange committee. "As an educational event it is very important to overcome the prejudice from the media and distorted views about Cuba which many people have."

Ruyle said he called the State Department March 17 and had spoken to Sarah, an official there, who told him that the visas are awaiting clearance from the State Department. The two students had applied for the documents on January 20.

A meeting for the students is planned on the Long Beach campus on March 20. It will go ahead whether or not the State Department has granted the visas in time.

"We have printed the flyers, reserved the room, and everything else," Ruyle said, "students on campus are still planning to organize a meeting to talk about Cuba, and U.S.-Cuba relations."

Ruyle has written a letter to supporters of the tour around the country, urging "all

inviting professors and local tour organizers to launch a public protest based on phone calls to the State Department against this attack on academic freedom and the exchange of ideas."

The letter asks the professors to call the State Department and request that Fernández and Zulueta be promptly granted visas to the United States. It also urges tour supporters to contact congressmen, senators, and other elected officials, and asks them to make similar calls to the State Department. Ruyle said he has asked professors and elected officials to call Sarah at the State Department directly at 202-663-1264. Those who need more information about this campaign, said Ruyle, can

contact him at 562-985-5364 or at uscae@mail.com.

More than 100 Cuban scholars, including 40 invited to present papers, were planning to participate in the LASA event set for March 27-29. To date only four or five have of them have received a visa. The State Department reported that 67 have been cleared but none of them have actually received visas. Another 16 are pending, while 19 had their visa requests denied based on the Immigration and Nationality Act, which allows the president to deny entry to foreigners whose presence is deemed "detrimental to the interests of the United States."

Reid Reading, an organizer of the LASA

conference, said in a March 17 letter that "time, and seats on international flights are just too short" for 44 of the scholars who would have been traveling on grants from LASA to attend—a result of the delays by the State Department.

According to Reading, despite occasional delays, nearly every one of the invited Cuban scholars has made it to the conference in past years. That is not the case this time, however. "For LASA 2003, it is clearly a different ballgame: people are being summarily denied visas without interviews," Reading wrote.

Kelly Shannon, a spokeswoman for the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs, said in a statement:

Continued on Page 14

Cuban deprived of rights in prison 'box'



Cubans in U.S. prisons, from left: René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, Ramón Labañino. Gramma

Continued from front page

that the other four Cuban patriots convicted along with Hernández were thrown in solitary confinement without any reason given by prison authorities. The five men are being held in five different prisons thousands of miles apart where they are serving sentences ranging from 15 years to life. Hernández is serving a double-life sentence.

After repeated requests to Assistant U.S. Attorney Caroline Heck Miller's office in Florida, Hernández' attorney, Leonard Weinglass, was granted permission to visit his client on March 16. According to Weinglass, Hernández is confined to "the Box" within the Special Housing Unit—a hole within the "hole"—and witnessed the torture he is undergoing.

Hernández is confined 24 hours a day to a cell with no windows, and only a slot in the metal door through which food is passed. The cell is only big enough for him to walk three steps, with a toilet and a concrete bed with a thin pad.

Prison authorities have taken his clothes

from him forcing him to wear just underpants and a shirt. The light in his cell remains switched on 24 hours a day. Despite his protestations he has been denied his mail and reading material. The Cuban revolutionary has unsuccessfully tried to register a complaint under the prison's established procedures but has been told that there are no complaint forms available.

The five—Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, René González, Fernando González, and Hernández—were framed up and convicted in a U.S. federal court in June 2001. They were in the United States to collect information on the activities of counterrevolutionary groups that have a history of launching violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

Unable to prove any illegal acts by the five men, the federal government pushed through convictions on a series of conspiracy charges, including conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage, and to commit murder.

leader of a popular uprising that brought a revolutionary government to power in 1983 in the former French colony of Upper Volta. Following the revolution the country was renamed Burkina Faso.

Galjour said that the increasing attacks on the rights of immigrants spurred her to get active. "Books and papers like these will help them know what's going on and not feel isolated," she said.

At several of the tables SWP and YS members gave soap-box speeches to groups of people who gathered around. These were often followed up with one-on-one discussions in-between the speeches.

"I don't understand why there is a U.S. base operating in Guantánamo, Cuba, that has prisoners from Afghanistan," asked Viviana, a student from Chile, who now lives in North Carolina. She was glad to find a table with information about Cuba's socialist revolution.

Participants at the peace marches in Washington, D.C., and in San Francisco bought just over 600 copies of the *Militant* and \$1,300 in Pathfinder titles. At the anti-war actions protesters also purchased a total of 15 subscriptions to the *Militant* and one subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Among the best selling titles were *Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq; Cuba and the Coming American Revolution; Malcolm X Talks to Young People; Socialism and Man in Cuba; and Che Guevara Talks to Young People*.

Leonard Weinglass has condemned the action by prison authorities, and the treatment of Hernández, as "completely unjustified." Noting that the five have been "model prisoners," Weinglass has urged supporters of the five men to write the Federal Bureau of Prisons and demand their immediate release from solitary confinement.

Messages demanding the five be released from solitary confinement should be sent to Kathleen Hawk Sawyer, Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, 320 First St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20534; tel: 202-307-3198; fax: 202-514-6620; e-mail: webmaster@bop.gov

\$75,000 Militant Fund March 10–May 12

| | Goal |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Atlanta GA | 4,100 |
| Birmingham AL | 2,500 |
| Boston MA | 2,800 |
| Charlotte NC | 3,000 |
| Chicago IL | 4,200 |
| Cleveland OH | 1,100 |
| Des Moines IA | 900 |
| Detroit MI | 3,000 |
| Houston TX | 3,200 |
| Los Angeles CA | 7,500 |
| Miami FL | 1,600 |
| New York NY | 7,500 |
| Newark NJ | 3,800 |
| Northeast PA | 1,600 |
| Omaha NE | 900 |
| Philadelphia PA | 3,000 |
| Pittsburgh PA | 3,000 |
| San Francisco CA | 7,000 |
| Seattle WA | 6,000 |
| Tampa FL | 1,800 |
| Tucson AZ | |
| Twin Cities MN | 3,000 |
| Utah | 800 |
| Washington DC | 2,200 |
| Western CO | |
| U.S. Total | 74,500 |
| Australia | 1,000 |
| Canada | 3,460 |
| France | |
| Iceland | 150 |
| New Zealand | 1,500 |
| Sweden | 400 |
| United Kingdom | 500 |
| International Total | 81,510 |

Hundreds snap up 'Militant' at protests

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, DC—"This whole war is planned to get access to oil," said 22-year-old Reina Galjour from North Carolina, who joined the peace demonstration here on March 15. At a literature table set



Socialists promote revolutionary literature at March 15 protest in Washington, D.C.

Youth leaders back antideportation fight

BY ARLENE TATE
AND OLYMPIA NEWTON

HAVANA—"The delegates of this assembly, meeting here in Havana, Cuba, March 4–7, 2003, demand that the U.S. government stop its efforts to deport Róger Calero, associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a magazine published in New York, and a permanent resident of the United States for the past 12 years." That's how a resolution, adopted here by leaders of progressive youth organizations from around the world, begins. The statement was approved unanimously at the plenary session of the 16th General Assembly of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) on March 6.

"Supporters of freedom of the press, immigrant rights, and civil liberties have launched an international campaign to win restoration of Calero's rights," the resolution concluded. "WFDY endorses this campaign. The U.S. government is carrying out similar attacks against thousands of immigrant workers in that country. This is part of Washington's war on workers' and democratic rights in the U.S. as they carry out a drive towards imperialist war against Iraq. It's an example of the violence that the U.S. government has used against the working class and other popular sectors in that country for decades. Progressive youth around the world have an interest in pressing for the restoration of Calero's rights as well as the rights of thousands of other immigrants facing similar attacks. A victory in Calero's case would be a victory for all young people fighting imperialism around the world."

Leaders of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba, Young Socialists and Young



Delegate from Syria addresses World Federation of Democratic Youth assembly in Havana, March 6. Union of Syrian Students was among groups that backed Calero.

Communist League in the United States, and Casa de la Juventud in Paraguay collaborated in drafting and presenting the resolution to the Assembly.

More than 150 youth leaders from around the world attended the gathering, representing 81 organizations in 70 countries (see article on page 7). Among them, delegates from 31 WFDY affiliates in 30 countries on all five continents signed up

as endorsers of Calero's antideportation fight. They include representatives of Casa de la Juventud of Paraguay, Youth of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador (JFMLN), National Union of Algerian Students, All India Youth Federation, Korean Youth League of Japan, Communist Youth League of China, Young Communist League of the United Kingdom, Socialist Youth Association of Ger-

Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Continued from front page

an undercover cop. The INS had previously waived the conviction in granting him permanent residency, which he has held for 13 years.

Attacks on immigrant rights are part of Washington's broader offensive against workers' rights, Calero said—an offensive that proceeds alongside the march to war in the Middle East and elsewhere.

"As the bombing of Iraq intensifies, the chauvinistic campaign to divide us on the basis of who has papers and who doesn't will also intensify," Calero said. "We will do the opposite of what the rulers expect us to do," he stated, "by demanding our rights, organizing, fighting to win, and making them pay the highest political price for their actions."

Calero had discussed the same points the previous day in his remarks to the eight workers who assembled to meet him outside an Eastern Market meatpacking plant. He talked about his experience as a meat packer in the Dakota Premium plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota, where he had worked before taking up his position at *Perspectiva Mundial*. He had been part of a union-organizing drive there. Several of the Eastern Market workers compared their own situation to his account of that ongoing fight against speedup and for dignity.

Bosses' tactics of divide and rule

Much of the discussion focused on the question of racism and how the bosses try

to divide workers—Black, Latino, white, men, women—to prevent them from coming together to fight against common injustice on the job.

Fernando Reyes, a worker at the plant who had helped set up the meeting, also spoke at the March 2 public meeting, making an appeal for financial contributions.

Alberto Villagómez, a production worker in a tortilleria in southwest Detroit, welcomed the 30 participants to the event. He had helped to arrange the venue of Holy Redeemer Church, a prominent church in the area. Villagómez had also been instrumental in securing two articles about the case in *El Central*, a local newspaper, in the weeks before Calero's visit.

"I hope you take time to look at the letters of support for Calero we have on display and enjoy the refreshments," said Villagómez. "We hope for your support and financial contributions as well."

Calero shared the speakers platform with Ignacio Meneses, a co-coordinator of the National Network on Cuba and the US/Cuba Labor Exchange. Meneses condemned the ongoing attack on democratic rights under the guise of the "war on terrorism." He also spoke about the case of the five Cuban political prisoners currently incarcerated in jails in five separate states. Meneses called on all those present to support the fight for freedom of the Cuban five, and to oppose the authorities' recent move to lock them all in solitary confinement.

"The first victory in my case was get-

ting out of jail," said Calero. The INS agents had locked him up in their Houston detention center the day of his arrest. He gave the credit for his release to the dozens of people who sent letters of protest to the Houston INS office.

The defense committee is still calling for letters protesting the deportation attempt to be sent to the INS offices in Houston, Calero said. He reported that the authorities had said they would not contest his lawyers' motion to transfer the hearing on his case from Houston to Newark, New Jersey, where he lives. The new date for the hearing—postponed from March 25—has yet to be announced.

"What Róger is fighting for is not just his case, but for thousands of others who face similar situations," said Reyes in motivating a collection that netted around \$400.

"We need to collect funds to help pay for the phone calls, producing materials, and making it possible for Róger to continue his travels and get the word out as broadly as possible about his case," Reyes said. "The success of this struggle depends on people like us."

many, African National Congress Youth League of South Africa, and the General Union of Palestinian Students.

A number of these youth leaders described similar struggles they've been involved in against deportations and harassment of immigrants by the U.S. and other imperialist governments.

Humace Oudit, national coordinator of the Progressive Youth Organization of Guyana, affiliated with the ruling People's Progressive Party in that country, for example, pointed to the experience of thousands of Guyanese immigrants living in the United States who are facing increased harassment from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. "Last year," he said, "260 Guyanese immigrants in the U.S. were deported back to Guyana, mainly for minor convictions that are fifteen or twenty years old. The Guyanese government received a letter from Washington earlier this year stating that we should be prepared to accept another 2,000 deportees in 2003. Most of these people have lived in the United States the majority of their lives and already served their time."

Oudit stated that the Guyanese government initially refused to accept the deportees, on the grounds that there is not gainful employment for them in Guyana, where the economy is largely based on agriculture. In retaliation, Oudit said, the U.S. embassy in Guyana stopped issuing visas for entry to the United States to all Guyanese residents. "This move forced the government to accept the deportees."

Elias Romero of the Youth of FMLN immediately identified with Calero's case. "Many Latinos in the United States are in the same situation," he said, "so it's important to keep fighting and to win international solidarity." He took a stack of brochures with him to distribute to his organization in El Salvador and also to send to his friends and political collaborators in the United States.

Ignacio González of Casa de la Juventud, who helped win backing for the Calero fight at this meeting, described a campaign in Paraguay to press authorities to drop frame-up charges of kidnapping against leaders of the Patria Libre party. The WFDY assembly included support for this defense effort in one of its resolutions.

Attacks on Koreans in Japan

Calero's case also struck a chord with the delegates of the Korean Youth League (KYL) in Japan. "There have been more than 500 attacks and threats against Korean residents in Japan since September," said Moon-Dal Seung, a vice chairman of that organization. The KYL set up a display during the assembly with information on their activities and photos of the attacks. Ri Sang Yong, a chairman of the KYL, described some of the photos to *Militant* reporters. They included that of a bullet shot into the national headquarters of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, the parent organization of the KYL; a threatening letter sent to the of-

Continued on Page 7

Róger Calero defense campaign tour

The Róger Calero Defense Committee is organizing a speaking tour for Calero in cities around the country to broaden the fight to stop his deportation by the INS. Below is the schedule for the next stops in the tour. Requests for additional tour dates can be made to the committee.

Atl./Birmingham March 18–20

Washington, D.C. March 21–22

Philadelphia March 23–24

For more information or to send a contribution, contact the Róger Calero Defense Committee, c/o PRDF, Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007; phone/fax (212) 563-0585.

•Send messages to INS district director Hipolito Acosta demanding the exclusion moves against Calero be dropped. Messages can be faxed to (281) 774-5989 or mailed to Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX

77060. Copies should be sent to the Róger Calero Defense Committee.

•Sign and distribute petitions demanding the INS drop the exclusion of Calero. A brochure and petition are available from the defense committee (e-mail: calerodefense@yahoo.com).

•Funds are needed to meet legal and other expenses. Defense campaign backers in every city need to raise thousands of dollars for these needs. Organize phone calling for donations, seek honoraria for speaking engagements, and take collections at public meetings. The goal is to raise more than \$50,000 by March 25, the date of Calero's deportation hearing. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Ohio students support Calero fight

BY ROSA GREEN
AND CAREN LISKER

CLEVELAND—"This event was organized to get the word out to students and the community about the campaign Mr. Calero is waging against his deportation," said Rob Rivera, president of the Ohio State University (OSU) National Lawyers Guild chapter, at a meeting in Columbus, Ohio. Rivera opened the March 6 meeting held at the university campus, which drew 15 people.

"What I am facing is something that thousands of immigrant workers are facing," said Calero, "but there are those who resist and know they deserve better and have a right to organize a union." Ken Robinson, an immigration lawyer in Co-

lumbus, spoke along with Calero in support of his case.

Several students at the meeting decided to support the campaign, including a young woman who will seek endorsement for the case from the feminist club on campus.

Supporters of Calero's antideportation fight organized a meeting of about 25 people the next night at La Sagrada Familia Church in Cleveland.

The speakers panel included Alicia Alvarado, director of the Office of Hispanic Ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland; Don Bryant of the Cleveland Peace Action Board; and Andrew Bonthius of the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia. Close to \$500 was raised for the defense campaign.

Int'l youth leaders discuss response to imperialist war

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

HAVANA—The World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) held its General Assembly here March 4–7. The gathering was followed by a one-day international consultative meeting on plans for the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students.

WFDY, with some 160 affiliates in more than 100 countries, is the main international organization that has sponsored the world youth festivals. The last two—held in Cuba in 1997 and Algeria in 2001—attracted thousands of youth from around the world. Many were engaged in popular movements for national liberation, worker and peasant struggles, and student protests. They took part to speak about their struggles, learn about those of others, and discuss how to advance the fight against the imperialist plunder of the world.

The meeting was hosted by the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba. Otto Rivero, first secretary of the UJC, gave a presentation in the opening session. He detailed the Battle of Ideas, which the UJC is at the center of leading in Cuba today. This is a political offensive to deepen the involvement of working people and youth in the Cuban Revolution. Central to it is broadening the educational and cultural opportunities available to the Cuban people. The goal is to counter the imperialist ideological drive promoting capitalism as the future. The Battle of Ideas is also aimed at addressing the social inequalities that have widened, as Cuba has become more directly exposed to the capitalist world market since the collapse of preferential trade relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe more than a decade ago. It includes combating the demoralization among certain layers of youth who were not working, had dropped out of school, and in some cases had become involved in petty crime. Cuba's revolutionary leadership is working to win these youth back to productive participation in society and to build revolutionary consciousness among them by involving them in a number of educational campaigns and providing them with jobs, Rivero said.

More than 150 representatives of 80 organizations in 70 countries took part in the meetings. At the center of the proceedings was discussion on how to respond to the U.S.-led war drive against Iraq.

Iraklis Tsavdaridis, the outgoing WFDY president and a leader of the Communist Youth of Greece (KNE), said in his report to the first plenary session that

Washington's assault on Iraq "will be bloodier than its previous wars against Yugoslavia or Afghanistan." U.S. imperialism is planning this war to control land, resources, and roads in the Mideast and suppress any resistance to their plans, he stated. "We are categorically against a U.S. war by unilateral military force or a war by France and Germany through the United Nations. The Iraqi people must be free to choose their leaders."

Debate on the imperialist war

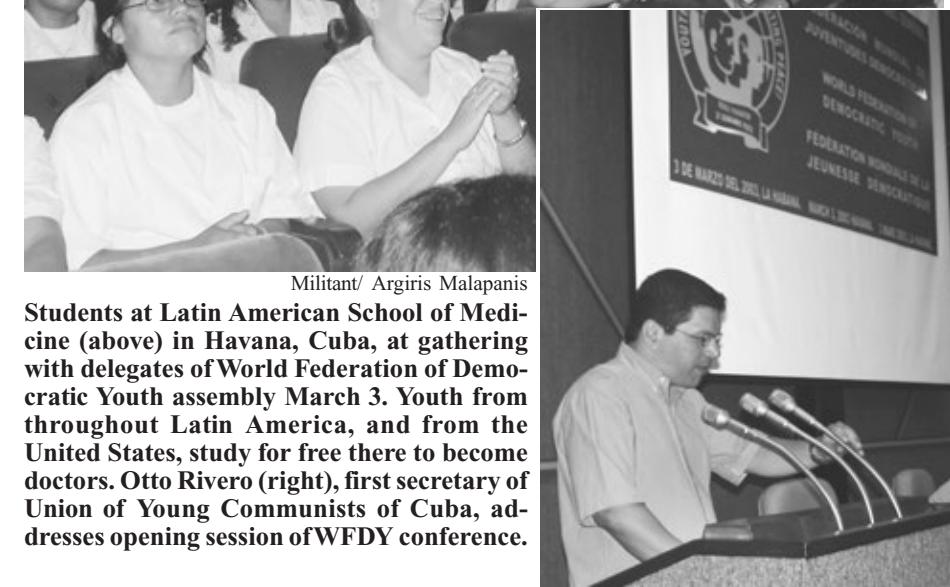
Other delegates expressed a variety of views. A number backed the idea that the French or German imperialist rulers are more benign than their competitors in Washington and can be counted on as part of the "peace camp."

A draft resolution on "Peace, Disarmament and International Security" presented to the Assembly by Vesselina Vateva of the Union of Communist Youth of Spain, for example, stated, after referring to the mass peace demonstrations in February: "Under the circumstances, the majority of countries, including prominent U.S.-allied nations such as Germany and France, oppose a U.S. war, call on Iraq to comply with UN resolutions faithfully, and continue to make earnest efforts for its peaceful solution."

"How can you say that?" responded Ogous Dorked of the Turkish Communist Party Youth. "Germany and France are likely to be part of the war when the shooting begins." He and others tried to amend this clause but had a hard time reformulating it to anything acceptable.

Anne Howie of the Young Socialists in the United Kingdom proposed the sentence in dispute be struck from the resolution. "Paris and Berlin have been as responsible as London and Washington in the last 12 years for destroying much of Iraq through their support for many UN resolutions imposing sanctions, no fly zones, etc.," she said. "They are imperialist powers simply vying with the U.S. government over control of the strategic oil platform Iraq sits on." She also said that the sentence in dispute gave support to pressing Iraq to comply with UN resolutions, which have been instruments in the hands of imperialism in its assault on Iraq. It also backed disarming Iraq, which is a violation of its sovereignty. Others expressed dissatisfaction with this clause, which was finally dropped.

A similar debate took place over the draft of the main political resolution, presented to the assembly by Tsavdaridis. The draft wasn't strong enough in placing re-



Militant/ Argiris Malapanis
Students at Latin American School of Medicine (above) in Havana, Cuba, at gathering with delegates of World Federation of Democratic Youth assembly March 3. Youth from throughout Latin America, and from the United States, study for free there to become doctors. Otto Rivero (right), first secretary of Union of Young Communists of Cuba, addresses opening session of WFDY conference.

sistance to the imperialist assault on Iraq at the center of tasks for progressive youth today, a number of delegates said.

Kil Chol Hyok of the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) argued for substantial changes on Korea in the draft. He proposed a stronger condemnation of Washington's and Tokyo's war threats against the DPRK and support for the "sunshine policy" agreed in principle as a starting point for negotiations on normalizing relations between north and south Korea. His proposals were adopted.

"There's an urgent need to make the center of any political declaration opposition to the imperialist war on Iraq that's already unfolding," said Olympia Newton of the Young Socialists in the United States, under this point. "This is one of a number of wars to come, and we need to explain the reasons for it. This is not a war by Bush but a war led by the entire U.S. ruling class. At the center of it is interimperialist competition between Washington and London on one hand and Paris and Berlin on the other on how to redivide the world. It's a war taking place as the capitalist system worldwide has entered a prolonged depression. As part of participating in peace actions and other manifestations against the war, like the high school walkouts in the United States yesterday [March 5], progressive youth organizations need to present demands with an anti-imperialist character like 'Bring the troops home now,' 'UN inspectors out of Iraq,' and 'End the imperialist trampling of Iraq's sovereignty.'"

A delegate of the Communist Youth of Denmark said later that the demand to get UN inspectors out of Iraq "wouldn't be understood in the antiwar movement today."

On the initiative of the Young Communist League USA, the delegates approved and sent a statement of solidarity with the March 5 U.S. high school strike against the war in the which was called by the National Student and Youth Peace Coalition.

Varying views towards Iraqi regime

Another point of debate was about the character of the Iraqi regime and its relevance to the fight against imperialist war.

Abdullah Muhsen of the Iraqi Democratic Youth Federation (IDYF), and Haider of the General Union of Students in the Iraqi Republic (GUSIR), said that Washington's main justification in the war is changing "the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein." This regime is the reason Iraq has acquired weapons of mass destruction, Muhsen stated. While IDYF opposes the war on Iraq, delegates need to be more sensitive to calls by exiled Iraqi groups to overthrow Saddam Hussein, he argued. Similar views were expressed by others. "The main problem in Iraq was and is Saddam Hussein," argued Paul Levy of the Young Communist League in the UK.

Anne Howie of the YS in the UK responded to these statements. "Progressive youth should defend unconditionally Iraq's sovereignty and side with the right of the Iraqi people and government to defend Iraq from an imperialist onslaught," she said.

Delegates did not agree to amendments proposed by IDYF to the main political

declaration, or the resolution on international solidarity, calling for "support of the Iraqi peoples' right to overthrow Saddam Hussein." A separate statement on Iraq presented by GUSIR, however, which included this stance, was adopted at the end.

How can sex discrimination be fought?

In addition to the main political declaration, the assembly discussed and approved specific resolutions from each region of the world and thematic resolutions on questions such as health, education, employment, and young women.

This last resolution addressed the fight for equal participation of women in work and in social and political life, as well as full reproductive rights. Under discussion, Aristos Damianou of the National Democratic Youth Organization (EDON) of Cyprus said that support for the struggle for women's rights today is fine. "But we also need to recognize that at the end of the day men and women are exploited equally under capitalism and this condition of exploitation can't be ended until the system is overthrown." He proposed that such a statement be added to the draft.

A delegate of the African National Congress Youth League of South Africa, an outspoken young woman, reacted strongly. "I can't believe you say that," she stated. "Progress towards women's equality can be made as a result of progressive struggles before capitalism is overthrown."

When another delegate tried to defend Damianou, this ANC Youth League representative exploded. She started saying loudly that this is not true, you can fight for women's rights now. "They did it in Cuba while they were fighting in the revolutionary struggle! Read this book," she stated, showing around the new Pathfinder title *Marianas in Combat*, which she had bought the previous day at the conference and had virtually finished reading (see ad on page 8). She also proposed that another amendment be made to the resolution, backing affirmative action not just in society but also in progressive youth groups.

The assembly approved various declarations of solidarity, including with the Palestinian struggle, national liberation movements from Western Sahara to Puerto Rico and Kanaky (New Caledonia), and the fight to free five Cuban revolutionaries jailed in the U.S. on trumped up conspiracy charges to commit espionage and murder.

The assembly elected WFDY's main leadership body, the General Council, which picked the federation's officers. The Communist Youth of Portugal was elected to WFDY's presidency and the UJC of Cuba to the post of general secretary.

Long road towards next youth festival

Harchand Singh of the All India Youth Federation chaired the March 8 consultative meeting on the next youth festival. Discussion focused on some of the lessons of the festival in Algiers. Singh said that there are no definite proposals yet on where to host the next festival, which is tentatively projected for 2005. That decision was left for a future international meeting.

WFDY backs Calero campaign

Continued from Page 6

fices of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan; a photo of the remains of a Korean-language school after it was burned down in an act of arson; and a picture of the uniform of a Korean-language schoolgirl that was torn by a Japanese military officer, according to Ri.

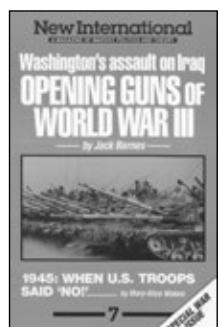
Moon-Dal explained that the spate of attacks against Korean residents in Japan comes after a minister of the Japanese Security Agency announced in September, in response to the escalating threats against north Korea by the U.S. government, that the General Association of Koreans in Japan would be targeted by Japanese national security forces as a threat to Tokyo's national security. "In addition to the official policies of discrimination against Koreans by Tokyo," he said, "Japanese government officials have stated that Koreans living in Japan should live as Japanese, not as Koreans." Korean residents in Japan, the overwhelming majority of whom are descendants of Koreans forcibly taken to Japan to fill labor shortages during the Japanese imperialist occupation of the Korean peninsula before and during World War II, are not considered Japanese citizens as many as three generations after their family's emigration. In addition to explicit policies

of discrimination in housing, education, job, and language rights, Korean residents in Japan must carry noncitizen identification cards with them at all times, Moon-Dal stated, or face a fine equivalent to \$1,700 or jail time. "Most Koreans living in Japan are victims of Japanese imperialism, just as all Koreans living on the Korean peninsula are victims of Japanese and U.S. imperialism."

The KYL has organized protests against these attacks and has solidarized with Koreans elsewhere in the world who face similar challenges. Moon-Dal pointed to recent marches in south Korean cities, and in Los Angeles and New York, against the U.S. military presence on the Korean peninsula. These erupted last fall after two U.S. GIs were acquitted by a U.S. military court of killing two Korean school girls with a tank.

"The threats and violence against Koreans living in Japan are a direct result of Japanese and U.S. imperialism's policies of hostility toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and of the Japanese government's policies of discrimination against Koreans living in Japan," Moon-Dal said. "Similarly, the case of Róger Calero is a direct result of U.S. imperialism's policies of discrimination against immigrants living there."

From Pathfinder Books for the working-class campaign against imperialism and war



Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq

in New International no. 7

By Jack Barnes

The feature article in this issue of *New International* explains that the devastation of Iraq in the 1990–91 Gulf War did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class battles that will decide whether the horrors of World War III are inflicted on humanity or a road is opened by working people to a socialist future of international human solidarity.

Other articles tell the hidden history of the GI revolt at the end of World War II, when U.S. troops refused to allow themselves to be used to crush spreading anticolonial struggles, and discuss the roots of the militarization drive Washington set in motion at the end of the 1970s. \$12.00

Capitalism's World Disorder Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

By Jack Barnes

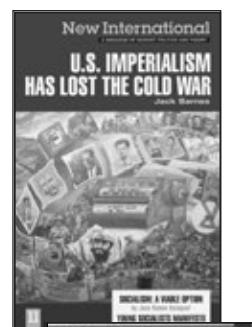
Today's spreading economic and social crisis and acts of imperialist aggression are not the product of something gone wrong, Barnes explains, but the lawful workings of capitalism. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle and selfless action of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also Available in French and Spanish. \$23.95



The Changing Face of U.S. Politics Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

By Jack Barnes

This is a handbook for young people who, in growing numbers, are repelled by the racism, women's inequality, and other intolerable social relations reproduced every day by the normal operation of capitalism on a world scale. Also available in French and Spanish. \$23.00



U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

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in New International no. 10

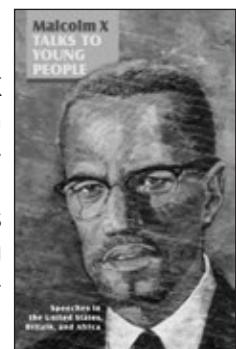
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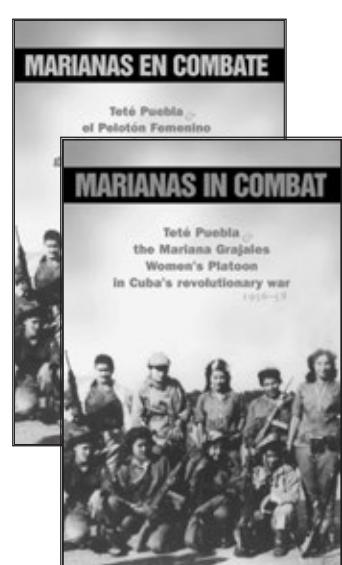
Malcolm X Talks to Young People

"All over the world, it is young people who are actually involving themselves in the struggle to eliminate oppression and exploitation. They are the ones who most quickly identify with the struggle and the necessity to eliminate the conditions that exist."

—Malcolm X, January 1965

This new expanded edition includes, for the first time in print, the entire December 1964 debate presentation by Malcolm X at the Oxford Union and February 1965 speech at the London School of Economics. It contains other new material complementing four talks given to young people in Ghana, the United Kingdom, and the United States in the last months of Malcolm's life. The book concludes with two memorial tributes by a young socialist leader to Malcolm X. The new English-language edition was released with the first-ever Spanish-language edition, *Malcolm X habla a la juventud*. \$15

Celebrate Women's History Month

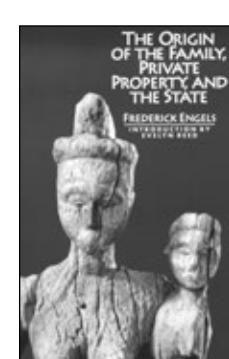


Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956–58

By Teté Puebla

Brigadier General Teté Puebla, the highest-ranking woman in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, joined the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1956, when she was fifteen years old. This is her story from clandestine action in the cities, to serving as an officer in the victorious Rebel Army's first all-women's platoon. For nearly fifty years, her life has been intertwined with the fight to transform the social and economic status of women, a cause of action inseparable from Cuba's socialist revolution. Also available in Spanish. \$14.00

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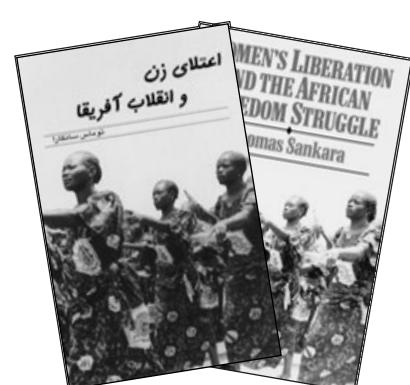


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By Evelyn Reed, Joseph Hansen, Mary-Alice Waters

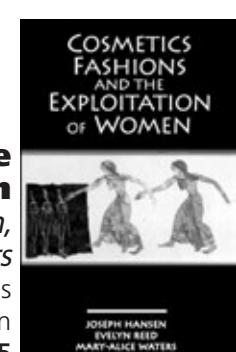
How big business plays on women's second-class status and social insecurities to market cosmetics and rake in profits. \$14.95

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By Thomas Sankara

"There is no true social revolution without the liberation of women," explains the leader of the 1983–87 revolution in Burkina Faso.

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U.S. Senate votes to ban abortion procedure

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Chipping away at women's hard-won right to abortion, the U.S. Senate voted March 13 to ban the procedure known medically as intact dilation and extraction. Under the bill's provisions, a doctor could face criminal charges for performing an abortion for the first time since it was de-criminalized under the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision.

Other methods could also be targeted using the bill's open-ended wording, say abortion rights advocates.

Sponsored by Republican senators, the measure gained a number of Democratic votes in passing 64 to 33. It will be put before the House sometime over the next month.

If it passes there, as is expected, it will go to President Bush. He left no doubt of his intention, praising the bill as "an important step toward building a culture of life in America."

The measure was given the misleading name of "Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act." The emotive term, used by opponents of a woman's right to choose in targeting the procedure, is not recognized by the American Medical Association or the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Intact dilation and extraction, first developed in 1992, involves the removal of a largely intact fetus.

Many doctors consider that it brings fewer risks to the pregnant woman than the more common method of dilation and evacuation (D&E), in which the fetus is removed in pieces.

The bill's wording is vague enough to cover not just dilation and extraction abortions, but those using D&E, said Kate Michelman, the head of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL). "This bill is written in such a way as to apply to not just one procedure," she said. "It would substantially affect the majority of abortions done after the first trimester."

The bill's vagueness and inclusion of criminal penalties for doctors, Michelman said, would have a chilling effect on the willingness of doctors to perform abortions.

"This legislation not only endangers women's health, but is unconstitutional, deceptive, and dangerous. And it is only the beginning of a coordinated strategy to rollback a woman's right to choose and insert government into our private lives," stated Michelman.

Defenders of a woman's right to control her body have vowed to challenge the constitutionality of the law. An earlier attempt at a similar ban in the state of Nebraska was narrowly overturned by the Supreme Court in 2000.

Opponents of women's right to abortion have targeted the late-term procedure since the mid-1990s. Both houses of Congress passed a similar bill in 1996, only to face a veto by President Clinton. He assured legislators, however, that he would have signed if it had included exceptions to the ban in cases where continuing with the pregnancy would threaten the woman's health.

A number of capitalist politicians in both parties have sought to obscure their opposition to abortion rights as a whole by focusing on this medical procedure as somehow particularly objectionable. "Abortion takes life away," said House majority leader William Frist during the Senate debate, "and partial-birth abortion does so in a manner that is brutal and barbaric and morally offensive to the mainstream medical community."

Limits to abortion access

Since the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision, made in the wake of the rise of the women's liberation movement and a wave of protests for abortion rights, capitalist legislators at both federal and state levels have enacted a number of measures aimed at taking the option of abortion out of reach for millions of women.

These restrictions and growing costs have had the greatest impact on working-class women.

These politicians' piecemeal approach

has been dictated by the fact that public support for abortion rights has grown over the three intervening decades, while hard-line opposition has shrunk.

In 1976 the federal government denied the use of Medicaid funds for abortion.

Since 1982 the number of abortion providers in the United States has dropped by 37 percent. Over that time there has been shift away from hospitals providing abortion services towards private clinics doing so.

Today 86 of the 276 metropolitan areas in the United States and almost all non-metropolitan areas have no abortion provider. As a result, 8 percent of women who had abortions in the year 2000 were obliged to travel more than 100 miles for the service, while another 16 percent had to travel between 50 and 100 miles.

Women in rural areas are placed at a particular disadvantage by such restrictions. The abortion rate among women in the countryside is half that of women who live in the cities, according to a 2001 survey by the Alan Guttmacher Institute in New York.

Parental notification for minors

In the 1992 decision *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the Supreme Court expanded the powers of states to enact a wide range of restrictions on access to abortion. Forty-two states have laws requiring parental notification and/or consent for minors seeking abortions.

In addition, a number of state governments have passed laws requiring mandatory waiting periods; placed bans on public funding to clinics that provide abortion; and prohibited insurance plans from covering abortion procedures.

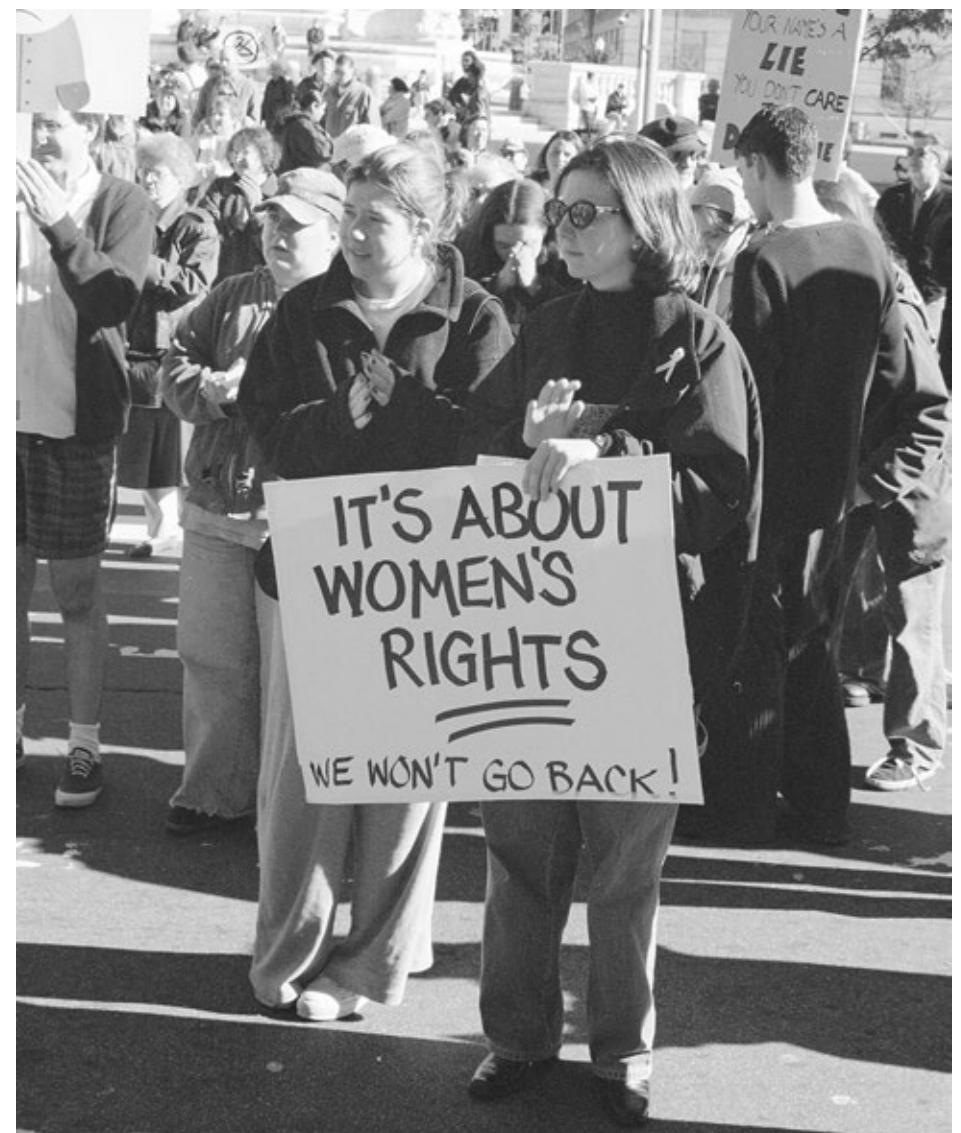
Despite the barriers that have been constructed, it is estimated that one in every three women will have an abortion before they reach the age of 45. Some 1.3 million such procedures were performed in the year 2000.

Since the legalization of abortion the number of women who die each year as a result of an abortion procedure has dramatically declined, from 130 in 1970 down to an average of fewer than 10 a year over the past decade.

Killer of abortion doctor convicted

Meanwhile, James Kopp was convicted on March 18 for the 1998 killing of abortion provider Dr. Barnett Slepian. Kopp admitted he shot Slepian, an obstetrician and gynecologist in Buffalo, New York, while was in his kitchen with his wife and two of his children.

Claiming he acted because Slepian was "going to kill children the very next day,"



Militant/Tony Lane

Some 500 people joined rally in Buffalo, New York, October 1998, to protest killing by rightist of Dr. Barnett Slepian. The struggle around women's right to choose abortion has been marked by such street protests and by violent rightist attacks.

Kopp pursued a defense of justifiable homicide. His lawyer, Bruce Barket, presented his client as a martyr of the anti-abortion movement.

"If the pro-life movement is going to claim that unborn children are children entitled to rights like anyone else, and they know these children are being brutally and systematically put to death," Barket said, "then simply writing your congressman ends up treating abortion like any other issue. You clearly need to do more than write a check and say a prayer."

Kopp will be sentenced on May 9 and faces 15 years to life in prison. He will also face a federal trial on charges of interfering with the right to an abortion. That charge carries a sentence of 25 years to life.

Slepian's murder came at the end of a near decade-long campaign of barricades and attacks on health-care facilities and doctors providing abortion.

In the early 1990s the rightist group Operation Rescue began an aggressive campaign to mobilize anti-abortion activists to shut down abortion clinics.

After scoring an early victory in Wichita, Kansas, in 1991 the rightists were pushed back in city after city as they were outmobilized by fighters to defend abortion rights.

In the middle of this confrontation, a half million people marched in Washington, D.C., in April 1992, the largest demonstration ever to defend a woman's right to choose.

Abortion rights is key question for working class

The following are excerpts from "Why Marxists champion abortion rights," an article that appears in the pamphlet, *Abortion is a Woman's Right!* by Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed. The article first appeared in the Dec. 10, 1982, issue of the *Militant*. See ad for pamphlet on page 12. Copyright ©1985 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Sub-headings are by the *Militant*.

BY JOSÉ PÉREZ

Marxists approach all questions from the standpoint of the interests of the working class. On the question of abortion, we have to begin by recognizing that women are not a group of "individuals," but an oppressed sex. The majority of women in the United States are also exploited as workers.

At the heart of women's oppression is the denial of their right to control their reproductive capacities. That's what the abortion struggle is about—the democratic right of half the population to decide for themselves if and when they will bear children....

Only by examining the ways women are oppressed can we understand why this issue is so important, not only for women, but for the working class as a whole.

The majority of women in the United States work outside the home. When they get off the job, they must put in long hours of unpaid overtime taking care of house-

hold chores.

On the job, women earn less than two-thirds of what men earn. The yearly median wage of women who work full time is \$6,760 less than what men earn. Multiplying this by the forty-five million women in the labor force, we get \$300 billion that the capitalists make—simply by not paying women as much as men.

For Black women and Latinas, who are triply oppressed as workers, women, and members of oppressed nationalities, the wage disparity is even greater.

Whereas white males have a median weekly salary of \$380, Latinas earn only \$209.

These differentials go against the interests of the entire working class, because it puts a heavy downward pressure on everyone's wages. Only the bosses profit from this.

In addition, discrimination on the basis of sex—as on the basis of race, nationality, or language—is used to pit working people against each other, placing big obstacles on the road to a united struggle against the exploiters....

Women enter nontraditional jobs

Since the rise of the women's movement at the end of the 1960s, thousands of women have entered many jobs they were traditionally excluded from. Women coal miners, truck drivers, steelworkers, and

auto workers have given the lie to the claim that these are "men's jobs" only.

In Central America, Nicaraguan women played a key role in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship. A number of women reached the rank of commander—the highest military rank among the insurgent forces—and played important military leadership roles. In El Salvador, we see a similar process.

Restriction of women's right to control their own bodies is one of the most fundamental and barbaric methods of ensuring that women "stay in their place."

Without the ability to determine whether and when to bear a child, a woman's entire life is circumscribed by her reproductive capacities.

At any time, no matter what her economic circumstances or individual goals, she can be forced to carry a pregnancy to term. Once she gives birth, she will bear the major responsibility for bringing up the child.

Since other forms of contraception are not 100 percent effective, it's no wonder that millions of women choose to have an abortion at some time in their lives.

Without the option of doing this, women's right to full humanity does not exist. Without being able to fully exercise control over their bodies, all other rights—including the woman's right to life itself—are jeopardized.

Washington launches a slaughter in Iraq

Continued from front page

lowed a war summit he held with the British and Spanish prime ministers at the Azores islands in the Atlantic. There, the three representatives of the imperialist powers made it clear a war would be launched whether or not it was ratified by the United Nations Security Council. The events highlighted the sharpening conflict between the major imperialist powers—with Washington and London at one pole and Paris and Berlin at the other—over who will control the vast resources and strategic facilities of the Mideast.

With more than 250,000 U.S. and British troops in the Arab-Persian Gulf ready to attack, UN officials ordered the 56 “weapons inspectors” to leave Iraq. The U.S. and other governments withdrew their diplomatic staff out of several front-line countries, telling their citizens to leave the area.

Washington’s war plans, as described by Pentagon officials, call for unleashing 3,000 bombs and missiles in the first two days of an intense air campaign. About 1,000 Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps strike and support planes will be operating from five aircraft carriers and from airfields in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and other countries.

Over the past 12 years, U.S. and British planes have gradually devastated Iraq’s air defenses, other military installations, and communications facilities. They have done so by carrying out bombing patrols under the cover of enforcing “no-fly zones” imposed over the nation’s north and south.

In recent weeks the bombings have escalated sharply. These attacks are part of a war that has begun well before the official launching of the offensive. U.S. Special Forces and CIA operatives have been moving freely in the north, preparing the ground for the invasion in territory controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdish Democratic Party.

As of March 15, the U.S. military had assembled 225,000 troops in the Gulf region, more than half of whom were assembled in the north of Kuwait, ready to drive across the border into southern Iraq.

Officers of the U.S. Marine Corps will direct a 300-mile push to Baghdad, U.S. officials reported. The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, under the command of the British Royal Marines, has been assigned to take Basra, Iraq’s second-largest city.

Lt. Gen. James Conway, commander of the U.S. Marines, will have command not only of the 65,000 U.S. marines but the 25,000 British troops stationed there. He will also have more than 150 attack planes and helicopters at his disposal. The British forces and units of the U.S. army will supply some of the tanks and artillery, including rockets, that the marines lack.

The U.S. and British troops that will play the key role in the drive to Baghdad virtually have the north of Kuwait to themselves, the *Wall Street Journal* reported March 17, adding that “the emirate looks like an occupied land.” The Kuwaiti government, it noted, has “even barred its own citizens from the northern half of the country, where some 150,000 American and British troops gear up for war.”

All capitalist politicians behind Bush

As the imperialist war moves accelerated, politicians from both big-business parties have rallied behind commander-in-chief Bush. “Those of us who have ques-

tions about the administration’s approach, including this senator, will now be rallying behind the men and women of our armed forces to give them the full support that they deserve as it now seems certain we will soon be at war,” said Sen. Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, following the president’s March 17 war speech.

The capitalist media followed suit. The liberal *New York Times* editors, while taking issue with what they called Bush’s wrong-headed diplomacy, declared after the March 17 speech, “Once the fighting begins, every American will be thinking primarily of the safety of our troops, the success of their mission and the minimization of Iraqi civilian casualties. It will not feel like the right time for complaints about how America got to this point.”

In his March 17 speech, Bush reiterated the main themes of the U.S. rulers’ propaganda campaign to justify a war in the Mideast. He accused the Iraqi regime of possessing “weapons of mass destruction,” and argued that it “continues to possess and conceal” them. “Using chemical, biological or, one day, nuclear weapons, obtained with the help of Iraq,” Bush stated, “terrorists could fulfill their stated ambitions and kill thousands or hundreds of thousands of innocent people in our country or any other.” He added, “The United States has the sovereign authority to use force in assuring its own national security.”

Over the past weeks, the Bush administration and its backers have won a majority of U.S. public opinion. According to a *Washington Post-ABC News Poll* conducted after the president’s speech, for example, seven in 10 people supported the call to launch an attack on Iraq—up from 59 percent two weeks earlier. The figures indicated that “the public’s preference for a UN-endorsed war also has faded into the background following the collapse of efforts” to pass a UN Security Council war resolution, the *Post* reported March 18.

Many people, including among those who have previously questioned the U.S. government’s course, have been “coming around to the president’s view,” the *Post* indicated.

Conflict between imperialist powers

The drive toward a war in the Mideast has been marked by widening conflicts between Washington and London, on one hand, and Paris and Berlin, on the other, with each imperialist power pursuing its own vested interests in a conflict over control of that strategic region.

The day before Bush’s March 17 speech, the U.S. president held a one-hour meeting with prime ministers Anthony Blair of the United Kingdom and José María Aznar of Spain on an air base in the Portuguese islands of the Azores. Bush emerged from the summit declaring that the Iraqi government had 24 hours to “cooperate fully” with UN resolutions calling for Iraq’s “disarmament.” The deadline, he indicated, was a “moment of truth,” not just for Iraqi president Saddam Hussein but for the other governments on the United Nations Security Council.

Bush castigated the United Nations, saying it had failed in many conflicts over the past decade—in Rwanda, in Kosova, and now in Iraq.

A March 17 *Wall Street Journal* editorial noted that the “Azores summit was pitched as offering one more final chance for Saddam Hussein to disarm, but it is closer to the truth to say that its real purpose was offering one more last chance to Jacques Chirac.”

Writing in the Newark, New Jersey, *Star Ledger*, staff writer John Farmer described the immediate targets of the Azores ultimatum as “France and Russia, the two Security Council members that have threatened to veto military action against Iraq, and six smaller uncommitted members.”

The day after the Azores meeting, French government officials repeated their threat to veto a U.S.-British resolution approving a military attack on Iraq. “France cannot accept a resolution that sets an ultimatum and envisages an automatic use of force,” said Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin.



Marines stationed in Kuwait near Iraqi border conduct live-fire exercises with machine gun on day that Bush issued ultimatum to Iraq.

Against the U.S.-British proposal, Paris proposed a 30-day deadline for Baghdad to “disarm” before approving an assault on Iraq. German chancellor Gerhard Schröder said the UN “weapons inspectors” should be given more time.

Russian president Vladimir Putin said he was for “solving the problem exclusively by peaceful means. Any other development would be a mistake,” he said, “leading to victims and destabilization of the international situation as a whole.”

The French government, along with Berlin, opposes the “regime change” advocated by Washington, London, and Madrid. Having concluded hundreds of lucrative trade and investment deals with the Iraqi government, the French imperialist rulers favor “disarmament” under their auspices, carried out with UN cover, rather than by U.S. military action, which would ice out French interests.

Under the United Nations regime advocated by Paris, Iraq has for the past 12 years been subjected to sanctions that have strangled its economy and armed “inspectors” to violate Iraq’s sovereignty at will.

With Paris and its allies on the UN Security Council rejecting the Azores ultimatum, U.S. and British representatives withdrew their resolution approving an invasion.

“The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours,” said Bush in his televised speech.

Several governments have lined up with Washington. Prime Minister John Howard of imperialist Australia stated that the 2,000 Australian troops in the region were prepared to join the offensive. The government of Poland said it would place 200 specially trained troops under U.S. command.

In the war zone, “The U.S. military is receiving tangible help from all the Persian Gulf monarchies, Jordan, and Egypt,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported. With the exception of Syria, “most Arab governments—even those that maintain public opposition to the invasion—have quietly positioned themselves to be in America’s good graces after a war.”

The regime in Saudi Arabia, which has previously stated that it would not permit its territory to be used by U.S. forces for an invasion of Iraq, has reportedly turned over at least two new airports to the U.S. military, and allowed an expanded U.S. presence at the Prince Sultan air base near Riyadh, the capital.

The Egyptian government, despite huge antiwar protests in that country, has opened the Suez Canal to U.S. forces and permitted overflights by war planes, the *Journal* reported.

In Turkey, government leaders are scrambling to get back on board the imperialist war train. On March 17, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer joined the country’s generals in calling on the government to allow U.S. troops to use the country as a base for an invasion from the north. On March 1 the parliament had rejected a proposal to station 62,000 U.S. troops there, a vote that caught Washington off guard.

Following that vote, the government said that it would close off the country’s air space to U.S. and British planes in the coming war.

After repeatedly stating that they expected the vote to be reversed, U.S. officials changed tack, saying that a \$6 billion “aid” package offered to Ankara in return for the military agreement was off the table.

Turkey’s armed forces should not carry out their announced plans of intervening in northern Iraq, they warned, without the go-ahead from Washington.

The Turkish government has already moved substantial forces southward with the aim both of stanching the kind of flow of Kurdish refugees into its territory that was seen in the 1990–91 war, and of blocking any moves that might lead to the formation of an independent Kurdish state. Millions of Kurds live in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, where they constitute an oppressed nationality. In Turkey they are subject to brutal discrimination and even denial of their identity by the government and military.

U.S. collaboration with Kurd leaders

Washington has moved to collaborate more closely with Kurdish armed groups in areas controlled by the Kurdish Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, whose leaderships have oriented to Washington to advance their aims. In face of Ankara’s zigs and zags, U.S. officials have also begun to shift their rhetoric, publicly voicing more sympathy with the Kurdish national struggle.

The Azores summit statement, for example, made a point of paying tribute to “all the Iraqi people—its rich mix of Sunni and Shiite Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and all others.”

New York Times columnist William Safire, a supporter of the U.S. administration’s course, addressed this development in a March 17 piece. Turkey’s “turnabout has been the unkindest cut of all,” he wrote. Advising the White House to withdraw its backing for Ankara’s application to join the European Union, he stated that Washington should “provide arms to the free Kurdish forces in northern Iraq to fight Saddam, ending our foolish policy of demurring to Turkish paranoia about such help leading to an independent Kurdistan.”

The way for Bush to answer his critics, Safire wrote, “is to get on with winning the war and to help Iraqis create a dictator-free confederation.”

Militarization at home

As it accelerated its war moves, the U.S. government stepped up the militarization on the domestic front. In his March 17 speech, Bush said that increased police and military surveillance and patrols would accompany the war. “Among other measures I have directed additional security at our airports and increased Coast Guard patrols of major seaports,” he said.

“The Department of Homeland Security is working closely with the nation’s governors to increase armed security at critical facilities across America,” Bush added.

New York City authorities are carrying out a police and military deployment named Operation Atlas. It calls for expanded police patrols and checkpoints at government buildings, hotels, bridges, and tunnels, as well as a request to the Pentagon for combat aircraft to fly overhead. Officials asked the Federal Aviation Administration to restrict airspace over Manhattan.

In addition to the gun-toting National Guard troops that are deployed at city subway stations, the city would deploy elite police units with names like Archangel, Hercules, and Hammer, which are heavily armed Emergency Service Unit cops. The cops would use explosive-sniffing dogs to patrol subway cars.

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Imperialist plunder of Iraq has long history

BY SAM MANUEL

Since the demise of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century, control over Iraq has been at the center of the rivalry of imperialist powers to dominate the vast oil reserves of the Middle East. The rulers in London, in particular, looked with greedy eyes on both the oil wealth and the maritime role of the entire Arab-Persian Gulf region, strategically located between the British “jewels in the crown” of India and its north African possessions.

In the years leading up to World War I, German companies constructed rail lines from southwest Turkey to Basra in southern Mesopotamia, as Iraq was then known. The British government, then the dominant imperialist power, feared such a presence by its rival threatened its trade routes to India and the broader region and its growing oil interests. London sought control of the newly discovered oil fields under Ottoman rule, and concluded exclusive oil pacts with local governments. In 1913, for example, the British government secured an agreement with Kuwait, receiving the promise that Kuwait would only sign oil contracts with those appointed by London.

With the opening of the war British forces landed at the Shatt-al-Arab waterway and advanced against Turkish troops at Basra. By the spring of 1918 Britain had extended its rule over all but a narrow strip of Mesopotamia. London gained leverage over its imperialist rivals in the war by promising Arab nationalist movements post-war independence in return for siding with Britain against Germany, which was allied with the Ottoman empire. Three major anticolonial societies had been formed in Iraq—the League of Islamic Awakening, the Muslim National League and the Guardians of Independence.

At the 1919 Versailles “peace” conference, however, where Washington, London, Paris, and Rome imposed settlements on their defeated rival in Berlin, and established the League of Nations to legitimize their domination, Mesopotamia was declared a protectorate of the United Kingdom.

In spite of promises of granting independence, London had, in fact, with the agreement of czarist Russia, signed a secret agreement with Paris on dividing up the Ottoman empire. The Sykes-Picot agreement between the imperialist powers allotted southern Mesopotamia to Britain, and awarded Syria to France. This pact was brought to light after workers and peasants came to power in the Russian revolution and the Bolshevik government published its terms along with other secret treaties.

By July 1920 a popular rebellion in Iraq threatened continued foreign occupation. The British Royal Air Force suppressed the revolt with a massive aerial bombardment of Arab villages, including the use of poison gas. Responding to a proposal to use chemical weapons as an experiment on “recalcitrant” Arabs, Winston Churchill, then secretary of state for war, said, “I am strongly in favor of using poisoned gas against uncivilized tribes.”

In the wake of the 1920 rebellion and hoping to disguise its colonial rule over Iraq, the British replaced its military regime in Baghdad with a provisional Arab government subordinate to a British high commissioner. At the 1921 Cairo Conference, London installed Faisal ibn Husayn as Iraq’s first king.

A protectorate of London

In 1922, London imposed the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, to last for 20 years, instructing the king to “heed British advice” on all matters affecting British interests and on all fiscal policy as long as Iraq remained in debt to London. British officials would be appointed to posts in 18 departments to act as advisors and inspectors. To insure Iraq’s continued debtor status, the treaty required the protectorate to pay half the bill for British resident officials, among other expenses. London agreed to provide various kinds of “assistance” and to propose Iraq for membership in the League of Nations “at the earliest moment.”

British interests in the new Arab protectorate mainly centered on the oil-rich former Ottoman province of Mosul. Prior to the fall of the Ottoman empire the British-controlled Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) held concessionary rights in Mosul. London rebuffed the Iraqi

government’s insistence on a 20 percent equity in the company as had been the agreement with Ottoman-ruled Turkey. Fearing that without British backing the League of Nations might return Mosul to Ankara, the monarchy submitted to the terms of the British colonial masters. The final agreement contained none of the Iraqi demands and granted the TPC, now renamed the Iraq Petroleum Company, a concession for 75 years.

Mosul is located in the predominantly Kurdish region in northern Iraq. At the end of World War I, the Kurds were also promised by London and Paris that in exchange for their support against Germany, the Ottoman Sultan would be required to grant autonomy to Kurdistan. But the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was scrapped after the young Turkish nationalist Mustafa Kamal, known as Atatürk, reestablished control over the Kurdish areas in eastern Turkey. In addition to northern Iraq, Kurdistan includes parts of Turkey, northern Iran, north eastern Syria and a small section of Armenia. The Kurdish fight for independence in Iraq and the broader region remains a pivotal issue today.

A new Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was signed June 30, 1930. It granted London the use of air bases near Basra and at Al Habbaniyah, including the right to move troops across the country. The 25-year treaty became effective with Iraq’s admission to the League of Nations in 1932.

As World War II approached, German imperialists attempted to exploit anti-British sentiment in Iraq. In 1941 the Arab nationalist prime minister of Iraq, Rashid Ali, placed conditions on British troop movements in the country and ousted members of the monarchy, who then escaped to Jordan. London retaliated by landing forces at Basra, and justifying its second occupation of Iraq on the grounds that Baghdad had violated the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. The monarchy was once again installed on the force of British arms.

London’s colonial empire, like that of Paris, was shattered by anticolonial movements throughout Asia and Africa during and after World War II. In Iraq this was spurred by the British suppression of the



British troops of 14th Hussars, an elite cavalry regiment, are transported on ship up the Tigris River in 1915. They were used by London to establish control over Iraqi oil fields during World War I.

1936 Palestinian revolt and subsequent partitioning of Palestine in 1947. The “Free Officers’ Movement” in Iraq aimed at ousting the king and ending foreign domination. In 1952 when depressed economic conditions led to widespread protests against the monarchy, the government responded by declaring martial law, banning all political parties, suspending a number of newspapers, and imposing a curfew.

British colonial rule shattered

On July 14, 1958, army officers led by Brigadier Abd al Karim Qasim and Colonel Abd as Salaam Arif overthrew the monarchy. They met virtually no opposition, as Iraqis poured into the streets in support of the revolt. King Faisal II was executed along with many others in the royal family.

The July 14 Revolution, as it is known, permitted the formation of trade unions and implemented a land reform aimed at dismantling the feudal structure in the countryside. It also challenged the profit-shar-

ing arrangement of the oil companies. Public Law 80 dispossessed the British-controlled Iraqi Petroleum Company of 99.5 percent of its concessions and restricted it to areas currently under production. The Qasim government announced the formation of the Iraqi National Oil Company to exploit any new production sites.

The new government was supported by Arab nationalists and members of the officer corps—many of whom were adherents of Baathist movements. The government was also backed by the Stalinist Iraqi Communist Party. Baath was an Arab political party, first formed in Syria and Iraq in 1941, that espoused pan-Arab unity.

Rise of Baathism

The Baathist Party came to power in a short-lived counterrevolutionary coup in 1963 that beheaded the vanguard of the 1958 revolution. A young officer named Saddam Hussein, who had participated in an earlier attempt to overthrow the Qasim government, rose in the Baath party through a bloody factional struggle. The Iraqi Baathist Party, which returned to power in 1968, is a bourgeois party that, as expediency dictates, has resorted to nationalist and anti-imperialist demagogic to rationalize its repressive and expansionist course. In 1979 Hussein became president of Iraq.

The Baathist regime halted revolutionary mobilizations of workers and peasants, while setting on a path of industrialization. In 1972 Iraq nationalized the oil industry. In response, Richard Nixon, the president of the United States, which had emerged as the main imperialist power after World War II, replacing London, placed Iraq on a list of nations supporting “terrorism.”

Baghdad, however, was not on a course to challenge imperialism and the rights and prerogatives of capital. With the overthrow of the shah of Iran in 1979 by Iranian workers and peasants, one of the main pillars of imperialist domination in the region had fallen. Washington publicly encouraged Saddam Hussein to attack Iran to take back the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, which the U.S. government had forced Iraq to cede to the shah’s regime four years earlier. The Iraqi government complied, sending its army to invade Iran in 1980 for what became an eight-year war.

Prior to Hussein’s August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Washington, Paris, and other imperialist regimes had been cultivating their ties with Baghdad for more than a decade. Trade with Iraq continued and the U.S. government regularly sent top-level delegations there up through the first half of 1990.

Washington plans protectorate in Iraq

BY SAM MANUEL

Washington is making plans to install a military occupation regime in Iraq that will be run by the Pentagon’s Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA). The new agency, established by the Bush administration on January 20, will be headed by “retired” Army Lt. Gen. Jay Garner. His lines of communications to the White House will go through Gen. Thomas Franks, head of the U.S. Central Command, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

That regime would also guarantee that U.S. companies scoop up all “reconstruction” contracts.

Officials for the Departments of State and Defense told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Washington would call the shots in Baghdad, not some provisional government set up by Iraqi exiles. In a blueprint leaked to the *Washington Post*, administration officials said that it would take “unilateral control” of Iraq.

The occupation agency’s priorities, the officials told the Senate committee in February, would be dismantling Iraqi weapons programs, securing the border with Iran, and rooting out supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime in the Baath Party. It will have responsibility for every aspect of ruling Iraq, which will include writing a new constitution and running the oil fields seized by the occupation forces.

According to an article in the March 27 *New York Review of Books*, Douglas Feith, U.S. undersecretary of defense for policy, said that “a genuinely democratic govern-

ment in Baghdad might encourage other countries in the Middle East to follow suit.” To fill in the blanks of this veiled threat to Iran, Syria and other countries, he added, “[In Afghanistan] you had a regime that was ousted.... If the Iraq regime gets ousted...I think the combination of those two actions will influence the thinking of other states.”

Feith added that a key task of the occupation agency will be “exploiting information” hoped to be obtained from Iraqi intelligence files. Agents of the occupation authority will have the freedom to go anywhere, interrogate anyone, remove or detain any official, and inspect and carry off any files.

Marc Grossman, U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, told the Senate committee that the occupation regime in Iraq might last more than two years. The March 11 *Washington Post* reported that senior Army and Defense officials estimate as many as three army divisions will be needed for the occupation. Some 45,000 to 60,000 soldiers is “the range under consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” the *Post* noted.

Such large numbers of troops will require a base. Saudi Arabia has said it intends to ask U.S. forces to leave the kingdom sometime after the war. One reporter suggested a permanent base in Baghdad would make clear to the governments in the neighborhood—Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia among others—that U.S. military muscle is next door, planted for the long haul.

Washington has also made clear it intends to push most of its imperialist competitors, especially those in “old Europe,” out of any contracts in Iraq after the war. Over the last decade, French companies, for example, signed 798 contracts for parts and equipment for the Iraqi oil industry. German capitalists have lagged behind their French pals but have still been pulling in some \$350 million in direct annual trade with Iraq. Washington has had no such toehold in Iraq.

An article in the March 17 *Wall Street Journal* said that the U.S. government plans for postwar Iraq, “as detailed in more than 100 pages of confidential contract documents, would sideline United Nations development agencies and other multilateral organizations that have long directed reconstruction efforts in places such as Afghanistan and Kosovo.” The plan offers more than \$1.5 billion in Iraq work to private U.S. companies through a growing web of contracts with the Pentagon and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The article referred to a German official saying that Washington should be “magnanimous” in an expected military victory, “enlisting European partners in the cleanup.”

“Senior U.S. administration officials say problems in rebuilding Afghanistan,” the *Journal* continued, “prove that a multilateral approach only slows postwar assistance. ‘At least to start, we intend to handle the big jobs ourselves,’ said one Bush official closely involved in the postwar planning.”

A Marxist view of Dewey's liberal philosophy

Printed below are excerpts from *Pragmatism versus Marxism: An Appraisal of John Dewey's Philosophy*, by George Novack, one of Pathfinder's March Books of the Month. Liberal figure John Dewey (1859-1952) was the most influential proponent of the pragmatic philosophical school in the first half of the 20th century. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY GEORGE NOVACK

An important national school of philosophy has to be judged not simply by the standards of the highest development of world thought, but also in the light of specific national conditions and its connections with them. Sun Yat-senism, for example, could be rejected out of hand as unworthy of consideration because it was backward

ception of Marxist ideas.

Today the overall national thinking of the American people is more backward than that of either China or Italy. Deweyism must be appraised in that concrete context. It is as wrong and misleading to identify pragmatism with imperialism as it is to identify pragmatism with Marxism. Pragmatism is essentially the philosophy of middle-class individuals who are caught between capital and labor; its hallmark is the attempt to find political and ideological positions somewhere between these polar forces in American society.

Two instructive examples

An event that illustrates the difference between the pragmatic and Marxist approaches to an acute social problem occurred in the last years of Dewey's life. When the witch-hunters launched their campaign to bar "subversives" from teaching in the public schools, Dewey courageously opposed this undemocratic purge. In 1949 he justified his stand by saying that the motives of the witch-hunters were not clear and the specific results of their actions could not be foreseen. He said that the purge might have either good or bad results but he feared that the latter would be the case.

Thus Dewey hinged his reasoning on social indeterminateness and personal ignorance, not on considerations of principle. This purely pragmatic approach made it possible for virulent anticommunists like his disciple Sidney Hook to approve the exclusion of Communist Party sympathizers from teaching staffs as "conspirators" and agents of a foreign power.

The Trotskyists, like Dewey, opposed such persecutions, but on a different basis. They stated that the drive had completely reactionary motives and was bound to stifle democratic rights. Their arguments were premised on the role played by thought control in the struggles issuing from the determinate class antagonisms of American society, and on the principle that the interests of democracy and labor demanded an irreconcilable fight against the inquisitors.

Thus even where the positions taken by certain pragmatists and the Marxists on a specific issue coincided, they were based on different premises, animated by different class aims, and guided by different methods of social analysis. Middle-class elements and the workers can and do have



1937 hearing of Dewey Commission, which exposed Stalin's frame-up of communist leader Leon Trotsky at Moscow Trials. At table, Trotsky is second from left and John Dewey is in middle. Dewey's opposition to Stalinist frame-ups illustrates difference between the pragmatic and Marxist approaches to major political questions.

certain points in common. This makes it possible and even necessary on occasion for their representatives to join in action against oppressions of the capitalist regime. But such united fronts on specific issues do not mean that the motives, programs, methods, and aims of the two are identical. They are often in fact quite different, as the further test of experience will show.

Although the protests against the slander and murder of Lenin's associates [by the Stalin regime in the 1930s] was worldwide, the organized effort to stay the hand of Moscow centered in the United States. Dewey headed the International Commission of Inquiry which was supported by a united front of liberal intellectuals and left-wing Socialists. This commission performed a historic service to the world working class and to the cause of justice. Its members examined the available body of information connected with the Moscow Trials of 1937-38, concluded that they were frame-ups, and found that Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov were not guilty of the infamous charges against them. These conclusions have stood the test of time; in 1956 Khrushchev himself partially confirmed them, although not directly and honestly.

Both tendencies backing the commission's work were interested in probing the case to the bottom, making known the truth about the accusations, and offering the exiled Trotsky the opportunity to present his defense to the public. These tasks were done, and done well. But the two allies did not have the same political motives.

Many liberals took the exposure of

Stalin's crimes against the working class and its revolutionary representatives as an opportunity to strike a blow against socialism. They vaunted the superiority of bourgeois democracy over Stalinist totalitarianism by falsely identifying the policies and misdeeds of the Soviet bureaucracy with genuine communism and asserting that Stalinism was the logical outcome of Leninism.

The Marxists had different objectives. They faced the difficult dual task of exposing the crimes of Stalinism while defending the honor of Bolshevism, the traditions of Marxism, and the program of socialism against both their desecrators and detractors. The Marxists saw no reason for exalting the virtues of an imperialist democracy which was splotched with a criminal record extending from world wars to frame-ups of labor militants and lynchings of Blacks. They explained that the very fact that Stalin had to besmirch and slaughter an entire generation of revolutionary leaders showed how incompatible his regime was with that of Lenin's time.

Dewey himself utilized the occasion of the announcement of his Commission's verdict in 1937 not only to repledge allegiance to democratic liberalism but to denounce Trotsky's doctrines as no better than Stalin's. This uncalled-for disavowal was one of the signs of the growing reconciliation by American intellectuals with imperialism in the late thirties, which culminated in their support to its war. By 1941 the anti-Stalinist liberals found themselves together with the American Stalinists—and against the Trotskyists—on the war issue.

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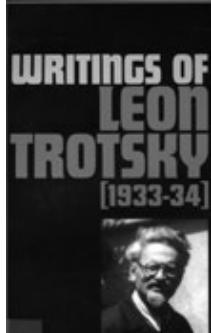
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Imperialist powers compete for bigger share of oil riches

BY PAUL PEDERSON

On the web page of the U.S. Central Command there is a section titled simply, "oil."

The command, known as Centcom, oversees U.S. military operations in the Middle East, northeast Africa, and southwest Asia, and is in charge of the escalating U.S. and British-led war against Iraq.

"Unrestricted access by the industrial nations of the world to the Central Region's vast oil reserves remains an imperative," the web page reads. "Over two-thirds of the world's proven oil reserves," it observes, are in "the narrow crescent of land extending west from Iran and south to the United Arab Emirates."

Those resources are a key target of the impending U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, and of the growing interimperialist conflicts between Washington and Paris and their various allies and competitors.

Oil holdings in Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere—along with other natural riches—are also prizes in this intensifying competition.

Mideast oil, imperialist rivalries

For the last century the imperialist powers have tussled over the strategic advantages and mineral riches of the Arab-Persian Gulf. The struggle sharpened as the extent of the oil reserves became known, and as Washington overtook London as the predominant imperialist power.

Until World War II British Petroleum (BP), backed by the armed forces of the British Empire, gained the lion's share of the oil concessions. In the first two decades after the war, however, U.S. monopolies began to wrest control of the region's oil from their British rivals. One decisive point in the displacement of British power was the CIA-engineered coup that toppled the nationalist Mossadegh government in Iran in 1953 and restored to power the brutal regime of the Shah.

As the colonial system weakened under the shock of the postwar wave of independence struggles, governments of the oil-producing countries began demanding a greater share of their national wealth.

This was the context in which the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was founded in 1960. OPEC is a bloc formed by oil-rich semicolonial nations to assert greater control over their own resources. Its members have more than two-thirds of the world's oil reserves, enabling them to influence the price of oil on the world market through production quotas.

At the same time the giant U.S. and British oil concerns—known as the Seven Sisters until mergers reduced their number to six—and the governments that back them play a dominant role in all facets of the oil industry worldwide.

In 1973 the OPEC nations declared an oil embargo against the United States because of Washington's support for Israel in its war against its Arab neighbors, and increased the price of oil to Europe by 70 percent. By the mid-1970s many of these nations, including Iraq, had nationalized their oil fields in a serious blow to the imperialists.

Licking his lips at the prospect of a post-Saddam Iraq, *New York Times* columnist William Safire wrote last October that "rising production from a non-OPEC Iraq, matched by Saudi price cuts from princes desperate to hold market share, could well reduce world oil prices by a third."

French companies and government officials stepped up their oil and arms ties with Iraq following the nationalization of the petroleum industry. After the 1990-91 U.S.-led Gulf War, French oil companies continued to sign oil deals. Such contracts currently guarantee them access to about 25 percent of Iraq's oil reserves should United Nations sanctions be lifted. All such deals are opened to question by the threatened U.S.-initiated "regime change."

In 1979 U.S. imperialism suffered its heaviest blow to date in the region, when the Iranian people toppled the Shah from his "peacock throne." The French govern-

ment and its major oil company, TotalElfFina, have signed lucrative oil and natural gas deals with the post-Shah governments in Tehran.

TotalElfFina's Middle East's director, Christophe de Margerie, said in 1997 that "we will work with all countries in the region, including Iran and Iraq as soon as that becomes possible."

With no major oil reserves on their own soil the biggest powers of continental Europe are heavily reliant on Mideast oil. Even more dependent is big business in Japan, which imports over 75 percent of its oil from the region. Any increase in the presence of U.S. and British oil companies in the region would be a blow to the German and French imperialists, in particular.

In face of the opposition of Paris and other governments, including Moscow, to Washington's plans, at least one U.S. commentator has threatened that they will be cut out of the postwar divvy-up altogether.

"France and Russia have oil companies and interests in Iraq," said James Woolsey, a former CIA director. "If they throw in their lot with Saddam, it will be difficult to the point of impossible to persuade the new Iraqi government to work with them."

Western Africa a source of riches

Washington has less of a foothold in western Africa, an oil-rich region in which France still plays a dominant role. Newly discovered oil deposits in the Gulf of Guinea and elsewhere, however, have begun to draw Washington into more direct competition.

"West Africa is expected to be one of the fastest growing sources of oil and gas for the American market," U.S. vice president and former oil company executive Richard Cheney said in 2001.

Some 15 percent of U.S. oil imports come from the area—mainly Nigeria, as well as Angola in southern Africa. Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Chad, and the islands and nations along the Gulf of Guinea have more recently discovered oil deposits.

President Fradique de Menezes of the Gulf of Guinea island-nation of Sao Tomé and Principe recently announced that he reached an agreement with Washington for the construction of a U.S. naval base there.

As Paris sent several thousand troops to the Ivory Coast in September, seeking to impose a settlement on the government and rebel forces, 200 U.S. Special Forces also entered the country, under the pretext of saving U.S. nationals from the bloodshed. They have since pulled back to neighboring Ghana. Other U.S. forces are stationed in Djibouti, on Africa's northeastern coast, where French troops are also stationed.

U.S., British, Canadian, and French companies all own stakes in Ivory Coast's rich offshore oil deposits.

Explosive continent of Latin America

The U.S. companies face less competition from their imperialist rivals in Latin America, which accounts for about a third of U.S. oil imports. The Andean region, particularly Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador, has extensive oil deposits. Venezuela alone accounted for 17 percent of U.S. imports in 2000.

The failure of the bosses' strike that crippled oil production in Venezuela over the last several months, and of an attempted antigovernment coup last April, dealt blows to Washington's ongoing efforts to undermine or overthrow the government of Hugo Chávez and replace it with one more subservient to U.S. interests. Goldman Sachs described the strike as "one of the largest shocks in oil market history." Venezuelan oil production has still not recovered to anything like pre-strike levels.

Over the past decade Washington has made some gains in its efforts to press the countries in the region to privatize their state oil companies. Deals signed with Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela in the mid-1990s opened up parts of the nationalized oil wealth to foreign investment.

Along with deeper economic penetration, the U.S. military presence in South America has grown over the last few years. The Bush



Workers at oilfield in Nigeria. West Africa is a region of rising competition among the imperialist powers for a bigger share of oil wealth in the semicolonial world.

administration recently announced plans to increase the number of U.S. Special Forces in Colombia from 250 to 400, and U.S. troops are currently training the Colombian army to guard the Caño Limón oil pipeline owned by the Los Angeles-based Occidental Petroleum Company.

Oil reserves in former Soviet countries

U.S. and European oil companies are also scrambling to increase their share of the growing oil industry in the former Soviet republics of the Caspian Sea region, "considered one of the largest sources of petroleum outside the Persian Gulf and Russia," according to a U.S. Department of Energy report. "The region's largest producers are Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. The key to foreign investment in these two Caspian nations is obtaining secure export routes." Currently the only pipeline routes for exporting oil from the region are owned by Russian state oil companies.

In a March 4 talk titled "Reliable Supplies of Energy for a Growing World Economy," U.S. undersecretary of state Alan Larson called on Moscow to "embrace competition and private investment in oil and gas transportation systems" and to "have a positive attitude toward the development of multiple pipeline projects for transportation of Caspian energy to Western markets.

"We welcome the groundbreaking on the

Baku/Tbilisi/Ceyhan oil pipeline that will allow energy from Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan to reach world markets at competitive prices," said Larson. Nearly 1,100 miles long, this pipeline, commissioned by BP and in the beginning stages of construction, will run from the Caspian port city of Baku in Azerbaijan, through the Black Sea port of Tbilisi in Georgia, to Ceyhan in Turkey on the Mediterranean.

Washington used its war on Afghanistan to increase its military foothold in the region, and advance the prospects of U.S. companies for involvement in the oil industry. U.S. forces now occupy bases in Uzbekistan, Georgia, and elsewhere.

The imperialist governments and corporations, however, continue to come up against the fact that the countries in this region are workers states. Investments in the area often involve agreements to support social infrastructure, pensions, and other gains that workers have won through the expropriation of the capitalist class.

In regard to Kazakhstan, the U.S. Department of Energy report lamented that state-controlled Kazak companies' "large debts, nonproductive assets, and lack of transparency made investors cautious." It also complained about "the many preconditions associated with the awarding of shares, particularly the required pledges for investment, social guarantees, payment of old debts, and environmental liability."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 31, 1978

MARCH 22—Coal miners are voting on the third proposed contract March 24, the 110th day of their nationwide strike.

Whether the final tally is thumbs down or ratification, the ranks of the United Mine Workers can take credit for blocking the union-busting plans of the coal bosses.

This coal strike has already provided the most dramatic example in thirty years of the power of the industrial working class in this country.

Even federal Judge Aubrey Robinson, Jr.—who heeded Carter's request for a temporary back-to-work order March 9—was forced to admit that Taft-Hartley doesn't mine coal.

On March 17, Robinson refused to extend the order, whining that the miners are "not paying attention to what I do anyhow."

The proposed agreement falls far short of the miners' demands for full restoration of health care, equalized pensions, and the right to strike to enforce safety.

In western Pennsylvania, Fred Uzelac said, "It's little better than the last one, and I think it's going to be close. There's not as much hollering about it as the last one. If we send it back, what will we get? Is it worth two or three more weeks out just to come back with the same stuff?"

In Harlan County, however, local president Mickey Messer argued that "if we accept this we're selling our union down the river."

Whichever view prevails, the miners have set an inspiring example for all working people.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y.

FIVE (5) CENTS

March 30, 1953

Eisenhower has buried his campaign promises on ending the Korean war deeper than the gold at Fort Knox. To questions on his Korea plans he returns a frigid silence.

The Wall Street Journal of March 28 reports that the Eisenhower Administration "is holding a new series of secret meetings to decide quickly whether or not to make a major drive in Korea late this summer or fall." The big objection to the drive, says the Journal, is "the enormous cost in U.S. casualties." The offensive, even if successful, would not be designed to end the war or make possible the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea, but to "show the Reds and Asia our power."

That Eisenhower hasn't the slightest plans or prospects for ending the Korean war is further confirmed by Gen. Mark Clark, U.S. Commander in the Far East, who on March 20 said flatly there are "no indications"—"none whatsoever"—of an early end to the fighting in Korea.

Instead, Gen. Clark's visit to Indo-China last week raised the grave threat of more active U.S. participation in the Indo-China war. Clark said that his forces in Korea and the French in Indo-China are fighting "one war."

His mission to Indo-China is of the "highest importance," reported the N.Y. World Telegram, because "Washington rates the French war strategically equal to Korea...the potential U.S. commitment there is as great as the actual one in Korea."

Oppose U.S. slaughter in Iraq!

Continued from front page

dent George Bush pretended to address the Iraqi people and promise that after invading, bombing their country into oblivion, and taking it over, the U.S.-led forces will deliver them needed medicine and food. He declared, "The day of your liberation is near."

No lie could be more cynical. In the 1990–91 Gulf war, the U.S. rulers unleashed a massacre, killing 150,000 Iraqi farmers and workers, many of them soldiers seeking to give up or flee the battlefield. Then, for the past 12 years, Washington and other imperialist powers—including Paris and London—have imposed a brutal economic embargo to deny food, medicine, and other essentials to the Iraqi people, leading to famine, disease, and the death of literally hundreds of thousands of children.

Far from liberation, what the U.S. government and the billionaire families it represents are seeking in Iraq is to impose a U.S.-dominated protectorate that will run Iraq under military rule for years. American corporations such as Halliburton and Bechtel are to get all or most of the multibillion-dollar "reconstruction" contracts in war-devastated Iraq, icing out bosses from all other imperialist countries, even from Britain. "It's impossible—impossible—to reconstruct without Europe," screamed one spokesperson for French imperialist interests in a revealing outburst. "You have to offer them a piece of cake."

The "cake" he was referring to is the Mideast—particularly control over its oil wealth. Bush's words were dripping with hypocrisy when he exhorted Iraqis, "Do not destroy oil wells, a source of wealth that belongs to the Iraqi people." Quite a statement from a Texas oilman in a country where private property reigns over petroleum and all other major resources and means of production!

The aim of the U.S.-led takeover of Iraq is not to protect the oil for the Iraqi people but to take it away from them and put it in the hands of the U.S. billionaires while pushing French and other competing capitalists away.

Not freedom, democracy, or the welfare of working people. Rather, redividing the Mideast and its resources at the expense of imperialist competitors. That is what is driving Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, and all the other imperialist powers in this conflict.

Paris has already dealt a blow by the U.S. government's unceremonious dumping of its effort to seek explicit United Nations approval for launching the war and its dismissal of the French proposal to extend

UN "arms inspections" in order to "disarm" Iraq—a proposal aimed at salvaging French imperialist interests in the region.

The imperialist powers' objectives go much beyond Iraq. Washington seeks to change the relationship of forces in the world in its favor. One of its main goals is to overthrow the government of Iran and recover strategic ground it lost when the Iranian people, in a popular revolution in 1979, toppled the U.S.-backed Shah, who had been a pillar of Washington's domination in the Mideast.

While Washington may make initial gains through its war drive, these moves, far from achieving peace and stability, will only exacerbate the conflicts with its imperialist rivals. Such interimperialist clashes, the scope of which has not been seen since World War II, will continue to sharpen. Their logic ultimately leads toward a third world war—a prospect that is more visible to millions of people today.

The twin parties of the billionaires, the Democrats and Republicans, have closed ranks behind their commander-in-chief, as they have in every war—including politicians who had previously posed as "pro-peace." And when Bush says, "The United States of America [will] use force in assuring its own national security," he makes it clear he is not speaking in the name of the U.S. population but of the state—a state that defends the interests of the wealthy, at home and abroad.

Hundreds of thousands of youth who are taking to the streets in peace demonstrations today have illusions about the nature of American imperialism and the worldwide social system it protects, remaining hopeful it can be reformed or tamed. As they go through the brutal events that the wealthy rulers will subject us to over the coming years, however, many will see these illusions shattered. They will be open to the socialist perspective that, to put an end to these wars and exploitation, it is necessary—and possible—to organize a revolutionary movement of workers and farmers that can disarm the imperialist warmakers by taking political power.

We urge you to take these facts and perspectives to the ongoing antiwar protests, debates, and forums; to farm protests, union picket lines, factory gates, and working-class neighborhoods; to high school and college campuses; and to GIs. These ideas will receive a serious hearing and, for some, will open up the perspective that the most worthwhile and rewarding thing you can do with your life is to join the socialist movement and be part of transforming the world.

Washington targets Iran

Continued from front page

"We suddenly discover that Iran is much further along, with a far more robust nuclear weapons development program than anyone said it had," Powell asserted in a CNN interview aired March 13. "It shows you how a determined nation that has the intent to develop a nuclear weapon can keep that development process secret."

Claiming that Iran was "within two years" of having nuclear weapons, Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former CIA agent, wrote in the March 13 *New York Times* that Iran would use the weapons to "aggressively try to influence Iraq's political system, which will hardly be set in stone two years from now."

Gerecht continued, "Iran's leaders are much less worried about what happens in Iraq than about the Bush administration's Axis of Evil doctrine. There has been nonstop discussion about whether the Islamic Republic will be 'next on the list.'" Bush has declared Iran to be one of the countries targeted as part of Washington's "axis of evil." Iraq and north Korea are two other points on that axis.

The *New York Times* editors joined the chorus. "Iran's deception is similar to those previously carried out by North Korea, and by Iraq before the Persian Gulf War," said a *Times* editorial in the March 14 edition. "All countries, especially members of the United Nations Security Council, should insist that Tehran immediately agree to the I.A.E.A.'s [International Atomic Energy Agency] strengthened safeguard system, which was created in the late 1990's for just this kind of situation."

These "strengthened safeguards" are a set of amendments to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty allowing United Nations snoops to "inspect" any site in a country they claim may be conducting work related to nuclear weapons development.

U.S. economic war on Iran

These latest provocations against Iran began with a February visit to Tehran by International Atomic Energy Agency director Mohamed El Baradei. El Baradei announced that he had discovered Iran was building a facility in secret to enrich uranium, a component of nuclear weapons, at a nuclear power plant Iran has been building near the city of Natanz.

Iranian government officials defend their country's right to develop its nuclear power industry and explain that this confrontation is set up by Washington, a result of its aggressive efforts to cut off trade to Iran.

"If the United States did not follow this policy of simply trying to deny Iran access to nuclear technology for any purpose," said Javad Zarif, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, "I don't think you would have all these scenarios that we are confronting."

Others in Iran have pointed to the hypocrisy of Washington's edict that Iran does not have the right to construct nuclear weapons.

"The Americans say, in order to preserve the peace for my children, I should have nuclear weapons and you shouldn't have them," said Amir Mohebian, an editor of the Iranian newspaper *Resalat*.

"I hope we get our atomic weapons," said Shirzad Bozorghmehr, editor of the English-language daily *Iran News*. "If Israel has it, we should have it."

Israel is the only nation in the Mideast with nuclear weapons, part of the Zionist regime's massive U.S.-built military arsenal. Tel Aviv firmly backs Washington's provocations against Iran and has added its own threats to the chorus. An Israeli government official was quoted in *Time* magazine saying the nuclear facility was "a huge concern" to Tel Aviv. He said Israel will not take the "Osirak option" off the table.

Osirak refers to the nuclear power plant that Paris helped build in the city of Tuwaitah in Iraq. The Israeli air force destroyed the plant in an unprovoked bombing assault in 1981 to prevent Baghdad from developing its own nuclear industry.

Step up Calero defense effort

Róger Calero's success in moving the hearing on his case from Houston to Newark, New Jersey, should be seized for the opportunity it is by those involved in winning new backing for this defense campaign. The case will now be heard in the region where Calero lives and works and where the national defense committee is located. New York is also where his legal team is based.

With the date of the INS hearing postponed, campaigners now have a little more time to build on the work that has been done so far. The list of letters of protest sent to the INS by union fighters and defenders of democratic rights is steadily growing. Meetings organized by Calero supporters during his speaking tour are drawing a range of speakers with a real record of involvement in struggle.

The campaign has become connected with other resistance to government abuses, like the fight by Farouk Abdel-Muhti against his imprisonment without charges and threatened deportation. Calero and Abdel-Muhti have exchanged messages of solidarity—most recently when Calero protested the Palestinian fighter's forcible transfer to a high-security Pennsylvania jail. Calero has similarly been in touch with the five Cuban revolutionaries who have been recently thrown into solitary confinement.

Calero's supporters will find new adherents to his anti-deportation fight along the natural lines of working-class resistance to assaults by the bosses and their government. Workers on picket lines or other actions to push

back takeback demands by the employers, and students and other youth joining antiwar protests in the tens of thousands, are among those who will respond.

The defense effort can flourish from the churches, to plant gates, to the campuses. Although immigrant workers are among the quickest to express solidarity, this is not exclusively a question of immigrant rights. Broader layers of working people can recognize their common interests in fighting such abuses and defending hard-won gains. Many are particularly outraged by the way the INS is using old convictions, no matter how minor or how many years have elapsed, as grounds for harassment and deportation.

The defense committee has mapped a course for Calero's supporters to follow. They can invite him or other representatives of the defense committee to visit, meet potential supporters, and speak alongside others at public meetings. They can accelerate their efforts to inform new people about the case, and to encourage them to write letters to the INS and sign petitions demanding restoration of Calero's rights. Until details of the new hearing, including the responsible INS officials, are known, such letters and petitions should continue to be sent to the INS office in Houston (see box on page 6).

Raising funds—from individuals to events like the successful dinner just held in Chicago—is an essential part of keeping the campaign viable over the long term. Whatever the outcome, Calero and his supporters can extract the maximum political price from the government and its immigration cops through such a multifaceted effort.

Join the campaign to stop the deportation of Róger Calero!

CORRECTION

In last week's *Militant*, dated March 24, the caption below the picture of Elvira Arrellano speaking at a Chicago public meeting to defend Róger Calero incorrectly identified the person next to her as Jorge Ramírez. In fact it is José Oliva, who co-chaired the meeting and translated Arrellano's remarks.

Visas delayed

Continued from page 5

sular Affairs, denied that there was any new policy aimed at excluding Cubans visiting for academic reasons. Under the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Reform Act, she said, visa applicants from Cuba and six other countries claimed by Washington to be "state sponsors of terrorism" must go through security checks by "federal U.S. law-enforcement and intelligence agencies and any other interested agencies." The act came into effect last summer.

Some of the Cuban scholars invited to this year's conference were forced to pay an \$85 fee and to undergo fingerprinting in making their visa application.

Organizers of the LASA conference have urged people to contact the State Department to ask that the visas be issued promptly. Calls can be made to the State Department Cuba desk at 202-647-9273; e-mails can be sent to cubanaffairs@state.gov.

Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

Nelson Blackstock

The FBI's spying and disruption against socialists and activists in the Black and antiwar movements. Includes

FBI documents. \$15.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12; or visit www.pathfinderpress.com. Please include \$3 for shipping and handling.



Tens of thousands march against war

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Some 40,000 people marched and rallied here March 15 against the impending war on Iraq. The demonstration took place as U.S. and British officials were announcing that an invasion of Iraq was only days away. Two days later President George Bush announced a 48-hour ultimatum to Baghdad after which Washington would spearhead an assault on Iraq.

The action was called by a coalition of groups called International ANSWER. Though smaller than a January 18 peace rally here, demonstrators were lively and determined to voice their opposition to Washington's war policies in the Mideast. Many, especially among the large numbers of students and other youth, were eager to discuss the war, its causes and consequences, and how to oppose it.

Many of the speakers singled out President George Bush as responsible for the war and argued that it could be "stopped before it starts" by mobilizations of public opinion. Many of the demonstrators interviewed were still hopeful that "somehow" the war could be avoided.

"This may be our last chance to stop the war," said Daniel Collins, 20, who came with a vanload of six other students from the University of Richmond in nearby Richmond, Virginia. "President Bush is meeting right now," added his friend, Sandra Finch, 20, "making preparations to start the bombing."

"If they go to war," said Sharon Rizack, 19, "we have got to keep marching. The people in Iraq must know that we don't agree with our government."

As it was for many others, this was the first demonstration for Jenny Walsh, 21, a student at Frostburg State University in Maryland. "The war will be horrible," she said, but she remained hopeful it "would never happen."

Noelle Ilves-Corresset, 23, a student at Camden Community College near Philadelphia, and her friend Lauren Medsker, 21, came on a bus from Philadelphia. "I am a pacifist and against all wars," Corresset said. She said she was outraged because "Bush is using the war to support the oil companies." On the march were many banners and placards that read, "No Blood for Oil."

"You kill, you lie, Palestine will never die!" chanted a contingent of Palestinians and their supporters. Palestinian flags could be seen throughout the march. Representatives of several Palestinian and Arab rights organizations spoke at the rally.

"We know what the Iraqi people have

suffered and will suffer with a U.S. war," said Ihab Darwish of the Free Palestine Alliance. "We Palestinians have the scars of 55 years of occupation. But as we have, the Iraqi people will resist."

"There will be no peace in the Middle East until there is peace and justice for the Palestinians," Darwish said. "And that peace must include the right of the Palestinians to return to their land."

During Darwish's speech several small groups of pro-war counterprotesters yelled out, "Give peace a chance—Stop the suicide bombers!" Others around them answered with chants of "Free, free Palestine!"

A group of students carried a banner that read, "Defend Affirmative Action!" One of the speakers, Winnie Khuyu, said, "Far from being a color-blind society—all you need to do is look at the D.C. schools and you will see that we are more separate and unequal than nearly 50 years ago when the Supreme Court handed down the Brown decision." Khuyu spoke representing the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action and Integration and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary.

She called on rally participants to come back to Washington on April 1 for a protest at the Supreme Court, when it will hear arguments in a challenge to the University of Michigan affirmative action admissions policy. The march has been endorsed by the NAACP and several other prominent civil rights organizations.

"Not only must we stop the war in Iraq," said John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association, "We must stop the war against African-American farmers." His organization was one of several groups of Black farmers who filed a suit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for discrimination in loans and other services.

A contingent of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists carried a banner that read, "Bring the Troops Home Now! UN Inspectors Out of Iraq! Oppose the Assault on Iraq's Sovereignty!" Others around the contingent joined in chanting "Bring the troops home now."

Discussion on 'inspectors'

But some demonstrators objected to the demand to get the inspectors out, arguing that "the inspectors are the only thing preventing war."

Bill Hostler, 56, from nearby Charlottesville, Virginia, said, "I think people like Senator Kennedy are right—the inspections are working and keeping Saddam Hussein in check. The inspectors should be given more time and the UN should send more of them."

This view was expressed in banners and placards as well as by many who spoke from the stage.

The demonstration took place as politicians from the two capitalist parties—including those who had expressed criticisms of the Bush administration—were closing ranks behind the U.S. president and "our men and women" poised for the assault on Iraq.

Several prominent Democratic Party politicians who had spoken at peace rallies over the past two months were notice-



Militant/Maceo Dixon

Some 40,000 demonstrate in Washington, D.C., March 15 for peace. A slightly smaller march took place in San Francisco that day, and similar actions around the world.

ably absent. Jesse Jackson, for example, was listed on the program but did not appear, and no explanation was given.

One of those speaking, Democratic congressman John Conyers, said, "This administration has shown contempt for the constitution and the democratic process. I am here to let you know that we in Congress are getting ready to hold this war in abeyance."

Conyers along with Rep. Charles Rangel have proposed that the draft be reinstated, arguing that this would ensure that military service does not fall solely on the poor. Conyers made no mention of the proposal at the rally.

Conyers ended his remarks saying, "But we must say what must be done with Saddam Hussein." He proposed the Iraqi president be brought before an "international tribunal" for war crimes. In response, many in the crowd began to chant, "Bush is a war criminal."

A substantial number of the speakers were introduced as coordinators of various outreach committees of International ANSWER, which sponsored the event. Brian Becker, a leader of the coalition and of the International Action Center, argued, "Bush and Blair had to meet on a tiny island because the American people still suffer from that rare disease of 'Vietnam Syndrome.'"

Becker introduced International Action Center spokesperson Ramsey Clark, who was U.S. attorney general in the Johnson administration, as the "foremost politician in this country who has stood for social justice." Clark said the peace protests have helped to slow the start of war. "We have reached the Ides of March and there is still no war," he said. He praised the French government for its "courageous stand" in the United Nations Security Council.

Clark announced that he has established

a web site at which participants in the rally could "vote to impeach President Bush."

Other speakers at the rally included labor union officials, representatives of Muslim mosques and Arab political groups, and local antiwar groups.

Peace rallies took place in several cities across the country, such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and around the world, including in Germany, Spain, Japan, and throughout the Middle East.

Tens of thousands marched in San Francisco. Earlier marches there had been significantly larger, with widespread expectations expressed by demonstrators and exhortations from speakers that the massive demonstrations in the United States and around the world could stop the war. This time, the mood was more restrained.

A number of pro-war rallies took place around the country as well. Several thousand people demonstrated in downtown Atlanta March 15 to back Washington's war moves.

"Support our troops" rallies were held in Portland, Oregon, and other cities. Some 75 people held a pro-war counterprotest in Washington, sponsored by a group called Free Republic.

Chessie Molano and Lea Sherman contributed to this article, as did Peter Buch in San Francisco.

CALENDAR

WASHINGTON, DC

Defend Affirmative Action! Save Brown vs. Board of Education! Civil rights march to the Supreme Court, Tue. April 1. Rally at 9 a.m. East Capitol and First, followed by march. Sponsored by the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action and Integration, Fight for Equality by Any Means Necessary. (313) 438-3748.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA Birmingham

The Fight for Women's Emancipation and the Example of Cuba Speaker: Susan LaMont, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 28. Program, 7 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. 3029-A Bessemer Rd. Donation: \$4 for program. (205) 780-0021.

NEW JERSEY Newark

Washington's Drives Toward War on Iraq, Iran, and North Korea Fri., March 21. 7:30 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave. 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. (973) 481-0077.

NEW YORK Manhattan

The Revolutionary Road to Women's Emancipation. Celebrate the publication of Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War Fri., March 21. 7:30 p.m. 545 Eighth Ave. 14th Floor. Donation: \$5. (212) 695-7358.

PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh

Defend Abortion Rights! Speaker: Alison Bodenheimer, Campus Women's Organization, University of Pittsburgh; Representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 28 7:30 p.m. 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 225. Donation: \$4. (412) 365-1090.

was a tenured professor until his suspension and banning from the campus in the fall of 2001.

One professor, who had welcomed Calero to USF when he visited Tampa in January, asked whether the Immigration and Naturalization Service would be influenced by the international support that Calero has won given the "little apparent impact of antiwar demonstrations around the world." Another Calero supporter said that he thought defense cases in the United States today help participants in the antiwar protests to see the war in class terms.

The forum was covered briefly by CBS on the 11:00 p.m. news.

Rachele Fruit
Tampa, Florida

Drive to World War III

In speaking about the growing tensions between the imperialist powers that are threatening to explode into a World War

III, the *Militant* points out that the capitalists will have to deal qualitative blows to the working class (a defeat) before being able to engage into their all out conflict for the redivision of the world.

If we retain the escalation to World War I, is it not possible for the rulers of each imperialist country to engage a third world war without having to deal immediately with the working class at home? After all, the Russian Revolution, and the revolutionary wave that followed it, came after hundreds of thousands had been slaughtered. Dimitris Fasalis
Montreal, Quebec

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

U.S. bolsters troops in Colombia

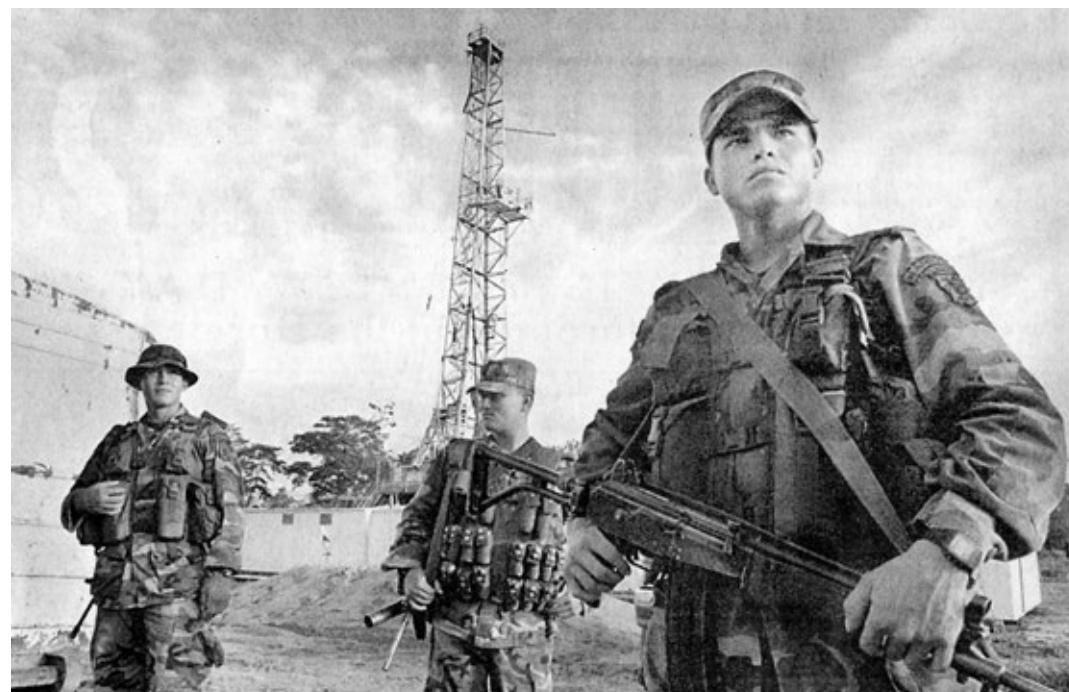
BY MICHAEL ITALIE

In the latest step expanding the commitment of U.S. military forces across the globe, U.S. president George Bush has dispatched some 150 troops to Colombia. The boosting of uniformed U.S. military personnel there to more than 400 complements the massive military aid provided to the government of Alvaro Uribe under the Plan Colombia and Andean Regional Initiative programs.

The deployment followed the capture of three "civilian contractors" near Florencia. The men, who were on board a Pentagon-owned light plane that crashed, were seized by soldiers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the largest antigovernment guerrilla organization. The Cessna had been flying over coca fields 240 miles south of Bogotá, in rebel-held territory.

Two others on board—a fourth U.S. citizen and an intelligence official in the Colombian military—were killed. Bush told the TV network Telemundo on February 19 that one death was "clearly an execution" at the hands of "cold-blooded killers." U.S. officials later said, however, that "initial autopsy reports indicated they had been shot while fighting or 'trying to bolt,'" reported the *Washington Post*. The "troops" mission is to provide additional intelligence and guidance to Colombian military forces" in pursuit of the prisoners and their FARC captors, officials told the big-business daily. They have "the capacity" to carry out a rescue operation on their own, said one.

The dispatch of the 150 troops brings U.S. military personnel in Colombia to 411, operating alongside some 300 more "contract workers." While Congress is supposed to review the stationing of more than 400 troops in Colombia, the president can waive such restrictions by claiming that



Colombian soldiers guard Occidental Petroleum oil pipeline in Cano Limón. Washington trained the army brigade, and is sending 150 additional U.S. troops to back Colombian regime.

they are needed in a search and rescue operation involving U.S. citizens.

Plan Colombia is the centerpiece of U.S. imperialism's growing military presence in the Andean region. Passed under President Clinton, the \$1.3 billion package of military assistance made Colombia the third-largest recipient of U.S. military aid, after Israel and Egypt. The Bush administration has announced that an additional \$1 billion in military assistance will be sent over the next two years.

The military links were first bolstered under the banner of combating Colombia's trade in illegal drugs. Last year Washington explicitly expanded the brief of its mili-

tary mission there to include assistance to the government in its battles against the guerrilla forces, presenting this step as part of its "war on terrorism." The 18,000-member FARC and the National Liberation Army, a smaller guerrilla group, were designated as "terrorists," along with right-wing paramilitary forces.

In 2002 Washington also allocated \$94 million to help finance a Colombian army brigade charged with guarding Occidental Petroleum's 500-mile pipeline in the northeast of the country. Nearly half the oil imported into the United States comes from the Americas, with Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador accounting for more than 2

million barrels per day, about 20 percent of total U.S. imports.

In the same year Congress approved Plan Colombia's expansion into the Andean Regional Initiative, under which U.S. troops are to train some 4,000 Colombian soldiers in "counter-insurgency operations."

The initiative includes funding for Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela, with Colombia still receiving about half the billion-dollar package.

The big majority of funds provided under both Plan Colombia and the Andean Initiative are earmarked for transport helicopters and other military equipment and training. Spending priorities are set in Washington, stated Luis Alberto Moreno, the country's ambassador to the United States. "This package still operates on the golden rule—he who puts in the gold makes the rules," he said.

"Civilian contractors" like the ones captured near Florencia form a sizable part of Washington's intervention in Colombia. Thomas Janis, one of the U.S. citizens on the downed flight, was an employee of DynCorp, a subsidiary of military hardware producer Northrup Grumman that "has 355 U.S. and third-country contractors working in a State Department-financed counterdrug program" there, reported the March 7 *Miami Herald*.

'Civilian warriors'

Washington uses 4,000 to 6,000 of these "corporate warriors" in Kuwait today, stated the *Herald*, assigning them to plan and monitor the drilling of troops, and maintain planes and weapons systems.

The sweeps against coca-growing areas—carried out under Plan Colombia and other militarization programs—that masquerade as antidrug initiatives have frequently worsened the already dire conditions facing the country's peasants.

The regime of Alvaro Uribe "has been pursuing the U.S. crop eradication program with enthusiasm," noted the *Washington Post* on March 9. In the three months after his inauguration last August, 115,000 acres of coca were sprayed in Putumayo province alone—more than half the national total of the previous year. Farmers complain that the herbicides used also kill food crops.

The program "has pushed thousands of farmers out of the province, strangled the local economy, and encouraged new coca cultivation in the Amazon jungle," reported the *Post*.

Uribe's predecessor, Andres Pastrana, voiced an occasional reluctance to follow Washington's dictates, according to the big-business daily. His national security advisor complained that U.S. officials "applied constant pressure to accelerate the pace of coca spraying, viewing it as cheaper than 'alternative development' and crop substitution."

For many peasants coca is the only crop that can provide the possibility of a living income. The price of the country's former principal crop of coffee has plummeted from an average of \$1.20 per pound during the 1980s to 60 cents per pound today, reported Reuters. "In the 1980s, coffee accounted for half of Colombia's exports," while last year coffee exports made up just 6 percent of the total, the dispatch noted.

This "coffee meltdown" brings "hunger, migration and debt" to vast stretches of the Colombian countryside, the report added. The same impact is felt in other coffee growing areas of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Meanwhile, "huge profits" are being raked in by coffee companies such as Folgers, Nestlé, Sara Lee, and Philip Morris's Maxwell House.

Australia students march for peace

Government targets Arab youth for harassment, denial of passports

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—Thousands of high school students demonstrated across this country to protest Canberra's involvement in the impending war on Iraq, as part of the March 5 international student strike.

In Sydney, under the banner "Books not bombs," more than 5,000 students from more than 70 schools rallied at Town Hall, then took off on a fast and lively demonstration through the central business district. Students were still arriving on the march as it wound up at Hyde Park for a rally. Many stayed for more than an hour to listen to student leaders and peace activists.

Student marches of similar size took place in Adelaide and Melbourne. Hundreds marched in Brisbane, Perth, and Hobart.

Many of the students had been threatened with disciplinary action if they took off school to attend the protests. "They

threatened us with expulsion, but we just walked out anyway," said one young woman who came with 14 other students from St. Catherine's School.

The media tried to portray the actions as students just taking a day off for the fun of it. Prime Minister John Howard said the students should have been in school instead of "running amok through the streets." Howard had denounced the more than half a million who joined peace marches across Australia the weekend of February 16–17 as giving "comfort to Saddam Hussein."

Many youth opposing the Australian rulers' war drive against Iraq face harassment by the police. A group of Arab students playing the Drimbaki, a Lebanese drum, on the train traveling back from the March 5 antiwar protest were taken off by cops, interrogated, searched, and humiliated in front of commuters.

According to eyewitness Rayyar Farhat, when the train arrived at Strathfield station it was detained by the police. A dozen policeman surrounded the doors at either side of the carriage, stormed the bottom section of the train, and rounded the boys up and out onto the platform.

The students were forced to kneel down with their hands behind their heads. Their wallets and school bags were searched, and books were taken out. The boys wearing caps were told to take them off and run their fingers through their hair. The cops made them lift up their shirts and jerseys, exposing their backs and stomachs.

They were ordered to put their banner, opposing Howard and U.S. president George Bush, on the floor and questioned about their whereabouts that day. After taking down names, the cops went away, giving

ing no reason for the detainment.

"I could not see any purpose to their interrogation but sheer malice and intimidation and, of course—racism," said Farhat.

Denial of passport to Arab youth

In another case of harassment of Arab youth, 19-year-old Zak Mallah, an Australian citizen whose parents are Lebanese, is contesting the federal government's decision last June to refuse him a passport.

Mallah wanted to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and marry in Lebanon. His passport application was denied a day after he was interviewed by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). ASIO agents stated that "there is a risk he could engage in politically motivated violence."

On March 10, the ASIO and the federal government defended their decision in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, going to extraordinary lengths to keep their case against Mallah a secret. The tribunal conducted in-camera hearings to protect the identity of ASIO agents who carried out the security assessment. Mallah's counsel David Berney wasn't allowed to be present to cross examine the ASIO witnesses. The nature of the ASIO case and its sources have also been withheld.

In the only documents tendered to the tribunal, ASIO acknowledged that Mallah had no criminal conviction, no known record of violence, and had talked of returning to Australia after visiting Lebanon.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* notes that the ASIO writes reports on passport applications where security is involved and has been accused by the Council of Civil Liberties of "unfairly targeting people of Middle Eastern extraction."

Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange July 24-July 31

Groups of young people from across the United States will be traveling to Cuba in July to participate in the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. They will meet with youth in that country, exchange ideas with them, and see firsthand the truth about Cuba's socialist revolution.

To find out more, contact:
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