

IRAK:

El pueblo se prepara para lo peor ante invasión por E.U. 12

TIME IS SHORT

Surround the White House

Anti-war coalition calls March 15 emergency mass action

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By Monica Moorehead

As the Bush administration and the Pentagon move ever closer to a war against Iraq, the International ANSWER coalition is mobilizing for a March 15 emergency convergence on the White House.

There are now 300,000 U.S. troops massed around the Persian Gulf area. An unimaginable Pentagon arsenal of weapons of mass destruction is aimed at a largely defenseless country. Anti-war forces are presented with their greatest challenge since the war crisis developed last fall.

More than 100 cities in 35 states are organizing buses and other modes of transportation to go to Washington, D.C., on March 15 to send a resounding message to the warmongers that the vast majority of people do not want to see one drop of blood—be it from an Iraqi or a U.S. soldier—spilled for oil profits or empire building.

Simultaneous protests are set for San Francisco and Los Angeles. Many other countries, including Greece, Japan and Portugal, are holding their own protests on March 15.

Anti-war forces in the U.S. and worldwide are also organizing other mass protests, work stoppages, direct action, civil disobedience and many more actions to stop the criminal U.S. war on Iraq before it starts.

Student walkouts are taking place at hundreds of colleges and high schools all over the U.S. as part of a national March 5 moratorium against the war. The National Youth and Students Peace Coalition has called the walkout actions “Books, Not Bombs,” to show how the billions of tax dollars being diverted to war are directly linked to devastating cutbacks in education.

Both President George W. Bush and Britain’s Prime Minister Tony Blair had hoped to begin a war with Iraq in January. They had to postpone it to February. But their diabolical war plans

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

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NO WAR ON IRAQ

Emergency Convergence
on the **White House**

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Gather at the Washington Monument
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Surround the White House on March 15

Continued from page 1

were temporarily dashed again when an unprecedented massive outpouring of humanity occurred worldwide on the weekend of Feb. 15 and 16—more than 10 million people took to the streets in 600 cities around the world to demand “No war on Iraq.”

Both Bush and Blair are now attempting to push through another pro-war resolution in the United Nations Security Council in defiance of world public opinion. The U.S. and Britain are finding it more difficult to depend on their long-time allies for military support for this war. All their attempts at bribery and arm-twisting to impose their imperialist will on the oppressed, underdeveloped countries have not produced the kinds of results they anticipated.

Most notably, the Turkish parliament voted against the use of its bases for U.S. troops to launch an attack on Iraq, despite U.S. efforts to bribe Turkey’s beholden, reactionary regime with billions of dollars in aid and loans. On the same day as the vote, tens of thousands of people in Ankara, Turkey, marched to parliament to demand no war. (See related article, page 8.)

In Cairo, where many protests are repressed by law, 100,000 people jammed a stadium and hundreds of thousands more rallied outside in support of Iraq and Palestine on Feb. 27.

Bush has become so defensive and isolated in the world about this war that he has admitted publicly what so many already knew—that its real aim is to overthrow the Iraqi government and put Iraq under the jurisdiction of the U.S. military.

The bottom line is that the real aims of a war against Iraq have nothing to do with weapons of mass destruc-

tion and everything to do with “regime change” in the interests of conquest.

Response to March 15 call

Sarah Friedman, a national outreach coordinator of ANSWER in Washington, told Workers World, “A movement has to have the ability to switch gears in terms of mobilizing efforts, especially when the stakes are so extremely high, like doing everything possible to stop a racist war on Iraq. We are getting great responses from all over the country—150 cities are organizing to get to March 15 protests on both coasts, including Minnesota, Florida and the Midwest.”

At a jam-packed meeting at Community Church in New York City on March 4, speakers including former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, ANSWER spokesperson Larry Holmes and others spoke about how critical the March 15 mobilization is. And they stressed that the people of the world understand the need for a strong anti-war movement inside the U.S.

People in the audience took stacks of March 15 leaflets and bought many bus tickets.

Mass leafleting for March 15 is planned for every International Women’s Day protest from New York to Baltimore, Washington to Los Angeles.

ANSWER organizers have called for a gathering of anti-war forces at 12 noon on March 15 at the Washington Monument. After a rally, a march will proceed to surround the White House, followed by a wind-up rally at the Department of Justice, which promotes so much injustice at home.

Go to www.internationalANSWER.org to download leaflets, endorse the protest, make a donation and find a local March 15 organizing center near you. □

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<p>CHICAGO</p> <p>Sun., March 23 The lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered community is coming out against war & racism. An afternoon of action and political education featuring Leslie Feinberg of the IAC and author of “Stone Butch Blues.” Sponsored by Queer to the Left, Sangat, Chicago Anti-Bashing Network, IAC, ANSWER. 2-5 p.m. At Chicago Temple, 77 W. Washington St. For info (888) 471-0874.</p> <p>NEW YORK</p> <p>Sat., March 8 On International Women’s Day—No War. Action initiated</p>	<p>by NY ANSWER. For info (212) 633-6646.</p> <p>SAN FRANCISCO</p> <p>Every Saturday Workers World Party weekly meetings. These educational meetings cover current events as well as struggles of peoples from all over the world. 5 p.m. At 2489 Mission St, room 28.</p> <p>WASHINGTON, D.C.</p> <p>Sat., March 15 Emergency convergence on the White House to stop a war on Iraq. Parallel actions will also be held in Los Angeles and San Francisco. For info see www.internationalanswer.org.</p>
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Vol. 45, No. 10 • March 13, 2003
Closing date: March 5, 2003

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Workers World-WW (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

Selected articles are available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to wnews-on@wppublish.com.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World-WW, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

Emergency response protests & walkouts

As the Bush administration threatens to wage a unilateral war of aggression we must do all we can to make this movement the single biggest obstacle to war. We do not believe that war is inevitable. However, if the war starts we must be organized to resist and disable the war machine.

Organize walkouts from school, work, your home. Spend the morning leafleting for people to join the anti-war movement. A.N.S.W.E.R. offices and organizing centers around the country will be open in the morning to pick up leaflets and from there you can head out with others into your community. Converge mid-day at noon at city centers—in New York City at Union Square, in Washington, D.C., at the White House, in San Francisco at Civic Center Plaza—to engage in protest actions against the war. Download flyers at www.internationalanswer.org and locate organizing centers in your area.

The morning after the war starts —
WALK OUT! STAY AWAY

The day a new U.S. war on Iraq starts —
EMERGENCY PROTEST

The first Saturday after—
CONVERGE AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Protest at a central location—
in New York at Times Square, in Washington, D.C., at the White House, in San Francisco at Powell and Market—against the war followed by a march through city neighborhoods beginning at 5 p.m. (the next day at 5 p.m. if the bombing begins at night).

The Saturday after a new war on Iraq
is launched, thousands of people will be converging at the White House in Washington, D.C., at 12 noon.

For listings of Emergency Response Mobilization plans around the country—and to list your local event—go to www.internationalanswer.org/campaigns/emerg/index.html

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FBI no friend to civil rights movement

Klan conviction: Justice delayed

By Monica Moorehead

Former Ku Klux Klan member Ernest Avants was found guilty in a Jackson, Miss., federal court on Feb. 28 of "aiding and abetting" in the murder of Black sharecropper Ben Chester White.

This conviction occurred almost 36 years after the original trial where Avants was acquitted by an all-white jury. The 72-year-old Avants is scheduled to be sentenced on May 9. His lawyers plan to appeal the verdict.

This case marks the first time a federal jury has issued a guilty verdict in a trial so closely associated with the civil rights movement. This case was reopened because White's body was found near Natchez in the Homochitto National Forest, which is deemed federal land.

White became a tragic statistic in the all-too-long list of lynching victims. Like 1955 lynching victim Emmett Till, and unlike martyred NAACP leaders Medgar Evers and Vernon Dahmer, White had not been active in the civil rights movement. Till, Dahmer and Evers were all murdered in Mississippi.

Any Black person was subject to beatings and even death at the hands of the KKK and other white supremacist groups that wanted to keep the Black masses in semi-enslaved, segregated conditions.

In 1966, White was randomly abducted by Avants and two other white supremacists, James Lloyd Jones and Claude Fuller, and brutally shot multiple times. It was later revealed that the KKK wanted to use the murder of White to lure Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to Mississippi to assassinate the civil rights leader.

The trials of Jones and Fuller—both deceased now—were declared "mistrials." Years later, Jones testified that Avants shot White in the head after the sharecropper had already been shot multiple times and killed by Fuller.

While White's family understandably

feels justice has been done with this verdict, there are others who feel that the conviction is too little, too late. Sawandi Olugbala, an African American Mississippian, replied following the verdict, "If somebody commits a murder, or a crime, and gets away with it for almost 40 years ... that's not justice." (Washington Post, March 1)

The Avants conviction follows a pattern of recent murder trials that have been tied to the civil rights movement. These trials include the conviction of a KKK member last year who planted bombs that killed four Black girls in the 1963 Birmingham church blast. And in 1994, Klan member Byron De La Beckwith was convicted of murdering Evers in the civil rights activist's driveway in 1963.

FBI complicit in murders

For every recent conviction, like in the White case, there are thousands more cases of murdered Black people and civil rights workers that will not see the light of

day. This raises the role the Federal Bureau of Investigation played during the civil rights movement.

Movies like "Mississippi Burning" make it seem as though the FBI was a true friend of the civil rights movement.

For instance, the FBI provided informants to infiltrate extra-legal terrorist groups like the KKK to "monitor" their activities.

In reality, however, the FBI, a repressive agency of the U.S. government, was no friend of the civil rights movement. It was very rare that any KKK member was indicted for any murders or assaults on civil rights activists based on the evidence of these informants.

During the 1950s, as an outgrowth of the anti-communist witch hunt, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover helped create the Counter-Intelligence Program—or Cointelpro—as a mechanism for discrediting leaders of the civil rights movement, including Dr. King. The spying, wiretap-

ping and frame-ups were meant to sow divisions and lead to the demise of this powerful mass movement.

And to this day, the FBI has yet to share crucial evidence it obtained in a milestone case—the horrific murders of voting-rights activists James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. The three were shot by Klan members on June 21, 1964.

A Jackson, Miss., newspaper recently reported that the FBI has more than 40,000 pages on this case and that they were turned over to the Mississippi attorney general's office in 1999. These pages do not include informant files, results of wiretaps or internal memos. (Clarion-Ledger, March 2)

Mike Moore, the attorney general, has not made any public comments on this case. This is the same attorney general who will not reopen the murder case of 15-year-old Till, which the NAACP has requested. □

Unity with Black struggle

Activists rallied at Roxbury Community College in Boston on Feb. 22 to "Make February Black Protest for Peace Month." The program featured Larry Holmes, a spokesperson for the International ANSWER coalition.

Speakers also included Boston City Councilor Chuck Turner; Nation of Islam Minister Don Muhammad; Dorothea Peacock of the Women's Fightback Network; Carl Jackson, a student leader from Tufts University; Robert Traynham, a Boston school bus driver from Steel Workers' Local 8751; and Earlene Salley from Boston ANSWER.

Solidarity messages to this struggle were delivered by Marta Rodriguez, Puerto Rican activist and singer; Mahtowin Munro of United American Indians of New England; and Amer Jubran of the New England Committee to Defend Palestine. □



WW PHOTO: LIZA GREEN

From right to left: Larry Holmes, Dorothea Peacock, Carl Jackson and Earlene Salley.



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

'St. Patrick's for all'

Anti-war contingent wins applause

March 2 was the 4th annual "St. Patrick's for All" parade in Queens, N.Y. This year the march through the working-class, multinational neighborhoods of Sunnyside and Woodside was dedicated to the memory of late Catholic anti-war activist Philip Berrigan.

Hundreds marched in spite of a driving rain and a hate campaign by bigots and the local Republican Party, who have targeted the parade because it welcomes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender participation.

Marchers reflected the character of the neighborhood: Irish, Mexican, Korean and Colombian groups, lesbian and gay

organizations, labor unions and churches. The Big Apple Marching Band, Comite del Cinco de Mayo dancers, Korean drummers and the De Jimbe Afro-Irish music group livened up the occasion.

An antiwar contingent included members of the International ANSWER coalition, International Action Center, West Queens Greens and West Queens Independent Democrats.

Onlookers along the route of march applauded the IAC banner, "Bu\$h, Blair—hands off Iraq! Britain out of Ireland" and the NYCLAW banner, "Labor's enemy is in the White House and the boardrooms, not in Iraq." —Bill Cecil

All out March 17 Stop homophobia on parade

By Leslie Feinberg
New York

"Why is it that anti-war protests are dangerous, but not homophobic St. Patrick's Day parades?" Dian Killian asked at a Feb. 27 news conference at City Hall. Killian is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1981 and is on the steering committee of Pride at Work-N.Y.—the lesbian, gay, bi and trans constituency group of the AFL-CIO.

"After blocking a permit for a peaceful, anti-war march on Feb. 15," Killian noted, "Mayor Bloomberg is now supporting the city's largest annual display of homophobia. I repeat: New York's St. Patrick's Day parade is the largest annual, city-supported display of homo-

phobia—in the U.S. and around the world."

She used the media conference to broadcast a call to join Pride at Work and the Campaign for Inclusive Parades on March 17 at 10 a.m. at Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street, "to demand that the mayor—and the city's St. Patrick's Day parade—be inclusive and respectful of all New Yorkers."

And, Killian added, "Pride at Work opposes a war on Iraq. My union, the National Writers' Union, UAW 1981, strongly opposes a war on Iraq. Dozens of other unions and labor organizations, under the umbrella of New York City Labor Against the War, also are demanding: Money for jobs, not war." □

AFL-CIO council meets, resolves, but shows no oomph

But genuine anti-war current emerges in labor's ranks

By Milt Neidenberg
Retired Teamster

On the eve of the U.S. war against the Iraqi people, a war that could change the face of the globe, the AFL-CIO Executive Council held its annual winter session Feb. 24-27 in balmy Hollywood, Fla., not far from where George W. Bush stole the 2000 presidential election.

The Executive Council passed a resolution expressing reservations about the war—a historic first—but the language was timid, especially given the breadth of mass opposition here and around the world.

The 65 affiliated unions face staggering crises and tumultuous events exploding around the labor movement.

War preparations have diverted hundreds of billions of desperately needed dollars from social programs—Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security. In the last two years more than 2 million jobs have permanently disappeared. Household incomes for workers and their families have dropped precipitously.

The U.S. Constitution has been shredded by repressive laws such as the Patriot Act, which have wiped out decades of civil-rights and civil-liberties legislation so precious to the 13 million union members.

The Bush administration has declared all-out war against organized labor, backing employers who violate labor laws.

"We can't grow through the National Labor Relations Board. ... It takes three years to resolve an organizing campaign," said Stewart Acuff, the new AFL-CIO director of organizing.

The Executive Council conference participants spent much time discussing strategies about how to organize the unorganized. One idea was floated to get around the slow NLRB union recognition process: election by card check, a simple and democratic voting process. However, employers would have to agree to be neutral. Highly unlikely.

The unorganized, who make up the overwhelming mass of the multinational working class, are anxious and willing to struggle for the right to join a union. They are the working poor—predominately people of color, women and immigrants—who are being driven onto food lines and into the streets for lack of decent wages and housing.

A recent survey by Peter D. Hart Research Associates found that half of all U.S. workers would vote for a union in

their workplace if given a chance. Yet only 13.2 percent of the workers are organized. The time is ripe for a major struggle against intransigent bosses.

Wooing Democrats: futile and unproductive

At the conference, AFL-CIO leaders passed many resolutions against Bush's relentless attack on labor's rights. However, there was no clear strategy for fighting back, no plan for organizing the multinational rank-and-file work force of millions.

Instead, these leaders spent much precious time discussing strategy for the 2004 presidential election. And once again it was Democratic presidential candidates who took front and center stage. The politicians lounged around in the luxurious Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa, a 39-story seafront hotel, where they were wined and dined by AFL-CIO leaders.

This wooing of Democratic hopefuls is a futile ritual, proven unproductive over the years.

Former President Bill Clinton's national security advisor, Sanford R. Berger, and Clinton's special Middle East envoy, Dennis B. Ross, were invited to participate in the Executive Council's decision to prepare an anti-war resolution, which passed in the final days of the four-day conference.

The smell of the Democratic Party was pervasive. The labor federation agreed unanimously that Hussein is a "demagogue and despot," but said the best way to disarm him is "in concert with a broad international coalition of allies and with the sanction of the United Nations."

This language is certainly in sharp contrast to the overwhelming support the labor movement gave to the Vietnam War. But a clause in the resolution moved it further to the right by adding labor would "support the war as a last resort." This was a compromise that deferred to the American Federation of Teachers bureaucracy, which supports unilateral U.S. military action.

Resolutions from progressive labor forces were ignored.

As per protocol, the federation invited Labor Secretary Elaine Chao to hear their gripes and exchange a few pleasantries. They were shocked and insulted when she delivered a 30-minute harangue about supposed corruption, listing charges of union embezzlement and resulting convictions.

Her speech was in perfect harmony with

Bush's strategy to housebreak the labor movement.

She defended new regulations requiring stricter financial reporting by unions. The new accounting requirements will cost the unions tens of thousands of dollars and much time.

The conferees were infuriated by Chao's attacks. It's not that there are not greedy individuals who dip into union treasuries. This is a shameful act. But it should be punished internally, not by labor's enemies.

The leaders' anger was understandable: What about the Wall Street billionaires and corrupt corporate executives who cover up their obscene wealth and get away with it through criminal accounting practices and illegal tax shelters?

The 2002 AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting will be remembered, if at all, for missed opportunities and what wasn't accomplished.

It was a repeat of previous Executive Council meetings such as the 1999 winter session. Then, too, the council took up saving Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. They called for raising the minimum wage and organizing the unorganized, and demanded health and retiree benefits.

They didn't win any concessions when the Democrat Clinton was in the White House, even though he boasted of budget surpluses over \$100 billion and a booming economy.

So how in the world can the AFL-CIO leaders expect to win concessions now without planning a major confrontation against the anti-labor war hawk, Bush? He is bankrolled by a billionaire corporate/banking clique, is hell-bent on destroying the labor movement and is beginning a preemptive attack on Iraq.

Progressive unionists are organizing against war

Fortunately, the AFL-CIO has a way out. The class struggle has surfaced in a spectacular and dramatic fashion. On Feb. 15-16 alone, more than 10 million people worldwide protested an impending war on Iraq. Demonstrations took place in 600 cities in 100 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, in

Europe, North America and Oceania.

A progressive sector of the labor movement is growing within this powerful global anti-war movement. A few days after the splendid Feb. 15-16 outpouring, U.S. Labor Against the War set up an international telephone news conference call. More than 200 unions, from 53 countries on five continents, representing over 130 million workers, agreed on a joint statement rejecting a U.S. war against Iraq.

The statement says in part: "There is no evident purpose for this war that we can support ... We oppose the use of this war ... as a pretext for attacks on labor, civil, immigrant, and human rights ... and the spending of billions of dollars. ... Our nations need money for education, health care, housing and other basic needs."

Another section points out, "The principal victims of any military action in Iraq will be the sons and daughters of working-class families and innocent Iraqi civilians who have already suffered too much."

USLAW sent this statement to the AFL-CIO Executive Council conference. It is far superior and more responsive to the war and domestic crises than the one the Executive Council ratified.

The USLAW anti-war statement reflects a spectacular mushrooming of the progressive sector of the labor movement, which is growing out of the impressive show of numbers coming into the streets.

It is a burgeoning movement that includes local unions, citywide central labor councils and state federations, and a few progressive national union presidents. This movement is now far to the left of the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

USLAW has called for March 12 anti-war activities at the work place.

The recent AFL-CIO conference failed to measure up to these historic developments. The survival of many of these officials as leaders is in question.

The tide sweeping the globe that rejects this war encompasses tens of millions of workers and their allies in class struggle. This is where the future of humanity lies. □

Mall bosses won't give peace a chance

You can find a t-shirt that says just about anything in the sprawling shopping shrines known as malls.

Designer logos, bumper sticker wisdom, rude suggestions, simplistic gendered statements, team loyalties.

But 61-year-old Stephen Downs and his 31-year-old son Roger tried to wear t-shirts with a progressive message—"Peace on Earth" and "Give peace a chance"—in the Crossgates Mall in a suburb of Albany, N.Y., on March 3. They had just bought them from a vendor at the mall.

A modest point in print.

Amid the hubbub of sales and people browsing, mall security spotted the message and demanded that the two men remove their shirts or leave

the premises. Both Downs refused. The guards returned with a cop. But Stephen Downs would not be stripped of his shirt or his beliefs.

He was handcuffed, taken away and charged with trespassing. He faces up to one year in prison.

Less than three months earlier, the same mall bosses had used their security force and local police to expel 20 peace activists for the crime of wearing similar t-shirts.

The captains of capital are putting a hard sell on this war, but more and more people aren't buying it. In fact, about 100 anti-war activists marched through the mall on March 5 to protest Downs' arrest.

—Leslie Feinberg

YALE STRIKE:

SHAKING THE IVY

By Monica Moorehead

Yale University has been virtually shut down by striking workers and graduate students who are demanding a living wage and a better pension program from the reportedly \$11-billion endowed institution.

The strike, which began on March 3, involves four different unions that have joined forces. They represent Yale's 2,900 clerical workers; 1,200 cleaning,

dining hall and maintenance workers; 1,000 graduate teaching and research assistants; and 150 food workers at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

The school administration had to admit that 95 percent of the technical and service workers walked off their jobs. Two-thirds of the clerical workers have also joined the strike.

Yale is on record as having the worst labor relations of any major U.S. university. □

In wake of blizzard

Baltimore workers need emergency fund

By Sharon Black
Baltimore

As of March 3, it has been 15 days since one of Baltimore's worst snowstorms dumped close to two feet of snow on the area. Despite two periods of rain and thawing, high mounds of dirty snow clog the city streets, making commutes and walks difficult and dangerous.

While the Pentagon can mount a war effort that includes deploying some 225,000 soldiers to invade Iraq and spending millions of dollars on "homeland security," Baltimore cannot plow its secondary streets.

There was no effective plan or organization in place when the storm struck the mid-Atlantic states. Keeping major highways and arteries open was set as the priority out of concern for businesses.

But there was no real provision made for workers and the poor. No block-to-block emergency plan. No efforts for the

homeless and the aged beyond the already overtaxed shelters.

Baltimore's infrastructure, which was already worn and tattered, buckled and in some cases collapsed under the stress of the storm.

In violation of the national Clean Water Act, more than 35 million gallons of raw sewage spilled into the Herring Run stream that flows through Baltimore. Old water mains and sewage pipes burst in many neighborhoods, creating health hazards.

And in Baltimore's Eastside, an entire block was evacuated as homes exploded from a natural gas leak.

Five people were reported dead from storm-related causes, including three children who were tragically poisoned by carbon monoxide fumes inside a car where they were trying to keep warm.

Create emergency fund

Local governments will be assessing the damage. They can apply for 75 percent of

the costs under federal laws. But what about the thousands of workers who have suffered tremendous losses not covered by insurance?

The first demand should be that workers be compensated for lost wages. Many could not travel to work because of the snow-covered streets and no public transportation. These workers live paycheck to paycheck. And many do not have adequate union contracts.

With a winter of unprecedented increases in the cost of oil and natural gas, many individuals and families will face utility shutoffs in the early spring. The government should declare a moratorium on all utility shutoffs.

Workers must also be allowed compensation for the loss of personal property. An

adequate emergency plan should be made for the homeless, aged, disabled and young.

And the federal government must immediately help rebuild Baltimore's old, decaying infrastructure.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said that revealing the actual cost of the genocidal U.S. war about to be unleashed on Iraq "simply isn't useful." The needs of the people of Baltimore challenge this cynical statement.

Every man and woman from Maryland about to be used as cannon fodder for Big Oil should be brought back home to rebuild the communities of Maryland. And the billions of dollars about to be spent on death and destruction should be used for people's needs. □

NEW YORK

Billionaire mayor threatens layoffs

By G. Dunkel
New York

Billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg is demanding that city unions give up \$600 million in give-backs—about \$2,400 per employee.

Lillian Roberts, executive director of AFSCME District Council 37—which represents 125,000 workers—said, "Our members are low paid, they average \$29,000 a year, and these cuts would be a real sacrifice for them." □

Bloomberg has threatened 12,000 layoffs if the unions don't surrender. In addition, the city will not bargain a new contract with any union that doesn't agree to these concessions on pensions, health-care and working hours.

Facing mounting opposition from the municipal unions, the Bloomberg administration is trying to buy time. It announced Feb. 28 that it was agreeable to setting up joint labor-management committees to consider alternatives. □

CUNY

'Education under attack: FIGHT BACK!'

Three hundred CUNY students, from New York City Tech and Medgar Evers, marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall on Feb. 26. Two hundred students marched from Borough of Manhattan Community College. Others came by subway to swell the crowd to about 2,000.

They chanted, "Our education, our future is under attack. Fight back!"

Camille Verez, a single mother at Queens College who brought her daughter to the rally stage, said, "I'm here because Pataki's cuts are destroying my future and my daughter's future." Although it is called the City University of New York, most of CUNY's funding comes from the state of New York, and Gov. George Pataki controls it.

Tamika from SLAM—Student Liberation Action Movement—explained that the last time tuition was hiked 30,000 students dropped out. A 35 percent increase in tuition and fees would mean that many poor students like herself couldn't continue in school.



Shamsoul Haque, who was born in Bangladesh and is chairperson of the University Student Senate, pointed out that Pataki's tuition hike was taxing the poor, not the rich. "We need more money for education, not for war on Iraq." He concluded, "We are not begging, we are demanding since education is a right."

The rally was organized by New York Public Interest Research Group, which is organizing people to walk to Albany from all over the state to oppose Pataki's tuition hike, and was supported by a whole host of student groups, unions—including the Professional Staff Congress, representing CUNY's faculty and staff—and Democratic city council members who currently attend or did attend CUNY.

—Story and photo by G. Dunkel

Hell no, he won't go!

National Guard member Ghanim Khalil, at a March 4 meeting in New York, explaining why he is refusing to fight against the Iraqi people. The meeting was organized by ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and Sara Flounders reported to 200 activists on their recent trip to Baghdad. Larry Holmes reported on the March 1 London conference of worldwide anti-war forces. Deirdre Sinnott mobilized organizers for the upcoming March 15 action in Washington.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO



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Iraqi women's gains set back by U.S. war

By Sara Flounders

With opposition to a U.S. war on Iraq exploding around the world, the Bush administration has reached fanciful heights in its promises to rebuild the country after a war and implement sweeping democratic reforms. Women make up half the people. Comparing the status of women in Iraq to the countries in the Gulf region where U.S. military and economic power keeps corrupt, feudal dictatorships in control shows how utterly false are these promises.

In Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and throughout the Gulf states women have no right to participate in any area of public or political life. They have no right to work, drive, vote or control their own funds. They are forbidden to be on the streets without a veil. They cannot travel without being accompanied by a husband, father or brother.

Women have no right to decide who they will marry, nor do they have the right to divorce, even from an abusive husband. They are literally imprisoned in their homes. Education is separate and so unequal that the majority of women in oil-rich Saudi Arabia are still illiterate. This criminal situation confirms that the Pentagon is incapable of implementing any progressive social changes.

In Iraq, however, in every school, hospital or government ministry a visitor meets opinionated, confident, educated young women. This is obvious even after years of continued U.S. bombing and sanctions that have strangled the economy.

Nicholas Kristof, writing in the New York Times of Oct. 3, 2002, admitted to this glaring contrast. In an article entitled "Equality of Women: Iraq Puts U.S. Allies to Shame," Kristof began with this comparison: "If American ground troops are allowed to storm across the desert from Saudi Arabia into Iraq, American servicewomen will theoretically not be able to drive vehicles as long as they are in Saudi Arabia and will be advised to wear an abaya over their heads. As soon as they cross the border into enemy Iraq, they will feel as if they are entering the free world: They can legally drive, uncover their heads, even call men idiots. Iraqi women routinely boss men and serve in non-combat positions in the army."

Kristof pointed out that "at the Basra Maternity and Pediatric Teaching Hospital 25 of the 26 students in obstetrics and gynecology are women. Across town, 54 percent of Basra University's students are female."

Overthrow of feudalism

Iraq was under the grip of the British Empire until the 1950s. Until the stranglehold of the U.S. and British was broken, the vast majority of the population was impoverished and illiterate. The country was underdeveloped because its vast oil reserves were totally in the hands of the big oil corporations. All the wealth from oil sales flowed into Western banks. Only the royal family and a narrow grouping around it benefited.

The democratization of the status of Iraqi women and other social gains began with the 1958 revolution. This social explosion overthrew the corrupt monarchy and feudal landowners whose repressive rule had been kept in place by British and U.S. military power. Until 1958 the social position of women in Iraq was similar to the horrible position of women in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia today.

But revolutionary Iraq didn't have a



moment's peace. The country went through years of upheaval and several coups as U.S. and British covert operations, sabotage, intrigue and constant military efforts attempted to restore the status quo ante. By 1972, however, the oil had been nationalized and the biggest landowners expropriated. With Iraq's vast oil resources in the hands of the state, a spectacular social transformation happened within two decades. Many problems rooted in age-old bias and backwardness were resolved. Iraqi women made the greatest social gains of women anywhere in the Arab world.

Education, including university, was free. Students paid no tuition and even received funds to continue their studies. This was a powerful incentive, especially in the education of women. It encouraged families to keep their daughters in school and not pull them out for work or an early marriage. At the same time the government guaranteed jobs for women who wanted to work. Women acquiring professional skills knew they would find jobs in their fields. Equal pay for equal work was guaranteed.

Health care was also free and of high quality. Mothers had pre- and post-natal care. Working women were guaranteed six months paid maternity leave and an additional six months at half pay. Subsidized daycare was available at most workplaces. Basic food and housing were subsidized.

U.S. bombs destroy women's gains

Regime change means the destruction of all the progressive social programs that Iraq has financed with nationalized oil. The Pentagon occupation plans call for putting the Iraqi oil industry directly under the administration of the U.S. Army. U.S. occupation of Iraq will be paid for out of this expropriated wealth. Any rebuilding will only be for infrastructure that benefits the extraction of wealth from Iraq.

In the 1991 war the Pentagon directly targeted the civilian infrastructure that had been built up during a 20-year program of investing oil revenue in modernizing the country. U.S. bombs damaged 676 schools. They were the pride of Iraq, their hope for the future. U.S./UN sanctions cut off all access to imported computers, books, school supplies and professional journals, and prevented study abroad at government expense.

Bombs and cruise missiles targeted the water purification and sewage processing

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plants. The dams, the irrigation network and food-pro-

cessing plants that had modernized agriculture were repeatedly hit. The electric grid and communications network were destroyed.

Women, who had gained the most, were also the most endangered by the war and sanctions.

The sanctions created wild inflation that shut down the whole economy, brought on massive unemployment, and cut off revenue to the public sector, the largest employer of women.

Workers with government jobs were not laid off. But the salaries of schoolteachers, doctors, social workers, engineers and technicians became almost worthless. Young women, who a few years earlier had enjoyed financial independence with a salary of around \$400 a month, suddenly found that their real wages were reduced through inflation to less than \$2 a month.

No one can live on this. Whole families pool every penny to survive. Even though the salary is worthless, millions of women continue to work because work means participation in society. Despite massive

destruction of the civilian infrastructure and years of sanctions, women still struggle to maintain an active role in society.

In every country in the world the burden of childcare and housekeeping is still borne primarily by women. Now, without running water, with only sporadic electricity and limited food provided by government rations, and with sick, undernourished children, Iraqi women face a double burden in a constantly deteriorating situation.

Today up to 95 percent of pregnant women suffer from anemia. Low weight, premature and sick babies are the result. Over 4,500 children per month die due to malnutrition, diarrhea caused by waterborne illnesses, and other sanctions-related, preventable causes. The public health system is in a state of near total collapse from a lack of basic medicines, supplies and equipment.

In the midst of scarcity, old traditions are more likely to reassert themselves. Families must choose which child to buy books for, which children can be pulled from school to work or beg on the streets so the family can survive. After 12 years of sanctions, more than 35 percent of young girls now drop out before finishing primary school.

The cost at home

The Pentagon's war on Iraq will cost over \$200 billion. The cost of a long-term occupation is estimated at \$1 trillion. Here in the U.S. it is also women and children who will pay for the war. Today over 25 percent of children in the U.S. live in poverty. In New York City over one and a half million people depend on food pantries to eat. Some 45 million people are now without health insurance.

As corporate power recolonizes whole sections of the globe, income in the U.S. steadily declines. Real income has declined every year for the past 20 years for 80 percent of the population.

A U.S. occupation of Iraq would be an enormous setback to the historic gains that women have made both in Iraq and in the U.S. Iraqi women's past achievements are an example of what is possible when resources are used for human needs. Women of the whole world have the greatest stake in stopping the U.S. war machine. □

Women say no

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The United States is stepping up threats against North Korea and increasing its military presence in the Philippines. The Navy has resumed using the Puerto Rican island of Vieques as a bombing range to prepare for military actions in other parts of the world. Around the world, U.S. militarism is wreaking untold havoc on people's lives.

But resistance is gathering against this U.S. onslaught. This resistance includes an international coalition of anti-imperialist women's groups that is organizing energetically.

The East Asia-U.S.-Puerto Rico Women's Network Against U.S. Militarism was formed after the rape of a 12-year-old girl in Okinawa by a U.S. soldier in 1995. This event galvanized a movement on that island to stop violence against women. The movement made connections to other women's groups in Korea, the Philippines and Japan, and later to

women opposing the U.S. occupation and bombing of Vieques.

The groups emphasize the links among violence against women, economic exploitation of women, and the presence of U.S. bases in their countries.

The member organizations also emphatically oppose the promotion of war through images and words that vilify gay people as well as women. The network rejects the current wave of militarism for its glorification of rigid gender roles and a violent hyper-masculinity.

Joined by U.S. women dedicated to opposing Washington's military policies, the network has held conferences in Washington, D.C., Okinawa, and Seoul, South Korea, to coordinate its work internationally.

Co-founder Margo Okazawa-Rey points out that the sexual exploitation of women is an integral part of the U.S. military presence in East Asia. In South Korea, for instance, young women are brought in from the Philippines and the

Poised to shake up the old order

Women on labor's cutting edge

By Deirdre Griswold

For many decades, all across the United States—indeed, in much of the world—the ground has been swelling and shifting in preparation for a social earthquake that cannot be suppressed much longer.

The vast change taking place is on a very fundamental level. It has the most profound implications for the future of human society.

It involves the flood of women who have entered the work force and become a potent element in the struggle of the working class.

To appreciate the immense changes, it is useful to look back at what life was like early in the last century, when International Women's Day was first established.

Sweatshop conditions were so terrible in New York City that in 1909 a strike of mostly young Jewish and Italian immigrant garment workers was dubbed "The Uprising of the 20,000." This struggle prompted the Socialist International, meeting in Copenhagen the next year, to declare an International Women's Day.

At that time, however, women who worked outside the home were a very small minority.

In most of the world, including the rapidly developing capitalist countries, the vast majority of women worked from dawn until long after dusk cooking, cleaning, sewing, raising children, and performing all the laborious tasks of running a large household without refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, washing machines or other appliances now standard in industrialized countries. They labored very hard, but not for pay and not outside the home.

In the United States in 1900, women made up only 18.3 percent of the official—paid—work force.

Vast majority of women are now wage workers

Fifty years later, that figure had grown to only 29.6 percent. Today, however, women make up 46.6 percent of the labor force in the United States—nearly half. (These and other figures cited in this article come from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau.)

That figure shows the breakdown

between men and women in the work force. But looking at just women, how many of them are now working outside the home?

At least 60 percent of the women in the United States today work outside the home. An astonishing 99 out of every 100 women will work for pay at some point in their lives.

Even the majority of women with young children have to go out and work.

In 2000, among married couples with children, two-thirds of the women worked—65.8 percent as compared to 57.5 percent in 1980.

With kids to take care of at home, maybe most of these women worked just part time? Oh no. Women worked full time in 60 percent of dual-worker families in 2000, compared with only 44 percent of such families in 1980.

These statistics don't cover the fact that people today are living in many relationships other than the "traditional" family of husband, wife and children. In 1997, for example, 28 percent of the families with children under 18 were maintained by a single parent—usually the mother. Single parents of course have a harder time financially and, if they work, in providing child care, because couples can often coordinate their work schedules to accommodate the needs of children.

Women in lesbian relationships have a lower family income not only because women are paid less than men on average, but because they have the disadvantage in most states of not being recognized as domestic partners.

Not just the percentage but the absolute number of working women has also shot up—from 5.3 million in 1900, to 18.4 million in 1950, to 66 million in 2001. The overall population of the United States is now just 3.6 times what it was in 1900, but the number of working women has multiplied 12.5 times over this period.

New reality, old social institutions

These figures represent a huge realignment of forces that is pressing relentlessly against the outmoded social and political institutions of this country. The 66 million

that has devastated generations of people?" Okazawa-Rey described militarism and capitalism as inextricably linked. She quoted former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen, who said, "Corporations open markets, and we'll keep them open."

This global capitalism has resulted in the displacement of millions of women all over the world, as they migrate, desperately looking for work. The women are also exploited in export-processing zones, working relentlessly long hours at super-low wages.

"Our work is part of opposing the bigger war machinery," said Okazawa-Rey of the women's network. And she pointed out that the United States has used defending women as an excuse for its attacks, such as the war on Afghanistan.

She called on the larger anti-war movement to support the network's goals by integrating an analysis of gender throughout all anti-war work. Her message to the movement: "Stop the deployment of women as justification for war." □

working women by and large take much more progressive stands on both international and domestic issues than do men.

The capitalist market's penetration into every aspect of life has brought women out of the home to an extent that the 19th-century socialists who campaigned for the liberation of women could have barely imagined. Women are no longer isolated from each other or from society at large. They have gained enormous confidence in areas that had been considered men's exclusive domain.

But the burden placed on working women has not been lifted at all. Forget the ads that show relaxed, smiling women managing stunningly beautiful homes at the push of a button. Married working women were putting in a 46-hour week on the job in 1998, and then had to come home and deal with everything there.

Women are suffering en masse from sleep deprivation. In the go-go decade of 1989 to 1999, women accounted for 85 percent of the increase in people working more than one job.

They had to work two jobs, just to keep their heads above water. While all workers are exploited in the sense that they produce a surplus that goes into the boss's pocket, women workers are subject to super-exploitation, above and beyond that of men.

Have there been gains? Yes, big ones. But they need to be understood in the context of a period in which the working class as a whole has been losing ground.

In 1970, when the modern women's movement was beginning to press for equal pay for comparable work, a popular button read "59." It referred to the fact that on average, women at that time earned only 59 cents for every dollar that a man earned.

The figure today is 76—after many, many struggles, both individual and collective. And it is even higher among young women. In the 20-24 age bracket, women are earning 91.5 percent of men's median wages.

While this is far from equality, it still is an important advance. It represents a gain of hundreds of thousands of dollars in wages over an average woman's lifetime. But there are other sides to this story.

African American women are earning only 67 cents for every dollar that men in general earn. Among Latinas, it is worse, 55 cents, which is lower than what women overall were getting in 1970.

Furthermore, the decreasing gap between women's and men's wages does not only reflect a gain by women. It is also caused by a decline in men's real wages over this same period, especially as big corporations have eliminated many of the higher-paying, unionized industrial jobs typically performed by men.

So while women's wages have improved, and women are working longer hours than ever, the financial status of the traditional patriarchal family has declined.

Karl Marx proved in great detail that the laws of capitalism constantly batter down the workers' share of what they have created by pitting worker against worker in a competitive job market. While every company's public relations are meant to convince you that the bosses consider each worker to be an individual human being, in fact the time the workers spend on the job is to the capitalists just another commodity, to be bought at

The flood of women who have joined the work force is reaching critical mass, with immense potential for the working class struggle

the lowest price possible.

Marx showed that, unless the workers organize and fight collectively to improve their position, the compensation they receive will be pushed down to the lowest level required to maintain and reproduce them as sources of labor power.

The stagnation and even decline of workers' real wages as a whole confirms this view. Workers are more productive than ever. With the newest technology, one worker can do the same job that it took many to do only a few decades ago. So why are people working longer and earning less? It is because, without a vigorous class struggle, the lion's share of what workers produce increasingly goes to the bosses.

Here is where women workers' role in the labor movement comes in.

Women are most dynamic section of labor

Women are the most dynamic section of organized labor, along with immigrants and men of color.

Union membership in general in the United States has been declining, from 14.9 percent of the work force in 1995 to 13.2 percent in 2002, especially as industrial jobs have disappeared. In just the last two years, 1.9 million factory jobs have been lost.

But women are organizing and joining unions as never before. The biggest union organizing victory since 1937 was won in Los Angeles four years ago by the Service Employees union, which organized 74,000 home health-care workers, almost all of them women of color.

The areas of the economy employing more women—health care, education, government, food service—are exactly where the unions have been most vigorous. The Service Employees union is now the biggest AFL-CIO affiliate, with 1.5 million workers. Some 40 percent of government workers are organized, compared to less than 10 percent in private business.

While in 1962 women accounted for only 19 percent of union membership, by 1997 that figure was up to 42 percent and rising.

What women have found is that they do much better with a union. In 2001, women union members earned at least 30 percent more than nonunion women. The figures are even higher for the nationally oppressed: African American union members earn 45 percent more than their nonunion counterparts. For Latino workers the union advantage totals 54 percent.

And, in a most telling figure, in 1998 women in unions earned more than unorganized men. This can be the basis for greater solidarity between men and women as both recognize the benefits of organization.

Women are now essential to socialized production. They have enormous problems juggling everything because of capitalist oppression, but they know they can't go back: Their problems must be solved collectively. They are now leaders in the movement for deep social change that pushes ever more insistently against the entrenched reactionary guardians of the old order. □

to U.S. bases

former USSR to work as prostitutes at the U.S. bases. They supplement South Korean women already being exploited.

The network supports grassroots women's groups like My Sister's Place, which has offered counseling and vocational training to women in a U.S.-base camp town in South Korea since 1986.

The network has also protested the current U.S. war drive against Iraq in actions coordinated internationally among its members. Okazawa-Rey, in a recent speech at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., pointed out that war disproportionately affects women in catastrophic ways.

For instance, 80 percent of small-arms casualties are women and children, far outnumbering other combatants. Some 75 percent of the 50 million people uprooted by war in the world are women.

Of U.S. accusations that Iraq and North Korea present a threat of "weapons of mass destruction," Okazawa-Rey said of the United States, "What country actually has used weapons of mass destruction in a way

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The Bush and Romanov regimes

Fears surface in establishment about the war

By Richard Becker

“Is the Russia of the late Romanovs really our model, a selfish, superstitious empire thrashing toward self-destruction in the name of a doomed status quo?”

That was the astonishingly undiplomatic question posed by career diplomat John Brady Kiesling, in his open letter of resignation dated Feb. 26.

Kiesling, political affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece, addressed the letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell in protest of what he termed “our fervent pursuit of war with Iraq.”

The Kiesling resignation created an uproar because he spoke not only for himself, but for a growing section of the U.S. foreign policy establishment. On March 3, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, addressing a White House conference, called on the Bush administration to hold off on launching a new war.

“The momentum seems to be moving in the direction of war,” Albright said. “We might get the war over, but we might not get the postwar over.”

Albright’s statement must have shocked the Bush war cabinet, as she herself was a fervent pursuer of war against Iraq when serving in the Clinton administration.

The opposition to war coming from Kiesling, Albright and numerous other diplomatic and national security luminar-

ies has nothing to do with humanitarian concerns. It is instead another product of the fierce and growing global opposition to a new imperialist war.

This was admitted in effect by Albright in her remarks. Pointing to what she termed increased anti-American feelings overseas in response to Bush’s Iraq policy, Albright asserted that “there must be some way to do what we wanted without alienating everybody.”

What demonstrated that “alienation,” and emboldened many governments to speak out against the war, is the millions of people marching in hundreds of cities spanning the globe.

It is only the unexpected intervention of the people in the political process that has caused a division among the rulers and their well-paid officialdom. Their disagreement is not over the goal: the subjugation of the Middle East and the repossession of its rich oil resources. On that they all agree. Rather, it is on how to proceed in achieving this longstanding objective.

While the ruling elites had pretty much closed ranks behind the war strategy a few months ago—and may well do so again if and when hostilities begin—the unprecedented mass mobilizations of recent weeks have engendered fear of unwanted consequences in the event of war.

In that regard, Kiesling’s reference to the Romanov dynasty, and its suggested

comparison to the Bush administration, is most interesting.

The Bush and Romanov regimes

Who were the Romanovs? They were the last hereditary monarchy, czars, of the Russian Empire. Their rule, contrary to latter-day attempts at romanticizing them, was cruel and capricious in the extreme. Imperial Russia was a police state, known as the “prison-house of nations,” and a bastion of reaction in relation to Europe and Asia.

The czars lived in indescribable luxury. In a country where the vast majority suffered from poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease, the horses in the czar’s stables were sheltered from the cold with blankets studded with rubies and emeralds.

During World War I, beginning in 1914, the czar’s general staff sent millions of workers and peasants to their deaths. On the home front, the suffering of the population became unbearable.

To this misery, the Romanovs and their royal hangers-on were completely oblivious. Oblivious, that is, until the suffering of the people exploded in revolution in February 1917. Within days the Romanovs and the whole rotten structure were gone and the royal family was in custody. A few months later a second, socialist revolution brought the working class to power and changed the world.

It is highly doubtful that Kiesling sees socialist revolution in the U.S. on the immediate horizon, so why the more-than-startling analogy between the Bush and Romanov regimes?

What Albright, Kiesling and others fear is that the current lords of the empire, in their unrestrained militarism and supreme arrogance, could trigger new social explosions. That the record-high anger against U.S. military, economic and political domination could be transformed into a global firestorm of protest in the event of a new attack on Iraq.

As the more sober establishment analysts well know, every empire in history has proclaimed itself invincible and eternal, and every previous empire has fallen.

For all those active in building the anti-war movement over the past year, the Kiesling resignation should be understood as a victory. It is only the mobilization of the people—the one factor the rulers almost always leave out of their calculations—that has aroused the fears of a significant section of the ruling establishment and pushed back the war for this long.

But this is not the time to rest on past achievements. The crisis has now entered its most crucial phase. All who are opposed to war and racism must do everything possible to build the largest possible mobilizations on March 15. Only the people can stop the war. □

Kurdish people resist U.S. manipulation

By Greg Butterfield

Kurdish people and their allies are speaking out against the planned U.S. war and occupation of Iraq. They are also denouncing Turkey’s plan to send tens of thousands of troops into northern Iraq to block an influx of refugees and “root out” Kurdish revolutionaries of Kadek, the Congress for Freedom and Democracy in Kurdistan, formerly known as the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

Hundreds of Kurds held a dramatic protest outside United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on Jan. 28, vowing to act as human shields against U.S. bombs and missiles. They said a U.S. war against the Iraqi people could only hurt, not help, the cause of Kurdish liberation.

In late February, Kurdish groups that supported the 1991 Gulf War and are friendly to Washington warned that Kurds in northern Iraq would resist any intervention in the region by the Pentagon’s Turkish allies. They suggested that U.S. troops could get caught in the crossfire.

And on March 1, following weeks of swelling anti-war protests across Turkey, tens of thousands of Turkish and Kurdish people converged near parliament in downtown Ankara. Inside, legislators were voting on a long-delayed measure to permit the United States to deploy up to 62,000 troops in Turkey.

Pentagon plans call for using Turkey as the staging ground to invade Iraq from the north, while simultaneously invading from the south. Thousands of U.S. troops are already permanently stationed at Turkish bases.

The Bush administration was so confident the compliant Turkish regime would vote “yes” that tens of thousands of U.S. troops and tons of war material were sit-

ting on ships just offshore, ready for deployment as soon as the vote was taken.

Instead, 100 members of the ruling Justice and Development Party broke ranks and voted against the deployment. Although a small majority of parliament approved the measure—264 votes in favor to 251 against—the measure failed. Under the Turkish Constitution, 267 votes were required to make it law.

The power of the anti-war protests, Kurdish resistance and 90-percent public opposition to the war sent shockwaves through Turkey’s parliament and all the way to Washington.

Turkish labor unions called the March 1 demonstration, supported by the left, Kurdish and other anti-war forces. “No to war, don’t let people die,” chanted protesters standing beneath a huge banner reading, “The people will stop this war.”

Kurdish activists and their supporters also raised slogans opposing Turkey’s plans to intervene in northern Iraq; demanding freedom for imprisoned Kadek leader Abdulah Ocalan; and in solidarity with Turkish and Kurdish political prisoners on a “death fast” hunger strike. One hundred and five prisoners have died in Turkey since the hunger strike began.

Western media reported the crowd’s size as 10,000, but local television stations in Ankara admitted that at least 50,000 came out, despite the presence of hundreds of riot police and armored cars blocking the main road to the parliament building.

While claiming it could still launch a northern assault from other bases in Central Asia, the Bush administration immediately began twisting arms in Turkish ruling circles. Threats to cut off financial aid sent Turkey’s stock market

and currency tumbling.

The New York Times reported March 3, “Under intense American pressure, Turkey’s foreign minister indicated today that his government would ask Parliament to vote a second time on whether to allow American troops to use the country as a base for an attack against Iraq.”

A history of U.S. betrayals

Kurds are a Middle Eastern people with a distinct language, culture and history. The region known as Kurdistan encompasses southern Turkey, northern Iraq, and parts of Iran, Syria and Lebanon. Forty percent of historic Kurdistan lies within Turkey’s borders.

From 1984 to 1999, the PKK—Kadek’s predecessor—waged a revolutionary armed struggle in southern Turkey for Kurdish rights and independence, closely allied with Turkey’s communist movement.

Until recently, Turkey claimed there were no Kurdish people—only “mountain Turks.” Their language was forbidden. It was the fierce struggle of the PKK and its allies that finally won some concessions on Kurdish civil rights.

With U.S. military and economic aid, a succession of Turkish regimes conducted a brutal war against the Kurdish resistance. More than 30,000 people died—mostly Kurdish civilians accused of sympathizing with the PKK.

While the U.S. was assisting the slaughter of Kurds in Turkey, across the border in Iraq Washington was playing a cynical game with two bourgeois Kurdish groups, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Those parties supported the U.S.-led Gulf War against Iraq in 1991. Washington promised military and economic support for a Kurdish uprising in the north against

the Baghdad government. The uprising failed when the first Bush administration withdrew its support. A similar scenario played out under the Clinton administration in 1994.

As Washington continues to squeeze Baghdad and encroach on Iraq’s sovereignty, the rival KDP and PUK have nominally governed areas of northern Iraq under U.S. and British control—the so-called “northern no-fly zone.”

Both groups joined in denouncing the PKK/Kadek and attacking its members. However, some Kadek guerrillas succeeded in crossing the border and finding refuge in the mountains of northern Iraq.

Trust Washington? No way, Kadek says.

Calling for national unity of the Kurdish people against U.S. war in Iraq and Turkish occupation of the northern region, a Feb. 23 Kadek statement declared: “The Kurdish people must prepare themselves for a serhilidan (popular uprising) in the spring. The serhilidan will begin on March 8 until the end of May and it will take an important place in history.

“PUK and KDP have often been used against the Kurdish movement,” the Kadek statement continued. “When it is time to take steps toward a solution on the Kurdish question, Turkey targets all the Kurdish forces ... There must be a plan to solve the Kurdish question both in South and North Kurdistan. ...Everybody must take steps to avoid the war.”

For background on the Kurdish struggle and U.S. imperialism, see Sam Marcy’s 1991 article, “Kurdistan: The struggle in historical perspective,” available at www.workers.org/marcy/cd/sam91/1991html/s910418.htm. □

'Multilateralism' Bush-style

U.S. demands UN endorse Bush war doctrine

By Fred Goldstein

A combination of world-wide anti-war protests, a deepening split in the Security Council, and a series of major concessions by the Iraqi government have forced the Bush administration into a narrow political corner as it positions its military forces for an unprovoked war of conquest.

Bush's reaction to being cornered was to assert openly that the reason Washington was going to war was to overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Ari Fleischer, the White House spokesperson, said at a Feb. 28 press briefing that "to escape military action, Iraq must disarm and Mr. Hussein must be deposed." Asked again later in the briefing, Fleischer repeated, "It's disarmament and regime change."

As the figleaf of inspections and disarmament falls away, Bush and the right-wing hawks who dominate his administration have openly proclaimed their right to overthrow an independent regime by massive military force in defiance of the fundamental right of national sovereignty and self-determination.

By implication, Washington's demand that the Security Council support this outright war of aggression against a small country with a diminished military is basically requiring that it ratify the doctrine of preemptive war. This was put forward in the Pentagon's National Security Strategy document and has become known as the Bush Doctrine. Bush wants U.S. imperialism's right of "regime change" to be the accepted international norm in Washington's new world order, and he wants it sanctified by a UN resolution.

Arm-twisting and dirty tricks

While Bush has threatened to go to war without Security Council sanction, and has declared a new resolution unnecessary, the administration is desperately twisting arms and resorting to dirty tricks to keep from being publicly repudiated. A key internal document leaked to the London Observer, which it printed on March 2, revealed that "the United States is conducting a secret 'dirty tricks' campaign against UN Security Council delegations in New York as part of its battle to win votes in favor of war against Iraq."

A top official of the National Security Agency—a U.S. body that intercepts communications around the world—sent a directive to the Regional Targets section of the NSA to carry out "an aggressive surveillance operation, which involves interception of the home and office telephones and the emails of UN delegates," according to the Observer.

The prime targets of the surveillance are the "middle six" delegations from Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Mexico, Guinea and Pakistan. Also targeted are "non-Security Council delegations" that could turn up "anything useful related to Security Council deliberations."

In addition to being the target of spying, all the countries are coming under intense pressure. An example is Mexico. The London Economist of Feb. 27 noted that "a stream of American officials, sounding more hostile than sorry, have been trekking south to argue the point.



Turkish student with sign declares, 'Stop attack on Iraq,' Istanbul, March 4.

... One American diplomat has given warning that a Mexican 'no' could 'stir up feelings' against Mexicans in the United States. He draws the comparison with the Japanese-Americans who were interned after 1941, and wonders whether Mexico 'wants to stir the fires of jingoism during the war.'

None of the oppressed countries on the Security Council would vote for Washington's war if they were free of intimidation and left on their own. The populations of all the "middle six" are opposed to the war overwhelmingly. The governments also know that Washington's favors, if ever really delivered, will increase U.S. penetration of their countries and render them more dependent than ever in the future. And no government wants to bless war by the Pentagon, for the simple reason that they could be next.

The outcome in the Security Council is highly uncertain for U.S. imperialism, so they are planning for various eventualities. "If nine votes can be assembled," wrote the Washington Post on March 3, "within several days of the Friday meeting with Blix, and if Russian and Chinese abstentions are assured, U.S. and diplomatic officials said they may vote at the end of next week even under threat of a French veto. 'We could let them veto it and then turn on them,' one official said. If there are not nine votes, the official said, 'then there will be no vote.'"

Virtual rebellions in Turkey, Philippines

But the vote in the Security Council, while it is important politically, is not Washington's fundamental problem. This was illustrated by the rebellion of the Turkish parliament last week, which opposed a resolution put forward by the government council allowing 62,000 U.S. troops and 225 warplanes to invade Iraq from Turkish territory. This vote, if it holds, creates a major logistical military problem for Washington.

The resolution was rejected because a majority of the attending members did not vote for it. A majority is required by the Turkish constitution. Over 100 members of the ruling Justice and Development Party rejected its leadership and voted against the resolution. To some extent the vote was a rebellion against the insensitivity of U.S. officials.

It was a fundamental victory for the more than 100,000 Turkish and Kurdish people who poured onto the streets on March 1, the day of the vote. There is nothing like 100,000 angry demonstrators outside the window to give anti-war backbone to legislators.

This was a huge political defeat for Washington. One of the chief hawks of the Bush administration, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, had journeyed to Turkey in December to

Masses of people in the U.S. are rapidly awakening to the fact that this is not just a war against Saddam Hussein. This is a war to colonize and enslave the Iraqi people. It is the duty of the anti-war movement to fan the flames of an anti-war rebellion. Be in Washington March 15.

negotiate a deal for the troop deployment. Afterwards he had declared, "Turkish support is assured."

It is no accident that at the very time that Turkey was rejecting the U.S. troops, the Pentagon had to pull back in the Philippines. It had previously announced on Feb. 20 that it was sending 1,700 troops into combat there. The Pentagon made its announcement about a "combat mission" in the province of Jolo on the island of Mindanao in order to refute the characterization of the mission as an "exercise" made by Ignacio Bunye, spokesperson for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Philippine constitution forbids any foreign army to carry out combat missions. This provision is specifically calculated to counter the colonial legacy of military occupation by the U.S., which had seized the Philippines from Spain a century ago. As was pointed out in the March 1 New York Times, "tens of thousands of Filipinos are thought to have died at the hands of United States forces in fighting after the transfer of the Philippines to American colonial control from Spanish colonial rule in 1898."

This is well known to the Pentagon, but in their arrogance they decided to put the president of the Philippines, and by implication the Filipino people, "in their place." Fearing the masses and trying to preserve whatever sovereignty it has left, the Macapagal government is driven to stop the U.S. deployment. Now the 1,700 troops are sitting offshore in the Philippines, just as there are 62,000 U.S. troops offshore in Turkish waters.

Ships, bombers ring Korea

Washington has also sent a spy plane to provoke the North Korean government, just as it did to China shortly after Bush took office. It has arrogantly refused to meet with the North Korean government about putting an end to Washington's nearly 60-year campaign to destroy the socialist government in Pyongyang. The Pentagon has sent warships within striking distance of North Korea. It has positioned 24 long-range bombers on alert for deployment to Guam and is moving an aircraft carrier flotilla into the region to threaten and intimidate.

According to the New York Times of March 1, the Bush administration is talking about surgical strikes, maritime interdiction and other measures against this embattled socialist country, which has asserted its right of self-defense, the essence of national independence. Because it has refused to bow down to Washington, Korea is part of the "axis of evil" and subject to "preemption," according to the Bush Doctrine.

But in spite of all this U.S. intimidation, the masses of both North and South Korea are completely opposed to Washington's designs. Mass

demonstrations in the south have demanded that the U.S. get its 37,000 troops out of the country. South Koreans have protested a war on Iraq and demanded that Washington sit down across the table with the North Korean government. Anti-U.S. sentiment is boiling over in the south after 60 years of the harshest repression, particularly since two U.S. soldiers were acquitted of even negligence by U.S. authorities after they ran over two South Korean schoolgirls with their tank.

In the same manner, the revolutionary forces in Colombia have not let up their struggle in spite of \$2 billion in military aid and the presence of U.S. arms and Special Forces. The government of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and the masses who support him have not been intimidated by a U.S.-backed coup and a Washington-inspired campaign of economic and political sabotage.

The militarists in the Pentagon are basing their hopes for world conquest on their ability to intimidate and terrorize governments. But the Turkish events, the recent mass demonstrations in Cairo, and the Feb. 15 demonstrations around the world illustrate that while governments may be intimidated, the masses, once hatred of imperialism and war takes hold, are not subject to arm twisting and bribery.

This is the fundamental flaw in the Bush administration's plans for world conquest.

Above all, the masses of people in the U.S. are rapidly awakening to oppose the government's aggressive plans for conquest of the oil and the territory of Iraq. They are waking up to the fact that this is not just a war against Saddam Hussein. This is a war to colonize and enslave the Iraqi people. The movement is growing rapidly as the war danger escalates. It is the duty of the anti-war movement to fan the flames of an anti-war rebellion. Be in Washington on March 15. □



Turkish union members carry a banner that says "No war," Ankara, March 1.



Code Green for terrorists

The nine robed Supreme Court justices, who sit on the bench of the court of last resort, understand how precious the freedom to protest truly is. They stand—or sit—for civil liberties, free speech and the right of dissent.

Unfortunately, they only defend these liberties when it's the right wing that's complaining it's being hampered.

These judges have no quarrel with treading on the civil liberties of the vast majority in this country under the guise of a "war on terror." But when actual terrorists stand before the bench, who are responsible for a campaign of bombings and arsons and assassinations, the court is suddenly a bastion of liberty.

That purposeful hypocrisy pervades the "justice" system. When anti-war groups applied to march through the public streets of New York City in the largest anti-war protest there to date, they were denied that right by an appeals court.

But the highest court in the land ruled on Feb. 26 that reactionaries can mass in front of women's health clinics to disrupt the possibility of abortion procedures. They can harass and intimidate women and health care providers who have to make their way through a gauntlet of shrieking bigots and bullies.

The court handed this victory to the right-wing anti-abortionists, lifting a 10-year moratorium restricting their "right" to clog entrances at abortion clinics and terrorize anyone who tried to enter.

The decision was 8-1. Only Justice John Paul Stevens withheld his

vote—lest this ruling hinder protections for property owners.

On this International Women's Day, the hard-won gains of women to control their own bodies are increasingly under fire. Amidst the outcry over this major decision, the Supreme Court also refused to hear an appeal by abortion providers who were trying to overturn a severe restricting of the right to abortion on demand in Indiana.

Reactionaries are readying to converge on Buffalo, N.Y., to defend James Kopp—the admitted assassin of Dr. Barnett Slepian in 1998. They will use the trial to argue "justifiable homicide" and create an anti-choice media circus. The ruling by the Supremes gives the far right succor and solace. But these anti-abortionists have been defeated in Buffalo twice before, and progressive activists are organizing to ensure that they will not be successful in these goals. To lend a hand, contact: bufc@buffalounitedforchoice.org.

The right of women to decide if and when to have children is a very basic individual right. But it wasn't won as a gift from on high by judges in lofty courts. It was won in the crucible of struggle by millions who voiced the demand. Massive protests by women and all those who supported their rights wrested the Roe vs. Wade ruling legalizing abortion out of a largely reactionary Supreme Court in 1973.

A groundswell from below, strengthened by the emerging mass movements against war, racism and repression, must defend and expand women's rights. □

Defend Korea

George Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld often appear to be cartoon versions of the Roman emperors, thumping their chests and calling all opponents nasty names. But the threats are all too real and the potential damage to be done by a U.S. military attack is not at all comic.

While the Bush administration is shouting about Iraq and has built up a huge military force surrounding that disarmed country, there are other military attacks also being prepared. Every imperialist bully has more than one fight going at a time, and the Bush gang has many.

Little notice has been given in the U.S. media concerning the move of two dozen heavy Air Force bombers to Guam, reported on March 5.

People in the United States may not understand the meaning of this, but the people of Korea understood it instantly.

This puts the U.S. military into a position to easily carry out a surprise bombing campaign against North Korea. The people of both North and South Korea were instantly outraged and the South Korean government was quick to ask the Bush administration for assurances that no attack

is being planned. No such assurances came from Washington.

The U.S. media continues to cover up what is happening in Korea, acting instead as the official Pentagon news agency. Where are the reports that show that it is the United States, and not North Korea, that is in violation of the agreements made?

In the 1994 North Korea-U.S. Agreed Framework, signed by Bill Clinton, the U.S. promised to develop full diplomatic relations with North Korea as well as to provide power plants to replace their nuclear plants that were to be shut down. The U.S. broke this agreement completely. The Bush administration even announced when it came into office that it had no intention of honoring the agreement.

Nothing that North Korea is doing now is in violation—because you cannot violate a treaty that was publicly broken and disavowed by the other side.

The threat of a military strike on Korea is greater now than ever. The anti-war movement must make sure to include Korea in all of its actions to demand an end to Washington's global war threats. □

National 1-day student walkout

Anti-war youth empty schools

By Leslie Feinberg

Bush and Blair beware: the youth are on the move. The young lives that would be ordered by their commanding brass to kill Iraqi people of all ages, or be killed. The youth whose futures would be squandered and sacrificed to expand an oil-gilded empire.

In massive numbers, these high school and college students across the United States and around the world left school buildings deserted and campuses like ghost towns in a March 5 walkout to take direct action against the impending Pentagon war against Iraq.

Their battle cry: Books not bombs!

They used the dramatic action to point to the colossal funds siphoned from education, health care and jobs to the military machine.

On the eve of the one-day student strike, tens of thousands of youths at more than 300 colleges and universities had already pledged to join the protest, according to the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition, which coordinated the day of action.

A coalition of peace groups also planned a National Moratorium to Stop the War on Iraq the same day, urging people to call in sick to work or shutter their stores.

"Strike plans include walk-outs, teach-ins and civil disobedience actions on some campuses," reported Hai Bihn Nguyen, co-chair of the Stanford Asian American Activism Coalition.

At Stanford University, Calif., a coalition of more than 30 student groups sponsored the protest day, including Muslim Students Awareness Network, Stanford Labor Action



Marching up Market Street in San Francisco, March 5.

Coalition, the Stanford chapter of the NAACP, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan and Stanford Community for Peace and Justice.

In Los Angeles, hundreds cheered 18 of their peers who were being arrested by cops for blocking an intersection. About 1,000 rallied at Santa Monica City College; 500 Venice High School students protested on the school's front lawn chanting, "No more war!"

Cops scuffled with high school and college students who united in Union Square and Washington Square parks—historic sites of past anti-Pentagon-war protests. The youth held their ground, reportedly taking only one arrest, and then marched or rode the subways—which they nicknamed "peace trains"—to an East Side rally.

Some 500 students walked out of classes at the University of Maryland. Hundreds in Texas.

Thousands of students also reportedly emptied schools in England, Spain, Sweden and other countries. An estimated 30,000 walked out in Australia.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. □

Don Smith, presente!

By Bill Massey
Chicago

Comrade Don Smith died in his sleep of a heart attack on Feb. 25. He was 71 years old. Don had spent more than 44 years in the progressive movement, and 28 of those years as a member of the Chicago branch of Workers World Party.

As a young man, Smith had visited the Soviet Union and learned that the things he had been taught about it in the United States were untrue.

A university student at the time, he was concerned about nuclear war. He asked a bus driver in Moscow why the Soviet Union was producing nuclear weapons. The bus driver stopped the bus and proceeded to explain that the United States had surrounded his country with ballistic missiles and that the Soviet Union was forced to defend itself.

This, and other things he observed, made Smith curious for more information about the Soviet Union and socialism.

During the "Cuban Missile Crisis," Smith and 13 other students at Indiana University in Bloomington organized a demonstration to call for an end to the U.S. blockade. At that time Indiana was just emerging from the McCarthy period; over 4,000 raving, right-wing students attacked the demonstration.

That was one of the first political protests Smith participated in. His last demonstration, 10 days before his death, was on Feb. 15, when he was one of millions worldwide demanding "No U.S. war on Iraq."

Smith taught for more than 23 years in the Chicago Public School system. But he was not only a teacher—he was a student all of his life. He had an unquenchable thirst for knowl-

edge. His curiosity led him on a lifelong journey to find truth.

Smith was no mere collector of data; he had a very definite purpose in mind. Smith had answered the question "Which side are you on?" by rejecting the side of the rich and powerful. It was not simply that they were rich and powerful but that they became so at the expense of the overwhelming mass of humanity.

Smith put all of his vast knowledge to use in the struggles of the workers and oppressed of the world, absolutely convinced that they could run it much better than the capitalist class.

Most of all Smith was an activist—from his school days right up to the day of his death. During the Vietnam War, he played a leading role in the Chicago anti-war movement and the Veterans for Peace. Most recently Smith was very active in the Columbia Solidarity Committee. He was extremely helpful in building the mobilizations to take people from Chicago to Washington, D.C., in April and October of last year to stop the war on Iraq and support the struggles of the people of Palestine.

Don Smith had a wide range of friends in Chicago's progressive milieu. He was a source of knowledge and he had clear, cogent and firm positions reflecting the positions of Workers World Party and revolutionary Marxism. In addition, Smith was a very sweet person who could patiently explain in a friendly manner that allowed even those who disagreed to come back to discuss the questions again and again.

He will be missed, but his memory will inspire us to continue the struggle in which he spent his life. □

International anti-war conference in London

Global resistance planned to stop U.S. war on Iraq

By John Catalinotto
London

Representatives of the worldwide coalition that called the anti-war demonstrations on Feb. 15 met in London on March 1. Over 100 delegates from 26 countries unanimously agreed to organize popular escalated actions in the coming weeks aimed at stopping Washington from invading Iraq and slaughtering its people.

The group said it would oppose the war "whether it has the backing of the United Nations or not."

Representatives from many countries—among them the United States, Greece, Belgium, Brazil, Spain, Denmark and Turkey—announced mass marches and rallies for March 15.

This and other authorized actions included continuous interference with movements of U.S. troops and war materiel, already started in Italy, and blocking U.S. military bases. International Women's Day meetings will focus on the war.

On the initiative of groups from Greece, Spain and Italy, delegates endorsed coordinated industrial actions, including some national general strikes on March 21.

The group, which brought out an estimated 15 million people on Feb. 15, also announced dramatic actions should the war begin.

In many countries the movement was already in motion. On the conference weekend, mass anti-war protests were underway in Egypt, Morocco, Bahrain, Pakistan, India, Qatar and Japan, and activists were stopping war trains in Italy.

The Turkish representative drew loud cheers on two occasions. First, from the podium, he announced a demonstration of 100,000 outside the Turkish parliament in Ankara. Later, after the official conference ended, he was cheered again as he informed the remaining delegates that the Turkish parliament had rejected letting U.S. troops into Turkey to attack Iraq from the north.

This European Coordination Conference grew from the European Social Forum call in Florence, Italy, on Nov. 10, and was spread worldwide by the call at the Cairo Conference Dec. 19 and the January World Social Forum meeting. Delegates came from all over Europe, including all NATO countries except Luxembourg and the Czech Republic. Representatives also came from Israel, South Korea, Mexico, Costa Rica and Brazil.

As Angeles Maestro of Madrid, Spain, told the delegates, this group "more than any other in the world represents the overwhelming majority of humanity that wants the war to be stopped." She added that "the war has been decided [by Washington], but we can still stop it."

Outrage in Philippines over Pentagon plan

By G. Dunkel

It is a violation of the Philippine Constitution for foreign troops to fight on its country's soil.

However, the U.S. government announced in February that it was sending 3,000 troops there. Their ostensible purpose is to fight against Abu Sayyaf, a small group that has been characterized as bandits by the progressive movement. Last year the Pentagon sent troops as "advisors" to the Philippine army in another campaign against Abu Sayyaf.

The Pentagon's plan involved stationing 750 Special Forces troops on Jolo Island, backed up by 1,750 Marines with heavy helicopters on support ships offshore.

Apparently, Washington had made a backroom deal with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who is retiring soon. The deal quickly came under fire.

In the Philippines, popular opposition to the Pentagon is overwhelming. This was reflected in the political reaction to Washington's announcement. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel accused Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes of "treason in its basest form." Others talked about the thousands of armed people in the southern island of Jolo who might oppose U.S. intervention.

On Feb. 28, an estimated 50,000 people marched in Manila in a massive show of opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq and Mindanao. According to Xinhua, demonstrators represented religious groups, both Catholic and Muslim, labor unions and colleges.

They marched to the Quirino grandstand in downtown Manila. They carried placards and banners reading "Oppose U.S. terrorism" and "Reject GMA's [President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo] support for war."

Smaller coordinated demonstrations were held throughout the Philippines.

Philippine Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes flew to Washington on Feb. 23 to meet with U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, reportedly to modify the agreement.

Many in the progressive movement believe the real Pentagon target is the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a much larger group that has been resisting the Philippine government for decades. There is also a strong left movement in the Philippines that the United States may label "terrorist."

The United States originally sent military forces to the southern Philippines in the early 1900s, after seizing the islands from Spain. They killed hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in the attempt to keep a colony there. The Philippines did not get formal independence until 1946.

A year later, the United States imposed an agreement that let it keep major facilities at Clark Air Base and Subic Bay naval base for more than four decades.

The constitutional prohibition against foreign combat forces grew out of the 40-plus years of people's resistance to the U.S. neocolonial presence.

While the U.S. imperialists want to control the world, they need allies who can directly confront the people's wrath. And they're getting harder and harder to find. □

U.S. movement

A delegation from International ANSWER, including Larry Holmes of New York and Gloria La Riva of San Francisco, represented the U.S. movement. Holmes reported on the rapid growth of the movement inside the United States and how the Feb. 15 demonstrations had spurred activists in the U.S. to press forward.

Holmes told Workers World that "Feb. 15 shows that this movement has a mandate from humanity to take whatever action it sees necessary to stop the march toward war."

La Riva spoke on the right of the Iraqi government to defend itself and to keep track of anyone entering the country at this time of crisis.

Within Europe, people expressed the strongest anti-war feeling in those countries where the government gave the strongest backing to the United States' policy: Italy, Spain and Britain.

Some countries had been able to move from demonstrations to direct action. Italian delegates reported on "train-stopping" actions that slowed down, forced route changes and even stopped some "death trains" carrying military equipment from Italy's north to Livorno on the western coast for shipment to Turkey. Despite government repression, rail workers provided the routes and schedules, activists blocked trains or pulled emergency cords on passenger trains on the route, while passengers overwhelmingly backed the actions.

A delegate from Barcelona spoke of civil disobedience and plans for a March 15 protest there. Another protest was

planned that day at the U.S. military base at Rota. The Greek movement timed its March 15 action to coincide with the meeting of the European Union's foreign ministers in Athens.

The British Stop the War Committee, which called out 2 million people in London on Feb. 15, hosted the conference and directed the process of arriving at a final declaration. Since a diverse group of delegates—from social forum, pacifist and anti-imperialist organizations—were present, the organizers focused on producing a minimum declaration that all could support.

Still, there was much support for other issues. A Brazilian delegate representing the Trade Union Congress discussed the importance of bringing up all U.S. attempts to impose hegemony, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement. A South Korean delegate brought up U.S. threats on the Korean peninsula.

Should the war begin ...

The delegates agreed quickly on what to do should the war begin. Their statement read:

"We put the warmongers on notice that if they ignore world opinion and launch a new attack on Iraq, there will be a tidal wave of resistance.

"On the day of an attack we call for mass protests in the center of every town and city in the world.

"The following Saturday we call for mass demonstrations in every capital city.

"We stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Iraq in urging everyone, everywhere to play their part in trying to stop this insane war." □

U.S. out of Philippines!



Mario Santos, a member of the Philippines anti-imperialist movement BAYAN, speaks at a Workers World Party forum in San Francisco March 2. In his talk, Santos traced the 1898 colonization of the Philippines by the United States and the massacre of thousands of Filipino people in the process. He said the recent deployment of U.S. combat troops is a violation of Philippine law and an attempt to recolonize this strategic country.

—Story and photo by Bill Hackwell

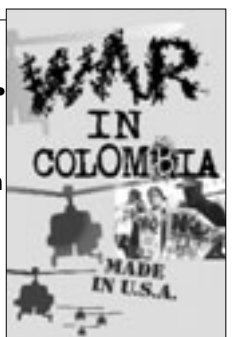
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El pueblo iraquí se prepara para una invasión por Estados Unidos

Por Sara Flounders
Bagdad, Irak

Una delegación encabezada por el ex Fiscal General de los Estados Unidos, Ramsey Clark, llegó a Bagdad el 22 de febrero después de un largo viaje en automóvil por el desierto desde Amman, Jordania. Un poco de luz de luna alumbraba la casi solitaria carretera. No podíamos dejar de pensar si el Pentágono lanzaría la guerra cuando la luna desapareciera. O si el movimiento mundial antiguerra fuese lo suficientemente poderoso como para detener el ataque.

El propósito de la delegación, con en viajes previos, esta el de evaluar el impacto de guerra de 1991 y doce años de sanciones, especialmente en los cuidados de la salud.

El Dr. Zuhair Abdul Al-Azawi, el diputado del ministro de la salud, dijo a la delegación el 24 de febrero que después de 11 años de condiciones agraviantes este año la situación se ha podido estabilizar y apenas mejorarse un poco. Por supuesto, las condiciones son todavía horribles comparadas con los cuidados de salud de lo que gozaban los iraquíes antes de la guerra de 1991 por los Estados Unidos, cuando los hospitales fueron objetivos de las bombas y misiles. Desde entonces las sanciones han obstruido la entrada de aún más medicinas regulares y equipos médicos.

Ellos también han disminuido la capacidad de las plantas purificadoras de agua, la industria de proceso de alimentos y la red de energía eléctrica.

Después de años de pobreza absoluta, no hay exceso para hacer frente a una emergencia. Se está haciendo todo los esfuerzos posibles para distribuir generadores, medicinas, antisépticos y otros materiales a diferentes partes del país.

“Esta vez, nuestra gran preocupación es el estado de preparación de los servicios de salud frente a la guerra. En 1991 cuando los hospitales y las farmacias estaban llenos y totalmente equipados, los doctores utilizaron todo en las primeras semanas de la guerra.

“Cuando visitamos los hospitales en febrero de 1991, no habían antisépticos, no había gasas, guantes, antibióticos ni anestesia. Miles murieron a causa de la falta de materiales para salvarlos. Pero de nuevo, el agua contaminada será la crisis más grande.

“El mundo debe saber de la crisis latente, y tiene que haber todo tipo de asistencia médica de emergencia ya,” dijo Clark.

Calma en la superficie en Bagdad

En la superficie, Bagdad, una ciudad de 5 millones de personas, está calma. Las escuelas, los sitios de trabajo, las oficinas y las tiendas están abiertas. El tráfico es pesado.



Hay exhibiciones de fotografías, eventos deportivos y hasta bodas. Los cines están abiertos. Pero todos los pequeños comerciantes dicen que la gente compra solo lo que necesitan. La gente espera una guerra horrenda, con la población civil como blanco.

“Mi familia tiene un plan cuando los misiles comiencen a caer,” dijo Ali.

“Nos quedaremos todos en un mismo cuarto. Los pase, nos pasará a todos juntos.”

Por décadas, Ali y sus dos hermanos han manejado una pequeña pescadería en un mercado de la vecindad de Bagdad. Su pescadería tuvo la mala suerte de estar cerca a uno de los puentes más grandes de Bagdad. En la guerra de 1991, las bombas destruyeron el puente y la mayor parte de la comunidad—y una de estas destruyó totalmente su venta.

Los hermanos trabajaron duro para reconstruir su venta. Pero ahora la gente es muy pobre para poder comprar pescado.

Hablamos con Ali el 22 de febrero, solo una semana después de las masivas manifestaciones mundiales contra la guerra. Los manifestantes están tratando de detener al plan del Pentágono, el cual los medios de difusión dicen que asestará un poder tan destructivo en dos días con armas “convencionales” como la bomba atómica que destruyó a Hiroshima en 1945.

Ali se acordó la gran dificultad de obtener agua potable después del poder destructivo de las armas estadounidenses destruyeron el sistema de agua y el alcantarillado en 1991. “Tomemos lo que fuera disponible”, dijo. “Mucha gente se enfermó. Mucha gente murió, especialmente los niños”.

En 1991 el Pentágono tuvo una estrategia de atacar deliberadamente a cualquier cosa que necesitó la gente para la salud y

la vida. Esto incluyó los suministros de agua y comestibles, la red de tendido eléctrico necesario en una sociedad urbana, los hospitales y las escuelas.

Thomas Nagy, profesor de sistemas expertos en la Universidad George Washington, ha llamado la atención del público a documentos de la Agencia de Inteligencia de Defensa de los EE.UU. (DIA), señalando que el Pentágono entendió como pudo hacer estragos en Irak con la destrucción de la infraestructura civil. Esto fue parte del plan.

Las conclusiones de Nagy salieron en la edición dominical del Sunday Herald del 17 de septiembre de 2000, y el número de la revista The Progressive del septiembre 2001.

Las cifras más recientes indican que la guerra de 1991 y las sanciones subsecuentes causaron la muerte prematura de 1,8 millones de iraquíes.

Los ataques contra el suministro de agua potable y la infraestructura del cuidado de la salud son violaciones de la Convención de Ginebra, que prohíbe ataques victimando a la población civil.

Esta vez, Ali espera que algunas de las precauciones que está tomando el gobierno pueda evitar los 100.000 muertos resultando de enfermedades producidas a lo largo de 1991.

El gobierno ha más que duplicado la ración de comida gratis durante los últimos tres meses para que muchas necesidades pudieran ser almacenado en cada hogar. Hasta ahora, familias han recibido raciones suficientes por cinco meses extras.

La ración de comestibles implica la supervivencia del ese sector grande de la población que se ha quedado sin empleo desde la última guerra con los EE.UU. Durante los últimos 12 años las sanciones impuestas por los EE.UU. han forzado la cierre de la mayoría de las industrias.

Los niños iraquíes serán los más afectados por la guerra del Pentágono contra Irak. La mitad del pueblo de Irak tiene menos que 15 años de edad.

MO FOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS

Familias iraquíes están almacenando a queroseno para cocinar y la calefacción, velas para luz, y contenedores de agua incontables.

Familias con más recursos económicos están comprando generadores pequeños. Hoy, muchas familias se están cavando sus propios pozos en el patio de sus casas. El agua se va a quedar sin purificar, pero puede ser mejor que el agua sacado directamente del Río Eufrates.

¿Una resistencia larga?

Además que ayudar con la supervivencia de la población, el gobierno está movilizándola para defenderse contra los invasores.

Cuando muchos millones de personas alrededor del mundo manifestaron para prevenir a una guerra contra Irak el 15 de febrero, el pueblo de Irak también estuvo en las calles, cientos de miles en todas las ciudades más grandes. En cada una de cuatro secciones distintas de Bagdad había manifestaciones masivas de la voluntad iraquí de resistir.

Un consejo de clérigos musulmanes chiíta y suni firmó una “fatua” o decreto religioso llamando por una resistencia total contra la ocupación militar extranjera. Esto no ocurrió en 1991.

Hay un ejército popular voluntario que según los iraquíes cuenta con 7 millones de soldados, con miembros de casi todas las familias de Irak. Ha recibido entrenamiento básico en tácticas militares, combate callejera y resistencia.

Casi todas las familias han recibido armas cortas para la casa.

El pueblo sabe que no se puede defenderse contra misiles “cruise” con rifle o pistola. Nadie puede predecir que clase de batalla pueda librar este ejército popular. Pero en los cálculos de los posibles escenarios de guerra, el Instituto Brookings hizo un cálculo de bajas estadounidenses que puedan sumar a 5.000 muertos y 30.000 heridos, si se produce resistencia de parte de la población urbana. Ya han salido reportes noticiosos de que el Pentágono ha ordenado calladamente a decenas de miles de bolsas plásticas para cadáveres de soldados estadounidenses.

Más allá del ataque inicial yace la posibilidad de una larga ocupación militar. Esta es una guerra colonial para robar los recursos naturales en un área donde los sentimientos antiimperialistas y nacionalistas son muy fuertes. La población es consciente y educada, y casi todo el mundo está armado. □