Bush gang seeks pretext for war

By Brian Becker

The Bush administration is confronted with a problem as it prepares to attack Iraq. At the moment, the U.S. government appears to the world in a distinctly “American” image from a scene repeated in countless stereotypical Hollywood movies: the frightful rampage of drunken gunslingers who shoot up the town in a Saturday night frenzy—just because they can.

That their sneering, swaggering and threatening foreign policy actually mirrors the physical pose struck by Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld when they appear on television or in front of crowds only reinforces the conclusion of the rest of the world—that this is indeed a dangerous regime. A rogue state, if you will.

Now, as they make the case that a U.S. war against Iraq is only a “pre-emptive defense” rather than an unprovoked and thus lawless aggression, no one around the world believes them.

With a straight face they tell the world that Iraq is the major threat to world peace and that its government must be destroyed by military action. Because the administration lacks even the slightest credible pretext for attacking Iraq, it has launched a media hype about Saddam Hussein's supposed stepped-up efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.

The rulers of the largest nuclear power in the world, along with their pliant sidekick from Britain, appear every day now before the world media to howl about Iraq’s nuclear threat. It is all lies—credible lies. The truth is a sinister in the publicity war that precedes the actual war.

On Sept. 6 and 7, the major U.S. dailies put “new evidence of Iraq’s nuclear threat” on their front pages. It started with a prominent New York Times story reporting that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had released satellite photos showing new, significant activity at “nuclear sites” in Iraq. “UN Spy Photos Show New Build- ing at Iraqi Nuclear Sites,” said the headline.

Pundits on CNN and the Fox network then talked for the next 48 hours about this new, “clear proof” that the Bush team had been right about Iraq's nuclear intentions.

“We can’t wait for the ‘smoking gun’ to be a mushroom cloud,” stated Condoleezza Rice, Bush’s national security advisor, in a dramatic interview on CNN on Sept. 8. Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld spoke virtually the same words in this calibrated media offensive. “Waiting to attack Iraq is not an option,” Cheney somberly concluded, and called on listeners to imagine that “they” had used nuclear weapons on Sept. 11: “It wouldn't be 3,000 dead but tens of thousands dead.”

British Prime Minister Tony Blair used the report to justify his pro-Bush position before a dubious public. He told the British press on Sept. 7, “We need only look at the report from the International Atomic Energy Agency this morning, showing what has been going on at a former nuclear site,” to justify British support for Bush’s war. “A policy of inaction is not something we can responsibly subscribe to,” he warned.

IAEA says ‘there was no report’

But the whole story—like most others of its kind—was false. It provided three consecutive days of propaganda against Iraq to prepare the population for war, but it was based on hype.

The IAEA stated on Sept. 8 that the satellite imagery did not prove anything. There was no report and “no new information about Iraqi nuclear activity,” according to Mark Gwozdecky, a spokesperson for the agency.

While Iraq has never possessed nuclear weapons, the Pentagon currently has about 6,000 nuclear warheads. It has spent more than $6 trillion on nuclear weapons since 1942 and is the only country to have used atomic bombs.
Detroit city unions unite to win justice

Special to Workers World

Detroit

On Sept. 5, in a show of unity of a sort rarely seen here, 37 local union presidents representing most of the 15,000 city of Detroit workers, jointly sent a letter to Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, denouncing his “no raise” contract position. Hundreds of copies of the letter were delivered at the mass, Labor Day Parade in Detroit under the headline “We Won’t Take Your ‘No-Raise’ Nonsense!”

Labor union workers are represented by one-third of one members are of the State County and Municipal Employees bargaining units of County 25. The others include Teamsters, Auto Workers, skilled trades and other unions, and independent associations.

Concerted action among these unions has been difficult. What has finally brought a measure of unity to the Kilpatrick administration’s position. Elected last November, Mayor Kilpatrick has stalling negotiations. While all the contracts expired on July 1, 2003, the union members have been working day to day under their old agreements. The city first broke off talks in November, warning the unions to wait until the new mayor took office.

Upon his January inauguration, Kilpatrick asked the unions to wait until April so he could put his “team” together.

Spiging with some unions has been going on since then. Others have still not been called in to continue talks. But it was the mayor’s announce- ment that he would not give any raises for the first two years of the contract, and would only provide a wage increase if the economy allowed it, in the third and final year, that brought the unions response: mass action at City Hall. After that, in the spring, 500 angry Continued on page 5
Workers World Party is holding an emergency conference on the weekend of Sept. 21-22 in New York City to strengthen the fight-back movement against the growing war crisis, escalating racism and repression carried out in the name of "homeland security" and the deepening economic crisis affecting millions of workers and their families.

As the Bush administration readies plans for open aggression against Iraq, steps up its intervention in Colombia, and threatens every country in the world that won't march to the orders of the Pentagon and the transnational corporations, the capitalist system is moving towards crisis.

The loss of TRILLIONS in the stock market is translating into bankruptcies and mass layoffs and poverty for millions of workers. This developing economic crisis into bankruptcies and mass layoffs and poverty moving towards crisis.

Workers World Party is holding an emergency conference on the weekend of Sept. 21-22 in New York City to...
Labor must fight bankruptcy court

By Adrian Garcia
Los Angeles

In an Aug. 23 court ruling that exposes the U.S. ruling establishment's disregard and utter contempt for migrant workers, a federal judge in San Francisco dismissed a class action lawsuit filed last year by Mexican laborers—to obtain savings that had been withheld from their wages back in the 1940s.

Judge Charles R. Breyer of federal district court denied the claim with no proof that many braceros never received Saving Funds with withholdings to which they were entitled and claimed, "The court is sympathetic to the braceros' situation." (New York Times, Aug. 30)

But his ruling cleared Mexico and the United States of any legal culpability. He cited the AFL-CIO's legal position that the statute of limitations had expired.

The lawsuit impugned the governments of Mexico and the United States, three Mexican banks and a Wells Fargo bank in squandering the migrant workers' salaries. Under the Bracero Program, Mexico agreed to provide the United States with workers as a gesture of good faith to help alleviate labor shortages caused by World War II. Between 1942 and 1949, the years considered in the lawsuit, about 400,000 Mexicans worked on farms and railroads in the United States. Unbeknownst to many of the Mexican migrant workers, or braceros, their wages were subject to a 15-per-cent deduction for the purpose of establishing savings accounts in Mexico. The money was to be transferred from U.S. banks to Mexican banks.

The workers were expected to collect their savings upon returning to Mexico. To this day, many of them have not received their due wages. And now a U.S. court has ruled that these workers have no right to their money because of legal technicalities.

The New York Times reported that "United States records at the time indicate that at least $12 million was withheld from the workers' wages." No accounting has been made of how much of that money was given back to the braceros.

A 1946 Mexican report claimed that most of the money, minus $6 million, was returned to the workers. Advocates for the braceros and their families view both the U.S. and Mexican reports with great suspicion. They say the braceros may have been cheated of as much as $500 million, including interest.

Breyer's ruling cleared Mexico and its banks of any responsibility on the grounds of sovereign immunity because the banks were state-owned. Wells Fargo, the bank entrusted with transferring the funds into Mexican banks, was cleared on the grounds that the workers' lawyers neglected to state a claim against the bank.

Claims against the United States were discarded on the grounds that the statute of limitations had expired. This begs the question: If some of the braceros were un-aware of the deductions made to their salaries, how could they possibly make a claim before the statute of limitations ran out?

Breyer, in his ruling, stipulated that the lawsuit could be reopened on condition that proof be presented that the workers didn't know about the deductions.

Jonathan Rothstein, a lawyer for the braceros, told the New York Times that an appeal is possible. "It's a grueling life, filled with danger and hardships. Imagine leaving home, prepared for work, and arriving at the terminal to find the gates locked. That's what happened on Sept. 2—Labor Day. Without warning, the company shut down operations and filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. It was a dehumanizing act of vengeance.

The intent of a corporate bankruptcy filing is to out labor costs. Thousands of workers are laid off, union contracts are torn up, and retirees lose their pensions and health benefits. Yet these corporations have no legal right to impose such abuses.

They have been stripped of their power. They can't sign a check, pay a bill or make a single financial deal unless the bankruptcy court-appointed trustee approves the transaction. They are "absentee owners," "a debtor in possession" under the law. They are no longer in possession of the property.

It is only in collusion with the bankruptcy court that their power is restored. On the day CF locked out the Teamsters, the company spokespeople invited smaller companies to pick up their shipments from many of its 290 terminals. Management asked their top competitors—Roadway and Yell-ow Corp.—to deliver freight to larger custo-

mum. CF has been in business for 73 years. The workers have earned the right to take over CF and run this bankrupt company. They gave life and value to the 73-year-old corporation.

The AFL-CIO statement is a significant development, but it needs to be backed up with an organized fight. So far, no attention is being paid to the AFL-CIO position, even as high-priced lawyers representing Wall Street creditors, bankers and vendors wheel and deal to strip the equity from the fallen company.

CF operates about 6,000 tractors, 27,000 trailers and about 290 extensive terminals. The property is sitting idle be-cause of locked gates while thousands of laid-off workers scramble to survive. Survival rests with their right to claim these tractors, trailers, and terminals.

The indisputable fact is that their long years of strenuous and stressful labor, their skills and experience entitle them to run the company. Add to this the value of back wages, pensions and other accumulated benefits and it is crystal clear that the Teamsters are the principal creditors and should be declared the trustees of CF.

The Teamsters, over 10,000 strong, have been caught off guard by being locked out and laid off. They need to quickly regroup and fashion the identity of the locked gates—the trailers, the tractors and the terminals.

As they fight for their legal rights in bankruptcy court, they need to put jackpot lines around these valuable pieces of property and means of production, to prevent them from being sold off or used to satisfy the claims of greedy bankers and other lenders.

Changing the locks would send these parasites a strong message that labor has property rights.
What will happen to labor’s rights if a war on Iraq is launched? Will workers suddenly be able to afford to leave? How many children are being abused in their current situation? Will the unions unite and strike if the war goes on? Will there be a war on Iraq, and if so, what will its impact be on workers and their families? Will even veteran soldiers return to their families after their long deployments? Will there be a war on Iraq, and if so, what will its impact be on workers and their families? Will even veteran soldiers return to their families after their long deployments?

**What the workers will get out of a war on Iraq is more pain and suffering.**

**Time for workers to fight?**

**YES**

But not in Bush’s war

By Deirdre Griswold

**Flight or fight—scientists say those are the two ways we react to fear.**

Run away from danger if you can. Stand and fight here.

But it’s both. After yet another war, will the world be more secure? When there are more grieving families, more destroyed cities and towns, will the world be more populous and generous? And how will a war on Iraq exact “vengence” for the Sept. 11 attacks? Iraq had nothing to do with the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Anyone who knows the least little bit about the Arab world knows that the Iraqi people and leaders are not allies of Al-Qaeda or the Islamic fundamentalist movement, even though they are very angry at the U.S. government for its treatment of their country.

Not one country in the Middle East—except for the Israeli settler regime, a U.S. client state—supports this government’s war plans.

**War equals more pain and suffering.**

Will working people here will get out of such a war on Iraq more pain and suffering? What are workers going to do about all this? Will the response to the bosses and their chief henchman in Washington be flight or fight? The war can be stopped.

The war is not inevitable. Bush is already being advised: “Pull out of Iraq and stop even token support around the world. The public attitude here is changing all the time, with more than 50 percent saying on a full-court press around the Sept. 11 anniversary to shore up its waning support. We can refuse to be diverted by war propaganda. We can support Bush right here for better social services and more public jobs. We can challenge the bosses “right” to throw us into the streets after decades of hard work. We can demand that the wealth of this society go into workers’ wages and benefits and not into bosses’ profits and perks.

**We can extend solidarity to our working-class sisters and brothers, regardless of who is in power or what language or culture they share. Solidarity is the greatest weapon of the working class—every worker needs the solidarity of others, whether to press a simple grievance or to win a major battle with the bosses.** We can build our unions— and tell Bush where to put his union-busting threats. Working-class heroes belong in the anti-war struggle—at its very core. The attempts of this big business administration to link terrorism to their violence against the Third World are nothing but a cynical manipulation of the people’s genuine fear and shock over Sept. 11. More and more workers know it, too. Even Stephen J. Cassidy, president of New York’s United Federation of Teachers, said at a recent rally, “I’m tired of politicians coming to our funerals and telling the widows how sorry they are. Pay us a living wage.”

If even firefighters aren’t getting a living wage, you know things are bad. Now is the time to fight right here at home for the working-class dream that, if it happens, will be a war on Iraq, he and the generals and the arms merchants and the oil billionaires should strap on their desert gear and go play soldier.

**Detroit city unions unite**

Continued from page 2

city workers packed a council budget hearing.

With no progress since then, the Coalition of City of Detroit Unions has been growing. The Labor Day message told the workers: “This is simply not acceptable. We will not quietly accept any diminution in our families’ standard of living.”

The letter exposed the waste, outsized expenditures and the insensitive privati- zation rampant in the city government.

In response to the mayor’s offer to show the unions the city’s books the union officials turned it down. “This is simply not acceptable,” they replied. “We will not quietly accept any diminution in our families’ standard of living.”

The letter exposed the waste, outsized expenditures and the insensitive privatization rampant in the city government.
The Evil Empire at work

By Sam Marcy

This penetrating article on the motives and form of the American imperialist strategy in the Gulf War, written by the founder of Workers World Party, appeared originally in the Aug. 29, 1990, issue of Workers World. At that time, the first Bush regime was furiously rounding up international support for its coming offensive against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Reagan had invented the term “Evil Empire” to describe his adversaries. Sound familiar? But as Marcy shows, the same tactics are being played out in Washington and Wall Street.

The Evil Empire is hard at work, moving faster than at any time since World War II. It has mobilized the largest naval armada since that global conflict. It has already deployed thousands of U.S. soldiers on the sands of Saudi Arabia and along the coast of Kuwait. President Bush is talking openly of a quarantine, which is the last step before open war.

“Why are we in Saudi Arabia?” asks the Wall Street Journal of Aug. 15, “We’re there to protect the integrity of the world’s oil supply,” an editorial notes. But the world’s oil supply doesn’t belong to the world. It belongs to a handful of multinational oil companies. This is the way to protect the integrity of world oil supply, and extort a grouping as ever existed.

“The world cannot tolerate,” says the Journal, “a power with the capability of imposing a tax on all the West, especially a power that would use its power to build up its military, political, and biological weapons in order to extract more declarations of surrender and tribute.”

Who’s raising gas prices?

Who is the Journal talking about? Who is imposing a tax on the American people as of today? Look at any gas station in the country and you will see Mobil, Exxon, Texaco, and Ashland—just a few of the many companies. Even in the period of a glutted oil market, they dared to raise the price of gas! And when President Bush was asked why he didn’t do something, he urged the people to exercise “voluntary restraint.”

What power “uses its profits to build nuclear, chemical and biological weapons to extract declarations of surrender and tribute”? Isn’t that the U.S.? Didn’t the Pentagon, the big banks, and the capitalist rulers of the country demand a quarantine because of their willingness or lack of willingness to allow the U.S. military to occupy Kuwait. Saddam Hussein provided that the Kuwaiti government has been a puppet of U.S. imperialism and that the world has been stepping up the deep pockets of the bankers in New York, Tokyo, London, etc.

What constitutes the Evil Empire? It is the union of big oil, the multinational corporations, the military-industrial complex, the big banks, and the capitalist government which unilaterally acts as custodian of world oil supply. It is the fact that the Kuwaiti government has been a puppet of U.S. imperialism and that the world has been stepping up the deep pockets of the bankers in New York, Tokyo, London, etc.

Who is the Journal talking about? Who is imposing a tax on all the West, especially a power that would use its power to build up its military, political, and biological weapons in order to extract more declarations of surrender and tribute.”

When Lenin wrote his “Imperialism,” in which he offered abundant data showing that one of the characteristic features of imperialism was the division and redistricting of the world, some still argued that this was a general theoretical conclusion not supported by facts.

 Likewise, Rudolf Hilferding’s earlier work, “Finance Capital,” had been pooh-poohed by the capitalists as mere theorizing, although both books relied heavily on the data of J.A. Hobson, a British author with impeccable credentials.

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After the imperialist peace conference of the Western powers in Versailles, the的根本 idea of breaking up the German military and the creation of separate and independent German states did not take place for a period of 50 years, and the Germans were left with the great powers’ ideal of a “new Europe.” The real reason for both world wars was the imperialist attempt to conquer the world. The real reason for both world wars was the imperialist attempt to conquer the world.

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seeks pretext for war

In the days after a Sept. 4 news conference launched organizing for the Oct. 26 National March on Washington, volun-
teers had to be called in to help answer phones at the ANSWER coalition’s offices in Washington and New York while the C-SPAN broadcast and broadcast the hour-and-a-half event.

The news conference featured former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who has been an ANSWER representative from a wide variety of anti-
war, civil rights and religious organizations announcing a call for a National March in Washington and a joint action in San Francisco to “Stop the War on Iraq Before It Starts.”

By Sept. 8, the news conference had been broadcast four times on C-Span 1 and 2—and volunteers had lost the number of calls.

“Infinitely in the hundreds,” said Ayn Kirkendall, a 16-year-old student in-
tern with ANSWER—Act Now To Stop War and End Racism. She said: “As soon as the shoe began shaking, the phones began ringing, and this continued throughout the broadcast and after. Then we would check the voicemail and find a number of mes-
sages equal or greater than the number of people we had spoken to.”

“Considering the amount of war propa-
ganda propagated by the Bush adminis-
tration, I was very surprised that the calls were overwhelmingly positive. Everybody wanted to come to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 26. They weren’t just calling to express support—they plan to be in D.C. on Oct. 26, 2002, to show their friends, fam-
ily and co-workers, who all oppose the war.”

Pam Parker, a research analyst and shop steward at Newspaper Guild Local 32035 who regularly volunteers with ANSWER on her evenings and weekends, said: “I've spok-
en with a retired woman from South Car-
olina whose husband was killed in World War II, who wants to come with her study group. I’ve spoken to numerous women whose kids are in the military and one who is in the Air Force reserves. I spoke to a man who started the conversation by say-
ing, ‘I’m a retired senior citizen—how do I get to D.C.?’”

“I've spoken to college students and younger students, including a few in middle school, from all over the South, Midwest, East and West Coasts. I've spok-
en to people of all ages, some of whom have been involved in many protests before, some of whom have never

The war will be to “protect American

Momentum for Oct. 26
national march grows

By Sarah Sloan
Washington, D.C.

and so militarily dangerous that Iraq will not be able to accept it. Then Iraq can be labeled intransigent, obstructionist and unwilling to “cooperate with the United Nations”—so that the Pentagon can begin the air war and invasion.

Bush and the media will thus assert that the U.S. went into Iraq in self-defense to prevent war. It went to the UN first to seek one last chance at resolution. When the war comes it will be presented as Iraq’s failure to comply with the UN, rather than as a uni-

neces-

If Iraq allows weapons inspections like

Iraqi mother and injured child.

and corps-sized infrastructure based in

eastern Turkey, and two or more brigades

dan-Iraq border, an air-mobile brigade in

The military-industrial complex is holding its annual arms bazaar in Washington, D.C., to show off its latest weapons of mass destruction.

The featured speaker will be the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the Bush administration’s chief cheerleader for a new war against Iraq.

While money is being cut from schools, housing, health care and social programs, the Bush administration is increasing the military budget by $50 billion.

Money for jobs, education, health care and human needs — not for war and repression!

International ANSWER
(202) 332-5757 or (212) 633-6646 or info@internationalanswer.org or www.InternationalANSWER.org

Monday, Sept. 16
8-10 a.m.
Connecticut Ave. & Calvert Ave. NW
Washington, D.C.

PROTEST DONALD RUMSFIELD
at the military-industrial complex’s
"festival of vultures"

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Mumia Abu-Jamal
Live from death row
9-11 Remembered

Forever in the American mind, 9-11 will be a day of shock, of disbelief, of sorrow and of loss. Like a flash photo image superimposed on the retina, the specter of planes circling like metal vultures the twin towers of midtown Manhattan repeats itself in the mind’s eye, revealing itself over and over again. What American political, military and economic elites have done with 9-11, however, should be cause for concern to all of us. For the shock and sorrow and yes, the rage borne from the fact that 9-11 have been used by these elites to reward the very culprits who brought 9-11 into being. Those elites have bequeathed billions if not trillions more to the military industrial complex that armed, trained and justified the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan in the first place. The late Pakistani scholar Eqbal Ahmad, in his book, "Terrorism: Theirs and Ours," points out that the entire Mujahedeen war effort was mobilized to fight the "evil empire," as Reagan called the former Soviet Union. Ahmad wrote: "We have seen plane loads of them arriv- ing from Algeria, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, even from Palestine where at that time Israel was support- ing Hafez al-Assad (of Alawite origin), Yasser Arafat’s faction of the PLO. These people were brought in, given an ide- ology and told that armed struggle is virtuous, when the whole notion of Jihad as an international Pan-Islamic terrorist movement was born. The U.S. had been buying and delivering the Bin Ladens of our time. In 1986 I visited the camp they hit in Zahawar Afghanistan. It was a CIA-sponsored camp," Ahmad writes.

There, in the poverty-stricken, dusty mountains of Afghanistan, the beginnings of 9-11 were born. What we saw in the second week of September 2001 was merely what the late Malcolm X called the "chickens coming home to roost." Deep down, in our hearts, away from the polis, away from the politicians, we know this. We really do. Then along come the oil barons, the Rumfelds, the Cheneys and the boy King, Bush. "Bomb Iraq," they say.

Americans are looking at a new colonialism that will leave a taste as foul in their mouths as the last one. VICIOUS, rapacious greed priming the pump of war—a war that will enrich millions of people to starvation and which aroused a powerful worldwide movement to fight it. The Pentagon, also hit that day, is the symbol of U.S. military domination, and of the bombs dropped on Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Yugoslavia—that have killed many, many more than the 3,000 in the towers.

With these buildings symbolized the grip that Washington, Wall Street and Hol- lywood have on the Middle East, sucking out the oil and money, and pumping in a foreign culture. Holding down the masses and stifling the educated middle classes. Propping up the intrusive Israeli settler state. U.S. foreign policies and practices, es-pecially throughout the Middle East, aroused a deep anger. And, even accord- ing to the official story, this anger found expression through organizations that Washington itself had funded and aided for decades as part of its war against communism.

Those who killed themselves and 3,000 others may have intended a blow against U.S. domination. And the destruction of those symbols was indeed an insult to the perceived invulnerability of the U.S. state. But the slap in the face broke no teeth.

A propaganda weapon

On the contrary, the Sept. 11, 2001, at- tack put a propaganda weapon in the hands of the most right-wing, aggressive faction in the U.S. political establishment. It stunned much of the population into pas- sivity, and made it possible for George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and others in their group to exploit the pain and fear the attack inspired to push the country toward a permanent state of war abroad and repression at home.

Right now the threat of a major assault on Iraq seems the biggest danger. But along with this—or waiting in line behind it—is a war against all peoples and parts of the world that resist "globalization." Henry Kissinger, in a 1999 talk at Trinity College, admitted that "globalization" means the domination of U.S. financial and strategic interests.

U.S. advisers and weapons pour into Colombia, now openly to battle leftist guer- rillas of the FARC and ELN who have been fighting the oligarchy. U.S. troops are back in the Philippines, allegedly to battle "Islamic terrorists" but really to intervene against a people’s liberation army. U.S. agents and money move against the progressive Hugo Chávez government in Venezuela, which neighbors Colombia at the north end of a continent that is in a de- pression deeper than that of the 1930s. Suffering Afghanistan is now perma- nently occupied by U.S. troops, ruled by a president who can’t survive without a team of 70 U.S. bodyguards.

Meanwhile U.S. bases proliferate from Eastern Europe to Central Asia, setting up a modern version of the old Roman Em-pire, with its capital in Washington. Those of us who worked in the towers can rightly ask ourselves, "Will we let Bush and Company use our worries and sorrows as an excuse for the Pentagon to wage war on the world?" As an indication of the an- swer, the sister of the worker who died keeping his friend in the wheelchair com- pany has become a spokesperson for anti- war unity.

I, for another, say no, and I’ll be demonstrat- ing this decision in the weeks that come.

New York City protesters

'Iraq is not the problem!'

Around 1,000 people marched from Times Square to Union Square in Manhattan Sept. 8 to demand "global peace, not just war." While the spirit of the march was focused on commemorating the events of Sept. 11, the protesters obviously had Iraq on their minds. Signs called for "a regime change in D.C." as well as "Global peace and justice." One of the more popular slogans was: "War is not the answer, Iraq is not the problem." People on the sidewalks generally reacted very positively. A group of African street preachers even revived the march for several blocks. A number of foreign television crews covered the event.

At the beginning of the march, police arrested one protester for carrying a "deadly weapon." He had a box-cutter taped to his sign.

—Photos and story by G. Dunkel
Out against repression
Palestinian professor speaks

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

On Sept. 7 an Atlanta audience of 150 or more listened attentively to Dr. Sami Al-Arian describe the repression he and his brother-in-law have endured because of their political views in support of Palestine.

Al-Arian was the featured speaker at a Sept. 7 program entitled “Voices for Palestine,” which also included International Action Center co-director Sara Flanders and Rania Masri, Arab-American activist, researcher and writer.

For over 16 years, Al-Arian has been an award-winning professor of computer engineering at the University of South Florida in Tampa. During the same time, he has been a vocal advocate for Palestinian rights, opposing the Israeli occupation.

He and his brother-in-law, Mazen Al-Najjar, also at a lecturer at USF, established an Islamic research center at the university called The World and Islam Studies Enterprise, as well as a charity named the Islamic Committee for Palestine.

Since the late 1980s, their political activities have been under scrutiny by federal authorities.

Anti-Arab frenzy swept the country after the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995. Right-wing journalists with ties to Israeli intelligence pointed to Al-Arian as the culprit despite the FBI’s finding that the prime suspects were white men.

The major Tampa newspaper repeatedly ran sensational stories filled with unsubstantiated and false accusations charging Al-Arian and Al-Najjar with being associated with “terrorism.”

Federal agents raided their offices in 1995 and froze the assets of their organizations.

Mazen Al-Najjar was then imprisoned for three years in solitary confinement without charges on “secret evidence.”

During his brother-in-law’s incarceration, Al-Arian conducted a public campaign against the use of “secret evidence.” He won the support of constitutional experts and civil-liberties advocates who successfully convinced Congress members to legislate against its use.

Mazen Al-Najjar was finally released from prison after a Florida judge reviewed the case. In a scathing 57-page decision, he stated that not only had Al-Najjar’s constitutional rights been violated but that there was no evidence to support any of the charges.

Meanwhile, the university itself conducted an investigation and found no evidence of terrorism activities.

As Al-Arian said on Sept. 7, “We thought we’d won. We had proven our innocence.”

Then came Sept. 11. As an imam and respected Muslim leader in the Tampa Bay area, Al-Arian mobilized blood drives and donations, participated in interfaith memorials and counseled the Arab and Muslim communities.

Two weeks after Sept. 11, Al-Arian was invited to appear on the Fox news show hosted by Bill O’Reilly, supposedly to discuss the ramifications on the community since several of the hijackers had lived in Florida.

O’Reilly-blinded Al-Arian, repeatedly accusing him of supporting terrorists. The show’s producers were fed their information by the Tampa journalists who had started the witch hunt years before. They omitted the judge’s findings, and the university’s.

What were Al-Arian’s “crimes”? At a 1988 rally, he had said, “Death to Israel.”

Years ago, he had been at an Islamic conference also attended by Sheik Omar Abu-Rahaman, the Egyptian cleric convicted of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. He knew members of Hamas and other Palestinian organizations.

After the O’Reilly show aired, Al-Arian received death threats. The Islamic school he founded in Tampa was vandalized.

University President Judy Genet suspended him with pay. She declared that his presence on campus endangered the safety of the institution and its 37,000 students.

Days later, on Aug. 21, the University of Southern Florida filed a lawsuit charging Al-Arian, a tenured professor, had violated his contract by creating “disruptions” at the school with his public statements.

The American Association of University Professors has been vocal in its support of Al-Arian as a matter of union rights and academic freedom.

Al-Arian’s case has been compared to Calif. Gov. Ronald Reagan’s firing of Black activist Angela Davis in the early 1970s.

Florida Gov. Jeb Bush has also weighed in on the matter. It’s no surprise that he agrees with the university president and board of regents’ actions to fire Al-Arian.

In the year since Sept. 11, 2001, thousands of Arabs, Muslims and South Asians have been picked up by federal agents and held incommunicado. They have been questioned endlessly and moved from prison to prison without any charges filed against them. Mazen Al-Najjar was one of them.

After months of detention, Al-Najjar was deported in mid-August 2002, for a 20-year-old visa violation.

Al-Arian warned the Sept. 7 audience of students, African Americans, Arab, Muslim and Jewish community members, and anti-war activists that the Bush administration does not only want to suppress support for Palestine. He detailed the provisions of the USA Patriot Act that infringe Bill of Rights freedoms—free speech, freedom of assembly and association, protection from unreasonable search and seizure—making opponents of government policy targets for political repression.

Al-Arian concluded by expressing confidence that this attempt at political repression will fail—not only because the case against him has no merit, but because the cause of freedom will not be suppressed.

For more information, go to www.academicfreedom.org.

Activists in Harlem declare: ‘Mugabe is right! Free the land!’

Special to Workers World
Harlem, N.Y.

The main theme of a Sept. 5 street meeting in Harlem was defense of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe, who has come under a vicious, racist, pro-imperialist attack for calling for the redistribution of the land to the indigenous masses. The Zimbabwean government is currently in a struggle with 4,500 white farmers who occupy the most arable lands in the former British colony.

The Friends of Zimbabwe Coalition and December 12th Movement sponsored the street rally. Speakers included Viola Plummer, with fist raised, from the Dec. 12 Movement, Kevin Muhammad from the Nation of Islam, and Monica Moorehead, at mike, from the International Action Center.

Labor activists demand release of Muslim detainees

Special to Workers World
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A number of labor unionists under the umbrella of “Justice For Detainees” picketed in front of the Metropolitan Detention Center here Sept. 7. Their objective was to bring attention to the illegal detention of hundreds of people, mainly of Arab and South Asian descent, who are being held indefinitely and in secret, imprisoned since the reactionary Patriot Act was signed after the Sept. 11th attacks.

The 200 protesters chanted, “INS, FBI—No more suspects, no more lies.”

The Bolsheviks and War

Lessons for today’s anti-war movement

By Sam Marcy
$4.95

What distinguished the Bolsheviks from the other parties in the Socialist International? Lenin and the Bolsheviks used the crisis of WWI to organize the revolutionary overthrow of the old order in Russia.

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Evil Empire at work

Analysis of first Gulf War from Workers World, Aug. 23, 1990

Grenada, Panama, Nicaragua, Kanaky, the Malvinas, and many other parts of this, both that's wholly wrong. Confusing the masses facilitates the role of the imperialists and has enabled them to virtually issue a declaration of war against all.

But note this. Having seen that the imperialists are on the verge of open military warfare and that Arafat has agreed such a vast array of all this, both China and the USSR have become worried about where all this is leading.

Earlier they agreed on sanctions, thinking it's a slower way. But now it's thought to be more important than arriving at some sort of accommodation with the imperialists. Foreign ministers Eduard Shevardnadze and James Baker made a joint statement Aug. 3, calling for "an international cutoff of all arms supplies to Iraq." It was a signal for the imperialists, especially the U.S., to hurry the military and especially the naval preparations to attack Iraq.

The point is that the U.S. originated the maneuvers for sanctions in the Security Council, and now the rest of the Security Council are following the orders of their respective governments, having interpreted it that way, and the world movement has been incredibly confused by the apparent unilateral action against Iraq, although this was not specifically agreed to by the Security Council.

You can read backwards and forwards the history of the first Gulf War, with the USSR calling for UN role and having gathered such a vast armada, both for the U.S. and the USSR, to hurry the military and especially the naval preparations to attack Iraq.

In the U.S. attention has been taken by the enormous power of the mass media. They are confused by the apparent unilateral action against Iraq, although this was not specifically agreed to by the Security Council.

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Protecting mass murderers

Why Washington battles the International Criminal Court

By John Catalinoto

Washington usually couches its hostility to the proposed International Criminal Court in terms of its desire to "protect U.S. soldiers.

Naturally the U.S. ruling class wants to protect the U.S. ruling class—those who are ruling class. The question is whether they are the entire working class and the people of the world or just those in the pocket of the ruling class.

The very idea of domination is alien not only to anti-imperialist but to socialist principles. In the world labor movement, it is elementary that the large unions should have the right to organize on the rights of a small union or to try to absorb it by high-handed tactics contrary to the will of the membership. What's appropriate for the government of the working class is also applicable among sovereign, independent and oppressed nations.

Current science and technology teach us how to control the weather, how to control the oceans, how to control the rivers, how to control the seas—human science and technology can control the world in a way that it was never possible for the imperialist bourgeoisie to control it, because the technological means are now there to control the earth itself.

The only "international court" Washington approves is one like the International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), now sitting in judgment of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in The Hague, Netherlands. This political court in NATO’s creation, a weapon against any leader from the Balkans who re-usethe U.S./NATO takeover.

As the prosecution ends the "Kosovo phase" of the trial, the world can believe that it has brought in 142 witnesses—some testifying in secret or at a distance—against Milosevic. It has proved nothing.

Acting as his own attorney, preparing his case from his jail cell, and working with pitifully little resources, the Yugoslav leader has demonstrated a heroic case, exposing U.S. and NATO crimes against his people.

Even with the full backing of the U.S. imperialist state, and with very little like- hood they would face charges as long as the United States remains the military dominant force, U.S. leaders are terrified of being put in the position they were so anxious to put Milosevic in.

Perhaps it is because U.S. officials are so acutely aware of their guilt.

Paremos la guerra antes de que comience

Continúa de la página 12

Cumbo sobre el Desarrollo Mundial en Johannesburgo, África, el 3 de septiembre.

Los intereses de la clase gobernante

La división entre Powell, el grupo Bush/Cheney, Rumsfeld, no es de principios, sino de intereses. Powell quiere ver la independencia de Irak destruida. La división es más profunda que la división entre los Clintonistas y los Bushistas de la administración.

Los malos reportajes de la prensa o las dudas de los asociados de la administración no pararán a Bush de llevar a cabo sus planes de guerra. Él es subsistente a amos mucho más fuertes—los intereses de la clase gobernante y el hombre por las cuestiones de la paz, tanto al entrar a sacar su dominación sobre el Medio Oriente rico en petróleo.

Mientras que ellos tienden a las consecuencias de acciones incitadas por el gob- ierno de los Estados Unidos, no se puede contar con ninguno de los otros gobernantes de las grandes naciones que mantienen una soberanía, una paz y un futuro para el mundo.

Para poder combatir una guerra—la única guerra que dañaría a la América occidental de Bush—y sus amos empre- sariales—es la amenaza de un leve- miento de la paz y desestabilización que tanto aquí como en todo el mundo.

Afortunadamente, hay terreno fértil para construir un movimiento anti guerra masiva aquí mismo: ira sobre la decreciente crisis económica de los pobres y obreros, los ataques criminales contra los derechos civiles, la creciente aprehensión sobre las consecuencias de la política de "tiempos de guerra todo el tiempo" de Bush.

Una encuesta por la revista Time Magazine y la CNN del 1 de septiembre mostró que el apoyo para enviar a soldados estadounidenses a derrocar al gob- ierno de Irak ha bajado desde un 73% en 2002 a un 51% en agosto del año en curso. Una encuesta del peri-ódico Los Angeles Times mostró que un 64%, menos de dos tercios—regresarías a la guerra, aún en medio de la ola de jin- goismo promovido por los medios de difusión marcando el aniversario del 11 de septiembre.

Un 46% de los encuestados por el Time/CNN estuvieron de acuerdo en que una guerra contra Irak sería "tardío y cos- toso.

Estas cifras muestran una duda y una oposición mucho más amplia contra la guerra que durante los años pasados en la república y en el mundo. En el sur de Vietnam, en el mundo en gran país hacia la organización de un movi- miento que puede parar la guerra.
Coalición planifican protestas nacionales: Paremos la guerra antes de que comience

Por Greg Butterfield

Con cada día que pasa, la administración de Bush se ve en cada vez más aislada en su plan para lanzar una invasión total contra Iraq. Entre los líderes del mundo que han condenado los planes de guerra de Washington está Nelson Mandela, el símbolo del heroico de la lucha en contra del apartheid en Sudáfrica.

Por ello, el aislamiento no es el motivo político suficiente para prevenir una guerra nueva, dijeron miembros de una delegación de paz encabezada por el ex procurador nacional de los Estados Unidos Ramsey Clark, que hizo una visita a Irak. Declararon que se necesita un movimiento popular poderoso para eso.

En una conferencia de prensa celebrada el 4 de septiembre en el National Press Club en Washington, D.C., los delegados se juntaron con organizaciones en contra de la guerra, líderes de la comunidad musulmana y africanos americanos, estudiantes y activistas laborales para anunciar planes por una Marcha Nacional a Washington para Parar la Guerra contra Irak el 26 de octubre. Se va a llevar a cabo una marcha en San Francisco también.

Los organizadores están pidiendo a los opuestos a la guerra y al racismo organizar protestas en ciudades alrededor del mundo ese día. El 26 de octubre es el primer aniversario de la Ley Patriótica (Pat Act) que redujo libertades civiles tras el desfile del 11 de septiembre, 2001.

La marcha del 26 de octubre a Washington fue iniciada por el grupo Internacional ANSWER (Respuesta Internacional—las siglas del nombre en inglés representan las palabras Acte Ahora para Parar la Guerra y el Racismo), la Fundación de Libertad de la Sociedad Musulmana-Americana, y el Gremio Nacional de Abogados.

“La gente de los Estados Unidos y de todos los lados tiene la obligación de parar la administración de Bush en su afán de cometer una nueva agresión militar total contra Irak,” dijo Brian Becker, un miembro de la delegación de Clark y un vocero del ANSWER. “La administración de Bush no debería ni siquiera hacer la guerra contra un país que no representa amenaza alguna a los EE.UU.

“Con una indiferencia absoluta todo derecho internacional, el Presidente George W. Bush, el Vicepresidente Dick Cheney, el Secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld y compañía están planeando en viar decenas de miles de soldados jóvenes a matar y a perder sus vidas en otra guerra para asegurar las ganancias petroleras.”

“¿Cuál es la cuestión más importante de las negociaciones de paz?”, agregó Becker. “Mientras que la opinión pública está firmemente en contra de la campaña bélica de Bush, se requiere un movimiento masivo del pueblo –en las calles, en los lugares de trabajo, las comunidades, los campos escolares– para prevenir una guerra.

“Llamamos a los civiles y militares igualmente a ejercer sus derechos políticos de hablar de claramente en contra de una guerra ilegal”.


Nelson Mandela: ‘Estamos horrorizados’

El 2 de septiembre, el ex presidente sudafricano, Nelson Mandela, denunció las amenazas contra Irak, diciendo que la Casa Blanca está “introduciendo caos en asuntos internacionales, y esto lo condenamos en los términos más enfáticos”.

Dijo Mandela: “Estamos realmente horrorizados por cualquier país, si sea una supopotencia o un país pequeño, que actúa fuera de las Naciones Unidas y ataque a países independientes”. (CNN.com, 2 de septiembre)

Los gobiernos de Alemania, Francia, Rusia y China se han opuesto públicamente al plan de guerra de los Estados Unidos. El aliado de Washington más estrecho, el Primer Ministro Británico Tony Blair, no ha asumido una posición sobre el plan de invasión, aunque está de acuerdo con Bush, de que el gobierno de Irak tiene que “reemplazarse”.

NINGNIMIEMBRO DE LA COALICION EN

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