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SOMALIS FIGHT IMPERIALIST PLOT & FOREIGN OCCUPATION

By Saida Osman & Thomas Davies

As the end of 2006 drew to a close, the United States split wide open a new African front in the emerging era of war and occupation. Approximately 8000 Ethiopian troops, sponsored and directed by the US, invaded Somalia. Protests erupted in Somalia, and by January 8th the US had begun air strikes against Southern Somalia, killing hundreds and destroying a number of villages.

The United Nations is not without blame for the current atrocities. On December 6th, the UN Security Council unanimously passed resolution 1725, authorizing a foreign mission in Somalia for which the UN is responsible for mobilizing resources and logistics.

There is a simple truth evident to Somalis. A hostile foreign force backed by an imperialist government has invaded their country. These invaders, African or not, must leave immediately and will be fought against until they do.

Invaders are Invaders

"We are not going to surrender our weapons to Ethiopians — our arch enemy. We want the Ethiopian forces out of our country first." — Protestor in Mogadishu

The Ethiopian government claims to be returning the Somali interim government of US-backed warlords to power. This "government" was, and still is, completely isolated from the majority of Somalis. Its president, Abdullahi Yusuf, even *praised* the recent American killings in the southern part of Somalia. The Union

a rich history that every Somali is proud of.

The History of Somalia, a History of Struggle

Pre-colonial Somalia was a primarily nomadic society. However, its coastline was an active trading point with the rest of the world, with its ideal location accessible to both the Middle East and India via the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Because of this, it was to become the site of fierce competition between colonial powers.

The "scramble for Africa" in the 1880s had terrible consequences for Somalis, as the British, French, and Italians all fought each other over Somalia and the rest of Africa. By the end of the 19th century, they had ripped up Somalia into the British Protectorate, French Somaliland, Italian Somalia, and Northern Kenya. Ethiopia ended up with the Ogaden and Haud regions of Somalia for having defeated Italy.

Somalis fought back, forming the Dervish Resistance Movement led by Mohammed Abdullah Hassan. A precursor to current Islamophobia, the British called him "Mad Mullah" because of his Muslim beliefs. Somalis managed to fight the colonial army against its use of both land and air forces from 1898 to 1920. The pressures of the largest military power and their continual attempts to divide Somalis along clan lines saw the movement's decline and Hassan's death. However, the movement continues to fuel Somalis' strength and courage to fight for



Somalis protest Ethiopian invasion, Dec 25, 2006.

malia and Ethiopia.

With a Sword in One Hand and a Rock in the Other

Somalis again refused to be left out of their political destinies. They were led by Hawa Tako, a young woman who was a part of the Somali Youth League (SYL), Somalia's first political party. They challenged the presence of the British in the North and fought the Italians in the South much like Palestinian youth challenge Israel, with rocks, sticks, unity, and

he "presided over a symbolic milestone in public health" by leading a very successful campaign against illiteracy in 1974.

These gains were short lived as the Cold War powers of the United States and Soviet Union began competing in the Horn of Africa. Barre soon began yo-yoing between the two powers based on their level of support, as the people suffered. He also entered into a costly war with Ethiopia in 1977 over the Ogaden

18 US soldiers were killed as masses of Somalis surrounded their Blackhawk helicopters. In this incident alone, the US killed thousands, but Somalis had proven a point and the US was forced to bitterly withdraw soon after in 1994.

The events still weigh heavily on US imperialists, and were a defining moment in Somalia's fight against imperialist invasion.

of Islamic Courts (UCI), which Ethiopian troops are currently hunting down, had "managed to quell much of the lawlessness that has blighted

dignity and self-determination. Hassan's tales of fighting are legendary and can still be felt through his epic poems on how much he truly loved

honour. Hawa was eventually killed with a poison arrow before independence, but is immortalized in a statue in the city of Xamar in Somalia with a sword in one hand and a rock in the other.

region and wasted Somalis' aspirations for unity and independence from foreign control.

Barre killed many of his own people, primarily in the North, as opposition developed. He was eventually ousted from the government by a campaign led by the United Somali Congress. Their split in 1992 led to the escalation of violence in Mogadishu and civil war. At the same time, the North declared themselves a separate state from the rest of Somalia, and named themselves Somaliland. This is Siad Barre's legacy. His killings of Somalis in the North reinforced the colonial division between the North and South.

Blackhawk Down

In the early 1990s the UN began "Operation Provide Relief" and "Operation Restore Hope" in Somalia, which began combining aid with foreign troops. It was the beginning of the so-called "humanitarian interventions", along with "Operation Restore Democracy" in Haiti in 1994, which have ravaged the world since they began. According to R. Snyder, a history professor at Northern Virginia Community College, "In the early 1990's, up to 80% of internationally provided food was stolen". Aid was used to buy weapons and fuelled all the internal fighting. More than 25,000 UN troops, led by the US, worsened the situation. Their first missions were simultaneous raids on the Port of Mogadishu and Mogadishu International Airport.

This culminated in the infamous "Blackhawk Down" incident in October of 1993. US Task Force Rangers conducting a raid on a Mogadishu building in an attempt to capture rebel leader Mohamed Farah Aidid were shot down, leaving the scene.

No Such Thing as a "Peacekeeper"

Canada is not without its own atrocities in Somalia. In 1993, 16-year-old Somali Shidane Arone's last words were "Canada, Canada..." as he was tortured to death by Canadian forces stationed in Somalia. A videotape also captured Canadian soldiers talking about hunting Somalis as trophies. Two unarmed Somalis were also shot "execution style" according to the doctor which examined them.

The Canadian Inquiry into the mission said they encountered a "wall of silence...evidently a strategy of calculated deception" initiated by the military's leadership. The Inquiry was also cut short in 1997, before it was able to properly investigate the military's leadership or even the murder of Shidane Arone.

Most telling:

"To our surprise, we found that in 1992 there was no formalized or standardized training system for peace operations, despite almost 40 years of intensive Canadian participation in international peace operations." - Somalia Inquiry Summary, 1997

Two Different Kinds of Intervention: Cuba vs. USA

For a different perspective on a positive foreign military mission in Africa, Cuba's role in Angola must be highlighted:

In both 1975 and 1987, Apartheid South Africa, with the support of Washington, invaded Angola. In response to requests from the Angolan government, Cuba sent 30,000 combat troops in 1975 and 50,000 in 1987, all of which volunteered for



Demonstration in Mogadishu, 1995

Somalia for the last 16 years and reunited the capital", according to the BBC. That tells very clearly that one the main reasons for attacking and occupying Somalia is the imperialist's fear of returning stability and rule of law, and of course, civil institutions to Somalia - a country known as one of the cradles of civilization.

So what reason would Somalis have to welcome these Ethiopian troops? They are all aware that since November 2002, the US military has established a joint taskforce in Djibouti, with 1,800 troops and special operations forces. Somalia has a strong anti-colonial and anti-imperialist history, and Somalis have fought, and won, against British, French, Italian, Ethiopian, United Nations, and US invasions. This is

his people:

You did not leave me when the ignorant stampeded ...

You loaded your camels and came over to me when they defected to the British generals.

And I count on you during the dry season of the year.

The colonialists continued to spar over Somalia, with fascist Italy recapturing the Ogaden region during the 1930s and parts of British Somaliland in 1940. In March 1941, the Allied army retook Somalia and Ogaden. The British held all of Somalia except French Somaliland from 1941-1949. By 1950, Ethiopia was given Ogaden and Haud, a decision the colonialists knew would ensure future conflicts between So-

On July 1st, 1960, a unified Somalia was born.

New Hope, New Challenges

The stains of colonization were difficult to wash out, and disputes continuing with Ethiopia over Ogaden and Haud, as well as difficulties in merging after years of separation left many Somalis wanting more. There was also little accomplished to raise public infrastructure and social programs. Into this stepped Siad Barre, who capitalized off of the situation and came to power through a coup d'etat in 1969.

Barre initially referred to himself as a "scientific socialist", had wide support as he had promised, and made initial gains in improvements to health and education. According to the Western Journal of Medicine

Continues on Page 2

By Tamara Hansen

"Recently, the prestigious World Wildlife Fund, based in Switzerland and considered internationally to be the most important NGO overseeing the global environment, stated that all of the measures taken by Cuba to protect the environment made it the only country on earth that meets the minimum requirements for sustainable development. This is an encouraging honor for our country." - Message from Cuban President Fidel Castro November 28, 2006.

In its Living Planet Report 2006 the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) announced that, "No region, nor the world as a whole, met both criteria for sustainable development. Cuba alone did." This short and maybe a bit confusing sentence says a lot about Cuba.

What does it mean exactly? The WWF's Living Planet Report 2006 marks the progress of countries around the world towards sustainable human and ecological development. They do this using the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) and calculating a country's ecological footprint.

The HDI number of each country is based on its life expectancy, literacy rate, education system, and per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Ecological footprint is a measure of the country's demand on the environment/biosphere. The UN Development Programme considers an HDI higher than 0.8 to be "high human development". Meanwhile, a country with potential for sustainability must have a footprint lower than 1.8. Cuba is the only country to meet both of these criterias with an HDI of 0.82 and a footprint of 1.5! Canada, on the other hand, may have an HDI of 0.95, but its footprint is 7.6! The United States is even worse with an HDI of 0.94 and a footprint of 9.6!

This report has a huge message about Cuba; first, that Cuba is a champion for environmental sustainability in the world, and second, it's the only country in the world reaching the report's criteria and goals. Despite this there is only one line in the whole WWF

report about Cuba. Also important is that there is no place on the WWF website that talks about how Cuba is the only country to pass this report with flying colors! Why has the WWF been so silent about this? Isn't Cuba an example they want the rest of the world to follow?

Another imperative question: Why is it that when major news media 'discovers' something disreputable about Cuba, such as "prostitution" or "poverty", it is splashed everywhere in the news? However, while the media keeps talking about the environment, global warming and the Kyoto accord, they ignore that Cuba has been announced as the single country in the world making real progress towards sustainability, which means better living conditions and natural conditions for human beings.

Maybe they are trying to keep this important example secret because of how Cuba came to be a champion of human and environmental improvement. Which brings us to the best question of all, how did Cuba become the only country in the world to meet this report's requirements for sustainable development?

How does Cuba put human needs first?

In 1959, the people of Cuba brought forth a

What does Sustainability Mean for CUBA?



SOCIALIST CUBA CHAMPIONS ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



revolution that would change Cuba's course in history. From 1952, the country had been ruled by a brutal dictator who was backed and funded by the United States. After many attempts at taking power, the revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro, succeeded on New Year's Day 1959. The revolution began a new era of giving land to landless farmers and nationalizing industries formerly owned by the United States.

One of the goals of the Cuban revolution was to change Cuba's economy from one that relied on the US for exports and imports. This relationship was really one of exploitation, as the US used Cuba's sugar, sold goods to Cuba at high costs, and set up a playground for the wealthy American mafia who used Havana for drinking, gambling and prostitutes. The majority of people in Cuba were poor, jobless most of the year and illiterate. The Cuban revolution set out with the ambitious goals of changing all of this.

In the eyes of the United States, there was a potential that the Cuban revolution would become an example for the rest of Latin America and that they would lose their business and economic interests in other countries as well. So they set out to prevent Cuba from becoming a successful example. This is why the US completely dropped its relations with Cuba shortly after the triumph of the revolution and forced Cuba to find other trade partners. This turned Cuba towards the Soviet Union. Unfortunately during this partnership, Cuba slowed progress on some of its earlier ideas of developing its agriculture beyond sugar. This meant that when the Soviet Union fell, Cuba could not feed itself, as its economy was still heavily reliant on exporting sugar and importing other resources and goods.

According to a documentary on Cuba by prominent Canadian environmentalist and scientist David Suzuki, "At one time Cuba's

Continues on Page 3

Continued From Page 1

the mission. Cuban military assistance was decisive in pushing South Africa's troops out of Angola. Consequently, there was a decisive defeat of the South African army by the joint Cuban-Angolan army in 1987-88 at Cuito Cuanavale, in southern Angola. Cuban revolutionary intervention not only guaranteed

sovereignty of Angola but also brought independence for Namibia. Also, it further helped decisively change the relationship of political forces in favour of oppressed South Africans by releasing the African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, from jail and ending the apartheid system in South Africa. Africans celebrated Cuba around the continent, and Nelson Mandela said in a speech,

"The Cuban people hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Africa... It is unparalleled in African history to have another people rise to the defence of one of us."

And again, at Nelson Mandela's inaugural in May 1994, to which Fidel Castro was invited as a main and special guest, he whispered very clearly in Fidel's ear, so the media could pick it up,

"You made this possible."

Will there be any such speeches made by Somalis about Ethiopia? Or about US and George Bush? No. Is the invasion celebrated by masses of Africans? No. Only by the few with their business suits attached to the puppet-strings of Washington.

The Cuban intervention in Africa and Angola at the time when Che Guevara was there in 1965, or when the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces were there in 1975 and 1987 clearly proves that the question is not whether weapons and wars are violent or not, but who is using them, who is benefiting from them and for what purpose they are used is the fundamental question. Someone could argue that the Cuban military intervention in Africa was accompanied with violence - the nature of any war - but how could humanity and dignity be established for impoverished and colonized Africans without a force, a true revolutionary force?

The Lines Are Drawn

Tony Blair responded to the recent US bombings of southern Somalia by saying:

"Some of those extremists who have been using methods of violence in order to get their way in Somalia pose a threat not just to the outside world but to people in Somalia as well."

Astonishingly, he is referring to the Union of Islamic Courts, and not the Ethiopian invaders or the US bombers! Whatever problems the UIC had, it was nothing compared to this, and it had actual support from within Somalia.

A couple of days after the invasion, the New York Times quoted Abdullahi Hashi, a Somali construction worker, who said, "We're going to turn this place into another Iraq."

The connections and the interests become clearer every day. They are completely clear to this Somali construction worker who joined the resistance to the Ethiopian invasion. He,

like his people, understands the mindset of the Ethiopian government and their partners, the United States, who attempt to "aid" a country with armed soldiers and aerial strikes. This mindset is that of the colonial powers like the US and UK of the past who believed that they were "civilizing" Somalis. However, just like before, the Mohammed Abdullah Hassans and Hawa Takos and millions of Somalis will rise to defeat the imperialists.

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US troops in Somalia, 1992.

The Newspaper Of

FIRE THIS TIME MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

-ISSN 1712 - 1817 -

www.firethistime.net

Volume 4 Issue 1 January 2007

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By Shannon Bundock

It has been decided: 21,500 additional US troops will be flown halfway across the world to join the 150,000 already stationed in Iraq. The vast majority of these new troops will be stationed in Baghdad – home of both the US “Green Zone” and of the fiercest anti-occupation resistance in the country. This acceleration of the

States.” Victory for the US ruling class in Iraq, on the other hand, means securing absolute political, economic and military control over the country. It means permanent bases and a permanent presence for the expansion of US hegemony throughout the Middle East. Iraqis understand that the occupation’s objective is the wholesale stripping of their sovereignty, and for nearly four

Bush speech. According to the British Guardian newspaper, “Within minutes of Mr. Bush finishing the speech, the Democratic leadership issued a joint statement claiming his policy would endanger national security because it further over-extended US forces, reducing their ability to operate elsewhere”

Democrat senator Edward Kennedy suggested that Congress

at great cost. It is wrong to place American troops in the middle of Iraq’s civil war.”

Quotations like those above could continue on for pages. What is important however, is the fact that it is clear that there is no unified strategy among the US government. By this time there is no question that the occupation of Iraq is in a serious crisis for the US and there is no disagreement

On January 12, 2007, the British Guardian Newspaper pointed out, “The Project on Defence Alternatives, a respected US think tank, points out this week that, to have even a small chance of conducting a successful “clear, hold and build” strategy, the US would have to double its troop commitment to 300,000 and keep it in Iraq for 15 years at a cost of at least another 8,000 American

US Ruling Class for More Massacres in Iraq



US soldiers conducting overnight sweeps in Baghdad, Iraq, Oct 10, 2006.



Burning British military vehicle after it exploded in a roadside bombing in Basra, Iraq, May 2006.

war and occupation of Iraq is the new “winning strategy” of the Bush Administration. Along with 1 Billion more dollars, the US government is looking to blitzkrieg Iraq into submission and finally – hopefully, eventually – secure Iraq in their favor.

The dramatic escalation was announced by President Bush in a speech on January 10, 2007. During this speech he emphasized that, “Failure in Iraq would be a disaster for the United

years, they have heroically battled back against this imperialist mission.

Reaction at home

The response from the US ruling class to the January 10th address is not confident encouragement. Unity can only be found in their pessimism, their uncertainty and the widespread stress that this four-year quagmire has wrought.

Both Democrats and Republicans came out strong following the

could block funding for the extra troops. He also said, “What we really ought to be having at this time is a surge of political initiatives, rather than a surge of military initiatives.”

Republican Senator Chuck Hagel, a Vietnam war veteran, called the plan “the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam”. He continued, “This is a dangerously wrong-headed strategy that will drive America deeper into an unwinnable swamp

among the different factions in the US government over the necessity for a US-controlled Iraq. The question is “What is the best way to occupy Iraq” or “How can the US/UK occupation guarantee the plundering of Iraq’s resources and the usurping of Iraq’s government?” The lack of support for the Bush plan to pile 21,500 more troops into Iraq is a sign that few are convinced that the US can accomplish this with a strategy of brute force alone.

shipment after shipment of young men and women to die in Iraq, then perhaps they could “win” this war. But other factors impact what is possible. Not the least of which is the already dramatically declining support among people living in the US. The BBC said in a January 11th article “Q&A: Bush’s new Iraq strategy”: “[The Bush address] is meant to rally US citizens behind a longer, deeper, costlier and bloodier conflict”.

Continues on Page 5

Continued From Page 2

agrarian culture was as conventional as the rest of the world. It experienced its first “Green Revolution” when Russia was supplying Cuba with chemical and mechanical “inputs.”

However, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 ended all of that, and almost overnight threw Cuba’s whole economic system into crisis. Factories closed, food supplies plummeted. Within a year the country had lost over 80% of its foreign trade. With the loss of their export markets and the foreign exchange to pay for imports, Cuba was unable to feed its population and the country was thrown into a crisis. The average daily caloric intake of Cubans dropped by a third.” During this time of crisis, Cuba entered a time known as the special period. The fall of the Soviet Union meant a crisis for Cuba’s economy and hardship for the people of Cuba who lost an average of 20 pounds during this time. The US took no mercy on Cuba and tightened their economic blockade with the Torricelli Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton law of 1996. These laws further limited Cuba’s access to food, medicine and supplies.

At the same time as Cubans were being asked to make many sacrifices, the main gains of the Cuban revolution – free and universal healthcare and education – were maintained. This gave people confidence that their government was doing what it could for them under strained circumstances and people in Cuba knew that with time their situation would improve.

Interestingly, according to Kurt Cobb, writer of the weblog ‘Resource Insights’, “Some visionary members of the country’s Ministry of Agriculture suggested that the low-input, organic methods they had been experimenting with for years be introduced on a broad scale and that agricultural output be directed



World Wildlife Fund tour in Cuba, 2001.

toward local consumption.”

Hope was not lost or abandoned; instead positive outcomes were created from the special period: urban gardens were founded all over cities throughout the country, in back yards, in playgrounds, and on patios. The result? “Cuba created the largest program in sustainable agriculture ever undertaken”, according to the David Suzuki documentary.

Today – Agriculture, Oil and Environment in Cuba

Cuba responded to its oil and fuel scarcity after the fall of the Soviet Union in very creative and innovative ways. They readjusted their crops to be organic and useful to the country’s population. An example of this today is Cuba’s sugar production. According to a May 2006 article in the UK’s Guardian magazine, “Cuba, which once produced eight million tons of sugar a year, has now all but left the sugar business. Barely one million tons are now produced, enough for home consumption.”

Another way Cuba has upped local agriculture and limited the amount of transportation needed to import, export and move food across the country is by pushing for urban agriculture. Urban agriculture, a very innovative route for Cuba, focuses on taking pieces of land in cities and towns where there is no tradition of agriculture, and developing gardens to grow vegetables, spices

and other valuable foodstuffs. By the end of 2005 there were 3,010 urban agricultural gardens set up in urban areas across the island. According to Periodico 26, a Cuban newspaper, “In 2005, the nationwide program of Urban Agriculture was not only outstanding for being a secure source of employment for some 354,000 men and women, but it also produced 4.11 million tons of fresh vegetables and spices in urban intensive farms.”

Urban agriculture is an exciting endeavor not only because it is practical, it also means that cities become greener areas, people living in urban areas learn about food production, and the urban spaces become more sustainable in the long term. Today in Cuba most students must learn how to grow food organically, and according to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, the city of Havana grows 90% of the fruit and vegetables it consumes!

In terms of oil and gas consumption, this year Cuba reached its target of producing 3.9 million tons of oil and gas. Granma International reports that this volume represents approximately 50% of Cuba’s domestic consumption of oil and gas and is seven times the oil and gas production Cuba made in 1990. This self-sufficiency means a total annual savings of \$260 Million US, which can be used on other important projects.

Similar statistics come from CUPET (the Cubapetroleo Corporation), which says that Cuba’s daily consumption of oil is 180,000 barrels. Cuba produces 80,000 of these barrels and the other 100,000 barrels come at below market value from Venezuela. In order to get these preferential prices Cuba sends its highly renowned professionals to Venezuela, including doctors, teachers, nurses and sports coaches.

Another interesting fact about the environment in Cuba is that in 1959, only 14% of Cuba’s territory was considered “forest-cov-

ered areas”. Today Cuba is one of the only countries in the world where the forest-covered areas are expanding and interestingly, Cuba has now reached 24.5% forested area. Cuba’s plan is to continue this trend towards a balanced figure of 25% by 2008.

Sustainability is not only about the environment!

Some people in the environmentalist community would argue that Cuba being named the only sustainable country in the world is Cuba’s biggest success story. This argument has led many people to say that, for example, we should support the US blockade on Cuba because this is the only reason that Cuba has developed its agriculture and environment in such an interesting, creative and sustainable way.

This is a dangerous argument and path to take, especially because people in Cuba have been demanding an end to the US blockade since its cruel and inhuman inception not long after the victory of the revolution. We must support the people of Cuba in this demand no matter how we on the outside project it will impact Cuba’s path to a more environmentally sustainable society.

The environment is not Cuba’s first priority; their first priority is improving human lives and protecting the gains of the revolution. Cuba does this today through giving people confidence that Cuba is continuing to evolve sustainably, not only in terms of the environment but sustainably in terms of the needs and desires of its people. Succinctly put, Cuba must move towards greater humanity and with that the environment will follow. Some small examples of this immense humanity can be seen in the fields of health, jobs, and education. Fascinatingly, “Education and health services will receive 22.6 per cent of Cuba’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP)” this year, explains the Prensa Latina news agency. It continues, “that is four

Continues on Page 4



By Thomas Davies

On January 2nd, 2007, Ban Ki-Moon stepped to the microphone to give his first statements as the new Secretary General of the United Nations. With his first words he laid his priorities on the table, and at the same time laid to rest any remaining doubts that a forceful intervention in Sudan's Darfur region will not happen soon. He stated:

"I start my duties at a daunting time in international affairs, starting from Darfur to the Middle East, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and many other crises that trouble our world."

Not just including, but starting from Darfur. To be clear, competition between countries like the United States, France, and Canada for Sudan is certainly not just starting in 2007. Being a strategic position as an entry point to Africa and a link to the Middle East, Sudan, with its vast resources, has been the site of increasing confrontation and competition between these countries. What is emerging is a new phase of heightened competition and fighting, which will mirror what we've seen in the Middle East since 2001.

Their justification for intervention is always the current internal conflict and fighting occurring in Darfur between the Sudanese government and rebel groups. US support of these rebel groups is common knowledge within the African press. In 2006 George W. Bush



Sudanese students protest in Khartoum against the proposal for UN troops in Sudan.

to sexual assault and degradation in the countries they operate in. The assistant secretary-general for UN peacekeeping operations, Jane Holl Lute, was forced to admit that, "My operating presumption that this is either an ongoing or potential problem in every single one of our missions."

In 2006, the BBC reported systematic abuse in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, involving food being given out by UN peacekeepers to children in return for sex. In 2005, two United Nations peacekeepers in Burundi were sacked after having sex with prostitutes and minors. In Haiti, BBC also uncovered sex

US TARGETING SUDAN FOR WAR & OCCUPATION

THE CAMPAIGN TO "SAVE DARFUR" IS A BIG TRAP FOR US/UN OCCUPATION

even said publicly he had met with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to push "that there needs to be unity among the rebel groups." This is never mentioned by the "Save Darfur" campaigns.

Another overlooked fact is that the situation began with a drought that lasted more than a decade across Northern Africa. The struggle for scarce water supplies has pitted subsistence farmers against subsistence nomadic herders. This is an environmental fact. The origin, contrary to so many news reports, is not an evil "Arab" government targeting the "African" population

of Darfur.

Trying to impose these false divisions on a native population is common method used by colonizers around the world. From 1924 until they were forced out in 1956, the British attempted to divide Sudan into two essentially separate colonies, the south and the north.

"Plan B"

The UN's current proposal for Darfur is an invasion force of 17,300 troops and 3,300 police officers. Since



Sudanese women protest Sept 17, 2006.

Continued From Page 3

times more than the average destined by any country in Latin America, according to 2007 budget figures."

Also, this year the percentage of Cubans who made blood bank donations was higher than the percentage in any other country in the world. In December 2006, Deputy Public Health Minister Joaquin Garcia said, "The number of donors is ever more increasing, and that is not luck, but the work of the Revolution itself, as it has created a dignified, kind people."

Some of the advances made in education include Cuba having just 2% of Latin America's population, but 11% of its scientists. Elementary, secondary and university education in Cuba are free for students. This also includes their books and uniforms. Today Cuba's universities are even training students from the United States to become doctors - and they are doing it for free! The only promise these students have to make is that they will return to the US and work in poor areas of the country for two years.

Today Cuba has the highest number of doctors per capita out of any country in the world. Before the Cuban Revolution in 1959, there was one doctor per 2000 people. Today, through Cuba's education system and training, there is one doctor per 167 people! Cuba uses these doctors not only in Cuba or Venezuela, but throughout Latin America, the Caribbean and around the world. For example there have been more

than 400,000 eye operations made under Operation Miracle. This is a shared program between Cuba and Venezuela, who are working together to provide free eye surgeries to hundreds of thousands of people in Latin America who are blind or going blind from lack of access to proper medical care.

A better world is possible...and necessary

As the world moves towards what is known as "peak oil", when the world will reach the maximum oil/gas production and everything will begin to decline in those industries, there are two main ways for world leaders to prepare. Option #1, taken on mainly by the US, Canada and other imperialist countries see this time as important to get their hands on as many valuable resources as possible, especially oil and gas resources. Option #2, taken on mainly by Cuba, is looking for other more sustainable energy sources. Option #1 has been part of the reason for invasions into oppressed countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and at this time, potentially Sudan. Option #2 has been a part of the reason for communities, scientists, environmentalists and people of all stripes to unite and think resourcefully about new options. If we agree that a better world is possible and necessary, whose option do we follow?

Tamara Hansen is a third year student at Simon Fraser University and the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She has been to Cuba twice as a volunteer brigatista and sits on the executive board of the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC).

the UN Security Council passed the resolution 1706 in April of 2006 they have been attempting to isolate and pressure the Sudanese government to accept the forces. The US even delivered an ultimatum for the Sudanese government, stating that, "On January 1st, either we see a change or we go to Plan B."

Andrew Natsios, the US special envoy to Sudan who made the statements, refused to specify what "Plan B" is, but given Condoleezza Rice's earlier comments that Sudan faces "a choice between cooperation and confrontation", it's clear where they are headed.

Threats Continue

January 1st has come and gone, but the threat of a "confrontation" against Sudan has not. Mr. "Plan B" Natsios, Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico, and Ban-Ki Moon's special envoy to Sudan Jan Eliasson have all made very publicized trips to Sudan in this New Year. They have all also made announcements of "ceasefires" and agreements, stating that they have even been able to pressure the Sudanese government into accepting a "hybrid" force in Darfur. Reports say that the government will allow UN technical support personal and goods to join the 7,700 strong African Union troops currently in the region. The rest is all speculation.

While we will never know what is being said behind closed doors, we can be sure that the recent US-supported Ethiopian invasion of nearby Somalia must have been pointed out to the Sudanese government. That Ethiopia also hap-

pens to border Sudan, and that the US warplanes that attacked Somalia could also attack Sudan could have very easily been a "friendly reminder" given to the Sudanese government at the same time.

With Friends Like These, Who Needs Enemies?

While the US and United Nations are happy to push the crisis Sudan and Darfur in the over airwaves and across newspapers, there is one news story they would rather bury.

An internal UNICEF report has surfaced containing interviews with 20 children, documenting cases of rape and sexual abuse by UN forces stationed in Southern Sudan. The UN has more than 10,000 police, peacekeepers and staffers from over 70 countries in the region.

The United Nations and its "peacekeepers" are no strangers

crimes against children as young as eleven, with chilling direct testimonies:

"When I found her I didn't recognize my own child. She had the face of a dead person - I started to cry out, she couldn't tell me what had happened."

- Mother of a 16 year old Haitian girl raped by a UN peacekeeper

Almost half of the complaints against peacekeeping troops involved sex with a minor and 15% involved rape or sexual assault. Peacekeepers have immunity from the domestic laws of the country they are in, and the UN admits that in cannot discipline at least 80% of the troops either. Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, was also forced to admit in 2005 that, "Although allegations have doubled since 2003, the Secretariat is aware that the data may still

Continues on Page 5



Sudanese women protest Sept 17, 2006.

Unfortunately for the Bush administration, people living in the US are not rallying behind the plan, but rather against it.

In a poll done by Associated Press and Ipsos, following Bush's televised address, 70% of Americans polled said that they were against sending more troops to Iraq. The day following the address, on just 48 hours notice, antiwar demonstrations took place in cities and towns across the US against the deployment of more troops.

American troops themselves are becoming war-weary. The military has been forced to take steps to repeatedly extend tours of duty. Previous protocol had been to limit National Guard members' mobilizations to no more than a cumulative total of 24 months every five years, but now reservists who have been deployed within the last five years can be summoned again. After missing recruitment targets in 2005, the army lowered standards and doubled enlistment bonuses. Last year, it raised the maximum age for recruits from 35 to 40, and then to 42.

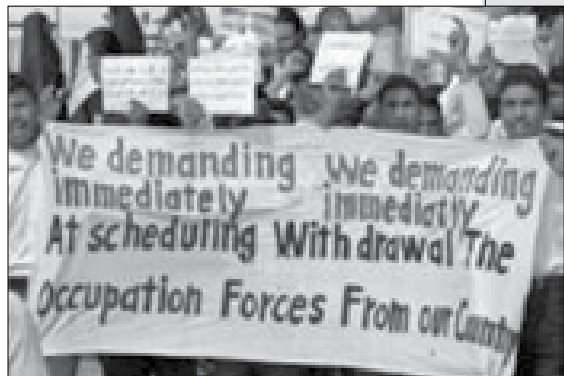
In an Associated Press article on January 14th, Margaret Susan Thompson, who teaches a Modern Presidency course at Syracuse University's Maxwell School, was quoted stating, "I'm wondering if this is not some kind of tragically misguided notion of statesmanship on the part of Bush, that there is something noble about ignoring public opinion".

A "surge" in death and destruction for Iraqis

The skepticism and opposition that is being expressed by people living the US is rooted in the crisis that has been snowballing for the last four years. All of the initial justifications

for going to war have been left by the wayside – Weapons of Mass Destruction, finding al-Qaeda, toppling Saddam. All that is left is the weak smokescreen that the US has a mission to bring "liberation" to the people of Iraq. The contradiction that is apparent, however, is that since 2003 life for Iraqis in every sense has steadily declined. As luck would have it, the US/UK occupation has proven to be the pivotal factor preventing Iraq's liberation.

A widely-touted survey of Iraqi households published by the Lancet Medical Journal found that about 655,000 Iraqi deaths had occurred "as a consequence of the war" by July 2006. According to an article



published on January 15th by Dr. Mohamed Elmasry, national president of the Canadian Islamic Congress, "...more than 1.5 million people are displaced within Iraq; and up to two million Iraqis have fled the country altogether. Some 100 Iraqi civilians are killed every single day... Personal security, health care, education and public services -- including accessibility to clean water, electricity and sewage -- are almost all non-existent or, at best, function at a fraction of pre-occupation standards. Annual inflation has skyrocketed to more than 50 per cent and unemployment stands at an appalling 60 per cent."



On top of the crisis of infrastructure and security, Iraqis face constant humiliation, harassment, arrest, imprisonment, torture and death at the hands of occupation troops.

Rightfully, the impending 21,500 more troops are not being seen as a friendly gesture to the Iraqis. In a BBC article from January 11th, Haythem Zalzal, a pharmacist in the Karada area of central Baghdad summed up the view of many Iraqis: "Nobody's thinking properly about making things better in Iraq. I think it's very wrong to send more soldiers to Iraq. It'll just create more problems, not solve anything."

In addition to the opposition from the mouths of Iraqis, there is also a more direct message being sent to the occupation forces. According to the Financial Times on January 11, 2007, "...on average an attack occurs against Anglo-American forces every 10 minutes..."

A response from Iraq

Beyond the skepticism and opposition from regular Iraqis, the Bush plan faces yet another hurdle. The US-propped up Maliki government in Iraq is a reluctant and weak partner. According to the International Herald Tribune on Jan 10 2007, "Haidar

al-Abadi, a member of Parliament who is a close associate of Maliki's, said: 'The government believes there is no need for extra troops from the American side. The existing troops can do the job'"

This hesitancy was echoed by other members of Iraq's US-steered parliament. "You can't solve the problem by adding more troops," said Redha Jawad Tahi. "The security should be in the hands of the

SUDAN
Continued From Page 4

not reflect the true extent of these deplorable incidents." Great! Let's send over more than 20,000 more of them to Sudan where they are already abusing and raping the population! Let's "Save Darfur" that way!

Growing Economy

Amidst all the international maneuvers around Sudan, the Chief of the Sudanese Bank announced that the Sudanese economy would grow by at least 10 percent in 2007. Its average growth rate over the past 10 years has been 7 percent in real terms. Sudan also now produces 330,000 barrels a day of oil. It has also begun implementing a new currency in the entire country, replacing the old Dinar with the Sudanese pound in a move to speed up the national economy. Could the growing economy in Sudan have anything to do with a growing interest by outside forces in the country?

As reported in the last issue of *Fire This Time*, Sudan is believed to have oil reserves rivalling those of Saudi Arabia and large deposits of natural gas. In addition, it has one of the three largest deposits of high-purity uranium in the world, along

Iraqis...

Despite their outward confidence in the sure success of the new strategy, uncertainty among Bush's closest allies looms right below the surface. On Jan 12, 2007, the Guardian Newspaper reported, "...[Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice], in an unguarded moment, picked up on an open television microphone yesterday morning, expressed concern that her forthcoming visit to Iraq might be perceived as dictation of policy from Washington. 'I don't want to descend on the Maliki government and look like we, you know, just sort of beat their brains out,' she said."

The role of the antiwar movement and



all peace-loving people

An acceleration of war, 21,500 more troops descending on Iraq, demands an acceleration of anti-war action. The Bush administration has admitted that more US troops will equal a bloodier, costlier and more devastating war. Plagued by division amongst themselves, the war-makers are in a weak position. Iraqi resistance to occupation is furthering their decent towards failure.

with the fourth-largest deposits of copper. Those national resources still exist, are still owned in the majority by Chinese institutions and French corporations, and are still hugely sought after.

Context Again

As the pro-intervention campaign pushed by large profit driven countries marches on, other organizations and individuals attempt to justify it on a "humanitarian" basis. They plead that foreign military intervention "will be different this time."

Unfortunately, every single indicator that the only way it would be different this time is that it would be worse. The Lancet Medical Journal reported that the number of Iraqis dying under U.S. occupation has risen every year since March 2003 to 655,000. The invasion of Afghanistan that was to bring freedom and equality to women has resulted in a report by the UN stating that hospitals in Kabul treated 3 times more cases of self immolation – women burning themselves – than in 2002.

We don't even have to dig very deep for another reminder of foreign intervention in Sudan itself. Many Sudanese have died of completely preventable diseases as a result of a US cruise missile attack on August 20th, 1998. It destroyed the El Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum. This plant, which had produced cheap medications for treating malaria and tuberculosis, provided

International pressure, accompanied by the anti-war fight being waged by people living in the US, can help to quicken the disaster for the imperialist occupation of Iraq.

The solution to this crisis of occupation is simple and clear. It has been demanded by Iraqi people since the day the first occupation soldier stepped foot in Iraq. The first and most necessary step to put Iraq on a path toward rebuilding and healing is self-determination and the immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces.

Pulling out occupation forces from Iraq is not a magic solution, but it is undeniably necessary. Solving the problems of violence, instability, unemployment, education, infrastructure, etc. can only begin with a sovereign Iraqi government. The last four years have proven, beyond a doubt, that the imperialist strategy is not in the interest of the Iraqi people, and has only lead to death, destruction and chaos. This must be turned around for Iraq to have any hope of a brighter future.

No to the Acceleration of War and Occupation in Iraq!

US/UK Out of Iraq!

Self-Determination for Iraq Now!

Shannon Bundock is a young welder and a member of Ironworkers Union Local 712. She is a founding member of the Fire This Time Newspaper and the Co-chair of Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) in Vancouver.

60 percent of the available medicine in Sudan.

It's the Same Thing

However you want to justify, ignore, or plead it, this impending foreign intervention is to be completely controlled by the same powers which have desecrated and dehumanized people across the world. Look no further than the state of the world since September 11, 2001. Look no further than UN abuses in Sudan itself! The question of supporting or opposing foreign intervention in Sudan really is the measure for how much we've learned since 2001.

Imperialists didn't stop their campaign in the Middle East after invading Afghanistan, and they certainly won't stop their campaign in Africa after invading Sudan.

No one is denying very real problems in the Darfur region. We do, however, point to the ever-growing evidence of suffering misery and humiliation as a result of imperialist intervention, whether named "peacekeeping" or not. Foreign invasion and occupation will never be a solution for anyone in Sudan or elsewhere. If anyone's interest is solving humanity's problems, they should look no further than opposing these invasions and occupations alongside millions of people in Sudan and around the world.

US/UN HANDS OF SUDAN!



By Esteban González Arteaga

"To all those who only see dark clouds and storms on the horizon, to those who are unwilling to confront the rough seas of destiny, I ask to go towards the door and to leave the ship." - Admiral Mariano Francisco Saynez Secretary of the Navy addressing the future tasks of the Mexican military, shortly after the inauguration of President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa.

Admiral Francisco Saynez, President Felipe Calderon, and their Party of National Action (PAN) are making it clear that they are charting a new bloody course for the Mexican ruling class. The Mexican ruling class has shown in recent months it is willing to openly trample on the laws it has written for itself and it is not afraid or shy of showing its repressive intentions.

In Atenco, in Oaxaca, in Mexico City, they are sending a message that is as clear as the banging of a riot shield. They have chosen this course because they know that Mexico is in crisis; they are aware that the injustices of neo-liberalism can no longer be disguised with myths of "peace, prosperity, and economic growth." The reality present in statistics as well as in the empty stomachs of Mexicans is unjustifiable. Today working class people in Mexico take their first united steps to confront the corrupt and unjust practices of the country's ruling class.

The Twilight of Neo-liberalism

The catastrophe of neo-liberalism in Mexico is reflected in all of Latin America, implemented during the last quarter century at the request of imperialists and their World Bank, and zealously carried out by the local ruling class. These policies have

respect for the rights of immigrants. The US ruling class is coming face to face with the victims of the imperialist policy it has carried out through Latin America for decades.

The weight of poverty, decades of deceit and humiliation, has grown unbearable for Mexicans. 500,000 continue to cross the border every year. Half of Mexico's 100 million people live in poverty, 20% of the population is so poor that they are, "unable to meet basic food needs," while the country's richest 20% live in opulence earning 50% of the national income. The working-class in Mexico has begun to make important conjectures in the past years; they have seen the colossal inequalities in Mexican society and have gained a decided mistrust of neo-liberalism and its defenders.

The Elections Have Become a Political Battleground for the Masses

The result of the Mexican presidential elections on July 2nd 2006 meant, more than the triumph of any particular candidate, the verdict of the Mexican people on the trial of neo-liberalism. What made this election so critical? The frustration of the masses and their active organized mobilization in defense of their candidate, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, before and after the elections.

Lopez Obrador was the progressive mayor of Mexico City. He became popular inside and outside of Mexico City for his government programs, which included assistance programs for the elderly, single mothers, and school-aged children. In 2005, Mexico's ruling class feared losing their hegemony over the country if this man became president, and made a scandalous move to put democratically elected Lopez Obrador in jail, accusing him of having illegally expropriated land for the purpose of building a road to a hospital. The people of Mexico understood that the 'Desafuero' (impeachment) was of political nature and not judicial. A million people came out to the streets, many who had not voted for Lopez Obrador, demanding that the will of the masses be respected and that Lopez Obrador be allowed to carry out his mandate. The case became a huge political liability for

the Mexican Political Volcano ELECTIONS & MASS MOVEMENTS



Mass rally against electoral fraud. Mexico City.



Mexico's new "President" Felipe Calderon (3rd fr. left) walks with Mexican Military officers.

President Fox who was forced to fire the attorney general, and declare that the case had no legal basis. This was a huge victory for the Mexican masses; it emboldened them, and made Lopez Obrador a rallying point for the poor to express their discontent with neo-liberalism and their resistance to the ruling class. In fact, Obrador was pushed by poor and working people into a major leadership position that perhaps he had never dreamed of or expected.

On July 29th 2005, Lopez Obrador announced that he would be running

privilege. The poor and working people of Mexico faced the most vicious attacks, they were portrayed by the media and politicians as dangerous and ignorant mobs. Calderon called them the, "red and yellow tide which paralyzes the country," which he promised to "drown out". Most of the middle class, fearing they had the something to lose, joined the chorus.

In general the ruling class used hate and ignorance as its main electoral tactic. Nonetheless Lopez Obrador continued rising in the public opinion polls, it appeared that the people of Mexico were decided. On May 3rd and 4th 2006 the Mexican ruling class decided that it was necessary to take drastic measures, and utilize the instruments that they were most

livelihood. The Mexican ruling class was anticipating battles to come.

¡Voto por Voto! ¡Casilla por Casilla! The Anti-Fraud Movement

On July 2nd 2006 millions of Mexicans came out to vote. The early results showed that according to all indications Lopez Obrador was going to win. Then, as if a cruel joke, there was a reversal, Calderon began to rise, and the electoral committee, headed by one of Calderon's close associates, hastily declared Calderon's victory.

Even before ballots began to be found in dumpsters and thousands of voters began to complain of being "shaved" of the electoral lists

meant misery, hunger, and death.

In Mexico the sector that has suffered most from liberalization has been the *campesino*, poor self-sufficiency farmers using backwards agricultural technology. The signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) flooded Mexico's market with cheap foodstuffs. *Campesinos* were unable to compete with the influx of products, and many abandoned their homes in search of jobs, leading them primarily in two directions: cities in Mexico and the United States. Neo-liberalism has pushed much of the poor into *maquiladoras*, sweatshops which constitute 17% of Mexican employment, and where super-exploited workers- mostly women- work long hours, many times facing abuse from management, and receive little more than a dollar an hour.

In the US today, there are 25 million Mexican immigrants, 5 million are undocumented workers risking daily deportation. Mexicans in the US, documented or not, represent one of the largest oppressed groups within the US and have been at the forefront of the struggle for immigrant rights. The Mexican flag has emerged as a symbol of resistance to the racist anti-immigrant policy of the US government, on May 1st 2006 millions marched in the US demanding

for president, his political platform included a stop to the privatization of national industries, an elimination of the NAFTA clause allowing the free importation of corn and beans into Mexico by 2008, and an increase in social spending. Business interests in Mexico represented by the Corporate Coordinating Counsel (CCE) saw the ideological challenge against neo-liberalism and cynically declared that, "To hope for something different, is to go backwards." In a slanderous media blitz, guided by the campaign slogan of the National Action Party's (PAN) candidate, Calderon: "Lopez Obrador is a danger for Mexico." Mexico's poor where largely unperturbed by warnings that "economic stability" would be threatened if Lopez Obrador became President; they had nothing to lose. In reality the slogan referred to the danger that the masses behind Lopez Obrador represented to *their* Mexico, the Mexico of wealth and

familiar with—the bloody clubs of repression—against the people of San Salvador de Atenco, in order to send a message and a threat to all Mexican people.

The people of Atenco, a small town on the outskirts of Mexico City, had a history of organizing to defend their land against theft by the government. In 2002 they had successfully stopped the construction of an airport on their lands, marching defiantly on Mexico City, machetes in hand, and forming the People's Front in Defense of Land. Mexico's ruling class could not help but complain about Mr. Fox's 'leniency' towards the people of Atenco. So the attacks on the people of Atenco did not let up, in 2006 Mexico's business interests decided they would turn a flower market in Atenco into a Wal-Mart, and that anyone who resisted would pay dearly. At 7 AM on Wednesday May 3rd hundreds of police entered Atenco, encountering a valiant resistance by the people of Atenco, the police responded brutally, detaining a 100 people and murdering a 14 year-old boy with a shot in the chest. On May 4th three thousand police entered Atenco again taking another 200 people prisoner in house to house raids, and occupying the town, both men and women were beaten brutally, and there were many cases of rape. The same day thousands of protestors responded, marching from Mexico City to Atenco, and holding a public meeting...

The government did not try to defer accusations of an undue use of violence; they publicly aired the images of the criminal attack. They made sure that the images of the repression would stay in the minds of oppressed Mexicans as a warning to those that dare unite to defend their

and bribery, people in Mexico had a clear idea of what had happened. The ruling class unable to win through fear and intimidation had resorted to massive electoral fraud. With this act the capitalist ruling class betrayed its own bourgeois law and civil society. They demonstrated that when it comes to the rule of capital and profit they easily disrespect their own rules and constitutions, and obviously have no problem throwing it all into garbage bins. In the Zocalo square of Mexico City the hundreds who had gathered to await the results began to shout angry slogans, some began to cry. Many had had their hopes stolen by electoral fraud before. Quickly the slogan of *¡Voto por Voto! ¡Casilla por Casilla! Vote by Vote! Booth by Booth!* was taken up by masses who came out to the streets, this time they would hold the ruling class to account for its deceptive manipulation. Masses of working and poor people in Mexico were clearly frustrated by the inability of the ruling class to follow its own rules. They moved closer to the centre stage of politics stating 'We will follow your rules better than you, the ruling class, can do. We will use your rules against you, count my vote according to your own rules otherwise we will count it ourselves and we will follow through with the results.' This was clearly a sign of oppressed masses capable of moving to a political dual power against the USA-supported-capitalist-ruling-class of Mexico.

The month of July 2006 saw the rise of the largest mass movement in Mexico's history. Enormous marches kilometers in length brought together *campesinos*, workers, state employees,

Continues on Page 7



Por Esteban González Arteaga

"A todos aquellos que sólo ven nubarrones y tormentas en el horizonte, a los que no se atreven a enfrentar a los mares bravíos del destino, los conmino a dirigirse al portalón y a que abandonen el buque"- Almirante Mariano Francisco Saynez, Secretaria de Marina, refiriéndose a las tareas futuras del Ejército Mexicano, pocos días después de la toma de posesión del Presidente Felipe Calderón Hinojosa

El Almirante Mariano Francisco Saynez, el Presidente Felipe Calderón, y su Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN) lo han hecho claro, están tranzando una nueva ruta sangrienta para la clase apoderada de México. La elite mexicana ha demostrado en los últimos meses que esta dispuesta a violar las leyes que se escribió para si misma, y que no teme, que no le inquieta demostrar sus intenciones represivas. En Atenco, en Oaxaca, en la Ciudad de México, mandan un mensaje que es tan claro como el golpar estrépitosos de las macanas de un policia contra su tolete. Han escogido esta ruta por que saben que México esta en crisis; reconocen que las injusticias de el neo-liberalismo ya no pueden ser disfrazadas con mitos de "paz, prosperidad, y crecimiento económico." La realidad que esta presente tanto en estadísticas como en los platos vacíos de los mexicanos no tiene justificación. Hoy, las clases trabajadoras de México toman sus primeros pasos unidos en la confrontación con las prácticas corruptas e injustas de la clase gobernante del país.

El Crepúsculo del Neo-Liberalismo

La catástrofe del neo-liberalismo en México se proyecta en toda América latina, implementada durante el último cuarto de siglo al la orden de los imperialistas y su Banco Mundial, y llevado acabo con celo por la elite de cada país, y ha resultado en hambre, miseria, y muerte.

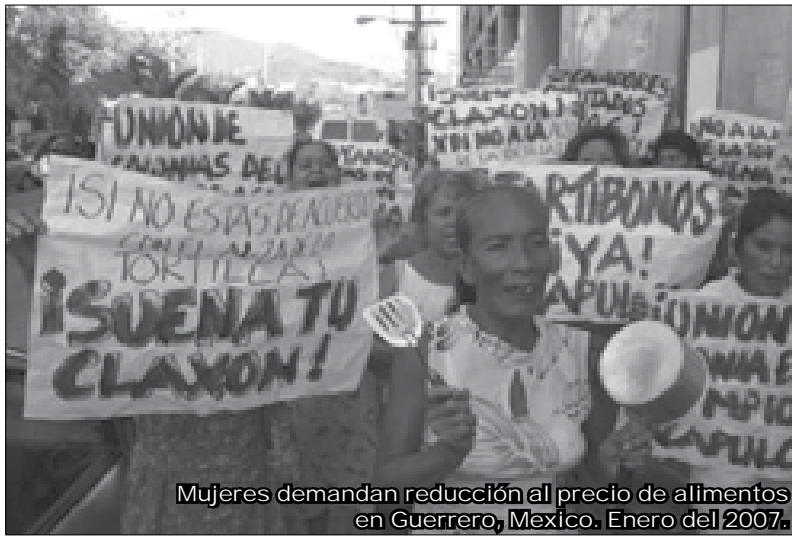
En México el sector que ha sufrido más del neo-liberalismo ha sido el campesino, agricultor pobre de autosuficiencia que utiliza tecnologías agrícolas atrasadas. Al firmarse el Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte (TLCAN), el mercado mexicano fue inundado por productos agrícolas baratos,



El peso de la pobreza, décadas de engaño y humillación, se ha vuelto insportable para los mexicanos, cada año 500,000 mas cruzan la frontera. La mitad de los 100 millones de mexicanos viven en pobreza, y 20% de la población es tan pobre que no pude "satisfacer sus necesidades alimentarias básicas," mientras que el 20% mas rico vive en lujo controlando 50% de el ingreso nacional. El pueblo trabajador de México ha llegado a conjeturas

El Volcán Mexicano

ELECCIONES Y MOVILIZACIONES DE MASA



el campesino no pudo competir con la avalancha de mercancías, y muchos abandonaron sus hogares en busca de trabajo, dirigiéndose principalmente en dos direcciones: las ciudades y los Estados Unidos. El neo-liberalismo ha forzado a una gran parte de los pobres a maquiladoras fronterizas, que constituyen 17% del empleo formal en México, y donde trabajadores súper explotados, en su mayoría mujeres, trabajan largas horas, muchas veces sufriendo abuso de parte de los pa-

importantes en los últimos años; ha visto la desigualdad inmensa que existe en la sociedad mexicana y han aprendido a ver al neo-liberalismo y a sus defensores con una desconfianza resoluta.

Las Elecciones se Han Convertido en un Campo de Batalla para las Masas

El resultado de las elecciones para presidente el 2 de Julio del 2006 significo, más que la victoria de cualquier candidato en particular, el veredicto del pueblo mexicano en el juicio del neo-liberalismo. ¿Que hizo que estas elecciones fueran

tan criticas? La frustración de las masas y su activa y organizada movilización en defensa de su candidato, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, antes y después de las elecciones.

López Obrador era el jefe de gobierno progresivo de la Ciudad de México. Se volvió popular dentro y fuera de la Ciudad de México por sus programas de gobierno, que incluían programas de asistencia a las personas de la tercera edad, a madres solteras, y a niños de edad escolar. En el 2005 la elite mexicana temía perder su hegemonía sobre el país si este hombre se convertía en presidente, e hicieron un intento controversial de encarcelar a López Obrador, quien había sido electo democráticamente, acusándolo de haber expropiado tierras ilegalmente para la construcción de un camino de acceso a un hospital. La gente en México entendió que el 'Desafuero' era de carácter político y no jurídico. Un millon salieron a las calles, muchos de ellos no habían votado por López Obrador, demandando que la voluntad popular fuera respetada, y que se le permitiera a López Obrador completar su mandato. El peso por el caso, se convirtió en un problema político para el Presidente Vicente Fox quien se vio forzado a despedir al procurador federal, y a declarar que el caso no tenía ninguna base legal. Esto fue una victoria enorme para las masas de México, las enardeció, y convirtió a López Obrador en un punto en torno al cual se pudieran reunir las masas para expresar su inconformidad con el neo-liberalismo y su resistencia a la elite gobernante. De hecho fue empujado por la gente pobre y trabajadora a una posición importante de liderazgo, la cual, quizás, nunca había aspirado ni esperado.

El 29 de Julio 2005 López Obrador anuncio su candidatura para las elecciones

continuado en la página 9

Struggle in Mexico...

Continued From Page 6

students, and professionals from a broad range of organizations; caravans arrived from all over the country. The demonstrations grew gradually as the extent of the fraud became clear. By the end of the month on July 30th the largest rally was held with 2 million people. Lopez Obrador and his Party for a Democratic Revolution (PRD) proposed that the demonstrators occupy the streets of the downtown district until the electoral court (TRIFE) ruled on whether it would allow a vote-by-vote recount, the crowd unanimously agreed. The government made veiled threats of removing the protesters by force, and set-up a military zone around the congress, ahead of President Fox's annual address.

The court made its final ruling on the August 5th it would not allow a total recount of the ballots, only a partial recount of 12%. Only a total recount could have corrected the fraud. It appeared that all institutional means of struggle had been exhausted for the anti-fraud movement.

Today many in Mexico and around the world are looking towards another struggle that began in the spring of 2006 and that, determinedly, continues today in the state of Oaxaca.

Oaxaca: Revolutionary Stirrings in Southern Mexico

"If we don't back him [Governor Ulises Ruiz] right now, like we did then, it would be very easy to mobilize against us, as it was done in Oaxaca, to take us, the governors, out and then the

fruit of electoral fraud. Under the cover of nightfall on June 14th he ordered over 1,000 riot police to brutally remove the teachers. The teachers re-organized themselves and with the aid of thousands of oaxaqueños overwhelmed the police. Assembled once again in the Zocalo they chanted, "The people united will never be defeated!"

This intense struggle forced them to put the slogan in practice and form an organization of working-class unity: the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO). The necessity of forming an organized front to confront an enemy who only grows more desperate united dozens of unions, peasant organizations, political movements, and civil organization. The people of Oaxaca decided that the conflict between poor and oppressed oaxaqueños and the government of Ulises Ruiz was irreconcilable and demanded the immediate exit of Ulises Ruiz.

Ulises Ruiz continues to govern Oaxaca "from a helicopter," not daring to set foot in the state. The government of the state has only escalated the level of violence, arresting hundreds, killing and disappearing unknown dozens. The people of Oaxaca have made immense sacrifices in their struggle but they have emerged organized and united, today they continue marching and fighting, they have provided guidance to the people of Mexico through their actions.

The APPO, the CND, and the Struggle Against Neo-Liberalism in Mexico

President of Mexico...It would be the wrong message to send the people of Mexico"- Silverio Cavazos Ceballos, Governor of the State of Colima, explaining his support of Ulises Ruiz, Governor of Oaxaca.

Oaxaca is one of the poorest states of Mexico; a majority of its population is made up of poor Indigenous farmers. Capitalists inside and outside of Mexico look at Oaxaca with avarice, the state is rich in resources, and is in a strategic location for trade, as well as having an ample 'labor supply.' For this reason the people of Oaxaca have faced increasing attacks by neo-liberalism.

On May 22nd 2006 the teachers of the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE) of Oaxaca went on strike. They're demands included higher wages, as well as social demands like the construction and repair of schools, infrastructure for poor Indigenous communities, as well as the release of all political prisoners. The poor and working people of Oaxaca quickly began to sympathize with the just demands of the teachers and joined them as they marched and occupied the Zocalo square of Oaxaca. Regional officials, business organizations, and federal politicians demanded, "the use of public force" in order to solve "the problem of the teachers' union." Ulises Ruiz Ortiz the Governor of Oaxaca, for the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), had a history of using repression against political movements and was another rotten

The government of Felipe Calderon, after a little more than a month in power, already faces increasing resistance. On the 7th of December, five day after Calderon had taken office, thousands of workers led by the union of electrical workers marched demanding a fair wage, and thousands more marched when Calderon announced a 400 million dollar cut to education.

Calderon has powerful allies in imperialist countries that are demanding that he carry out "important reforms," primarily the privatization of oil, electricity, and the agricultural sector. It is certain that they will try to assist him, in hopes that Mexico does not become another Venezuela, Bolivia or Cuba. Already Calderon has had a 'secret meeting' with such unsavory figures as Donald Rumsfeld, Rick Hillier (commander of the Canadian Armed Forces), and Gordon O'Connor (Canada's minister of defense), as well as executives of Lockheed Martin and Chevron.

The APPO and the National Democratic Convention (CND), an organization that was born from the anti-fraud movement, represent formidable instruments for working class struggle, against Calderon's government, and the imperialists supporting him.

Esteban González Arteaga is a high school student and an organizer with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC).



Canadian soldier frisks Afghan boy at an ISAF roadblock, Oct 29, 2006.



Which Way for Afghanistan?

CANADA OUT!

By Nita Palmer

"The Afghan people and the government have moved ahead considerably and the pace is only going to increase, in my opinion, as we're able to bring about greater stability."

- Peter MacKay, Foreign Minister of Canada, during his visit to Afghanistan, January 7th 2006.

Peter MacKay opened the New Year with a surprise visit to Afghanistan, and proclamations of how well Afghanistan is progressing with the help of the Canadian military bringing stability. He lauded the reconstruction and the building of schools, roads, and other infrastructure. Despite his delicately placed praise for Afghanistan's progress, however, MacKay's actions there indicate that, in fact, the mission is not going smoothly for the government of Canada or for NATO.

The primary announcement of MacKay's visit was that Canada would be giving \$10 million to the Afghan police force. MacKay announced that the goal of this way to build, "a more professional police force to better serve the people of

Million road recently built through the Panjwai district of southern Afghanistan is a good example of one of NATO's "reconstruction" projects. The New York Times recently reported that, "to fight their way into this area and clear it of Taliban insurgents, NATO troops bulldozed through orchards, smashed down walls and even houses, and churned vineyards and melon fields to dust." (January 13th 2007). "They bombed our orchards and fields and we have nothing now. They made a road through my land," said a local farmer. What NATO has developed in southern Afghanistan, where virtually all of the Canadian forces in Afghanistan are stationed, is little more than a prison for people on their own land. Checkpoints and guard houses have been set up everywhere, watching the every move of people. Canadian forces routinely shoot at those who do not first go through the checkpoints to receive permission to walk to their houses or to work on their fields.

Having lost their land to the bulldozers or their family to the guns and air strikes of

forces in Afghanistan, then retreat into Pakistan. On January 11th NATO bombed what they claimed was a convoy of Taliban insurgents crossing the border from Pakistan into Afghanistan. However, Taliban leaders stated that they had no affiliation with people crossing the border – they were only civilians. These bombings along the border by NATO have been routine, and have likely killed thousands in the last year. But while NATO claims they are killing Taliban, people in Afghanistan say otherwise. The Afghanistan-Pakistan border is not well-defined, and some ethnic groups and communities live on both sides of the border. The bombings simply kill innocent civilians walking through their own land, and the fenced and guarded border that Mackay is proposing would only tear these communities in half. Given these actions by NATO against Afghans, it is little



an impoverished country suffering from 30 years of war and destruction, would be easy. What they underestimated, just as they underestimated it in Iraq, was the resistance of the Afghan people.

Afghans are resisting, and the number of people fighting the occupation grows each day. The countries occupying

Afghanistan." In Afghanistan however, most people don't see the police force as serving them. In fact, an analyst for the International Crisis Group noted that the police force is, "nothing more than militias. Most people fear them more than they think of them as a source of security." Not to mention, those are just the officers that cooperate with the occupation forces. The other crisis that the occupation forces are facing in securing their interests via the Afghan police force is that some refuse to operate as occupation force militias against their fellow Afghans. Many in the police force in fact do not support the occupation, and join the force to receive training, weapons, and a salary, all the while working to resist the occupation of their country.

Underneath Foreign Minister MacKay's talk of "Afghanistan's progress" lies the truth, as confessed by *Foreign Affairs* journal, a capitalist class think-tank (one of the most influential in the US), that Afghanistan is, "sliding into chaos". After five years, the promises of Canada and the other rich NATO countries have not been able to achieve their stated goal of "rebuilding Afghanistan". In fact, the only things they have brought to Afghanistan are an increase in instability, poverty, and death.

NATO's Reconstruction: Destroy and Kill to Build

Why has NATO failed in rebuilding Afghanistan? As the crisis in Afghanistan grows, so does the call for a 'kinder occupation' – one with less combat and more reconstruction. But NATO's latest "reconstruction" efforts in Afghanistan shatter the myth of NATO's benevolence towards the people of Afghanistan. A \$5

NATO occupation forces, many Afghans have been forced to flee their homes. The number of internally displaced people in Afghanistan is now the highest in the world, with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reporting that 20,000 families have been displaced in southern Afghanistan alone due to the war waged



Thousands of students protest occupation at Kabul University.

by NATO forces. Unemployment is also at crisis levels, and for those who have managed to find work, the average salary is only \$80 per year – or about 22 cents per day. Only 10% of Afghans have access to electricity, and although generators have been set up in many areas, they are used only to power the military bases. NATO's claims of "reconstruction" and building an Afghan police force to "increase security" do not fool anyone in Afghanistan; as an elder in Sperwan Ghar, Kandahar put it, "They did not come to bring peace for us, they came to destroy us."

The other focus of Peter MacKay's visit to Afghanistan was to enforce a closed border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, as NATO claims that Taliban forces – the name they give to any Afghan who dares to pick up a weapon and resist the occupation - make their attacks on NATO

wonder that they have not won any hearts and minds or support for the occupation there.

Why Have Canada and NATO Failed?

So, why have some of the world's richest countries failed so miserably in "rebuilding Afghanistan"? It is because, in a country of 24 million people, it is impossible to "rebuild" it without the support of the people there. And with their air strikes and shootings, their police militias and their policies of destroying homes to build roads for the military, NATO has not gained the support from Afghans. The occupation is massively unpopular. The unpopularity of the mission has resulted in NATO countries securing little of their interests in Afghanistan.

With their occupation, they have opened Afghanistan wide for exploitation, through legislation allowing for 100% foreign owned companies to take 100% of the profits they make out of Afghanistan, and the like. In theory, they thought that they would be able to capture Afghanistan and hold it under the interests of Western businesses and financial institutions. The ruling class of Canada, and other NATO countries along with them, thought that this would be their ticket to securing their investment interests in an area of the world that for 3,000 years has been the pivot point upon which access to the trade markets of Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. For them, securing these financial interests was and is incredibly important as the world economy faces a massive economic downturn and growing resistance to exploitation from people threatens their position as the owners of the world's wealth. They thought that taking control of Afghanistan,

Afghanistan cannot afford to lose their economic interests there, so they will come with even more brutal attacks on the Afghan people within the coming months and years. But ultimately, people in Afghanistan will prove to them that they are fighting an unwinnable war – just as Iraqis have proven this to the US and UK forces occupying their country.

Confronting Canada's Occupation on the Home Front

Our job, then, as people in Canada, is to fight against the government of Canada's bid to plunder and pillage Afghanistan, all the while slashing funding to education, health care, and jobs here in Canada in order to pour billions into the military. We must demand an immediate withdrawal of all Canadian forces from Afghanistan, and call for an independent public inquiry to investigate Canada's war drive in Afghanistan. As people in Canada, we have a responsibility to ask why billions of dollars have been cut from social programs, while billions are spent on the military. Or why the occupation of Afghanistan began, with the number of troops then increased and the mission extended without public consultation or debate. We must fight to save Afghanistan – not through tanks and bombs, but through fighting for the right of Afghan people to control their own land, their own country, their own resources, and their own lives.

CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!

NATO OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!

CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY!

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Manifesteros retoman Zócalo de Oaxaca. Julio del 2006.

México...

continuado de la página 7

presidenciales, su plataforma incluía un cese a la privatización de las industrias nacionales, la eliminación de la sección del TLCAN que permitiría la libre importación de maíz y frijoles a México en el 2008, y un incremento en los gastos sociales. El sector privado en México, representados por el Consejo Coordinador Empresarial (CCE), vio un reto ideológico contra el neo-liberalismo y declaró cínicamente, "Apostarle a algo distinto es retroceder," en una campaña mediática difamatoria guiada por la consigna del candidato del Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN) Felipe Calderón: "López Obrador es un peligro para México." Los pobres de México, en su mayor parte, no fueron perturbados por las amenazas de que se pondría en riesgo la "estabilidad económica" si ganaba López Obrador la presidencia, ellos ya tenían muy poco que perder. En realidad, la consigna se refería a la amenaza que presen-

taban las masas detrás de López Obrador a su México, al México de poder y privilegio. El pueblo pobre y trabajador de México fue el que sufrió los ataques más descarados de los medios y los políticos, los retrataban como multitudes ignorantes y violentas, lo que Calderón llamó "la marea roja y amarilla que agobian al país" y a la que prometió "ahogar." La mayor parte de la clase media, temiendo que tenía algo que perder, se sumó al coro.

En general la clase gobernante utilizó el odio y la ignorancia como su principal táctica electoral. A pesar de todo López Obrador seguía subiendo en las encuestas de opinión pública, parecía que la gente en México estaba decidida. El 3 y 4 de Mayo del 2006 la elite mexicana decidió que era necesario tomar medidas drásticas, y utilizar los instrumentos con los que estaba acostumbrado—las armas sangrientas de la represión— contra la población de San Salvador de Atenco, para así mandar un mensaje y una amenaza a todo el pueblo de México.

El pueblo de Atenco, una comunidad pequeña en las afueras de la Ciudad de México, habían en el pasado defendido sus tierras del robo del gobierno. En el 2002 ellos habían detenido exitosamente la construcción de un aeropuerto en sus tierras, marchando desafiante sobre la Ciudad de México, con machetes en mano, y formando el "Frente de Pueblos en Defensa de la Tierra". A la elite mexicana no le quedó más que quejarse sobre la 'tolerancia' de Fox hacia el pueblo de Atenco. Pero los ataques en contra del pueblo de Atenco no se detuvieron, en el 2006 los in-

tereses empresariales en México decidieron que se convertiría un mercado de flores en Atenco en un Wal-Mart, y que los que resistieran pagarían con su sangre. A las 7 AM de la mañana del miércoles 3 de Mayo cientos de policías entraron a Atenco, chocando contra la resistencia valiente del pueblo, la policía respondió brutalmente, deteniendo alrededor de cien personas y asesinando a un joven de 17 años con una bala al pecho. El 4 de Mayo tres mil policías entraron a Atenco deteniendo a otras 200 personas, irrumpiendo en las residencias de la comunidad, y ocupando el pueblo, hombres y mujeres fueron golpeados brutalmente, y hubo varios casos de violación. El mismo día miles de manifestantes respondieron, marchando de la Ciudad de México para reunirse y manifestarse en el



Manifestación contra recortes a la educación en la Ciudad de México. Diciembre del 2006.

lación. Las masas del pueblo pobre y trabajador muy claramente estaban hartas con la inhabilidad de la elite gobernante de seguir sus propias reglas. Se acercaron mas al centro del escenario político diciendo 'Nosotros aplicaremos sus las leyes con mayor apego que ustedes la clase gobernante, lo puede hacer.

pueblo de Atenco...

El gobierno no hizo intentos de alejarse de la violencia, transmitieron publicamente las imágenes de la embestida criminal. Se aseguraron que las imágenes de represión se grabaran en las mentes de los mexicanos oprimidos, como una amenaza a ellos que se atrevan unir para defender a su patrimonio. La clase gobernante de México anticipaba batallas por venir.

¡Voto por Voto! ¡Casilla por Casilla! El Movimiento Contra el Fraude

El 2 de Julio 2006 millones de mexicanos salieron a votar. Los resultados preliminares daban todas las indicaciones de que López Obrador iba a ganar. Pero entonces como una broma cruel, hubo una inversión, Calderón empezó a subir, y el comité electoral, dirigido por un asociado cercano de Calderón, rápidamente declaró su victoria.

Incluso antes de que se comenzaran a hallar votos en basureros, antes de que miles de electores empezaran a quejarse de haber sido 'razurados' del padrón electoral, y de que hubiera acusaciones de soborno, la gente en México sabía lo que había ocurrido. La clase gobernante de México, no pudiendo ganar la elección a través del miedo y la intimidación, como último recurso había organizado un fraude electoral masivo. Con este acto la clase dominante capitalista traicionó a sus propias leyes e instituciones civiles burguesas. Demostraron que cuando se trata de la dominación del capital y el lucro fácilmente violan sus propias reglas y constituciones,

Utilizaremos sus leyes en contra de ustedes, cuenta mi voto de acuerdo a esas leyes, de otra manera nosotros mismos los contaremos y aplicaremos los resultados.' Esto es una señal clara de que las masas mexicanas son capaces de mover hacia un poder político dual en oposición a la clase capitalista, apoyada por los EE.UU., que domina a México.

El mes de Julio 2006 vio la ascensión del movimiento de masa más grande en la historia de México. Marchas enormes, de kilómetros de largo, juntaron a campesinos, trabajadores, empleados del estado, y profesionales de un sinnúmero de organizaciones; llegaron caravanas de todo el país. Las demostraciones crecieron gradualmente conforme se hacía más claro el carácter de fraude, al fin del mes, el 30 de julio, se llevo a cabo la marcha más grande con la participación de 2 millones de personas. López Obrador y su Partido por la Revolución Democrática (PRD) propusieron que los manifestantes ocuparan las calles del centro histórico hasta que el tribunal electoral (TRIFE) deci-

diera si se llevaría a cabo el conteo voto por voto, la multitudinaria marcha lo aprobó unánimemente. El gobierno hizo amenazas veladas de hacer uso de la fuerza pública para desalojar a los manifestantes y estableció un área de control militar alrededor del congreso en anticipación del informe anual del Presidente Fox.

El 5 de Agosto el tribunal hizo su decisión inapelable, no permitiría un recuento total de los votos sino solo un recuento parcial de 12% de los votos. Solo un recuento total podría haber corregido el fraude. Parecía que todas las vías de lucha institucional se habían agotado para el movimiento contra el fraude.

Hoy la gente en México, y alrededor de mundo, están mirando hacia otra lucha, que comenzó en la primavera del 2006, y que, resueltamente, continua hoy en el Estado de Oaxaca.

Oaxaca: Campanadas Revolucionarias en el Sur de México

"Si no se le respalda ahorita [al Gobernador Ulises Ruiz], como se hizo entonces, es muy fácil hacernos un tipo de manifestación al estilo Oaxaca para quitarnos a los gobernadores y luego al Presidente de México...Sería un mal mensaje que se mandaría al pueblo de México"- Silverio Cavazos Ceballos, Gobernador del estado de Colima, justificando su apoyo por Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, Gobernador de Oaxaca.

Oaxaca es uno de los estados más pobres de México; la mayor parte de su población esta compuesta por campesinos Indígenas. Los capitalistas nacionales y extranjeros miran hacia Oaxaca con avaricia, el estado es rico en recursos naturales, y

de Oaxaca, por el Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) tenían antecedentes de utilizar represión en contra de movimientos políticos, y este era otra fruta podrida del fraude electoral. El 14 de julio, encubiertos en la oscuridad de la madrugada, ordeno a 1000 policías antimotines desalojar brutalmente a los maestros. Los maestros se reorganizaron y con la ayuda de miles de oaxaqueños abrumaron a la policía. De nuevo reunidos en el zócalo comenzaron a gritar: ¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!

La intensidad de la lucha forzó al pueblo de Oaxaca a poner esa consigna en práctica, y a formar una organización de unidad de las clases trabajadoras: La Asamblea Popular de los Pueblos de Oaxaca (APPO). La necesidad de formar un frente organizado para confrontar un enemigo que solamente se volvía mas desesperado, unió a docenas de sindicatos, organizaciones campesinas, movimientos políticos, y organizaciones civiles. El pueblo de Oaxaca decidió que el conflicto entre los oaxaqueños pobres y oprimidos y el gobierno de Ulises Ruiz era irreconciliable y demandó la inmediata salida de Ulises Ruiz.

Ulises Ruiz sigue gobernando Oaxaca "desde un helicóptero," no atreviéndose pisar en el estado. El gobierno del estado solamente ha escalado el nivel de la violencia, arrestando a cientos de personas, y matando y desapareciendo a un número desconocido. El pueblo de Oaxaca ha hecho inmenso sacrificios en su lucha, pero han emergido organizados y unidos, y hoy siguen marchando y luchando, le han dado un ejemplo al pueblo de México a través de sus acciones.



March contra la represión en Atenco.

esta situada en un área estratégica para el comercio, además de tener una gran 'mercado laboral.' Por esta razón los ataques en contra del pueblo de Oaxaca por el neo-liberalismo han incrementado.

El 22 de Mayo del 2006 los maestros de la Sección 22 de la Coordinadora Nacional de los Trabajadores de la Educación (CNTE) iniciaron una paro en Oaxaca, sus demandas incluían mejoras salariales, junto con demandas de tipo social como la construcción y reparación de escuelas, infraestructura para las comunidades indígenas mas pobres, además de la liberación de todos los presos políticos. El pueblo pobre y trabajador de Oaxaca inmediatamente comenzó a simpatizar con las demandas justas de los maestros y se unieron a ellos en sus marchas y en su ocupación del zócalo de Oaxaca. Las autoridades municipales, las organizaciones empresariales, y políticos federales demandaron "el uso de la fuerza pública" para resolver "el problema magisterial." Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, Gobernador del Estado

La APPO, la CND y la Lucha contra el Neo-Liberalismo en México

El gobierno de Felipe Calderón, a poco más de un mes en el poder, cada día confronta una creciente resistencia. El 7 de Diciembre, cinco días después de que Calderón tomara posesión, miles de trabajadores, encabezados por el sindicato de electricistas, marcharon demandando un salario mínimo justo, y miles mas marcharon cuando Calderón anunció un recorte de 400 millones de dólares a la educación.

Calderón tiene aliados poderosos en los países imperialistas, quienes están demandando que lleve a cabo "reformas importantes," principalmente la privatización del petróleo, la electricidad, y del sector agrícola, y lo asistiran en esperanzas de que México no se convierta en otra Venezuela, Bolivia, o Cuba. Calderón ya ha tenidos reuniones 'secretas' con figuras tan siniestras como Donald Rumsfeld, Rick Hillier, comandante de las Fuerzas Armadas Canadienses, y Gordon O'Connor, ministro de defensa, junto con ejecutivos de Lockheed Martin y Chevron.

La APPO y la Convención Nacional Democrática (CND), una organización nacida del movimiento contra el fraude, representan instrumentos de gran envergadura en la lucha de las clases trabajadoras, contra el gobierno de Calderón, y el imperialismo que lo apoya.

Esteban González Arteaga es un estudiante de secundaria, que organiza con Comunidades de Vancouver en Solidaridad con Cuba (VCSC).

By Mike Chimenti

The word genocide permeates the daily news broadcasts about the conflict in Darfur. Politicians, activists and well meaning people of all stripes apply the word to Darfur, and then claim that only an international military operation can dam the flood of violence and blood that threatens this large, strategically located, oil rich African nation.

And who should make up this benevolent "protection" force? None other than the soldiers of the same governments who in 1994 sat idly by while 800,000 Rwandans were killed. At the time, the diplomats of the powerful western countries and the UN were unendingly creative in their quest not to characterize the wholesale slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda as genocide, thereby absolving themselves of any responsibility to stop the conflict.

Today, under the banner of "Never Again", these same interests claim that only altruistic intentions lie behind their push for intervention in Sudan. However, the history of the Rwandan genocide, and the inaction and callousness of the United Nations and its backers, shows the world the need to "never again" be fooled by the myths of "humanitarianism" and "international peacekeeping" created by imperialism, and carried out by its most loyal servant, the United Nations.

Colonial History

"Look, this was one of the worst instances of violence and killings

Rwanda and Burundi to exploit as League of Nations "protectorates" in 1916. Rwandans were treated as second and third class citizens in their own country at the hands of Belgian colonialism, and in 1926 the colonial administration began sub-dividing the population into Tutsi and Hutu, issuing identity cards to formalize the ethnic divisions. Under the colonial system, the Tutsi minority was elevated to the educated political class, while the Hutu majority was relegated to the peasant class, largely barred from education and well paying jobs in the colonial administration.

"It is often remarked that the violence between Hutus and Tutsis goes back to time immemorial and can never be averted, but Belgian records show that ...before around 1960, violence [along] ethnic lines was uncommon and mass murder of the sort seen in 1994 was unheard of." - Stephen D. Wrage, *Genocide in Rwanda: Draft Case Study for Teaching Ethics and International Affairs*

In 1959, a Hutu rebellion against the colonial ethnic divisions led to the deaths of tens of thousands of Tutsi's and the migration of 150,000 Tutsi's into the neighbouring countries of Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda. By 1962, the Hutu struggle against the apartheid-like divisions forced Belgium to withdraw from the colony all together, allowing the Hutu majority to gain political power, declaring official independence on July 1st 1962.

The Hutu majority, politically led by the Parmehutu party, reversed

During their initial attack, the RPF (largely thought to be backed by English speaking imperialists) came within reach of the capital, Kigali. In order to ensure the survival of their client regime, the French government deployed 1,100 soldiers, some from an elite French paratroop unit, in one of the more than 16 unilateral French military interventions in Rwanda between 1960 and 1994. While French soldiers were fighting alongside the Rwandan army, French military "instructors" were training new recruits, increasing

asked the Rwandan government to award French troops medals for their January 1991 defence of Ruhengeri in northern Rwanda.

"It was considered that it would only take one of these regimes to be overthrown ... to create a chain reaction that would compromise the security of all the countries bound to France and to discredit the French guarantee." - Hubert Vedrine, advisor to French President Mitterand.

France valued their puppet state of Rwanda so highly that between

that they required 4,995 machine guns and 499,500 bullets, as well as traditional weapons (bows and arrows, spears and machetes) in order to carry out the plan. French military trainers were to play the leading role in organizing and training the new militias.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR)

When French President Francois Mitterand learned that the increasing arms shipments and presence of French troops was not enough to ensure the survival of

Rwandan Genocide Planned and Executed by Colonial Powers and the Gravest Failure of the United Nations "Peace Keeping" Mission



Refugee camp in Rwanda, 1994.

that had occurred after the Second World War." - Iqbal Riza, Deputy Chief of UN Peace Keeping Operations at the time of the Rwandan Genocide.

In 1994, the forces of colonialism and imperialism in Rwanda led to one of the most horrifying human tragedies in history. Between 800,000 and 1,071,000 Rwandans were killed in 100 days. This happened despite the presence

the racist class assignments in Rwandan society, suppressing and scapegoating the Tutsi minority. Following the 1973 coup led by Juvenal Habyarimana, Rwanda became a one party state operating under the strong, totalitarian central control exercised by the MRND. It also became one of the main African client states for French imperialism which considered Rwanda "an interesting pole of

the size of the Rwandan Army from 10,000 to 30,000 in just a few years.

French soldiers in Rwanda were not only responsible for fighting on the front lines, they also interrogated prisoners and policed the civilian populations. James Gasana, former Rwandan Minister of Defence, stated that the Rwandan army could only use the heavy weapons given to them

1990 and 1994, the French government supplied the Rwandan army not only with soldiers and trainers, but machine guns, artillery, armored vehicles and six Gazelle helicopters. During February of 1993, the French government was sending more than 20 tons of arms a day into Rwanda.

During the same month, the RPF had made significant territorial advances against the Rwandan

Habyarimana's regime, he began pushing for a UN force to intervene in Rwanda. His hope was that a UN ceasefire would be able to stop the RPF advance long enough for France to devise a method of saving their client regime.

On August 4th 1993, the Arusha Accords, a cease fire agreement brokered by the US, France and Belgium, laid out a basis for a power sharing transitional government in

Rwanda. The UN backed transitional government was to be supported by a UN "peacekeeping" force of 2,548 troops who would monitor the ceasefire and establish a weapons free zone in the capital city of Kigali. However, from the first moments of the UN mission, the foot dragging of the permanent members of the Security Council meant a full 5 months passed before

the entire "peacekeeping" force arrived. A clear sign of things to come.

Every aspect of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) reeked of the callous and foul disregard for human life that is the hallmark of imperialism and "international peacekeeping". While the UN was hashing out the original UNAMIR mission, the US and UK were vocally and persistently blocking any attempts to increase the mission above a token force, citing the "expense" of international humanitarian missions.

Continues on Page 11



UN refugee camp, 1994.



Rwandan refugees fleeing violence.



Refugee camp in Rwanda, 1994.

of a UN "peacekeeping" force in the country and the fact that months before the killing started, the UN, US, France and Belgium held detailed information about the organization and planning of the genocide. These same forces that now proclaim themselves as the benevolent saviors of Africa publicly claimed no knowledge of the situation, while privately some elements were directly involved in the slaughter.

German imperialism sank its fangs into Rwanda in 1885, releasing its grip only after the First World War. Without a lapse in the bloodsucking, Belgium was given

political and economic influence in the region."

Outside of Rwanda, the children of the Tutsi refugees had participated in the liberation struggle against Idi Amin in Uganda, and galvanized themselves into a political and military force, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), under the leadership of Paul Kagame.

France and Politics of Rwanda

On October 1st 1990, Kagame ordered the RPF into Rwanda, fighting under the banner of the right of return for the Tutsi refugees and sparking a civil war in Rwanda that lasted until the summer of 1994.

by France after they had received French permission to fire. On some occasions artillery would be placed and readied by French troops, who would then stand back and let the Rwandan soldiers push the button. The evidence of Frances' deep involvement in the civil war, and unflinching support for Habyarimana's regime is further shown by the appointment of Lt. Col. Jean-Jacques Maurin. In April of 1992, Maurin was made an advisor to the Rwandan chief of staff, effectively placing control of the Rwandan army in French hands. French soldiers were so deeply integrated into the Rwandan army that a French officer

army. Members of the MRND government and the Hutu Power movement began discussions in cabinet meetings about the development of an "Organization of Civilian Self Defence" to "protect" the country if the army failed to stop the RPF advance.

The "Civilian Self Defence" forces, which President Habyarimana publicly supported in March 1993, were to be trained and armed by the Rwandan government and on the orders of the government would begin the slaughter of "disguised RPF" members and their "accomplices". The government had calculated

The US whined that 'just because it was the richest country in the world didn't mean that they were responsible for footing the bill on international "peacekeeping"'.

The UNAMIR mission clearly reflected the financial priorities of the powerful nations. All of the UN vehicles used in Rwanda were second run vehicles from the previous UN mission in Cambodia. Only 8 of the 300 sent were usable.

In March of 1994, UNAMIR's medical supplies ran out and there was not enough money in the mission's operating budget to buy any more. No replacement parts, no batteries, no medicine. This was the depth of western humanitarian concern in Africa.

"So you knew where the weapons were, and you knew you needed to act quickly. What did you do?"

"Nothing" - PBS Frontline interview with Colonel Luc Marchal, UNAMIR Commander

On January 10th 1994, Luc Marchal, the second in command of UNAMIR had a meeting with a senior leader and planner in the governing MRND party. This informant, "Jean Pierre", exposed the planning, training and organizing for a widespread genocide of Tutsis throughout Rwanda. The informant not only explained in detail how the militias were organized, he told the UN officer about the weapons caches in Kigali, even bringing Marchal to see one for himself. This information was passed on to the UN Office of Peace Keeping

France the Principal Planner of the Genocide

France clearly understood the risk of genocide in Rwanda. The French commanding General in Rwanda had been told by Colonel Rwagafilita of the Rwandan Army that the Tutsi, "are very few in number, we will liquidate them." This blatant display of genocidal intentions did little, if anything, to sway French imperialism. For France, letting the Hutu government wipe out the Tutsi minority meant an end to the massive military costs of supporting the Rwandan army against the RPF and would allow France to focus on other colonial projects like Zaire.

"In 1992, I was invited to go to France ...I met ... senior officials, who told me very clearly, very openly, that if the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) did not stop fighting, if we continue making advances into Rwanda, that we should bear in mind that we shall find none of our relatives alive..." - RPF Leader, Paul Kagame

On April 6th 1994, a plane carrying Rwandan President Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryomira was shot down above the Presidential Palace in Kigali, killing both men. Within 45 minutes, roadblocks went up in Kigali and the wholesale slaughter of Tutsis had begun.

During a meeting in the ambassador's office in the French Embassy following the assassinations, French Ambassador Martres explained who had been picked to form the new provisional government,

all of them members of the extreme right wing Hutu Power movement. Theoneste Bagosora, the man chosen by France to lead this new government stated, "I

On April 9th three days after the genocide began, and in spite of a UN arms embargo, France shipped 5 tons of ammunition to the Presidential Guard in Rwanda, a shipment that France vehemently denies despite its interception and subsequent release by UN forces.

Two days later, 2,000 Tutsis gathered in École Technique Officielle seeking safety from the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambe militias. Despite the fact that armed militia members were circling around outside the school chanting "Hutu Power", the Belgian soldiers were ordered to retreat to the airport and leave the civilians behind. All 2,000 people inside were massacred. Four days later the UN Security Council voted to reduce the size of the UN force from 2,548 to 270.

UN Failure and Genocide

The UN, US, France, Belgium and all other western countries spent the next 3 months denying their knowledge of the situation on the ground, and carefully phrasing every statement as to avoid using the word genocide. Even the April 30th Security Council resolution condemning the killings steered clear of the word genocide. If anyone had labeled the situation as genocide, they would be legally obligated under the UN Charter to intervene and stop the genocide, as well as arrest and try the people responsible for it. This was a financial price the Security Council members were not willing to pay, regardless of the Red Cross reports that had estimated tens of thousands of deaths by the time the UN pulled out.

"I would say, everybody was in damage control, 'Let's try to evade the reality of what's going on,' whether it was Europe or New York or Washington. They didn't want to know the full dimensions of this thing and, thereby, assume the responsibility of having to deal with it.

- PBS Frontline interview with James Woods, United States Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

Without a doubt, the Clinton administration had ample knowledge of the situation in Rwanda. James Woods, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs compiled a briefing list for the Clinton administration of possible crises on the African continent. Despite his briefing showing the potential

for genocide, he was instructed to remove Rwanda from the list because "U.S. national interest is not involved and we can't put all these silly humanitarian issues on lists."

A US National Security Archive report states, "That the Clinton administration decided against intervention at any level was not for lack of knowledge of what was happening in Rwanda." That the Clinton administration decided not to act, however, was solely for a lack of economic incentive. Rwanda is slightly smaller than the

state of Maryland. It is landlocked, lacks any oil reserves, has only marginal natural gas and mineral reserves, and 90% of its economy depends on tea and coffee exports. Clearly not a strategic interest for history's largest empire.

On May 3rd 1994, just less than

French forces help only their Hutu allies across the border, hoping to give the Hutu a relatively secure base from which to continue their civil war and genocide for control of Rwanda. Throughout the entire operation, French forces allowed the militias into the refugee camps to slaughter the Tutsis who were



one month after the start of the genocide, President Clinton signed Presidential Decision Directive 25 which expressly sought to limit US involvement in international humanitarian interventions. The reasons were strictly financial. The US had been responsible for a full third of all UN "peacekeeping" costs around the world, a cost that had more than tripled over the preceding few years. US imperialism was clearly telling the world, 'unless our economic

interests are at stake, you won't find us ready to lend any 'helping hands' to anyone, even if they are dying at a rate of 1,000 every 20 minutes', as was the case in Rwanda.

supposedly being given safe haven. In total, an estimated 50,000 people were killed by the Interahamwe and the Rwandan army after French forces coaxed Tutsis from their hiding places, claiming that the French had come to bring them peace. In mid-July 1994, the RPF captured Kigali. The Hutu government and hundreds of thousands of Hutus fled to Zaire, thus bringing the civil war and the genocide to an end. The final death toll in Rwanda

Operations, then under the leadership of Kofi Annan, as well as the US, French and Belgian ambassadors.

Following the January 11th



telegram informing the UN offices in New York about the impending genocide, the UN special representative in Kigali arranged a diplomatic meeting between himself, the US, Belgian and French ambassadors, and Rwandan President Habyarimana. France had prevented the ambassadors of Belgium and the US from asking President Habyarimana about the preparations for violence, and the UN prevented their soldiers from seizing the weapons, claiming such an operation was beyond their mandate.

have come back to declare the Apocalypse." With their puppets in place, and with full knowledge of what was about to happen, the French diplomats and military fled Rwanda, taking only the wife and family of Habyarimana with them.

As the French designed provisional government unleashed the Internahamwe and Impuzamugambe militias to murder Hutu opponents and slaughter the Tutsis, the UN forces were ordered not to use force to stop the bloodshed.

was at least 800,000 killed in 100 days.

No to UN/US in Africa

Unfortunately, the destructive, inhuman forces of imperialism unleashed in Rwanda did not dissipate after the end of the genocide, but spilled over the Rwandan borders and engulfed the central African region in the first and second Congo Wars, in which 3.4 to 4.4 million were killed in the second war alone.

The racist and divisionary policies and strategies of imperialism that set the stage for the Rwandan genocide are the same as those that set the stage for both Congo Wars. Those same forces now threaten to open a new front in the era of war and occupation, the battle for Africa. Amidst the hue and cry over Sudan and Darfur and the establishment of an illegitimate US/Ethiopian-backed government in Somalia, the true intentions of imperialism in Africa threaten to once again soak the continent in blood. Anti-war activists and peace loving people across Canada and around the world must not let themselves be duped. Imperialism knows no humanitarianism. All working, poor and oppressed people must unite behind African self-determination and demand:

Imperialists Hands off Africa! No to UN Intervention in Africa! No to War and Occupation in Africa!

Mike Chimenti is a young construction worker, journalist and social justice activist in Vancouver. He is an organizer with Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO).

*“The path to a new and better world is not capitalism,
the path is socialism”*

*“El camino hacia un mundo nuevo y mejor, no es el capitalismo,
el camino es el socialismo”*

www.firethistime.net

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez

By Manuel Yepe*

In the first half of December 2006, several events took place simultaneously in Havana, which highly impressed a married couple of Latin-American friends visiting Cuba for the first time.

They arrived on time to witness the military parade and the popular demonstration for the 50th Anniversary of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, which were also the culmination of the events for the celebration of Fidel Castro's 80th birthday, organized by the Guayasamin Foundation, from Ecuador. They went back to their country after the 28th edition of the New Latin-American Film Festival ended. In this Festival, more than one hundred films were in contest, and a large number of cinema stars from the continent and their best film makers also participated. My friends felt happy to have chosen this time of the year for learning not only about the landscape, but also about the soul of this nation, so vilified for such a long time by the media of their country.

On Sunday evening, while we were talking about the activities of the day and about the presence in Cuba of the writer Gore Vidal with a very outstanding group of intellectuals from the United States, as well as about the attendance of a delegation of US congressmen from both parties that alternate power in that nation, they decided to check on the Internet to see if the press from their country was properly showing what was causing such a great impression on them.

When they did so, they burst out in annoyance when they found on the first page of the main newspaper of their country, of liberal approach, just a note with a very striking title:

"Dissidents Beaten in Cuba on the Day of Human Rights".

The Spanish news agency EFE, reported as follows:

"Groups akin to the Cuban government, using violence, avoided yesterday the celebration of a peaceful march summoned by a group of dissidents in Havana, coinciding with the International Day of Human Rights. Incidents took place when about one dozen persons, called by the National Patriotic Front, tried to march through a park in the Havana section of Vedado, where about 200 persons participated in trainings on the National Defense Day. The dissidents, without posters or banners, could start their route around the park, but when they were about half-way, they started being insulted and later attacked by revolutionary sympathizers that jumped on the march calling "Long live the Revolution!" and "Long Live Fidel".

- How is it possible that with so many really interesting news features taking place here, only such an irrelevant thing is published?- asked he.

But his wife gave a view from another angle: - How is it possible that authorities here permit that a dozen dissidents come to bother a large group of citizens precisely when they are fulfilling the civic duty of training themselves to defend their threatened homeland?

I then explained that this type of show is not unusual and that, with no more information about the incident, it was possible to decode the news published in these terms:



Anti-Cuba terrorist group "Alpha 66" training in Miami Florida.

CUBA The Dissidents Gala



Remembering the victims of Anti-Cuba terrorism. Havana, Cuba.

"On the Day of Human Rights, the US Interests Section, after summoning reporters and photographers from all the foreign and local media in Havana, instructed a group of regular "dissidents" to make an antigovernment demonstration and chose the same place and timing where a centrally located neighborhood would be holding their

military training exercises, as part of preparations to fight a home-by-home battle by all the population in case of a foreign aggression. As it always happens when such provocations take place, the neighbors themselves were the ones to answer and the police only intervened in case that people exceed in their indignation and may cause physical damage to the "dissidents", who are always the same well known persons that have this as their means of subsistence."

The greater part of the multimillionaire budget that the US Administration yearly allocates "for the promotion of democracy in Cuba" stays in Miami, increasing the wealth of the leaders of the ultra right Cuban American organizations. But a small part of it gets through to the groups mobilized by the US Interests Section in Havana, in fact, the sole leader of the Cuban opposition.

Governmental organizations as USAID and NGOs as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which are actually CIA covert organizations, as well as other subversion, intelligence and counterintelligence agencies, are being used to channel these funds by different ways.

In Cuba, as in any other democratic order, all citizens have the right to disagree with the governmental policies and decisions, based on the principle that the government responds to the will of the majority of the

citizens and not necessarily to all the citizens.

Dissidents can use multiple means to express their disagreement in a peaceful way and in the framework established by law. Furthermore, the Cuban socio-political system, stemming from its participatory character, considers a large number of spaces and ways to convey suggestions and discrepancies. These scenarios could be wider, but the hostile policies that the different US administrations have practiced towards Cuba limit them.

As all national legislations establish, Cuban laws require that any actions opposing the national establishment must be absolutely independent from any alien government, as an elemental requisite of respect to national sovereignty, legal equity among states and non-intervention in national matters.

In all countries, without exceptions, the attitude towards national citizens registered as agents of alien governments is completely different, because they do not have the rights that the dissidents have. National legislations restrict the spaces of the former, limiting their movements in a way in which they cannot go where they want or

talk to whoever they decide.



Photo from the book "The Dissidents" written by undercover Cuban agents who infiltrated US/CIA collaboration with Cuban "Dissidents".

In those cases where there is an open hostility between the national government and the one whom the agents serve, they are put on permanent vigilance by the national authorities to guarantee that they abide to the strict space to which their movements have been limited to. There is also a call to the population to collaborate in their vigilance, as a form of expressing patriotism.

Therefore, in order to understand the situation of the so called "Cuban dissidents" portrayed by the foreign media, mainly the one controlled or influenced by the campaigns orchestrated by the US against the Revolution during the last fifty years, it is necessary to determine their true identity.

Are they really dissidents or are they agents of an alien and hostile country?

If they were actually honest citizens with points of view differing from the official ones wanting to express their views to contribute to rectify some governmental policies or directives; if they were persons willing to peacefully meet with other citizens who also disagree with the course taken by the nation in order to solve the difficulties that the so-

ciety is suffering; if they would have no links of dependence with a foreign government; if they were not moved by material stimulus or promises to be accepted in other countries in response to their opposing activities, or if they were not instructed by alien sources, then they could be considered

"dissidents". In that case, they would be respected as such category deserves, in spite of the fact that the US policy towards Cuba has disparaged this term to an extent that it has been assimilated in the feelings of Cubans to the term "mercenary".

These "Cuban dissidents", who are really nothing but agents of a clearly hostile government that has been fighting an undeclared war against the government of this nation and its citizens for more than 48 years, have never been prosecuted for expressing ideas or thinking different. In fact, the treatment they are granted is an evidence of the very high grade of humanitarianism of the Cuban revolutionary project.

It should be taken in consideration that it is not any foreign government that these agents serve but a superpower that for more than 40 years has publicly declared its intention to overthrow the Cuban government, has attempted against the life of its leaders and presently has official plans to promote and finance the dismantling of the social order that Cubans have given themselves with great sacrifices. They serve a government that has no respect whatsoever for the international law and considers itself on top of the United Nations for whose decisions it has no respect at all.

In practice, the dissidents' farce -the alleged opposition party leaders; independent journalists; independents librarians; and the self proclaimed human rights watchers- have absolutely no representativeness or support in any place except in Miami.

When they exceed the limits of tolerance set to them by Cuban authorities and incur in serious crimes and, therefore, they are

sentenced to prison following every criminal and procedural warranty established by Cuban laws, the media serving the US campaign against Cuba calls them "prisoners of conscience".

Ultimately, the individuals identified as "Cuban dissidents" by the media that constantly denigrates the Cuban revolution do not constitute a new category in Cuban history, because this country has suffered opportunistic annexationism as an endemic evil since its first wars for independence. Those now existing are unprincipled persons that serve the enemies of their motherland and objectively obstruct the development of Cuban socialist democracy, constantly moving towards its improvement since 1959 until our days.

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Havana, January 2007.

Por Manuel Yepe*

En la primera quincena de diciembre último, coincidieron en La Habana varios acontecimientos que impresionaron vivamente a un matrimonio de amigos míos latinoamericanos que visitaba por primera vez a Cuba.

Llegaron a tiempo para presenciar el desfile militar y la manifestación popular por el 50º Aniversario de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias con que

en una actividad por el Día Nacional de la Defensa. Los opositores, sin carteles ni proclamas, pudieron comenzar su recorrido alrededor del parque, pero mediado el itinerario empezaron a ser increpados y posteriormente agredidos por los simpatizantes revolucionarios que se abalanzaron sobre la marcha al grito de "Viva la Revolución" y "Viva Fidel".

-¿Cómo es posible que con tantas cosas de verdadero interés noticioso que están pasando aquí, solo se destaque un hecho tan irrelevante?- se preguntó él.

Pero la observación de ella refería otro ángulo: -¿Cómo es posible que aquí las autori-

mayor parte en Miami para el enriquecimiento de los dirigentes de las organizaciones de inmigrantes cubanos de la extrema derecha. Pero una pequeña parte de tales recursos llega a los grupos que moviliza la Oficina de Intereses de los Estados Unidos en La Habana que es, de hecho, el único líder de la oposición en Cuba.

Organizaciones gubernamentales como la USAID o no gubernamentales como la National Endowment for Democracy (NED) que son fachadas de la CIA y otras agencias de subversión, inteligencia o contrainteligencia del gobierno de los Estados Unidos son las encargadas de canalizar estos pagos por las vías más diversas.

En Cuba, como en cualquier otro

de modo que no puedan ir por a donde quieran, ni hablar con quienes quieran, ni hacer lo que se les antoje.

En casos de que exista un estado de franca hostilidad entre el gobierno nacional y aquél al que sirven tales agentes, se les vigila con celo por parte de las autoridades nacionales para garantizar que cumplan el estrecho espacio a que se les limitan los movimientos y se convoca a la población a colaborar en la vigilancia como una expresión del patriotismo.

Por ello, para comprender la situación de estos supuestos "disidentes cubanos" de que hablan y escriben los medios de prensa influidos o controlados por la campaña que hace casi medio siglo promueve Estados Unidos contra la revolución cubana hay que empezar por determinar su verdadera identidad.

Debe tenerse en consideración que no es a un estado extranjero cualquiera al que sirven estos agentes sino a la superpotencia que por más de 40 años ha declarado públicamente su intención de derrocar al gobierno cubano, ha atentado contra la vida de sus gobernantes y en la actualidad tiene planes oficiales para promover y financiar el desmontaje del orden social que con tantos sacrificios se han dado los cubanos. Sirven a un gobierno que no respeta el derecho internacional y se considera por encima de las Naciones Unidas, cuyas decisiones no respeta en los absoluto.

En la práctica, la farsa de los disidentes: los dirigentes de los supuestos partidos políticos de oposición, los pseudo-periodistas independientes, los llamados bibliotecarios independientes y los autoproclamados vigilantes de los derechos humanos, carecen absolutamente de representatividad o apoyo en cualquier lugar que no sea en Miami.

CUBA

La Gala de los Disidentes

culminaron los eventos de celebración del 80º cumpleaños de Fidel Castro que organizó la Fundación Guayasamín, de Ecuador, y partieron de regreso a su país al término la 28ª edición del Festival del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano en el que concursaron más de un centenar de películas y contó con la participación de decenas de estrellas de la cinematografía del continente y sus mejores realizadores. Mis amigos se sentían felices de haber escogido ese período del año para



Cubanos se manifiestan afuera de la sección de intereses de los EE.UU. 24 de enero del 2006.



Monero pinta mural en la Plaza de la Revolución.

conocer no solo el paisaje sino también el alma de esta nación tan vilipendiada durante tanto tiempo en los medios de su país.

En la noche de un domingo, mientras comentaban en mi casa con entusiasmo sus actividades del día y la presencia en Cuba del escritor Gore Vidal con un grupo de destacados intelectuales de Estados Unidos, así como la de una delegación de congresistas norteamericanos de los dos partidos que se alternan en el poder en esa nación, decidieron consultar en la Internet si la prensa de su país estaría reflejando debidamente lo que a ellos tanto les estaba impresionando.

Cuando lo hicieron, estallaron de indignación al encontrar en la página principal del principal diario de su país, de orientación liberal, apenas una nota con un muy llamativo título: "Golpean a disidentes en Cuba en el Día de los Derechos Humanos".

El cuerpo de la información, de la agencia española EFE, comenzaba así:

"Grupos afines al gobierno cubano impidieron ayer por la fuerza la celebración de una marcha pacífica convocada por un grupo disidente en La Habana en coincidencia con el Día Internacional de los Derechos Humanos. Los incidentes se produjeron cuando alrededor de una docena de personas convocadas por el Frente Patriótico Nacional trataban de marchar por un parque del barrio habanero de El Vedado, en el que había congregadas alrededor de 200 personas que participaban

dades permitan que una docena de disidentes vengan a mofarse de la ciudadanía nada menos que cuando están cumpliendo el deber cívico de entrenarse para defender su patria amenazada?

Le expliqué que este tipo de "show" no es algo inusual y que, sin necesidad de conocer más detalles, la noticia puede descodificarse así:

"Con motivo del Día de los Derechos Humanos, la Oficina de Intereses de Estados Unidos, luego de convocar a periodistas y fotógrafos de todos los medios de información nacionales y extranjeros acreditados en el país, instruyó a un grupo de su equipo habitual de disidentes a que efectuaran una manifestación antigubernamental y escogió para ello el lugar y momento en que los vecinos de la céntrica barriada del Vedado efectuarían sus habituales ejercicios de defensa en el marco de los preparativos para librar, casa a casa, la guerra de todo el pueblo en caso de agresión extranjera. Como es habitual, cuando ocurren provocaciones de este carácter, son los propios vecinos los que se encargan de responderlas y la policía solo tiene que intervenir para evitar que la población se exceda en su indignación y pueda infringir algún daño físico a los "disidentes", que son siempre los mismos viejos conocidos que tienen en ello un medio de vida."

Los multimillonarios presupuestos que cada año aprueba la administración estadounidense "para el fomento de la democracia en Cuba" se quedan en su

ordenamiento legal democrático, se garantiza a todos los ciudadanos por igual el derecho a disentir de las políticas y directivas del gobierno, partiendo del principio de que éste responde a la voluntad de la mayoría y no necesariamente a la de la totalidad de la ciudadanía.

Los disidentes disponen de múltiples formas y espacios para expresar sus discrepancias, de manera pacífica y dentro de los límites que establecen las leyes. De hecho, el sistema sociopolítico cubano, por su carácter tan participativo, propicia un sinnúmero de espacios y formas para canalizar las sugerencias y discrepancias, aunque seguramente este escenario podría ser mucho más amplio de no ser por las limitaciones que impone a la sociedad cubana la agresiva hostilidad del gobierno estadounidense contra la isla.

Como todas las legislaciones nacionales, la cubana exige que esa actuación sea absolutamente independiente de cualquier gobierno extranjero, como medida elemental de respeto a la soberanía nacional, la igualdad jurídica de los estados y la no intervención de unos en los asuntos internos de otros.

Algo distinto ocurre en todos los países, sin excepción, con los ciudadanos nacionales registrados como agentes de gobiernos extranjeros porque ellos no disponen de esos derechos que se garantizan a los disidentes. A los agentes de gobiernos extranjeros, las legislaciones nacionales les restringen los espacios y les limitan los movimientos

¿Son en realidad disidentes o son agentes al servicio de un gobierno extranjero hostil?

Si se tratara de ciudadanos honestos con puntos de vista distintos de los oficiales, deseosos de expresarlos para contribuir a la rectificación de algunas políticas o directivas del gobierno; si fueran personas que pretendieran reunirse pacíficamente con otros ciudadanos que también discrepan del rumbo que lleva la nación con vistas a resolver los problemas que aquejan a la sociedad; si no tuvieran vínculos de dependencia con algún gobierno extranjero; si no fueran movidos por algún estímulo material o promesas de acogida en otros países por su actuación discrepante; si no recibieran instrucciones de alguna fuente extranjera, podrían ser verdaderamente considerados "disidentes". En tal caso, tendrían el respeto y la consideración que tal categoría merece, aunque la política de Estados Unidos contra Cuba haya desprestigiado el término al extremo de asimilarlo al de "mercenario", en el sentimiento de los cubanos.

A estos "disidentes cubanos", que en realidad no son sino agentes del un gobierno francamente hostil que ha llevado a cabo una guerra no declarada contra el gobierno de esta nación que ha afectado a todos los ciudadanos del país desde hace 48 años, no se les ha perseguido por expresar ideas ni pensar diferente. En realidad, el tratamiento que se les dispensa ha demostrado un grado muy elevado de humanismo en el proyecto revolucionario socialista cubano.

Cuando sobrepasan los límites de la tolerancia que le dispensan las autoridades e incurren en graves delitos que, con todas las garantías procesales y penales que otorga la Ley, les valen condenas judiciales de prisión, los medios al servicio de la campaña de Estados Unidos contra Cuba los llama "prisioneros de conciencia".

En definitiva, los individuos que la prensa que denigra a la revolución cubana llama "disidentes cubanos" no constituyen una categoría nueva en la historia de Cuba, que ha sufrido el anexionismo oportunista como un mal endémico desde sus primeras guerras por la independencia. Los de hoy, son elementos sin principios que sirven a los enemigos de su patria y objetivamente obstruyen el desarrollo de la democracia socialista cubana, en constante proceso de perfeccionamiento desde 1959 hasta nuestros días.

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La Habana, enero de 2007.

FREE THE POLITICAL PRISONER LEONARD PELTIER



**IN THE SPIRIT OF
CRAZY HORSE.
FREE LEONARD PELTIER!**

Thirty Years of FBI Harassment and Misconduct When the Truth Doesn't Matter

January 9, 2007

By LEONARD PELTIER

"Much of the government's behavior at the Pine Ridge Reservation and in its prosecution of Mr. Peltier is to be condemned. The government withheld evidence. It intimidated witnesses. These facts are not disputed."

- U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals

For over 30 years I have sought justice from the United States Courts which have failed to provide me with any relief despite acknowledging numerous acts of Government misconduct. For example, after my trial, my lawyers issued Freedom of Information Act Requests ("FOIA") and discovered that the Government fabricated the ballistics evidence which it used at trial to argue that I shot the agents in cold blood. Once we revealed this egregious misconduct, the Government has had to admit on several occasions in open Court and before the Parole Commission that it could not prove I shot the agents and that it could not prove who shot the agents.

Despite the Government misconduct recognized by the Courts, I remain in prison. When we exposed the Gov-

ernment misconduct, the Government stopped arguing that I "shot the agents," and began arguing that my conviction should be upheld on aiding and abetting grounds, even though the only two people I could have aided and abetted, Robert Robideau and Dino Butler, were acquitted on self-defense grounds.

In the Robideau and Butler trials, the Court allowed them to present evidence to show that they were shooting in self defense at unknown assailants who were shooting at houses occupied by women and children. In contrast, my case was moved to another Judge, Judge Benson, who prevented me from introducing evidence of self-defense and evidence of the war-like climate that existed on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation because of marauding groups of vigilantes hired by a corrupt tribal government, supported by the United States government.

Just as significant, no Court has ever explained how my conviction could be upheld on aiding and abetting grounds since I could not aid and abet myself, and I could not aid



justice and face the wrath of our Government. What I was not allowed to introduce into evidence was the indisputable evidence that United States Government and a corrupt tribal government committed war crimes against the Oglala people during the so-called "Reign of Terror," from 1973-1976. Yet, these crimes have never been investigated, and, if anything, they have been ignored and certain propagandists have revised history to say they never occurred, similar to those who espouse that the genocide of Native American people never occurred in the Americas. The one exception is the murder of Anna Mae Aquash which the United States Government began pursuing earnestly nearly 30 years after her death, in order to smear me

the FBI withheld critical ballistics evidence which raised questions "regarding the truth and accuracy of [FBI agent Evan] Hodge's testimony." The Eighth Circuit acknowledged that the FBI withheld critical evidence which was "newly discovered evidence indicating [that the government's ballistic's expert] may not have been telling the truth," and that the evidence withheld by the FBI created "inconsistencies casting strong doubts upon the government's case."

The Eighth Circuit also addressed the government's coercing of witnesses and extracting perjurious affidavits including the three fabricated affidavits of Myrtle Poor Bear which were used to extradite me from Canada. The FBI knew that Ms. Poor Bear

Introduction By Aaron Mercredi

This February 6th marks 31 years of unjust imprisonment for Leonard Peltier in the United States.

Like many young Indigenous people from throughout the US and Canada, Leonard joined activists in the American Indian Movement in the 1970s to defend Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation during the FBI-backed "reign of terror."

In 1975, Leonard was set up for a crime that he did not commit. The crime was the deaths of two FBI agents who had sped on to the Jumping Bull compound in an unmarked car and who began a shoot-out with the Indigenous people who were there.

Today in the US, Canada and around the world, Leonard is a symbol of the injustices committed against Indigenous people. He is the conscience of a colonial settler society, and he is a survivor and inspiration for Indigenous people. Let's not forget that it was the authorities in Canada who collaborated with the FBI to have Leonard extradited from Canada, where he was seeking refuge based on fabricated evidence. Let's also not

forget the shared colonial history on both sides of the 49th parallel. Genocide was committed with the same aim of taking the land and resources from Indigenous people and criminalizing those today who defend themselves and their people from these crimes. Be they Western Shoshone or Secwepemc, the North American colonial governments will work together against them. This is why Leonard is all of us—he was put away because he represented Indigenous self-determination; the resistance to colonialism; capitalist greed that ignites every time Indigenous people stand up for their rights to their land and resources and extermination by the colonial governments of the US and Canada.

The following pages contain the most recent public statement made by Leonard, as well as a statement by the Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Group, who is organizing the 14th annual march and rally for Leonard's freedom. We encourage everyone to attend this important event.

Venceremos!

Aaron Mercredi

14TH ANNUAL NW REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY FOR LEONARD PELTIER MARCH & RALLY FOR JUSTICE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH, 2007 - TACOMA, WASHINGTON

MARCH FOR JUSTICE 12:00 NOON - PORTLAND AVE. PARK
On Portland Ave. between E. 35th & E. Fairbanks. Take Portland Ave. exit off I-5 and head east.

RALLY FOR JUSTICE 1:00 PM - U.S. FEDERAL COURT HOUSE 1717 Pacific Ave.

PERFORMANCES BY: THE AZTEC DANCERS - UNITED NATIONS NATIVE RAP ACTIVISTS - ALBERT COMBS

SPEAKERS: Matijala - Nuxli/Yakama, Tacoma LPSC, M.C. | Robert Robideau - Co-Director of the LPSC and Co-Chairman | Shelly Ventolola - Indigenous Women's Network | Steve Hardy - Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Group | Arthur J. Miller - Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Group | Juan Jose Bocuengra - Every Workers Movement | Frank Reynolds - Native American Coalition | Bill Brissett - Catholic Worker, NW | Zoltan Grossman - Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, Family Emergent's Native American Studies | David Dierens - Puget Sound

CARAVANS/CAR POOLS: SEATTLE: Meet at the Red Apple parking lot at 23rd and Jackson. Will be leaving at 10:00 am.
OLYMPIA: There will be a carpool leaving from the parking lot at Harrison and Division at 10:30 am.
EUGENE: Drivers and people needing rides meet at the Grower's Market parking lot (454 Williamson, by the Amtrak station) at 7:30 am. (The Eugene Caravan will be meeting up with the Portland Caravan.)
PORTLAND: Drivers and people needing rides, meet in the main parking lot (entrance just north of Killingsworth from Albina, parking lot entrance on the right, behind the student services building) at PCC Cascade Campus at 9:30 am.

(If anyone can set up other caravans/car pools in other areas like the Bellingham area please contact us at heyout@harg.net)

and abet my co-defendants since they were acquitted. So, just who did I aid and abet to warrant two consecutive life sentences? The Courts and the Government cannot answer that question. Yet, I remain in prison.

My case demonstrates the illegal means which our Government will utilize to ensure that I, a native American, am punished for the death of two FBI agents, without regard to whether I did it, which I did not, and without regard to the deprivation of my rights. All the Government cared about was that someone was punished for an incident provoked by the FBI, the corrupt tribal government, and its private police, known as the GOON squad. And yet, I remain in prison.

The United States Government keeps me imprisoned to justify the continuing abuses against, not only Native American people, but anyone who seeks to fight criminal abuses such as those committed and/or aided by the FBI on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation between 1973-1976. This Country has waged, and continues to wage, war not just against native Americans but against any form of domestic political dissent. Secret domestic intelligence programs, such as the well documented Cointelpro program and the Patriot Act, have eroded and destroy the constitutional rights and liberties of all peoples of this Nation. But, most people would rather ignore injustice,

to harm my chances at parole through the use of hearsay testimony and unsubstantiated innuendo. I unequivocally deny that I had anything to do with the murder of Anna Mae, and I condemn those who murdered her and those who seek to smear me and make me a patsy for the crime they committed.

The indisputable Government misconduct which led to my wrongful conviction represents a threat to the liberties of each and every one of us. Perhaps this is what ultimately struck the conscience of Judge Heaney (a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit who despite the glaring evidence of Government misconduct, wrote a strained and legally embarrassing decision to deny my first habeas petition), and compelled him to write a letter supporting my request for presidential clemency.

As recently as the fall of 2003, the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit stated:

Much of the government's behavior at the Pine Ridge Reservation and in its prosecution of Mr. Peltier is to be condemned. The government withheld evidence. It intimidated witnesses. These facts are not disputed.

As my lawyers wrote in a recent brief, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit has repeatedly recognized specific instances of FBI misconduct in my case:

was mentally incompetent. Yet, they had her sign three fabricated affidavits which falsely stated that she was my girlfriend and that she saw me kill Agents Coler and Williams. Poor Bear never knew me, and she was never at the Jumping Bull Compound on June 26, 1975, or any other date that I am aware of. The Eighth Circuit described the Myrtle Poor Bear episode as follows:

In February and March, 1976, Myrtle Poor Bear signed three affidavits which related her eyewitness account of the murders of the two agents on June 26, 1975. Two of these affidavits were considered by Canadian officials in the extradition proceedings. In testimony given outside of the presence of the jury at the trial, Poor Bear disclaimed virtually every allegation contained in the affidavits. She testified that she had been forced to sign the affidavits, which were prepared by FBI agents Price and Wood, under threats of physical harm.

The Eighth Circuit court recognized that "[t]he Poor Bear...testimony was certainly consistent with [my] theory [that the FBI framed me by manufacturing evidence and inducing witnesses to testify in accordance with its theory of the murders.]" Even in the face of this fraud, one of the prosecutors, Lynn Crooks, belligerently stated on television in 1990 that, even if he knew the affidavits were false, he still would not have

Continues on Page 16

hesitated to provide them to the Canadian prosecutor.

THE FBI'S ILLEGAL TACTICS IN ITS WAR ON THE AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT AND ME

I was a member of the American Indian Movement who, like many others, was subjected to a number of Counterintelligence (COINTELPRO) type activities by the FBI. "COINTELPRO" is the FBI acronym for a series of covert action programs directed against political domestic groups. This program was investigated and condemned by a Congressional hearing in the 1970s. With this unauthorized program, the FBI engaged in covert actions designed to 'disrupt' and 'neutralize' target groups and individuals," engaged in political dissent. One of the COINTELPRO type tactics used by the FBI and, in particular against AIM, was the infiltration of the legal defense by paid informants, violating attorney-client privilege. We have recently discovered evidence that the FBI did this in my case.

RECENTLY DISCOVERED EVIDENCE

In the face of Court expressions acknowledging and condemning the Government misconduct, the Courts continue to allow the FBI to engage in wrongful behavior by allowing them to withhold more than 140,000 documents which are located in FBI Field Offices throughout the country. Despite the passage of over 30 years, the Courts have justified the FBI's behavior by ruling that the Informant Files in my case must be protected because the release of such documents could impact the war on "international terrorism." Such a ludicrous and unfathomable reason can only undermine any remaining confidence we could possibly have that our system is based on justice and fairness.

With respect to AIM, and me in particular, we now know that the FBI used confidential informant sources to compromise attorney/client communications they illegally used to develop strategies for conviction. We recently discovered FOIA documents establishing that the FBI utilized Douglas Durham, a paid FBI

quested by Crown Attorney [and] .. If recontacted by Halprin, he would cooperate fully and would keep Omaha [FBI] advised of developments."

As my attorneys recently wrote, the Courts have indicated that this type of conduct crosses the line:

The informant, Douglass Durham, had worked in various undercover capacities prior to the Wounded Knee incident. His relationship with the FBI began in March 1973 when he supplied the FBI office in Des Moines, Iowa, with copies of photographs he had taken in a one-day visit to Wounded Knee. He later served in various leadership positions within AIM, including national security director and national administrator. He became a close companion of AIM leader Dennis Banks during the period including the Banks-Means trial in St. Paul. Throughout this period of intimate affiliation with AIM and its leaders, he was supplying information to the FBI.

In analyzing this issue, the Eighth Circuit described the troubling conduct by the FBI:

Were we concerned on this appeal with the question of whether the convictions of Dennis Banks and Russell Means, tried in St. Paul, could be upheld, we would have another case. There is evidence in the record and FBI files to indicate that Durham was privy to numerous conversations between Banks and his lawyers, that he was present in St. Paul during the course of the trial, and that he was in constant communication not only with Banks and the other defendants during the trial, but with the FBI. As the record here is devoid of that type of close proximity to the defense of these appellants and as no prejudice has been shown, we refuse to set aside the convictions of the appellants because of the activities of the



Statement For: The 14th Annual International Day In Solidarity With Leonard Peltier Regional Tacoma March And Rally: February 10, 2007

The shadow of totalitarianism is slowly creeping across the land. Our civil liberties are under attack. Our government has our country fighting a war of aggression that is not in the interest of the people of this land. If you take a close look at all that is taking place you will be able to see direct parallels to the case of Leonard Peltier and thus understand why all people who believe in peace, justice and freedom should actively support Leonard. The first connection can be found in whose interests the government is acting in. There are few today that cannot see that the war in Iraq is about oil and the interests of the multi-national energy corporations. Behind the events that took place on the Pine Ridge Reservation were the interests of the multi-national energy corporations wanting uranium that was found there. In both cases armed force was used to seize control of those resources and to suppress opposition. In the pursuit of suppressing opposition, constitutional and human rights were denied. Matter of fact, many things that the FBI did against AIM and Leonard Peltier, which at the time were illegal, the government has made legal by

acts of congress. Though the government says that such denial of human rights is justifiable for their war against "terrorism", the fact is that the government has also targeted those who oppose its policies who are clearly not terrorists. The case of Leonard Peltier clearly shows why such power should never be given to the FBI and others in power. For it can be seen clearly that Leonard's constitutional rights were denied him. The reasons given by the government for the war in Iraq have been shown to be fabrications to justify the war. Still the war continues. The evidence that the government presented at Leonard's trial has all been disproved as either fabricated evidence or intimidated witnesses, to the point that even the courts have admitted it. Still Leonard is in prison and no new and fair trial is granted. The government has done all that it can to suppress the documents that it has on both the war in Iraq and the case of Leonard Peltier. In Leonard's case there are over 120,000 pages of documents that are still being withheld for reasons of "national security." Whose national security is being protected? In both cases the national security of the people is being threatened by the withholding of the truth. One year the police contacted us about our march and asked us if there will be any anti-war people in our march. Our answer was, we don't believe that there will be any pro-war people in the march. Even the police worried about the connection between peace and justice.

confidential source who infiltrated the highest levels of AIM and was exposed on March 7, 1975, in my extradition proceedings from Canada. As one Court recognized, "Mr. Douglass Durham, infiltrated the American Indian Movement under instructions of the FBI, won the confidence of Dennis Banks and other leaders of the movement, occupied a series of high level positions in the organization."

These FOIA documents show that the FBI utilized Durham not only to provide information to William Halprin, the Chief Prosecutor from Canada, against me in connection with the extradition proceedings, but also as an "expert adviser on AIM." Halprin requested Durham's involvement "to enable him to utilize the source [Durham] to refute statements made by Peltier's defense." To purportedly avoid legal liability, Durham was told by the FBI not to execute any affidavits or to travel to Canada. "Durham has been instructed to provide information



informants.

The FBI permitted informants to attend both my trial and that of my co-defendants. In an FBI internal memo, the FBI discussed the circumstances under which informant sources could be approved to go to our trials:

"If approved by FBIHQ, sources should be specifically instructed to refrain from being parties to Defense Litigation strategies. Furthermore, they should be instructed that in the event they are unexpectedly placed in the position of being parties to such discussions, they should, where their informant status will not be compromised, leave such discussions immediately."

Durham himself acknowledged that this caution was little more than a wink and a smile. In the Wounded Knee Trials, Douglas Durham was similarly advised by the FBI not to engage in any activity that would violate confidences of the defense, nor to engage in any activities or relate to the FBI any information that had to do with defense tactics, or any legal aspect of the operations of AIM or the defense at that point. In spite of the advice he allegedly received from the FBI, Mr. Durham testified in the United States Senate about the 1974 trial of AIM leader Dennis Banks: "If Dennis and I were sitting in a room and an attorney would walk in and start talking, I couldn't jump up and say, 'I can't be here, the FBI won't allow it.'"

In a Teletype dated July 7, 1975 from the Special Agent in Charge of the Buffalo Field Office of the FBI to the FBI Director and Mr. Richard Held, Special Agent in Charge, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, The FBI indicated that a confidential source, much like Durham was allegedly advised by the FBI not to engage in any activity that would violate any confidences of my

defense. The FBI however refuses to produce the name(s) of their informants and has been given unfettered discretion by the courts to keep this information from my legal team.

Despite our discovering this information, the Courts have let the Government be the arbiter of what documents to produce and what they can withhold. As such, the FBI has unfettered discretion to withhold documents from which it can be determined whether it engaged in misconduct, because it will not acknowledge it. As it is, the FBI deliberately failed to produce any documents from the time period of my trial in the exemplar of documents which it recently produced to the Court to allow it to determine whether the informant documents should be produced to me in an unredacted form. It is clear that it did so to prevent me from finding information they have hid that could affect my due process rights.

Indeed, a document recently produced by the FBI and recently introduced by my lawyers to a Magistrate Judge established that the FBI intentionally took actions to try to avoid producing documents in discovery in my case. But again, this seems to have had no impact on the Court. The United States Federal Courts have recognized overwhelming evidence of FBI misconduct in my case which has already been revealed, yet it has continued to allow the FBI to use exemptions under FOIA to shield its illegal tactics in this case, depriving me of my rights to a fair trial. I urge all of you who believe in justice to join my fight and cry out for the production of all documents related to my case. Why is the FBI still withholding documents? Why won't they produce all documents to me? To me the answer is obvious. I believe the answer is obvious to you also.

Leonard Peltier
89637-132
U.S.P. Lewisburg,
P.O. Box 1000,
Lewisburg, PA USA 17837

Leonard Peltier Defense Committee

For these reasons we are calling for all people who believe in peace, justice and freedom to join us for the 14th Annual International Day in Solidarity with Leonard Peltier Regional Tacoma March and Rally.

In The Spirit Of Crazy Horse

Tacoma Leonard Peltier Support Group
Susan Morales, Steve Hapy,
Arthur J. Miller

As individual fingers we can easily be broken, but all together we make a mighty fist.
-- Sitting Bull

"I have no doubt whatsoever that the real motivation behind both Wounded Knee II and the Oglala firefright, and much of the turmoil throughout Indian Country since the early 1970s, was—and is—the mining companies' desire to muffle AIM and all traditional Indian people, who sought—and still seek—to protect the land, water, and air from their thefts and depredations. In this sad and tragic age we live in, to come to the defense of Mother Earth is to be branded a criminal."
-- Leonard Peltier, Prison Writings --

"I'M STILL HERE. I am all at once saddened, exhilarated, angry, proud, defiant, and puzzled by that fact. Here in prison, after 28 years (30 years now) of unjust incarceration, I am a living example of the injustice, racism, fear, and inequity that still exists in some parts of the United States of America. This is particularly true when it comes to America's views and actions towards Indian people. Residing in the best hopes of all of us is the dream that America has moved away from the days of hostility towards the Indigenous people of this land. And yet, we are shown with daily regularity, a reality that defies this dream. A reality that American Indians are incarcerated at a disproportionately high rate. A reality that American Indians are denied decent health care, housing, and education. A reality so dire, that the United States Civil Rights Commission has had to address it, calling it "A Quiet Crisis."

Leonard Peltier

By Aaron Mercredi

Trevor Miller is a Six Nations Mohawk of the Turtle Clan and a father of three young children. He is also one of the many Indigenous people who stood their ground to defend the people at Kanehstato (The Protected Place), also known as the Six Nations Land Reclamation near Caledonia, Ontario. On August 8th 2006, Trevor was arrested near Grassy Narrows for charges related to an incident that occurred at the Six Nations Land Reclamation. For 5 months, he has been denied bail and no trial date has yet been set.

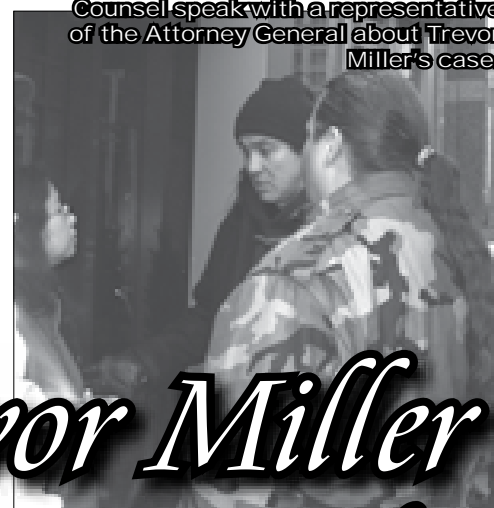
Although masked as a criminal issue, Trevor's case is a political one. It is Canada's continuing criminalization of resistance by Native people at Six Nations, and it is a case that challenges Canada's colonial courts and their jurisdiction over Indigenous people. Also, the Crown has not provided a single piece of evidence which incriminated him even under their own colonial laws. The judge in his case, David Marshall, owns tracts of land on Six Nations territory and was noticeably biased against Six Nations people in earlier court hearings. On December 11th this same judge again denied bail to Trevor while he asked to be released to the Traditional Mohawk Council. The Mohawk Nation has never given up its rights as a sovereign nation. As a Mohawk of the Turtle Clan, Trevor is not being judged by his own people but instead by a foreign colonial institution that does not represent him or the Mohawk Nation.

Trevor's case highlights the struggle that he is a part of at Six Nations. The dispute led to the land reclamation, over the construction of a housing development on Six Nations land, was not just an issue of defending land from development. It was an issue of who owned the land, and who was stealing it. It was and still is an issue of Indigenous sovereignty. Despite the fact that this tract of land is declared Six Nations territory in the legally binding Haldimand Treaty of 1784, Canada has continued to deny them their title over this area, and has refused to deal with Six Nations on a nation-to-nation basis, as Six Nations have never relinquished their sovereignty to Canada. As a sovereign people, this court case is a case of who has jurisdiction over Trevor Miller.

Trevor was taken prisoner during an assault that Canada was making on Six Nations. From before its inception to today, the government of Canada's ongoing war has continued against the



Members of the Mohawk Traditional Council speak with a representative of the Attorney General about Trevor Miller's case.



Free Trevor Miller Prisoner of War, Political Prisoner in Canada!

many Indigenous nations that continue to exist and continue to fight for their land, their resources, and their sovereignty. Because of this and his 5 months behind bars without a hearing, he is a prisoner of war and a political prisoner being held by Canada.

Supporting groups, members of the community, and the Traditional Mohawk Council have packed the courtroom for Trevor's bail hearings. Along with this, rallies outside courthouses and the Attorney General's office, as well as the prison where Trevor is currently being held, are all part of the work that people are doing to raise awareness about Trevor's case and to work for his freedom. We need to echo these demands from coast to coast and not let Trevor be a forgotten warrior left locked behind bars.

You can also write Trevor directly at:
Trevor Miller, 165 Barton street east, Hamilton, Ontario, L8L 2W6, Range 5CR

Aaron Mercredi is a young Metis activist and a main organizer with Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO).

FRANK PAUL VICTIM OF POLICE BRUTALITY

Indigenous Action Group memorial march and rally for Frank Paul

By Aaron Mercredi

On December 6, 2006, the Indigenous Action Group organized a memorial march and rally for Frank Paul and other victims of police brutality in Canada. Over 50 people joined in that day as a march wound its way from the Main Street Skytrain station and into a nearby alley, where eight years earlier the Vancouver Police Department left the 47-year old Miqmaq man out to die.

On December 6, 1998, Frank Paul's body was found in an alley behind the Vancouver Detox. Interestingly, his body was found by the same two police officers who had dumped him there only hours earlier after they had dragged his motionless and

rain-soaked body out of the police station. Frank Paul was known to the VPD. He had problems, like many people living in the poverty of the Downtown Eastside, and he had been taken into custody twice the night before to spend time in the drunk tank. He was released the first time after he was able to walk on his own, but then was taken in again a few hours later - this time unresponsive - and shown on surveillance tapes being dragged from the entrance into the elevator of the police station, leaving a wet streak on the floor from the freezing rain outside. Even though he was unconscious, the head sergeant decided he was fit enough to be 'breached,' a term used for removing people from the downtown area. The surveillance tapes then show police officers dragging Frank's still motionless body from the elevator back in to the paddywagon. 'Breaching' Frank Paul meant driving to a nearby alley outside of the downtown core, pulling him out of the paddywagon and leaning him against a wall as the cold December rain continued to pour down.

For 8 years, the Vancouver Police Department, which is responsible for his death, has avoided being held accountable for their actions that night. The VPD held internal investigations and imposed a two-day suspension on the jail sergeant for 'discreditable conduct' and a one-day suspension on a police officer for 'neglect of duty.' After years of Indigenous groups and grassroots activists demanding a public inquiry into Frank Paul's death, Solicitor General Rich Coleman rejected these calls in 2004. As those responsible for this crime remain silent, activists continue to keep this issue alive.

The rally was MC'd by Kat Norris, coordinator of the Indigenous Action Group, and a long-time activist in Vancouver. As people held signs with pictures of other Indigenous victims of police brutality, she explained how the crime committed against Frank Paul was not an isolated incident, but is continuing a long legacy of abuse and murder of Indigenous people in Canada, and that the denial of an actual inquiry into Frank Paul's death shows how inherently racist Canada's police forces are. Kat introduced other speakers from the Indigenous community, including those who have suffered abuse at the hands of the VPD and those who are working against it. The rally concluded with a ceremonial burning at the site where Frank Paul's body was left, with people offering tobacco and a prayer to an innocent man who was left to die cold



Video of police dragging the body of Frank Paul.



Kat Norris, Indigenous Action Group organizer speaks at the rally

MAHER ARAR CASE: Exposes Canadian Ruling Class Racism & Hypocrisy on Immigrants

By Nita Palmer

On December 6th 2006, the mask of Canada's "multicultural mosaic" slipped away for an instant, uncovering the racism of the Canadian government with the resignation of RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli. Zaccardelli resigned his post after massive criticism was sparked by the testimony he brought to the commission inquiring into the government of Canada's handling of the case of Maher Arar. This case involved Syrian-born Canadian, Maher Arar, who was deported to Syria by US authorities in 2002, where he was imprisoned and tortured for 10 months. His case is just one of a number of cases of injustice that have been, and continue to be waged against immigrants, refugees, and working people in the Government of Canada's home front of the "war on terror".

Maher Arar's Fight for Dignity

Maher Arar lived and worked in Canada for many years. On September 26th 2002, on a flight back to Montreal through JFK airport in New York, he was pulled aside by authorities and questioned about his supposed 'links to al-Qaeda', about his political views,

tioned completely falsely that Arar had been in Washington, DC on September 11th 2001, with the intention of linking him to the events of 9/11. In this way, the RCMP and the FBI co-operated in framing up Arar and deporting him to Syria.

Zaccardelli's Resignation, Arar's Fight: Symptoms of a Racist Government

Zaccardelli's resignation has once again brought Arar's case into the spotlight. But Zaccardelli alone is not responsible for the injustice committed against Maher Arar. Nor is Arar's case unique. The brutal systemic racism that prompted the framing-up of Arar has framed up countless others in Canada's "war on terror". In fact, three other men - Abdullah Almalaki, Ahmed El Maati, and Muayyed Nureddin - all Canadian citizens, were also investigated by the RCMP's Project A-O, imprisoned in Syria in the same prison as Arar during the same period, and faced accusations of the same kind as those faced by Arar. Like Arar, none of the men were ever charged with a single offence in Canada. The commission of inquiry into Arar's case also looked into these cases, and found that, "there is reason

Act which is specifically targeted at immigrants and refugees, and has been used particularly against (surprise!) Muslim men. The security certificate legislation allows non-citizens to be detained



Maher Arar



Giuliano Zaccardelli



Monia Mazigh, wife of Maher Arar

Not much to read in the Arar Public Inquiry report.

and held indefinitely, without charge if they are suspected by agencies like the RCMP or the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) of potentially having links to "terrorist activity". Currently, there are five men - Mahmoud Jaballah, Mohammad Mahjoub, Hassan Almrei, Mohamed Harkat and Adil Charka-

Islamophobic campaigns that are being waged against immigrants and refugees, especially those who are Muslim or Arab, in imperialist countries around the world. From France to the UK to Canada to the US, the attacks on poor and working people, particularly Muslims and Arabs, has increased a thousand fold since the so-called war on terror began.

mented to stop immigrants and refugees from demanding their rights are also an attack on all working people in Canada, as the government uses its anti-Arab, anti-Muslim fear campaigns to stop us from uniting for our rights like healthcare, jobs, and education. Furthermore, the attacks on immigrants and refugees, Muslims and Arabs, in Canada under

and about which mosques he goes to. He was denied the right to a lawyer and held in prison in the US before being deported to Syria, where he was imprisoned and tortured physically and psychologically for almost a year. Eventually, hard work by his family and friends in Canada brought media attention to his case and pressure on the government of Canada to have him released. He was released on October 5th 2003.

Although Arar was detained by US authorities, it was with the eager help of the RCMP's "Project A-O", a "national security" branch of the RCMP which conducts investigations into so-called terrorist suspects. The RCMP had been investigating Arar for suspected, "links to terrorist organizations". What was the basis for their investigation of Arar? Simply that he had met with another man, Abdullah Almalaki, another framed-up "suspect" in their war on terror. The RCMP gladly passed on their false evidence about Arar to the FBI. The evidence they provided to the FBI included a statement that described Arar and his wife, Dr. Monia Mazigh, as "Islamic extremist individuals suspected of being linked to the Al-Qaeda terrorist movement", and men-

to believe that Canadian officials had a pre-existing policy governing some of their actions and that policy played a part in Mr. Arar's removal from the United States and his imprisonment and torture in Syria." How many others like them are victims of these racist policies?

oui - who are held on security certificates in Canada. None of these men or their lawyers have been allowed to see the evidence against them, making it virtually impossible to launch a real challenge against their imprisonment.

Yet another attack against Muslims by the government of Canada came with the arrest of the 'Toronto 17' - 17 young Muslim men arrested in a police sting operation in Toronto in June 2006 on allegations that they were involved in or had links to terrorist organizations. Before they even stepped into the courtroom, they had already been convicted by the Canadian media, who splashed their names and the allegations against them across every newspaper, TV station, and radio wave in Canada.

The government of Canada also turns a blind eye to the brutal torture and human rights violations at the US's Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Guantanamo, Cuba. Nearly 500 people are held there, including Omar Khadr, a 19-year-old Canadian citizen, who has been held there since he was 15. Despite the fact that Omar has been beaten, tied, threatened with rape, and used as a human mop to clean urine off the floor, the Government of Canada remains complicit in his detention.

These are just a few examples of Canada's part in the racist and

The "War on Terror" at Home and Abroad

Imperialist countries, including Canada, are facing a coming economic crisis of greater magnitude than ever before. In response, they have launched an era of wars and occupations to plunder the resources and the trade markets of oppressed countries around the world - from Afghanistan, to Iraq, to Haiti, to Sudan, to Somalia. But at the same time they have launched this international "war on terror", they have also launched a "war on terror" on the home front - creating an atmosphere of fear in the Muslim and Arab communities and among regular working people in Canada, especially immigrants and refugees. Even while they create a racist fear campaign against Muslims and Arabs, they desperately need our labour to keep their economy running - especially the labour of poor immigrants and refugees, who often receive the lowest of wages and work in the poorest of conditions, increasing the profits of their employers. The last thing the ruling class - the government and the big business owners in Canada - need is to have immigrants and refugees begin demanding their rights, which would threaten their position as the owners of the wealth in Canada. Therefore, they make examples out of people like Maher Arar, like the Toronto 17, in order to say "this is what we can do to you. Do you want to stand up to us?"

The racist policies that are imple-

the guise of "national security" also serves to drum up support for Canada's "war on terror" in Afghanistan. It's an age-old ploy, as simple as convincing people that their families and their lives are at risk if they don't give unconditional support to the government.

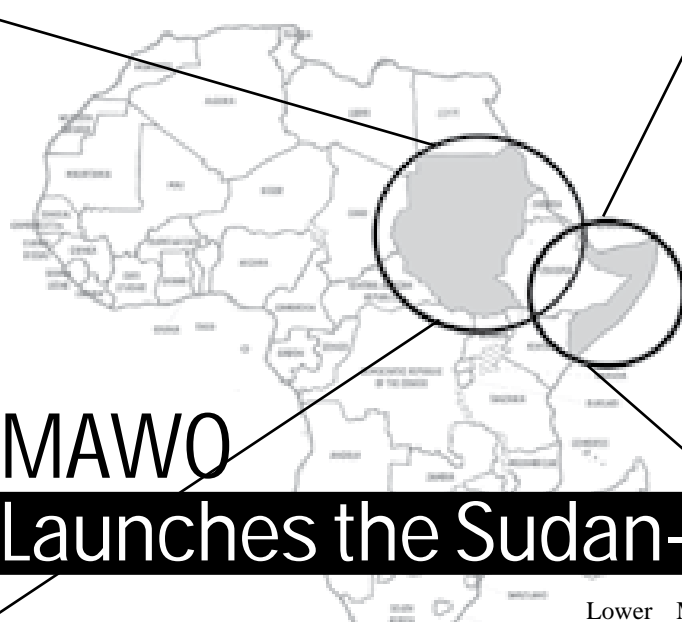
Unite Against All Attacks on Immigrants and Refugees!

The government of Canada is currently tightening the noose around the neck of immigrants and refugees in Canada. But the noose is being lowered over the necks of all working people in Canada as well. As their economic crisis deepens, the ruling class of Canada will put into action more attacks on working people in order to save their profit. From attacks on unions, to lower wages, to longer work hours, to poorer and poorer working conditions - The time that we must begin organizing for our rights is NOW. The time we must begin organizing for immigrant and refugee rights is NOW. The time we must begin organizing for an end to racist and Islamophobic attacks on Muslims and Arabs is NOW. Maher Arar's case, and the countless other cases of attacks on the democratic and human rights of immigrants and refugees by the Government of Canada are only the tip of the iceberg. These cases must serve as a wake-up call for working people in Canada: We must fight for our collective rights, and fight for them now.

Stop Attacks on Immigrants and Refugees!



The one common link that Arar, Almalaki, El Maati, and Nureddin share is that they are all Muslim. As Canada's "war on terror" in Afghanistan heats up, so too do the attacks on Muslims here in Canada. The reason that these men were investigated by Project A-O is simply that they were Muslim, unlucky enough to be chosen as targets by the RCMP. Other legislation has been passed under Canada's Anti-Terrorism



MAWO Launches the Sudan-Somalia Campaign

Rally against UN threats to send troops to Sudan. Khartoum, Sept 17, 2006.

By Alison Bodine

On January 10th 2007 Vancouver anti-war coalition, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), launched the "MAWO Sudan Campaign: US/UN Hands Off Darfur!" For many months imperialist countries around the world have been lining their ducks in a row in political preparation for a full intervention into Africa. This has included an egregious public relations push to encourage support for US/UN intervention in Darfur, Sudan. As the necessary first response to this, MAWO passed a resolution at the Nov 29th general meeting demanding US/UN Hands Off Darfur! To take this resolution one step further, to the streets, MAWO is launching the Sudan Campaign: US/UN Hands Off Darfur! This is a grassroots campaign charged with education and outreach work against imperialist intervention in Africa.

MAWO's campaign will also work to expose demands and campaigns like the pro-imperialist "Save Darfur," that calls for military intervention into the sovereign country of Sudan.

The US and imperialism, in their attempt to turn the continent of Africa into another bloodbath like Iraq and Afghanistan, have also opened up war in Somalia. With the US backed Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in late December 2006, the US began a proxy war in Africa. This attack intensified to direct US bombings that have killed hundreds of civilians over the last week in Somalia. Within the MAWO Sudan & Somalia Campaign two petitions are also being released; one against US/UN intervention in Sudan and the other demanding "All foreign troops out of Somalia!"

This campaign and petition launch

coincides with the sixth Student Week Against War and Occupation (SWAWO), a week of coordinated anti-war events on Lower Mainland campuses including UBC, SFU, UVic, Langara College, Douglas College, Kwantlen University College, and high schools in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island. From Jan 22nd-26th students all over BC will be organizing and responding to Canada's increasing war drive that has meant escalating attacks against poor and working people both at home and abroad.

SWAWO works to educate, organize and mobilize students against these attacks by organizing forums, film showings, petition drives and information tables against war and occupation and of course march and rallies. With massive cuts to funding for education in Canada and the rapidly rising military budget, youth and students across the

Lower Mainland are drawing the strong ties, and working together to organize and polarize campuses against imperialist war and occupation and for the self-determination of oppressed nations. This year SWAWO will be organized under the banner of "US/UN Hands Off Africa!" especially highlighting the attacks on Sudan and Somalia.

It is with the tremendous success of the Operation Canada Out! Campaign launched in January of 2004, that MAWO begins this push for education and awareness in the Lower Mainland with the MAWO Sudan & Somalia Campaign and SWAWO #6. Operation Canada Out! includes the 12,000 signature-strong petition demanding Canada Out of Afghanistan!, alongside 3 years worth of films, forums and countless petition stops against Canada's imperialist occupations around the world. As a part of this campaign MAWO has held over 23 pickets at the Canadian Forces

Recruitment center demanding NATO/Canada Out of Afghanistan! From here, MAWO will continue with rallies, conferences and pickets against Canada in Afghanistan. Now MAWO will also be incorporating the MAWO Sudan & Somalia Campaign, working to educate people all over the lower mainland about the real threat to people in Africa and all over the globe, imperialist war and occupation.

- US/UN Hands Off Darfur!**
- All Foreign Troops Out of Somalia!**
- US/UK Out of Iraq!**
- Canada Out of Afghanistan!**
- Self-Determination for All Oppressed Nations!**

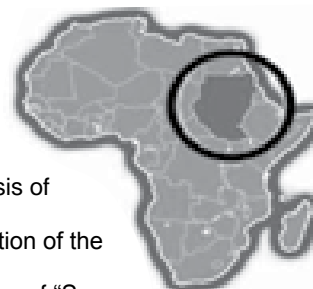
Alison Bodine is a fourth year student at the University of British Columbia and the President of UBC AMS group Coalition Against War and On the People of Iraq & Internationally (CAWOPI).

For complete petitions visit www.mawovancouver.org

"NO TO THE INVASION OF SUDAN" PETITION

Petition to the House of Commons in Parliament Assembled

We, the undersigned residents of Canada, draw the attention of the House to the following:
 THAT there is currently a growing international propaganda campaign calling for foreign intervention in Sudan, citing internal conflict and 'humanitarian' concerns in the Darfur region as an attempt to justify foreign military intervention and sanctions;
 THAT the recent invasions, wars and occupations leading to the criminal destruction of Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti were all carried out on the basis of 'humanitarian' concerns;
 THAT foreign intervention in Sudan under any justification threatens the sovereignty of Sudan and violates the inalienable right to self-determination of the Sudanese people;
 THEREFORE we call upon Parliament to cease any support for the current campaign of threats and intervention against Sudan under the auspice of "Save



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"NO FOREIGN TROOPS IN SOMALIA!" PETITION

Petition to the Government of the United States and Ethiopia

We, the undersigned, draw the attention of the Government of the United States and Ethiopia to the following:
 THAT in December 2006 Ethiopia, with the support of the United States Government, invaded Somalia on the justification of supporting the Interim Somali Government in overthrowing a legitimate and popular Islamic Union Courts Government;
 THAT the US has a fleet of warships stationed off the coast of Somalia, and launched air strikes across Somalia, killing hundreds of people. The invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia and the United States is an attack on the sovereignty of Somalia;
 THEREFORE, we call upon the government of the United States and Ethiopia to respect the self-determination of the people of Somalia by stopping military operations and occupation of Somalia, to immediately stop the US bombings of Somalia and to withdraw the US warships from the coast of Somalia, and to end the occupation of Somalia by Ethiopian troops.



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¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre! VANCOUVER CELEBRATES 48 YEARS OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION!



By Kira Koshelanyk

“¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre!” A triumphant call for a triumphant revolution! On January 1, 1959, the Cuban people took their place in history as a people who fought and won their freedom against colonialism, imperialism and exploitation. On the eve of the 48th anniversary of this triumph, over 200 people gathered in Vancouver to celebrate alongside them. This second annual event was organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), and co-organized with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver. Our Community Bikes shop on Main St in Vancouver was filled with the same celebratory cry as Cuba.

Transformed to match the décor and celebratory atmosphere of a Cuban block party, with twinkling lights, streamers and many Cuban flags, the venue filled quickly as people arrived to watch “Bloqueo”, a documentary about the 2001 Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba and the effects of the US blockade on Cuba. While encouraging people to get involved with spreading

sweeping Latin America, with Cuba's example at the forefront.

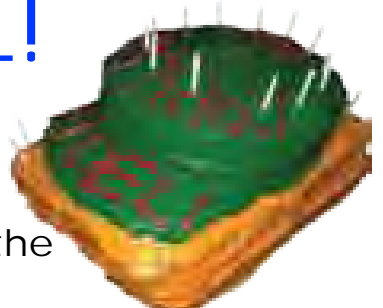
Musically talented supporters of the Cuban revolution also graced the stage with the combination of melodic Latin guitarists Beto and Nicanor. Joaquin Ernesto, singer-guitarist and host of the Coop radio 102.7FM show ‘Romantic Tango’ led everyone into dancing. DJ Su Commandante commanded the turntables for the rest of the night, keeping everyone dancing! Event MCs, Tamara Hansen, Jolene Borrelli and Esteban Gonzalez led the countdown “3...2...1...” ¡Viva Cuba! At midnight, amidst the cheers, hugs and shouts of “Happy New Year!”, a clip of the newsreel of the march into Havana showed Fidel and the rest of the young revolutionaries as they joined millions of Cubans in the streets to celebrate overthrowing the US-backed dictator Batista.

A success on all counts, the event



VIVA FIDEL!

80 MORE YEARS! CELEBRATION OF FIDEL'S 80TH BIRTHDAY & the 50th anniversary of the landing of the Granma!



By Lindsay Clarke

“Sentence me. It doesn't matter. History will absolve me.” It is with these words that Fidel Castro closed his defense statement in a courtroom in Cuba in 1953 before being sentenced to jail for attempting to overthrow the dictatorship of US-backed Fulgencia Batista. It was these same words that, over 50 years later, opened Fidel's 80th birthday celebration in Vancouver, BC. December 2nd 2006 was not only marked by the 50th anniversary of the landing of the Granma in Cuba, but was also a time to celebrate 80 years of Fidel's vibrant life. With over 100 people in attendance at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver celebrating the night away, it was a party not to be missed.

Organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), the Free the Cuban Five Committee – Vancouver, and the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, the night was introduced by event MCs Tamara Hansen, coordinator of VCSC, and Colleen Glynn, president of the Richmond NDP. Colleen read a warm letter from Fidel to participants in his birthday celebrations in Cuba and abroad. The first speaker of the evening was Tim Louis, a former Vancouver city councilor, who recounted why Fidel inspires him. Saida Osman, Capilano Students' Union Students of Colour Liaison

tization of healthcare in Canada. To both of these points he stated, “You would never see anything like this in Cuba.” Up next was the funky jazz improv group, the Rhythm Section, which got people up to dance. After a couple of songs Ivan Drury, coordinator of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, got up to speak, mentioning the “moral vest” that Fidel wears for protection instead of a bullet-proof one. Following him were Jolene Borrelli and Lindsay Clarke who spoke on behalf of VCSC. Both spoke about their inspiration from Fidel and Cuba as young women organizing with a solidarity group.

The feeling of inspiration and celebration were warm in the air. Partygoers took part in signing Fidel's birthday card, buying raffle tickets and chatting with the people sitting next to them. The spirit, vision and leadership of Fidel was on everyone's minds, while hopes for his speedy recovery from his surgery was in everyone's hearts. Soon the room broke out into the “Happy Birthday” song and a cake shaped like Fidel's famous army hat appeared. Everyone got to their feet to help blow out the candles together, while the Rhythm Section took the music and dancing off into the night!

As the evening came to an end there was one idea and feeling that resonated through everyone. The idea that the Cuban revolution is a young revolution, one with a long history to come and the feeling that with every ounce of humanity within each and every of us, we must stand unit-

solidarity with Cuba in Vancouver, VCSC is also fundraising to send at least 15 young activists to Cuba in summer 2007 with the Caravan and the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade. The experience of Cuba was shared by young brigadistas from last summer, Jane Ivanova and Kira Koshelanyk, as well as guest John Waller, the coordinator for the Pastors for Peace Caravan in Canada. Congratulations to Cuba and solidarity messages were also brought by Colleen Glynn, President of the Richmond NDP and VCSC organizer; Randy Caravaggio of Victoria Goods for Cuba, and Liz Kendler of the Coop Radio 102.7 show “America Latina al Día”. Noah Fine, coordinator of the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver explained the case of the 5 Cuban Heroes and how their fight for freedom is a continuation of the fight of Cuban revolutionaries of 48 years ago. Event MC, Esteban Gonzalez and VCSC organizer Thomas Davies spoke on the exciting tide of revolutionary change

opened the new year of 2007 with a new perspective for all who attended. The turning of the clock from 2006 to 2007 was a turning for many with change in mind. A turning with the hope, and the resolve to make it so that Cuba's gains could be shared by people across Latin America, Africa, and all over the world, to here in Canada as well. Young and old from all different communities in the Lower Mainland went home in the early hours of the first morning of 2007 with an idea of what could be and an example in mind... Cuba.

As they say in Cuba, so we say in Vancouver: ¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre! ¡Viva Cuba! This year and onward, until victory!

Kira Koshelanyk is a second year student at Langara College and member of executive board of the Langara Student's Union, as well as the co-chair of Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO).

son then took the stage, explaining how two of her siblings had been delivered by Cuban doctors and how much Fidel and Cuba had done for her country, Somalia. The audience then enjoyed three sections from Estella Bravo's illuminating film, “Fidel”. Jaehun Choi, an organizer with Korean anti-war organization “Imagination for International Solidarity” gave a thoughtful talk on how Fidel has inspired people to struggle all over the world. He was followed by the original music of Donald Morin, which inspired the audience to sing along.

Next, Rosa Arteaga explained how Fidel and Cuba impacted struggles for social justice in her country, Mexico. John Waller, coordinator of the Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba, was the next speaker up, proclaiming, “Viva Fidel!” to which the room responded, “VIVA!” Special guest speaker, Fred Muzin, president of the Hospital Employees' Union, spoke about homelessness in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and the priva-

ed and continue to fight for and to defend the gains of Fidel's Cuba.

Lindsay Clarke is a second year student at Capilano College and sits on the Capilano Students' Union Executive as the coordinator of the Social Justice Committee.



MC's, & VCSC organizers, Tamara Hansen and Colleen Glynn.

Comunidades de Vancouver en Solidaridad con Cuba (VCSC por sus siglas en ingles)

¿Quiénes son VCSC?

es una organización que trabaja para crear apoyo y solidaridad para Cuba en Vancouver, Canadá e internacionalmente. Para cumplir con esta labor nosotros organizamos frecuentes eventos educativos y culturales, conferencias, movilizaciones y acciones en defensa de la soberanía de Cuba contra los ataques imperialistas y en defensa de las victorias de la Revolución Cubana.

Además apoyamos 3 campañas de peticiones:
-1- Contra el Bloqueo de los EE.UU. contra Cuba
-2- Por Libertad de los Cinco Cubanos Encarcelados en los EE.UU.
-3- Por la Extradición del Terrorista Anticubano Luis Posada Carriles

A través de las campañas de peticiones en toda

la lower mainland, en eventos, festivales, secundarias, y universidades, podemos conversar con miles de personas sobre Cuba. El objetivo de este

trabajo es llevar a Cuba, un país haciendo importantes avances sociales, a jóvenes, estudiantes, mujeres, personas de América Latina, personas del tercer mundo y a otras personas trabajadoras y oprimidas en Canadá, como un ejemplo de la construcción de un mundo mejor.

Cualquier miembro nuevo es bienvenido y animamos a todos a que se involucren con VCSC para construir un movimiento de solidaridad con Cuba más fuerte y más grande en Canadá.

Para conseguir mas información contacta: cubacommunities@yahoo.ca 778-882-5223 www.vancubasolidarity.com

Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) is an organization working to build solidarity and support for Cuba in Vancouver, Canada and internationally. To do this, we organize frequent educational events, cultural events, conferences, mobilizations and actions in support of Cuba's sovereignty against Imperialist attacks and in defence of the gains of the Cuban revolution.

We also support 3 petition campaigns:

- 1- Against the US Blockade on Cuba
- 2- To Free the Cuban 5 held in US Jails
- 3- To Extradite anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela

Through petitioning throughout the lower

Who is VCSC?

mainland, at events, festivals, high schools and campuses, we engage with thousands of people about Cuba. Our work aims to bring Cuba, as a country

making important social gains, to youth, students, women, Latin American people, people of the third world and other working and oppressed people in Canada, as an example of a building a better world.

We welcome new members and encourage everyone to get involved with VCSC to build a larger, stronger Cuba solidarity movement in Canada!

For more information contact: cubacommunities@yahoo.ca 778-882-5223 www.vancubasolidarity.com

MAWO'S 4th Annual Anti-War Film Festival a Huge Success!

The Theme:

US VS. THEM

By Lindsay Clarke

People resisting against oppression, struggling against exploitation, and fighting for humanity from Iraq, to Cuba, to Indigenous nations in Canada - these were the images on the walls that led people towards two days of anti-war films. Us vs Them, the oppressed versus the oppressor. This was the idea and the feeling that resonated through all aspects of Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO)'s 4th annual anti-war film festival.



Dec 14 article in the Vancouver Sun Newspaper.

Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba and Iraq - and included the presence of director Jessica Anderson, who introduced her film "Occupier/ Occupied: An American in Iraq". On Sunday December 17, people came together once again for the second day of the festival, which was opened with another landmark film, Stanley Kubrick's "Dr. Strangelove". Sunday brought to the screen films from Bolivia, Lebanon, Palestine, Cuba, Afghanistan and Indigenous Nations in Canada, which all reflected the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed people and nations around the world. Sunday included special introductions by the directors of "From the Heart: George Manuel" (Dir. Doreen Manuel) and "Caged Birds' Song" (Dir. Sobhi al-Zobaidi). Also screened on Sunday was a film about the life and struggle

role in Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, and Palestine. It also reflected anti-imperialist resistance locally, through the historic sovereignty struggles of Indigenous Nations and of Quebec, as well as the fight of poor and working people in the labour movement. Throughout the weekend, over 600 people came through the doors at the Britannia Centre, many who came to watch one film and stayed for many more. The films were inspiring and creative works, provocative, moving, and often heart-wrenching. But they were more than striking works of art. These films are truly part of the protest against war and occupation. By reflecting the struggles that people around the world are engaged in, the festival expanded awareness, understanding, solidarity, and most importantly, the inspiration to take action against war and occupation.

As the two-day festival came to an end, there was a distinct confidence and certainty that resonated within people. A certainty that we, alongside millions of people in Canada and around the world, must continue to fight



Doreen Manuel, director of "From the Heart" introduces her film about her father, Indigenous leader George Manuel.



MAWO Film Festival antiwar photo exhibit in the foyer of Britannia Auditorium.

On Saturday December 16, over 250 people came together at the Britannia Community Centre for the opening day of the festival. Walking through the hallway to the auditorium at Britannia Community Centre, festival goers were met with a powerful and stirring photo exhibit. Images of war and occupation since Sept 11, 2001 set the tone for the weekend: destruction and brutality, yes - but ultimately, resistance. The festival was opened with the classic anti-war film M*A*S*H, as a tribute to the recently deceased, groundbreaking director Robert Altman. As the day continued more anti-war, anti-occupation films were screened, many for the first time in Canada and North America. These films reflected the heroic struggles against occupation and oppression - in Brazil, Algeria, Korea, Indigenous Nations in Canada,

of revolutionary leader Malcolm X.

As the festival came to a close, there was one last film to be screened, a production created by MAWO on the expansion of Canada's role as an imperialist threat at home and abroad. This production vividly exposed Canada's destructive and vicious

for humanity and for self-determination for all oppressed nations.

Lindsay Clarke is a second year student at Capilano College and sits on the Executive of the Capilano Students' Union as the coordinator of the Social Justice Committee.

WHO IS MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION (MAWO)?

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) is a coalition of over 50 endorsing groups who have come together with the common goal of ending this era of imperialist war and occupation which is causing destruction and suffering throughout the world today. We organize rallies, forums and cultural events to educate, organize, and mobilize people in Vancouver and in Canada to stand with people in struggle around the world for self-determination for

all oppressed nations. Our main demands are: Canada Out of Afghanistan! US/UK Out of Iraq! US/UN Hands Off Darfur! Hands off Cuba and Venezuela! Israel Hands off Palestine and Lebanon! and Self-Determination for Indigenous Nations in Canada. For more information about upcoming events and our weekly meeting times, please visit our website at www.mawovancouver.org, or contact us at info@mawovancouver.org or 604-322-1764.



¿QUIENES SON M.A.W.O.?

Movilización Contra la Guerra y la Ocupación (MAWO por sus siglas en ingles) es una coalición endorsada por mas de 50 grupos, quienes se han unido con el objetivo común de acabar con esta época de guerra y ocupación imperialista, que hoy causa destrucción y sufrimiento en todo el mundo. Organizamos, manifestaciones, foros, y eventos culturales con el fin de educar, organizar, y movilizar al pueblo de Vancouver y Canadá ha pararse solidariamente con los pueblos que luchan mundialmente por la autodeterminación de todos los pueblos oprimidos. Nuestras demandas

principales son: ¡Canadá Fuera de Afganistán! ¡EE.UU. y Reino Unido Fuera de Irak! ¡EE.UU. y ONU Manos Fuera de Darfur! ¡Manos Fuera de Cuba y Venezuela! ¡Israel Manos Fuera de Palestina y Líbano! y ¡Autodeterminación para los Pueblos Indígenas de Canadá! Para conseguir mas información sobre eventos futuros y los tiempos de nuestras reuniones semanales por favor visite nuestra pagina de Internet en www.mawovancouver.org contáctanos en info@mawovancouver.org 604-322-1764.



Vancouver Free The Cuban 5 Committee Participates in the International Week of Solidarity Action!

Wilson Munoz, coordinator of the Unitarian Church Social Justice Committee.



Vancouver Forum: US Terrorism Against Cuba and the Freedom Fight of the 5 Cuban Heroes

By Jane Ivanova

On the evening of December 12, 2006, over 60 people gathered at SFU Harbour Centre in Downtown Vancouver for a forum titled "US Terrorism Against Cuba and the Freedom Fight of the 5 Cuban Heroes". This forum was organized by Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver as a part of the international solidarity campaign to mark the 5th anniversary of the unjust trial and sentencing of the 5 Heroes.

The forum was opened with a showing of a film called "Extradite Luis Posada Carriles!". This

educational documentary, produced by the International ANSWER coalition in the US, gave an overview on the cruel terrorist attacks against Cuba organized by right-wing Cuban mafia in Miami. All forum participants truly felt the pain of Cuban people, who lost their loved ones in these inhumane attacks.

Following the film, Tim Louis, former Vancouver City Councillor, lawyer, and long-time supporter of the 5 Heroes, spoke on the great injustice faced by the 5 Heroes in an unfair and manipulative trial. After Tim's introduction, a special multime-

dia presentation continued to tell the story of the 5 Heroes through emotional and inspiring images of the Cuban 5, their families, and the struggle for their freedom taken on by millions of people all around the world.

After the slideshow Nita Palmer, the forum's MC, introduced the next speaker, Wilson Munoz, the coordinator of the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver. Wilson highlighted the gains of Cuban people such as their incredible achievements in healthcare and education, which the Cuban 5 were heroically defending.

Everybody in the audience was deeply moved by poetry written by the Cuban 5 and read by an organizer with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee, Sarah Alwell. Beautiful lines, written behind prison bars, proved once again the unbreakable dignity and strength of Antonio, Ramon, Rene, Gerardo and Fernando.

Next on the panel of speakers was Sophie Ziner, an active organizer with Free the Cuban 5 Committee - Vancouver. She spoke in depth on the US motivation to punish the Cuban 5 for their heroic mission, and put the unjust jailing of the Cuban 5 into the perspective of years of US terrorism on Cuba.

The final speaker of the forum was Noah Fine, the coordinator of the Free the Cuban 5 Committee - Vancouver. Noah concluded that it is now more important than ever for the solidarity movement to demand the immediate release of the Cuban 5, to continue the mission of the 5 Heroes, and thus to expose US terrorism against Cuba.

The diverse and exciting program was followed by a dynamic discussion, full of questions, ideas and suggestions on how to build an effective solidarity movement with the 5 Cuban Heroes in Vancouver, in Canada and beyond.

The forum "US Terrorism Against Cuba and the Freedom Fight of the 5 Cuban Heroes" laid a solid base for the following two-week-long world-wide campaign marking the 5th anniversary of the unjust trial of the Five and demonstrated the energy of the growing solidarity movement in Vancouver.

Jane Ivanova is a social justice activist, an organizer with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver, and a second year student at Capilano College, where she is the coordinator of the Free the Cuban Five Committee at Capilano.

Buttons in Defence of the 5 Heroes

Available for 50 Cents ea.

To Order Contact:

Free the Cuban 5 Committee
Vancouver
(604)
719-6947
or
cuban5_@
van@
yahoo.com

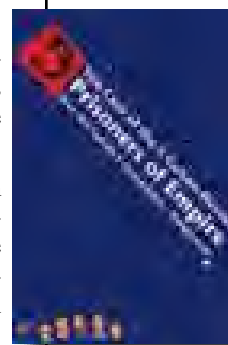


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Vancouver Activists Picket in Front of US Consulate

By Sarah Alwell

From December 12 - 27, many events took place all around the world marking 15 days of international action for the freedom of the Cuban 5, five political prisoners being held unjustly in US prisons. On December 19, a cold and rainy day in Vancouver, 50 people gathered together outside the US consulate for the 12th protest in 12 months demanding the release of these five heroes.

Andrew Barry, an organizer with Victoria Goods for Cuba, was the first to speak, shouting at the US consulate to free the 5, "representatives of Cuba!" who were on a mission to stop terrorism from the US. Andrew also spoke about the gains that Cuba has made in healthcare and education, which the 5 were defending from attacks by terrorist groups in Miami.

Andrew's speech was followed by a loud and passionate picket line demanding "Justice for the Cuban 5!", and "Freedom for the 5 now!". The picket line continuously grew throughout the protest.



Dec 19, 2006. US Consulate, Vancouver BC.

Guido Varela, a Chilean activist and long time defender of the Cuban 5 passionately spoke to the crowd, outlining that what the Cuban 5 Heroes were fighting for is essentially what all people in Latin America are fighting for, an end to US intervention and US terrorism.

Finally, Noah Fine, coordinator of the Free the Cuban Five Committee-Vancouver emotionally closed the picket action declaring that, "as our 5 Heroes are stolen from us and illegally kept locked up in prison, we must, in the words of Fidel, 'fight and work' until they are all free."

The Cuban 5 have been imprisoned for eight years now, and 2007 proves to be yet another difficult year of struggle for the 5 and their families. It is vital that we, the people of Vancouver, stand strong and continue in our efforts for the release of these heroic men.

On the 30th of January the Free the Cuban Five Committee-Vancouver will launch the first picket action of 2007 outside the US consulate to continue their efforts in ensuring that these five men will return to their homeland, to their families, and that we will not be silenced until that day comes!

Please join us in this upcoming action to free the Cuban 5!

Sarah Alwell is an organizer with the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver, and a first year student at the Capilano College.



Dec 19, 2006. US Consulate, Vancouver BC.

Five Heroes Freedom Fund



Since the imprisonment of the 5 Cuban Heroes in 1998, the biggest roadblock for the case has been a complete media blackout. The National Committee to Free the Cuban Five in the U.S. has launched a \$250,000 fund for a mass national media campaign. They are asking all individuals and organizations to do whatever possible in the raising of this urgently needed money.

To make a donation or to find out more about the "Five Heroes Freedom Fund" please check out

www.freethethefive.org or

www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca

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Send your name, address, province/state, country and postal/zip code with the equivalent of \$40.00 USD (for 52 weeks) by postal or electronic bank transfer to: Ediciones Cubanas, Apartado 6260, C.P. 10699, Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba.

In the United States or anywhere else in the world, go to the Pathfinder website at: www.pathfinderpress.com

EVENTS and ACTIONS

Vancouver

Jan 18
REVERSE THE CUTS - UPHOLD EQUALITY RIGHTS
 1st Anniversary of Harper's Broken Promise to Women
 Rally and Information Picket
 Noon onwards
 Sinclair Centre, 757 West Hastings Street
 Gather outside the front door of the Sinclair Centre

Feb 9 to Feb 11
TRAVELLING WORLD COMMUNITY FILM FESTIVAL
 Langara College Campus
 100 W. 49th Ave Vancouver

Feb 16
MAHER ARAR SPEAKS!
 Chan Centre
 2:30 pm to 3:45 pm
 Please email Sarah Frew at sarah@bccla.org or call 604-687-2919 to get more information
 Org'd by: The BC Civil Liberties Association

Calgary

Jan 18 – Sun Jan 20
ROCK FOR CHOICE
 For info on events/locations:
www.myspace.com/rockforchoicecalgary

Jan 19
THE ISRAELI WAR ON LEBANON: CAUSES & CONSEQUENCES
 Canadian Tour of Professor As'ad AbuKhalil ('The Angry Arab')
 University of Calgary, Craigie Hall, Rm. 119.
 Doors open 7 pm. Event Starts 7:30pm
 \$10 at door.
 Org'd by: Palestinian Canadian Student Society

Victoria

Feb 22
MARCH 19 GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION Planning meeting
 7:00 pm
 UVic Student Union Bldg Room B024 (basement level)
 Org'd by: Victoria Peace Coalition

Winnipeg

Jan 21
ANTI-WAR PROTEST AT THE LEGISLATURE!
 3 p.m
 Org'd by: Fort Richmond High School Students/Peace Alliance
 Winnipeg

Ottawa

Jan 22
NEW COMMITTEE ON AFGHANISTAN!
 7 PM
 First meeting of a new Afghanistan Committee to oppose the war in Afghanistan.
 123 SIMARD HALL
 University of Ottawa
 Org'd by: NOWAR-PAIX

Jan 23,
TOGETHER AGAINST WAR-ENSEMBLE CONTRE LA GUERRE (TAW_ECG) MEETING
 TAW-ECG will begin planning for March 17, the 4th anniversary of the Iraq war.
 7 PM
 123 SIMARD HALL
 University of Ottawa

Toronto

Jan 20
DEMONSTRATION TO END THE OCCUPATION OF SOMALIA
 11:00am
 US Consulate (360 University Avenue - North of Queen)
 Org'd by: Coalition of Concerned Somali-Canadians

Jan 24
FORUM: CANADA AND THE MIDDLE EAST
 7pm
 Concord Cafe 937 Bloor St. West
 Org'd by: Socialist Project and the New Socialist Group



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M O N T H L Y P I C K E T A C T I O N S

FREE THE

GUBBAN HEROES

HELD IN U.S. JAILS!

Tuesday January 30
 3pm-4pm | US Consulate (6075 W. Pender St)
 Free the Cuban Five Committee - Vancouver
www.vancouvercubanfive.com / freethefivevan.html
cuban5_van@yahoo.com | 604.719.6947

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STUDENT WEEK AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION (MAWO)

US/UN HANDS OFF SUDANI!
ALL FOREIGN TROOPS OUT OF SOMALIA!

US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!
CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTANI!

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!



JANUARY
22-26
Winter
2007

Co-Organized by student/antiwar groups on-campus at:
UBC SFU UVIC Langara Capilano Douglas Kwantlen
- and -

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR
AND OCCUPATION (MAWO)

WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG | (604) 322-1764 | Info@mawovancover.org

Canada/NATO Out of Afghanistan! US/UK Out of Iraq!



- US/UN/CANADA Hands Off Sudan and Darfur!
- Hands Off Somalia!
- All Foreign Troops Out of Somalia Now!
- Israel Hands Off Lebanon and Palestine!
- Self-Determination for Indigenous Nations in Canada!
- Self-determination for all Oppressed Nations!

RALLY & MARCH
SAT. JAN 27
2PM
Vancouver Art Gallery
(Robson St @ Hornby St)

Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO
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604.322.1764 | info@mawovancover.org