

Woodstock International



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International, National, and Community News—From a Left Perspective

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Iraq: Seven Years of Occupation



Woodstock International is a voice for upholding freedom and democracy through the written word. Communication and critical thinking are key components to knowledge and understanding. Critical thinking requires access to information.

Corporate-owned newspapers ignore important news items ... and much of the news is reported from a capitalist-oriented point of view. An alternative news source, Woodstock International intends to give greater coverage of news that reflects the reality of our times.

woodstockinternational.us

by Raed Jarrar

On April 9, 2003, exactly seven years ago, Baghdad fell under the U.S.-led occupation. Baghdad did not fall in 21 days, though; it fell after 13 years of wars, bombings and economic sanctions. Millions of Iraqis, including myself, watched our country die slowly before our eyes in those 13 years.

So, when the invasion started in March of 2003, everyone knew it was the straw that would break the camel's back.

I still remember the day of the fall of Baghdad very clearly, as if it happened yesterday. My family and I had fled to my uncle's home in southern Baghdad because our neighborhood, located near Baghdad's airport, was bombarded by U.S. airplanes in the days before. I remember the first U.S. tank rolling down the street with a U.S. soldier, wearing black gloves, waving his hand and some people waving back. That was one of the saddest days of my life, not only because Baghdad fell under a foreign occupation, but

also because I knew it would be the beginning of another disastrous chapter in Iraq's history. Now, when I look back at all that happened under the occupation, I find that I was, unfortunately, right.

In the last seven years, one million Iraqis have been killed and millions more injured and displaced from their homes. The country's infrastructure was destroyed and Iraq's civil society has been severely damaged. A video posted recently by Wikileaks is not an exception to how the U.S. occupation operated in Iraq all along, but rather an example of it. While the video is shocking and disturbing to the U.S. public,

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One Drop in a Sea of Blood

by Michael Prysner

The harrowing Apache footage released by Wikileaks gives us a stomach-turning glimpse of war. Seventeen minutes of cold-blooded massacre in a war of more than seven years. A brief clip of one Apache video; a quick look at one part of one mission. Hundreds of those missions take place every day.

The video came to light thanks to military whistleblowers who provided it to WikiLeaks together with supporting documents. Imagine if we had access to all such videos, the things we would see. Imagine all the Iraqis killed who have no one to uncover the truth about their deaths. Had the death of two Reuters news staffers not generated interest in this video, then the destruction of three families by hellfire missiles fired into an apartment building with no provocation, in a separate engagement also featured in the video, would have never been made public.

This massacre is a drop in a sea of blood. Many other such "incidents" will never be known.

Officers claimed there was "no question" that the pilots were responding to enemy fire; the video shows there is no question that they were not responding to enemy fire. They said that they had "no idea" how the journalists were killed; the video shows that they know very well how those journalists were killed. They were gunned down standing in a crowd of unarmed people.

After the slaughter of that group, the pilots beg for permission to kill the innocent passers-by who had come to the aid of one of the wounded, like any of us would have done if we saw our neighbor dying on the ground as we drove down the street. They kill everyone trying to help the dying journalist, and critically wound two children seen sitting in the front seat.

We see a group of unarmed men mowed down by a machine gun designed to destroy armored vehicles. We see a vanload of good Samaritans obliterated for trying to help a dying victim. We see all this with the soundtrack of the pilots mocking the dead, congratulating each other and laughing about the massacre.

No wonder the U.S. military goes to such great lengths to keep such videos from us. They want us to see Iraq and Afghanistan through their lens, through their embedded reporters, filtered by censorship and restrictions. They know that, once the people of this country see the extreme racism and brutality behind these occupations, they will be repulsed by what their tax dollars are paying for.



Michael Prysner

The military brass and the White House politicians have tried to justify this senseless atrocity. "Cut the pilots some slack. This was in Baghdad. This was a battle zone"—that's been their line. The pilots had been indoctrinated with the same colonial mentality. "That's what they get for bringing their kids into battle," one pilot says.

The father driving that van was not "bringing his kids into battle." He was bringing them to school, driving down the street where they live. But the U.S. occupation has made all of Iraq a battle zone. To those pilots, to their commanders over the radio and to the generals in the Pentagon, every single person in Baghdad and in Iraq is "fair game."

The pilots joked about the people they killed, laughed about U.S. military vehicles running over dead bodies, knowing that their commanders were listening and that they were being recorded. They were not acting out of character. This is the culture of the occupation. This is how these wars are being conducted.

Having seen this, one cannot honestly believe that these atrocities are committed day in and day out for the liberation of the Iraqi people.

The Pentagon's talking heads and media lackeys are hard at work putting their spin on this story. It's time to tell the truth. For more than seven years, the United States has unleashed criminal, unprovoked aggression against the people of Iraq, and they have been doing the same thing in Afghanistan for more than eight years.

The U.S. military presence in Iraq is a colonial occupation force. The only way forward is a complete, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan. This government will not do that unless all of us who are outraged by these criminal acts stand up and demand it.

Michael Prysner is an Iraq War veteran and co-founder of March Forward! For more information, see marchforward.org.

From the Editors

Yesterday, the staff of Woodstock International—Nic, Ellen, Tarak, Helaine, and Fred—gathered at Nic and Helaine's house, high on Overlook Mountain, in Woodstock, N.Y., for a final review, page by page, word by word, of the current issue, which you now hold in your hands.

We were moved by the contents; many of the pieces brought tears to our eyes, and expanded our hearts, as we hope it will yours.

You'll see within: Frida Berrigan's article, *Eight Years of Guantánamo*; John Pilger's hard-hitting and deeply insightful piece, *Obama and Empire: Power, Illusion and America's last Taboo*; Huwaida Arraf's moving account of her arrest in the West Bank; and Iraq vet Mike Prysner's comments on the Wikileaks release of footage from an 2007 Apache Helicopter massacre in Iraq calling it "a drop in a sea of blood."

In our front-page story, *Iraq: Seven Years of Occupation*, native Iraqi Raed Jarrar describes how "millions of Iraqis, including myself, watched our country die slowly before our eyes." And, on the back page, a delightful piece by Dave Zirin on Lester "Red" Rodney, one of the great political sportswriters of our time.

However, what moved us most was a short, from-the-heart article that arrived only a few days ago. Ross Caputi wrote *An Iraq Vet Thanks Howard Zinn*. Caputi participated in the battle of Fallujah, perhaps the bloodiest of the war, which he "came out of, feeling like a terrorist." Profoundly troubled by this experience, he said what changed his life was a chance encounter with Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*. And, since our previous issue of Woodstock International was a tribute to Zinn and his wife Roslyn, we are especially honored to print Caputi's moving piece in this current issue. As Ross says, "In a way, he saved my life. And thanks to him, I'll never be on the wrong side of the gun again."

We hope you'll be inspired and motivated by what you read within, and please . . . let us hear from you.

In solidarity,

Nic, Ellen, Tarak, Helaine, and Fred
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OBAMA AND EMPIRE: POWER, ILLUSION, AND AMERICA'S LAST TABOO

The following article is the text of John Pilger's address to Socialism 2009 in San Francisco on July 4, 2009.

by John Pilger

Two years ago, at Socialism 2007 in Chicago, I spoke about an "invisible government," a term used by Edward Bernays, one of the founders of modern propaganda. It was Bernays who, in the 1920s, invented "public relations" as a euphemism for propaganda. Deploying the ideas of his uncle, Sigmund Freud, Bernays campaigned on behalf of the tobacco industry for American women to take up smoking as an act of feminist liberation; he called cigarettes "torches of freedom."

The invisible government that Bernays had in mind brought together the power of all media—PR, the press, broadcasting, advertising. It was the power of form: of branding and image-making over substance and truth—and I would like to talk today about this invisible government's most recent achievement: the rise of Barack Obama and the silencing of the left.

First, I would like to go back some 40 years to a sultry day in Vietnam.

I was a young war correspondent who had just arrived in a village called Tuylon. My assignment was to write about a company of U.S. Marines who had been sent to this village to win hearts and minds.

"My orders," said the Marine sergeant, "are to sell the American Way of Liberty as stated in the Pacification Handbook. This is designed to win the hearts and minds of folks as stated on page 86." Page 86 was headed WHAM: Winning Hearts and Minds. The Marine unit was a Combined Action Company, which, explained the sergeant, "means that we attack these folks on Mondays and win their hearts and minds on Tuesdays." He was joking, though not quite.

The sergeant, who didn't speak Vietnamese, had arrived in the village, stood up in a jeep and said through a bullhorn: "Come on out everybody; we

got rice and candy and toothbrushes to give you!..."

There was silence.

"Now listen, either you gooks come on out, or we're going to come right in there and get you!"

The people of Tuylon finally came out, and stood in line to receive packets of Uncle Ben's Miracle Rice, Hershey bars, party balloons and several thousand

see, we count ourselves as real lucky having the greatest democracy the world has ever known, and we want you nice people to share in our good fortune."

Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, even John Winthrop's "city upon a hill" got a mention. All that was missing was the "Star Spangled Banner" playing in the background.



"My orders," said the Marine sergeant, "are to sell the American Way of Liberty as stated in the Pacification Handbook."

toothbrushes. Three portable, battery-operated, yellow flush lavatories were held back for the arrival of the colonel.

And when the colonel arrived that evening, the district chief was summoned, and the yellow flush lavatories were unveiled. The colonel cleared his throat and produced a handwritten speech.

"Mr. District Chief and all you nice people," he said, "what these gifts represent is more than the sum of their parts. They carry the spirit of America. Ladies and gentlemen, there's no place on earth like America. It's the land where miracles happen. It's a guiding light for me, and for you. In America, you

Of course, the villagers had no idea what the colonel was talking about. When the Marines clapped, they clapped. When the colonel waved, the children waved. As he departed, the colonel shook the sergeant's hand and said: "You've got plenty of hearts and minds here. Carry on, Sergeant!"

"Yessir."

In Vietnam, I witnessed many spectacles like that. I had grown up in faraway Australia on a steady cinematic diet of John Wayne, Randolph Scott, Walt Disney, the Three Stooges and Ronald Reagan. The American Way of Liberty they portrayed might well have been lifted from the WHAM Handbook.

I learned that the United States had won World War Two on its own and now led the "free world" as the "chosen" society. It was only much later when I read Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* that I understood something of the power of emotions attached to false ideas and bad history.

Historians call this "exceptionalism"—the notion that the United States has a divine right to bring what it calls liberty to the rest of humanity. Of course, this is a very old refrain; the French and British created and celebrated their own "civilizing mission" while imposing colonial regimes that denied basic civil liberties.

However, the power of the American message is different. Whereas the Europeans were proud imperialists, Americans are trained to deny their imperialism. As Mexico was conquered and the Marines sent to rule Nicaragua, American textbooks referred to an "age of innocence." American motives were well meaning, moral, exceptional, as the colonel said. There was no ideology, they said; and this is still the received wisdom. Indeed, Americanism is an ideology that is unique because its main element is its denial that it is an ideology. It is both conservative and liberal, both right and left. All else is heresy.

Barack Obama is the embodiment of this "ism." Since Obama was elected, leading liberals have talked about America returning to its true status as a "nation of moral ideals"—the words of Paul Krugman in the *New York Times*. In the *San Francisco Chronicle*, columnist Mark Morford wrote that "spiritually advanced people regard the new president as 'a Lightworker' ... who can help usher in a new way of being on the planet."

Tell that to an Afghan child whose family has been blown away by Obama's bombs, or a Pakistani child whose family was among the 700 civilians killed by Obama's drones. Or tell it to a child in the carnage of Gaza caused by American smart weapons, which, disclosed

Seymour Hersh, were resupplied to Israel for use in the slaughter "only after the Obama team let it be known it would not object." The man who stayed silent on Gaza is the man who now condemns Iran.

Obama's is the myth that is America's last taboo. His most consistent theme was never change; it was power. The United States, he said, "leads the world in battling immediate evils and promoting the ultimate good ... We must lead by building a 21st century military to ensure the security of our people and advance the security of all people." And there is this remarkable statement: "At moments of great peril in the past century, our leaders ensured that America, by deed and by example, led and lifted the world, that we stood and fought for the freedom sought by billions of people beyond their borders." At the National Archives on May 21, he said: "From Europe to the Pacific, we've been the nation that has shut down torture chambers and replaced tyranny with the rule of law."

Since 1945, "by deed and by example," the United States has overthrown 50 governments, including democracies, crushed some 30 liberation movements, supported tyrannies and set up torture chambers from Egypt to Guatemala. Countless men, women and children have been bombed to death. Bombing is apple pie. And yet, here is the 44th President of the United States, having stacked his government with warmongers and corporate fraudsters and polluters from the Bush and Clinton eras, teasing us while promising more of the same.

Here is the House of Representatives, controlled by Obama's Democrats, voting to approve \$16 billion for three wars and a coming presidential military budget, which, in 2009, will exceed any year since the end of World War Two, including the spending peaks of the Korean and Vietnam wars. And here is a peace movement, not all of it, but much of it, prepared to look the other way and believe or hope that Obama

continued on page 8 ...

Who Will Stop AIPAC Before It Is Too Late?

by Medea Benjamin

While I was being tackled by security guards at Washington's Convention Center during the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) conference for unfurling a banner that asked "What about Gaza?" my heart was aching. I wasn't bothered so much by the burly guards who were yanking my arms behind my back and dragging me—along with five other CODEPINK members—out of the hall. They were doing their job.

What made my heart ache was the hatred I felt from the AIPAC staff who tore up the banner and slammed their hands across my mouth as I tried to yell out: "What about Gaza? What about the children?"

"Shut the f--- up. Shut the f--- up," one staffer yelled, red-faced and sweating as he ran beside me. "This is not the place to be saying that shit. Get the f--- out of here."

What makes my heart ache is thinking about the traumatized children I met on my recent trip to Gaza, and how their suffering is denied by the 6,000 AIPAC conventioners who are living in a bubble—a bubble where Israel is the victim and all critics are anti-Semitic, terrorist lovers or, as in my case, self-hating Jews.

I found it fascinating that AIPAC's executive director Howard Kohr opened the conference admitting that there was now a huge, international campaign against the policies of Israel. He painted a picture of 30,000 people marching in Spain, Italian trade unionists calling for a boycott of Israeli products, the UN Human Rights Council passing 26 resolutions condemning Israel, and an Israeli Apartheid Week that is building a global boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign.



Medea Benjamin speaks to participants in the Gaza Freedom March in Cairo

This global movement, he warned, emanates from the Middle East, echoes in the halls of the United Nations and the capitals of Europe, is voiced in meetings of international peace organizations, and is spreading throughout the United States—from the media to town hall meetings, from campuses to city squares. "No longer is this campaign confined to the ravings of the political far left or far right," he lamented, "but increasingly it is entering the American mainstream."

But Kohr failed to explain why there has been such an explosion in this movement, even among the American Jewish community. He didn't tell the attendees that the world was shocked and outraged by Israel's devastating 22-day attack on Gaza that left over 1,300 people dead—mostly women and children. He didn't mention the killing of civilians fleeing their homes, the use of white phosphorous, the bombing of homes, schools, mosques, hospitals, U.N. buildings, factories. He didn't talk about the continuing, cruel blockade of the Gaza Strip that is keeping desperately needed humanitarian aid from reaching 1.5 million people and making rebuilding impossible.

There were no seminars at the conference by human rights groups like Amnesty International that are calling for an immediate and comprehensive suspension of arms to Israel. Instead, one after another, U.S. elected officials eager to curry favor with AIPAC pledged continued U.S. financial support for Israel. Senator Kerry, despite that fact that he was one of only a handful of legislators who visited Gaza, didn't say one word about the massive destruction he witnessed and pledged that, as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he would do everything to ensure that the \$30 billion in military aid to Israel is "delivered in full." "America will continue our military aid, and Israel will keep its military strength," he insisted. Instead of calling for talks with the democratically elected government of Hamas, Kerry said: "Hamas

"Shut the f--- up. Shut the f--- up," one staffer yelled, red-faced and sweating as he ran beside me. "This is not the place to be saying that shit. Get the f--- out of here."

Photo by Ellen Davidson

has already won one election—we cannot allow them to win another." He ended his speech shouting several times in Hebrew, "Am Yisrael Chai—Israel lives!"

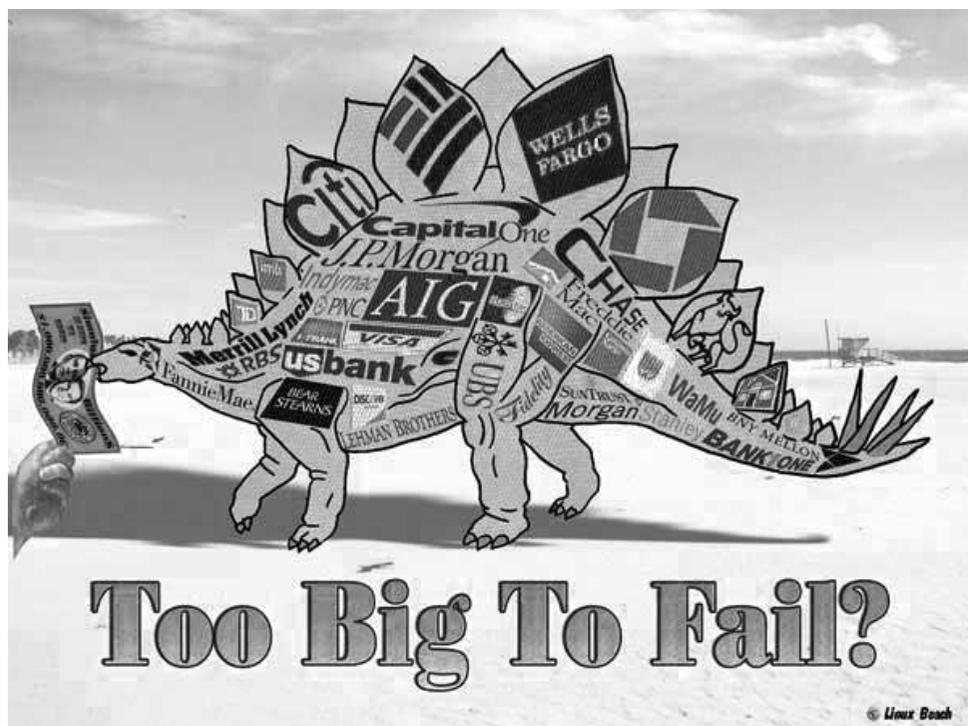
Even Vice President Joseph Biden, who at least told AIPAC that Israel should freeze new settlement activity, didn't say a word about the ongoing humanitarian crisis caused by Israel's invasion and continued blockade of Gaza. No U.S. officials, and there were hundreds at the conference, dared echo the call of the United Nations or the world community to lift the siege of Gaza.

Republican Congressman Eric Cantor was one of the most emotional speakers, portraying Israel as the victim of an evil global movement determined to wipe out Israel and all Jews. Evoking the "shivering, naked victims who were herded into the gas chambers," he wondered when it would become too late to protect Israel. "When is it too late?" he repeated over and over.

I wonder the same thing. When is it too late, I wonder, to stop Israel from destroying itself? When is it too late to tell AIPAC attendees that more violence and hatred is not the answer? When is it too late to open the hardened hearts of my people, once victims of a terrible holocaust, to realize that by occupying Palestine we have become the evil we deplore? When is it too late to restore meaning to the Hebrew term "tikkun olam" by truly working to heal the world? When is it too late for the Jews of the world to weep for the children of Gaza, recognizing that they, too, are the children of God?

I couldn't ask my questions at AIPAC. My mouth was muzzled by the sweaty hands of hate-filled staffers demanding that I "shut the f--- up." But despite AIPAC's massive funds and influence, I feel certain that more and more members of the Jewish community will step forward and refuse to be silent. I just pray it is not too late.

Medea Benjamin (medea@globalexchange.org) is cofounder of Global Exchange (www.globalexchange.org) and CODEPINK: Women for Peace (www.codepinkalert.org).



Veterans Return to Vietnam

Pledge to win justice for victims of wartime Agent Orange exposure



by Mike Ferner

Passersby wouldn't have noticed anything unusual about the six people on a tour of a small rehab facility recently—but three things lifted the occasion from the mundane into the realm of the truly moving. The facility served people suffering from exposure to Agent Orange;

the facility was located in Hanoi; Paul Cox, the leader of the group, fought with the U.S. Marines in Vietnam.

"Vietnam Friendship Village" is a rare place. Opened in 1998, it provides respite, rehabilitation and training for some 190 people annually, out of some estimated three million Vietnamese who suffer the ravages of dioxin and Agent Orange, according to Vietnamese government figures. Physically, emotionally and spiritually, Vietnam Friendship Village is a true oasis, but 12 years later it's beginning to show its age.

"Is this as good as it gets in Vietnam for taking caring of people poisoned by Agent Orange?" one member of the team queried Cox.

"I'm afraid so," the Californian responded.

Update

Hanoi—At a meeting with American veterans here, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung urged "the United States government to take responsibility for solving the aftermath of its war with Vietnam."

During the war, Mr. Dung emphasized, more than two million Vietnamese were killed, and millions more were injured, and more than 300,000 are still missing. Moreover, three million people were exposed to toxic chemicals like Agent Orange sprayed by the U.S. military during the war.

Mr. Dung urged the U.S. government to "listen to its conscience," and to cooperate with Vietnam's government by giving assistance to victims of Agent Orange to help them overcome the difficulties they face, and to aid in the clean-up of the dioxin-contaminated environment.

The veterans' delegation wrapped up a 10-day fact-finding trip where they met with families living with the effects of Agent Orange poisoning in Hanoi, Da Nang, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City and several outlying towns and villages.

Speaking for the group, composed of representatives from Veterans for Peace, the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign, Iraq Veterans Against the War and Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Paul Cox stressed the groups' continued commitment to obtaining justice for all victims of Agent Orange. Cox also announced that a bill seeking to fulfill this objective will soon be introduced into the U.S. Congress.

If Friendship Village is as good as it gets, one can only pray that the next place on the delegation's list was as bad as it gets. The only way to even inadequately describe Tran Thi Dao's son and her home is to say they are the very definition of misery.

A standard double bed takes up nearly half the floor space in this one-room, 120-square-foot structure. You may want to read that again. A standard double bed takes up nearly half the floor space in this one-room, 120-square-foot structure.

The son, Tran Van Hai, is 27 years old. He is just .8 meters "tall." He weighs 17 kg. He can't walk and spends his days sitting on the neatly made bed under a single light bulb hanging from an extension cord. The corrugated steel ceiling doubles as a roof. He was quiet today, but his mother said he often gets frustrated and angry, his crossed eyes fill with tears and he throws things

Tran's mother cannot work because he has to be watched constantly. She said she does some gardening in a plot not much bigger in area than her house, located three feet from the front, and only, door. She described her 6-year-old granddaughter, born to Tran's older brother, as thin and very weak, attending kindergarten as much as possible. "She looks okay but has intestine problems," the grandmother said, with a face lined by permanent sadness.

Her husband does not live with them. "He went south to work," she said, "but he can't make enough to be any support." During the war,

he was soldiering in the south for two years before he found himself in Quang Tri Province in 1971. His personal version of being in the wrong place at the wrong time found him beneath a U.S. Air Force C-123 on one of thousands of flights, spraying Agent Orange to "deny the enemy cover." The defoliant, contaminated with deadly levels of dioxin, is a known carcinogen and a teratogen, an agent that causes a defect or malformation in the development of the embryo or fetus.

Other members of the delegation, all members of Veterans for Peace, were Susan Shnall, a former Navy nurse who tended wounded soldiers during the Vietnam war at a California Navy hospital; Michael Uhl, a former Army counter-intelligence officer who served in Vietnam; Ken Mayers, a former Marine Corps major who served in Vietnam; and Geoff Millard, an Army National Guard soldier who served in Iraq.

The veterans are in Vietnam for two weeks to visit people suffering from Agent Orange exposure, members and leaders of the Vietnamese Agent Orange Victims Association, public health workers and officials of the Vietnamese government. They are gathering information to make the case to the U.S. government that the Vietnamese people should be compensated for the pain and suffering endured as a result of being exposed to Agent Orange.

Mike Ferner, a former Navy hospital corpsman and president of Veterans for Peace, was a member of the VFP delegation to Vietnam. mike.ferner@sbcglobal.net.



Casualties of U.S. use of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War



The Militarization of Washington, D.C.

by Stephanie Westbrook

As a visitor to our nation's capital, I cannot tell you how disconcerting it is to step off the Metro and find yourself face to face with an F-35 fighter jet. Where you would normally expect to find ads for cell phones or museum exhibitions, Washington's subway, the second busiest in the country, instead displays full-color backlit billboards for some of the most deadly—and expensive—weapons systems ever produced.

tracks to be insufficient, Northrop Grumman has installed ads on all four sides of columns near the turnstiles, on banners strung up along the railings upstairs and even on the floor, just in front of the escalators. CBS Outdoor, responsible for the ad space in D.C. Metro stations, claims that "Capitol Hill Station Domination is an impactful way to get your message in front of the Congress and decision-makers in DC."

An estimated 17,000 Capitol South Metro passengers are confronted daily with Northrop Grumman Global

has gone as far as offering a \$25 million incentive package for what Northrop Grumman estimates to be a measly 300 jobs, which will be filled primarily by company executives moving from Los Angeles!

The military contractor presence on the D.C. Metro is but one example of the ubiquitous signs of militarism in Washington. Standing out like sore thumbs, military personnel dressed in camouflage can be seen everywhere from the food court at the shopping mall to the line at the bank. Combat fatigues were ordered everyday wear for all service members, including those with desk jobs, following the September 11, 2001, attacks. I asked several camouflaged service members the reason behind the combat uniforms and all sheepishly replied that it was in support of the "troops in the field." One woman told me, "That's a good question. You feel kind of funny wearing this." Looking down at her desert boots, she said, "It's not exactly office wear." But it is a clear and constant reminder that the nation continues to be on a war footing.

At Union Station, Amtrak passengers should not be surprised if a soldier or two cut in line. Signs in the station invite uniformed military personnel to skip to the head of the ticket line. According to Amtrak, which is the only Department of Defense-approved rail passenger carrier in the United States, it is a way for the company to "extend their thanks." That's all well and good but why wouldn't Amtrak want to do the same for teachers, healthcare professionals, firefighters, librarians or non-profit volunteers?

Much of this is not necessarily new; the militarization of our society has been progressing for decades, permeating our schools, research and development programs, law enforcement and culture. And despite the heavy concentration in Washington, D.C., the phenomenon is certainly not limited to the nation's capital. The signs of militarism in our country are ever present to the point of becoming virtually invisible, while subconsciously persuading us to accept violence and war as not only a suitable solution to conflict, but the only one.

The militarization of our society has been progressing for decades, permeating our schools, research and development programs, law enforcement and culture.

The ads for such companies as Lockheed Martin, the world's largest weapons producer; Goodrich; KBR; AGI; BAE Systems; and Northrop Grumman can be found in many of the Metro stations in the Washington metropolitan area. Not surprisingly, the heaviest concentration is at Pentagon City and near government offices at the Federal Center and Capitol South stations. Undoubtedly, the ads aim to influence key decision-makers, but they also serve the purpose of selling to the general public the concept that only our superior military prowess can protect us from a hostile world.

The billboards range from explicit ads for attack helicopters and combat vehicles to more subtle billboards for companies such as little-known DRS, owned by Italian weapons maker Finmeccanica and 26th among the top 100 Pentagon contractors, or for "rugged" Dell computers designed to meet Defense Department specifications for military use.

Far from subtle is Northrop Grumman's marketing approach in the Capitol South Metro station, the closest to Congress. In an all-out assault on the visual senses, the station has been literally festooned by the country's third-largest military contractor. Apparently considering the usual ad space along the

Hawks and X-47 Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles, which boast a 4500-pound weapons bay; E-2D Advanced Hawkeyes; Viper Strike-armed Fire Scout unmanned helicopters; and E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar Systems (STARS), all designed "for an unsafe world." According to the centrist Brookings Institute, 90 percent of casualties in "targeted" drone strikes in Pakistan have been innocent civilians. Yet ads for these systems, which carry price tags of hundreds of millions of dollars when development costs are factored in, are on full display.

Perhaps most startling of all the Capitol South billboards is the ominous scene of a bombed-out apartment building above the slogan "By the time you find the threat, we've already taken it out of the picture." Northrop Grumman fails to fill us in on what happened to the people living in those apartments.

Following the trend of major military companies wishing to cozy up to powerbrokers in Congress and at the Pentagon, Northrop Grumman recently announced plans to relocate its California headquarters to the D.C. area. Officials from Washington, Virginia and Maryland have been falling over themselves trying to influence the decision of the \$34 billion company. The District of Columbia

Standing out like sore thumbs, military personnel dressed in camouflage can be seen everywhere from the food court at the shopping mall to the line at the bank.

Signs calling for support of the troops can be found on everything from restaurant walls to dump trucks. Also cheering on the "troops in the field" is the Liberty gas station on Columbia Pike in Arlington. Directly above the gas pumps is a red, white and blue sign that reads "Support Our Troops." This is either the result of disturbingly twisted logic or an astonishingly candid call for protecting U.S. access to Middle East oil reserves.

Walking the halls of Congress, you will find memorials at the offices of many representative and senators for the fallen troops from their district or state. What you will not find are any memorials for the 2,200 veterans who died in 2008 as a result of a lack of adequate health care.

The fighter jets and missile-firing drones are anything but invisible to the people in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Let's rebel against their apparent "normalcy" here in the United States. As a start, contact Dan Langdon, CBS Outdoor's vice president and regional manager, letting him know that ads for deadly weapons systems have no place on the D.C. Metro, or anywhere else for that matter! Dan.Langdon@cbsoutdoor.com

Stephanie Westbrook is a U.S. citizen who has been living in Rome since 1991. She is active in the peace and social justice movements in Italy and was in Washington, D.C., in March, participating in antiwar activities. steph@webfabbrica.com.

Stop War and War Crimes by Honoring a Peace Hero!

One way to prevent war crimes is to prevent war. But we won't be able to prevent war until we change our society by dismantling our culture of war and establishing a culture of peace. A step in this direction would be to honor our peace heroes as we have done our war heroes. The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial will be the first on the National Mall to honor a man of color and a man of peace, not a veteran of war or a president. Learn more at mlkmemorialnews.org and read Kim Carlyle's commentary below.

by Kim Carlyle

I knew I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without first having spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent...

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Riverside Church, New York City, April 4, 1967

If Dr. King were still among us, he would see President Obama as a symbol of progress toward the American ideal of equality. But he would be appalled at the administration's continuing purveyance of violence. And, as inequality is a partner to violence, he would find the symbol lacking in substance, as inequality remains rampant.

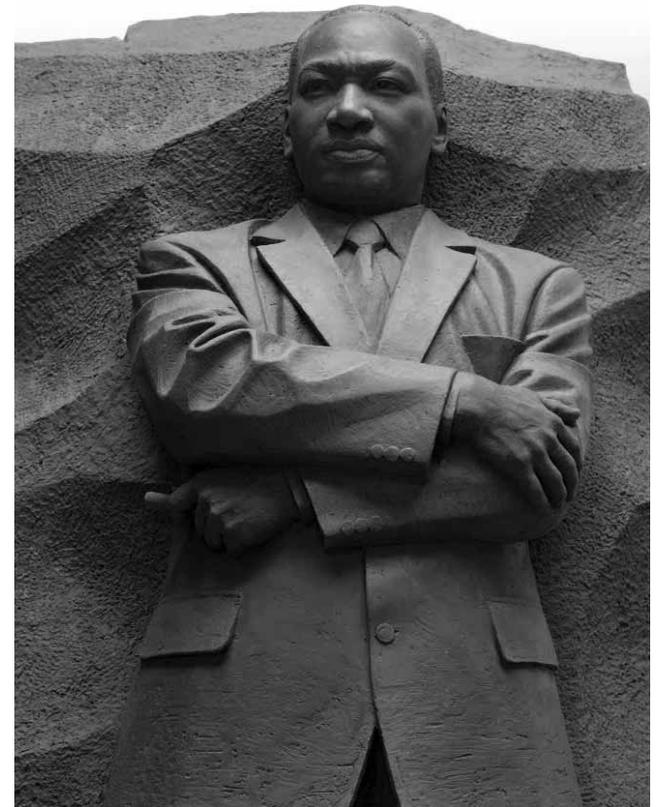
Dr. King would observe an America increasingly divided into two distinct and unequal classes: the rich and powerful, and the rest of us. He'd see bankers prospering as foreclosures increase; insurance executives reaping profits as people die for lack of health care; and the military-industrial-congressional complex advocating and perpetuating war (and enjoying the spoils) as the underclass fights, suffers, and pays the costs.

America's founders, who established equality as a human right, understood the connection between war and class inequality. James Madison wrote, "War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few." (Today's war debts will burden the next generations; war taxes take the form of reduced services—e.g. the national health care we can't afford, as most of our federal budget pays for past, present and future wars.)

... we have 737 foreign military bases with 255,000 troops deployed across a world divided into U.S. military commands.

Beyond this domestic dichotomy of class, Dr. King would see inequality deeply entrenched in our foreign policy and largely responsible for our perpetual state of war. The notion of American exceptionalism—that we are better, smarter, stronger, and especially, more virtuous than everyone else in the world—gives us the right, even the duty, to select (or depose) the leaders of other nations, to choose and impose their forms of economy and government and to allocate their natural resources. We bestow this beneficence on them through the threat or the use of military force. That's why we have 737 foreign military bases with 255,000 troops deployed across a world divided into U.S. military commands.

This inequality of exceptionalism pervades our culture. Our media and our government pay scant attention to civilian casualties of other



Proposed memorial on the National Mall

countries. Foreign nationals are less valuable than Americans. Our losses are tragedies; theirs are collateral damage. The American public remains callously indifferent to the suffering of human "others." According to polls, a majority of us would approve of torture—a war crime for which our enemies have been executed.

We must overcome this superiority complex by recognizing that all people, of all countries, are created equal. Pay heed to Dr. King's words at Riverside (just substitute "Afghanistan" for "Vietnam"):

Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. I speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours.

Dr. King understood that we are all in this world together and we must stand up for one another—not just "the poor of America" but "the suffering poor" of the whole world. The initiative must be "ours." We can't continue to cling to the audacious hope that elected "leaders" will stop the wars, end the violence and promote equality. History shows that change only occurs when the people take charge.

It was people—abolitionists, suffragettes, unionists and civil rights activists—not political leaders, who demanded the changes that ended slavery, expanded voting rights, made workplaces fair and safe, and put a stop to Jim Crow. It was people who ended the Vietnam War. We would honor these heroes, including Dr. King, by continuing their work.

There is urgency. Our great global problems, such as the climate crisis, can only be addressed through the human solidarity that peace and equality will bring. The initiative must be ours.

Kim Carlyle is the editor of *War Crimes Times* (warcrimetimes.org). A full-time peace and justice advocate, he is president of Western North Carolina Veterans For Peace and lives near Barnardville, N.C.

An Iraq War Vet Thanks Howard Zinn

My name is Ross Caputi and I'm an undergraduate student here at Boston University. I'm also a member of the BU Anti-War Coalition and I'm an Iraq War veteran. In November of 2004 I was in the Battle of Fallujah. Most of you probably know at least something about the Battle of Fallujah. You probably have heard that it was the biggest battle of the war, and you might also know about the large number of refugees and civilian deaths.

I'll spare you the gory details; however, I came out of Fallujah feeling like a terrorist. In the months that followed, I felt a great deal of guilt and confusion, but I was afraid to talk about it, even with the people who were closest to me. I felt like I was crazy for thinking what I was thinking, and that there wasn't anyone who could possibly understand what I was going through. I couldn't say to my friends in my platoon that if victory in Iraq meant doing things like we did in Fallujah, then I wanted to lose. I was afraid that they would call me a traitor or say that I was sympathizing with terrorists. And for every person in my hometown that would come up to me and shake my hand and thank me for my

service, I wanted to scream at them, "You don't understand, you shouldn't be thanking me," but I held back out of fear of their response. I couldn't tell if I was crazy or if I was the only sane person left on this planet, and for a while I felt completely alone, and like many veterans I turned to drugs and alcohol.

I don't know what prompted me to buy a copy of *A People's History of the United States*, but I'm not exaggerating when I say that that book changed my life. I began reading it while I was still in the Marine Corps, and through Professor Zinn's words I heard my own story echoed throughout all of America's history. I learned that in every American war the many have suffered for the profit of the few, and that in every American war there were others who felt like I did. Professor Zinn captured the voices of the silenced majority that were completely absent from my grade school history books, and he painted a picture of war that lacked the usual illusion of good fighting against evil.

What resonated with me the most was the chapter on the
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Obama

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will restore, as Paul Krugman wrote in the *New York Times*, the "nation of moral ideals."

Not long ago, I visited the American Museum of History in the celebrated Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. One of the most popular exhibitions was called *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War*. It was holiday time and lines of happy people, including many children, shuffled through a Santa's grotto of war and conquest, where messages about their nation's "great mission" were lit up. These included tributes to the "exceptional Americans [who] saved a million lives" in Vietnam where they were "determined to stop communist expansion." In Iraq, other brave Americans "employed air strikes of unprecedented precision."

What was shocking was not so much the revisionism of two of the epic crimes of modern times but the sheer routine scale of omission.

Like all U.S. presidents, Bush and Obama have much in common. The wars of both presidents, and the wars of Clinton and Reagan, Carter and Ford, Nixon and Kennedy, are justified by the enduring myth of exceptional America—a myth the late Harold Pinter described as "a brilliant, witty, highly successful act of hypnosis."

The clever young man who recently made it to the White House is a very fine hypnotist, partly because it is so extraordinary to see an African-American at the pinnacle of power in the land of slavery. However, this is the 21st century, and race— together with gender and even class—can be very seductive tools of propaganda. For what matters, above race and gender, is the class one serves.

George Bush's inner circle—from the State Department to the Supreme Court—was perhaps the most multiracial in presidential history. It was PC par excellence. Think Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell. It was also the most reactionary.

To many, Obama's very presence in the White House reaffirms the moral nation. He is a marketing dream. Like Calvin Klein or Benetton, he is a brand that promises something special—something exciting, almost risqué, as if he might be a radical, as if he might enact change. He makes people feel good. He's postmodern man with no political baggage.

In his book, *Dreams From My Father*, Obama refers to the job he took after he graduated from Columbia University in 1983. He describes his employer as "a consulting house to multinational corporations." For some reason, he does not say who his employer was or what he did there. The employer was Business International Corporation, which has a long history of providing cover for the CIA with covert action and infiltrating unions and the left. I know this because it was especially active in my own country, Australia.

Obama does not say what he did at Business International, and there may be nothing sinister, but it seems worthy of enquiry, and debate, surely, as a clue to whom the man is.

During his brief period in the Senate, Obama voted to continue the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He voted for the USA PATRIOT Act. He refused to support a bill for single-payer health care. He supported the death penalty. As a presidential candidate, he received more corporate backing than John McCain. He promised to close Guantánamo as a priority and has not. Instead, he

new tactical nuclear weapons designed to blur the distinction between nuclear and conventional war. Like George Bush, he used the absurdity of Europe threatened by Iran to justify building a missile system aimed at Russia and China.

In a pseudo event at the Annapolis Naval Academy, decked with flags and uniforms, Obama lied that the troops were coming home. The head of the army, General George Casey, says America will be in Iraq for up to a decade; other generals say 15 years. Units will be relabeled as trainers; mercenaries will take their place. That is how the

United for Peace and Justice drew only a few thousand. The outgoing president of UFPJ, Leslie Cagan, says her people aren't turning up because "it's enough for many of them that Obama has a plan to end the war and that things are moving in the right direction." And where is the mighty MoveOn these days? Where is its campaign against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? And what exactly was said when, in February, MoveOn's executive director, Jason Ruben, met President Obama?

Yes, a lot of good people mobilized for Obama. But



Tell it to a child in the carnage of Gaza caused by American smart weapons, which ... were resupplied to Israel for use ... only after the Obama team let it be known it would not object.

has excused the perpetrators of torture, reinstated the infamous military commissions, kept the Bush gulag intact and opposed habeus corpus.

Daniel Ellsberg was right when he said that, under Bush, a military coup had taken place in the United States, giving the Pentagon unprecedented powers. These powers have been reinforced by the presence of Robert Gates, a Bush family crony and George W. Bush's secretary of defense, and by all the Bush Pentagon officials and generals who have kept their jobs under Obama.

In Colombia, Obama is planning to spend \$46 million on a new military base that will support a regime backed by death squads and further the tragic history of Washington's intervention in Latin America.

In a pseudo event staged in Prague, Obama promised a world without nuclear weapons to a global audience mostly unaware that America is building

Vietnam War endured past the American "withdrawal."

Chris Hedges, author of *Empire of Illusion*, puts it well. "President Obama," he wrote, "does one thing and Brand Obama gets you to believe another. This is the essence of successful advertising. You buy or do what the advertiser wants because of how they can make you feel." And so you are kept in "a perpetual state of childishness." He calls this "junk politics."

The tragedy is that Brand Obama appears to have crippled or absorbed the antiwar movement, the peace movement. Out of 256 Democrats in Congress, 30 are willing to stand against Obama's and Nancy Pelosi's war party. On June 16, they voted for \$106 billion for more war.

In Washington, the Out of Iraq Caucus is out of action. Its members can't even come up with a form of words for why they are silent. On March 21, a demonstration at the Pentagon by the once mighty

what did they demand of him—apart from the amorphous "change"? That isn't activism.

Activism doesn't give up. Activism is not about identity politics. Activism doesn't wait to be told. Activism doesn't rely on the opiate of hope. Woody Allen once said, "I felt a lot better when I gave up hope." Real activism has little time for identity politics, a distraction that confuses and suckers good people everywhere.

I write for the Italian newspaper *Il Manifesto*, or rather I used to write for it. In February, I sent the foreign editor an article that raised questions about Obama as a progressive force. The article was rejected. Why? I asked. "For the moment," wrote the editor, "we prefer to maintain a more 'positive' approach to the novelty presented by Obama ... we will take on specific issues ... but we would not like to say that he will make no difference."

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In other words, an American president drafted to promote the most rapacious system in history is ordained and depoliticized by the left. What is remarkable about this state of affairs is that the so-called radical left has never been more aware, more conscious, of the iniquities of power. The green movement, for example, has raised the consciousness of millions of people, so that almost every child knows something about global warming; and yet there is a resistance within the green movement to the notion of power as a military project. Similar observations can be made of the gay and feminist movements; as for the labor movement, is it still breathing?

One of my favorite quotations is from Milan Kundera: "The struggle of people against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting." We should never forget that the primary goal of great power is to distract and limit our natural desire for social justice and equity and real democracy. Long ago, Bernays' invisible government of propaganda elevated big business from its unpopular status as a kind of mafia to that of a patriotic driving force. The American Way of Life began as an advertising slogan. The modern image of Santa Claus was an invention of Coca Cola.

Today, we are presented with an extraordinary opportunity, thanks to the crash of Wall Street and the revelation, for ordinary people, that the free market has nothing to do with freedom. The opportunity is to recognize a stirring in America that is unfamiliar to many on the left, but is related to a great popular movement growing all over the world.

In Latin America, less than 20 years ago, there was the usual despair, the usual divisions of poverty and wealth, the usual thugs in uniforms running unspeakable regimes. There is now a people's movement based on the revival of indigenous cultures and languages and a history of popular and revolutionary struggle less affected by ideological distortions than anywhere else.

The recent, amazing achievements in Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, El Salvador, Argentina, Brazil

and Paraguay represent a struggle for community and political rights that is truly historic, with implications for all of us. These successes are expressed perversely in the overthrow of the government of Honduras, for the smaller the country the greater the threat that the contagion of emancipation will follow.

Across the world, social movements and grassroots organizations have emerged to fight free market dogma. They have educated governments in the South that food for export is a problem rather than a solution to global poverty. They have politicized ordinary people to stand up for their rights, as in the Philippines and South Africa. An authentic globalization is growing as never before, and this is exciting.

Consider the remarkable boycott, disinvestment and sanctions campaign—BDS for short—aimed at Israel, that is sweeping the world. Israeli ships have been turned away from South Africa and western Australia. A French company has been forced to abandon plans to build a railway connecting Jerusalem with illegal Israeli settlements. Israeli sporting bodies find themselves isolated. Universities have begun to sever ties with Israel, and students are active for the first time in a generation. Thanks to them, Israel's South Africa moment is approaching, for this is, partly, how apartheid was defeated.

In the 1950s, we never expected the great wind of the 1960s to blow. Feel the breeze today. In the last eight months millions of angry emails, sent by ordinary Americans, have flooded Washington. This has not happened before. People are outraged as their lives are attacked; they bear no resemblance to the passive mass presented by the media.

Look at the polls that are seldom reported. More than two-thirds of Americans say the government should care for those who cannot care for themselves; 64 percent would pay higher taxes to guarantee health care for everyone; 59 percent are favorable toward unions; 70 percent want nuclear disarmament; 72 percent want the United States completely out of Iraq; and so on.

For too long, ordinary Americans have been cast



During his brief period in the Senate, Obama voted to continue the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He voted for the USA PATRIOT Act. He refused to support single-payer health care. He supported the death penalty.

in stereotypes that are contemptuous. That is why the progressive attitudes of ordinary people are seldom reported in the media. They are not ignorant. They are subversive. They are informed. And they are "anti-American."

I once asked a friend, the great American war correspondent and humanitarian Martha Gellhorn, to explain "anti-American" to me. "I'll tell you what 'anti-American' is," she said. "It's what governments and their vested interests call those who honor America by objecting to war and the theft of resources and believing in all of humanity. There are millions of these anti-Americans in the United States. They are ordinary people who belong to no elite and who judge their government in moral terms, though they would call it common decency. They are not vain. They are the people with a wakeful conscience, the best of America's citizens.

They can be counted on. They were in the South with the civil rights movement, ending slavery. They were in the streets, demanding an end to the wars in Asia. Sure, they disappear from view now and then, but they are like seeds beneath the snow. I would say they are truly exceptional."

A certain populism is once again growing in America and which has a proud, if forgotten past. In the 19th century, an authentic grassroots Americanism was expressed in populism's achievements: women's suffrage, the campaign for an eight-hour day, graduated income tax and public ownership of railways and communications, and breaking the power of corporate lobbyists.

The American populists were far from perfect; at times they would keep bad company, but they spoke from the ground up, not from the top down. They were betrayed by leaders who urged them to compromise and merge with the Democratic Party. Does that sound familiar?

What Obama and the bankers and the generals, and the IMF and the CIA and CNN fear is ordinary people coming together and acting together. It is a fear as old as democracy: a fear that suddenly people convert their anger to action and are guided by the truth. "At a time of universal deceit," wrote George Orwell, "telling the truth is a revolutionary act."

John Pilger is an internationally renowned investigative journalist and documentary filmmaker. His latest film is *The War on Democracy*. His most recent book is *Freedom Next Time* (Bantam/Random House, 2006). johnpilger.com.

Iraq War Veteran

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Vietnam War, because the parallels with Fallujah were too strong for me to ignore. Professor Zinn wrote, "Large areas of South Vietnam were declared 'free-fire zones,' which meant that all persons remaining within them—civilians, old people, children—were considered enemies, and bombs were dropped at will. Villages suspected of harboring Viet Cong were subject to 'search and destroy' missions—

men of military age in the villages were killed, the homes were burned, and the women, children, and old people were sent off to refugee camps."

Fallujah was no different, and Professor Zinn made me realize that what happened to me in Iraq was not unique, and that I'm not crazy for feeling disgusted with having been a part of it. The Iraq and Afghanistan wars are not departures from America's proud history, but instead, are events that follow logically from 234 years of American policy.

Professor Zinn is no longer here with us

physically, but as long as there are poor and oppressed people in this world, his memory will be called upon, and until subjugation and injustice become just a memory, Professor Zinn will not be forgotten. He leaves behind him a new generation of resistance, armed with his words and ideas, who will pick up the torch where he left it and strive forward for peace and justice.

Professor Zinn touched many people's lives, but few like he did mine. In a way, he saved my life. And thanks to him, I'll never be on the wrong side of the gun again.

New York City's Jihad Against Debbie Almontaser

by Amy Goodman

Debbie Almontaser has won a victory in her battle against discrimination. She was the founding principal of the first Arabic-language public school in the United States, until a campaign of hate forced her out. She is well known for her success in bridging cultural divides, bringing together Muslims, Christians and Jews, yet as the new school neared its opening date in the summer of 2007, she became the target of anti-Muslim and anti-Arab attacks. Last week, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruled that the New York City Department of Education (DOE) discriminated against her "on account of her race, religion and national origin."

The school is called the Khalil Gibran International Academy. Gibran was a Lebanese-born writer and philosopher. His best-known book, "The Prophet," published in 1923, has sold more than 100 million copies in 40 languages. A line from "The Prophet," prominent on the academy's website, reads, "The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind."

But open-mindedness was hardly the response of a fringe group called Stop the Madrassa. The group used the Arabic word for school because of its negative associations with religious schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The academy was developed as a secular, dual-language public school for sixth through 12th grades and had no religious curriculum. As the small but vocal group of opponents continued to take issue with the planned school, the DOE compelled Almontaser to submit to an interview with Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*. The article's headline read: "City Principal Is 'Revolting.'"

In the interview, Almontaser was asked to explain the use of the word *intifada*, because the word appeared on a T-shirt of a women's organization that sometimes used the offices of a community group where she was a board member. The T-shirt had nothing to do with the Khalil Gibran International Academy. Almontaser told me: "He asked me one or two questions about the school and then asked me

for the root word of the word *intifada*. As an educator, I simply responded and said to him that it comes from the root word of the word *infad* in Arabic, which is 'shake off'; however, this word has developed a negative connotation based on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, where thousands of people have died. Within the interview, I stated that I . . . condemn all violence, any shape, way or form."

Her lawyer, Alan Levine, told me: "Debbie was the victim of a smear campaign. . . . The bigots in the community had no power to fire; the Department of Education did. They succumbed to the bigots." The EEOC report concluded, "DOE succumbed to the very bias that the creation of the school was intended to dispel, and a small segment of the public succeeded in imposing its prejudices on DOE as an employer." Almontaser is seeking reinstatement as principal of the KGIA, along with back pay, damages and legal fees. The New York City Law Department has vowed to fight her. Levine hopes for a settlement, but is prepared to file a lawsuit, saying: "The EEOC,

"The bigots in the community had no power to fire; the Department of Education did. They succumbed to the bigots."

which has no ax to grind [and] is the country's premier agency with regard to employment discrimination claims, says that they did discriminate. I'll go with the EEOC. I'm confident that a judge or jury will." Days after the EEOC letter was delivered, the non-Arab-American principal of the KGIA stepped down, without explanation, and was replaced by an Arab-American educator.

Three years ago, in the midst of the firestorm, a group of prominent Jewish leaders, including 15 rabbis, wrote an open letter to the Jewish community in support of Almontaser, saying, "We seek your support and respect for a colleague and friend who has suffered and



Debbie Almontaser

continues to suffer from a disturbing and growing prejudice in our midst . . . her return to her children [at the KGIA] will only bring greater peace and understanding between people of all faiths in our educational system and in our city as a whole." This case, as a metaphor, has broader implications, as protests continue in the streets of Jerusalem following the Israeli announcement of thousands of new housing units in occupied East Jerusalem, blindsiding Vice President Joe Biden as he began a peacemaking visit there. Almontaser told me, "It's my life's dream . . . to lead a school, to establish an institution that would set precedents in helping building bridges of understanding and certainly creating young people who will be global thinkers, competing in the 21st-century workforce." Hers is a vision the New York City Department of Education should embrace, with her prompt reinstatement.

Denis Moynihan contributed research to this column.

Amy Goodman is the host of *Democracy Now!*, a daily international TV/radio news hour airing on more than 800 stations in North America. She is the author of *Breaking the Sound Barrier*, recently released in paperback and now a *New York Times* best-seller.

Ain't I a Woman?

Delivered 1851 at the Women's Convention in Akron, Ohio:

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and

planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne 13 children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? [member of audience whispers, "intellect"] That's it, honey. What's that got to do with women's rights or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him. If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say.

—Sojourner Truth

My Father's Unjust Incarceration

The Case of the Holy Land Five

by Noor Elashi

A decade before my father received a 65-year prison sentence, he handed me an unusual book, one that ultimately shifted the way I perceive the world. It was entitled *Magic Eye*, and it contained pages of what seemed like simple multicolored patterns. But each page had a hidden gift, a sensational truth. By diverging your eyes, my father told me, you'll see an unexpected image. It seemed to challenge everything I'd ever known. I stared at the flat, distorted artwork until it transformed into a faded silhouette and then a three-dimensional shape like a group of dolphins or a rose-filled heart. Years later, as I flip through the pages of my family's narrative, I see images that are far less whimsical, and indeed, painful.

U.S. Attorney Jim Jacks filed a motion asking the federal judge in the Holy Land Foundation case to transfer my father—Ghassan Elashi, the charity's co-founder—and his colleagues to a prison that closely monitors its inmates. If transferred to either of these so-called "Communication Management Units" in Terre Haute, Ind., or Marion, Ill., my father's phone calls would be more limited than they are now, in Seagoville, Texas. His letters would be monitored, his visitation time would be reduced to four hours a month and his conversations would be restricted to English, which is his second language.

Perhaps this may seem like an illustration of an effective justice system at work. But if one diverges his or her eyes, the camouflaged truth will slowly unfold, until it comes into focus. I, for one, see a hazel-eyed girl with pale skin and soft dark curls losing her home upon Israel's creation in 1948. The young woman, now my paternal grandmother, often tells me about her banishment from Jaffa, a once vibrant Palestinian city known for its orange groves and turquoise beach. I also see a man who was expelled from his native Gaza City in 1967 and was not allowed to return. I grew up hearing stories from this man, my father, about the plight of Palestinians, whom he called "a voiceless population" suffering from occupation, starvation, demolished homes, uprooted trees, constrained movement and a devastated economy.

As I look deeper, I see the Holy Land Foundation rise to stardom in the eyes of human rights activists worldwide who had witnessed this charitable organization alleviate poverty in Occupied Palestine through bags of rice, boxes of medicine, conventional humanitarian aid. I see my family scrutinized throughout the 1990s due to agenda-driven reports linking my father to terrorism—reports written by individuals who saw the HLF's strength as a threat, for they wanted Palestinians to remain weak and desolate. I see President Bush shutting down the Holy Land Foundation three months after Sept. 11, 2001, calling the action "another important step in the financial fight against terror."

I see my father and his colleagues tried in 2007 and almost vindicated. I see him tried a second time and convicted in 2008, thereby receiving a life-long sentence. In both trials, prosecutors argued that the HLF gave money to Palestinian zakat (charity) committees that they claimed were controlled

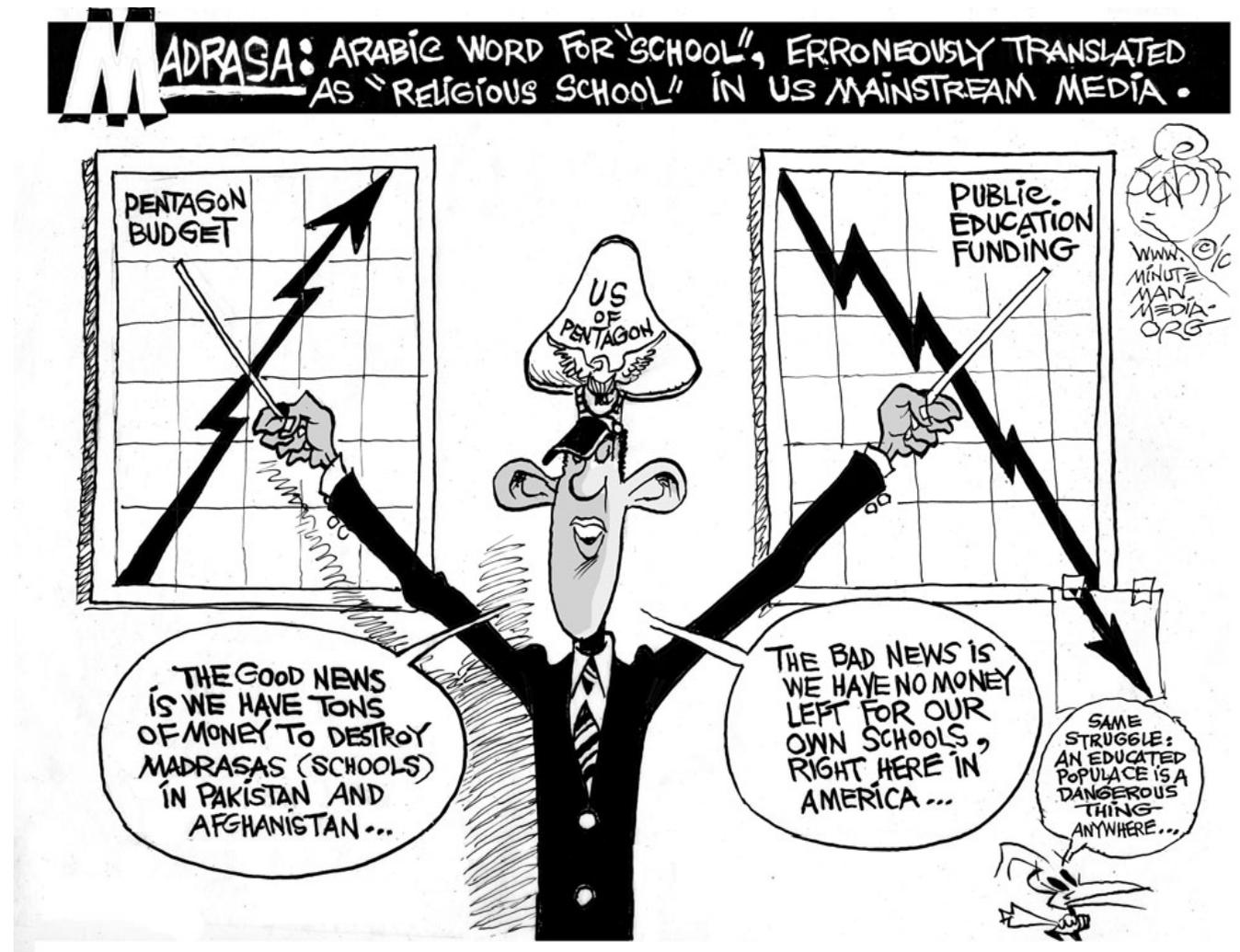
by Hamas, which the U.S. designated a terrorist organization in 1995. To prove this, prosecutors called to the stand an Israeli intelligence agent, testifying under the pseudonym of Avi, who claimed he could "smell Hamas." The prosecutors intimidated the jury by showing them scenes of suicide bombings completely unaffiliated with the HLF, and they used guilt by association by linking my father and the other defendants to relatives who are members of Hamas. The defense attorneys' argument was simple: The Holy Land Five gave charity to the same zakat committees to which the American government agency U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) gave money. Furthermore, none of the zakat committees included in the HLF indictment were named on any of the U.S. Treasury Department's lists of designated terrorist organizations.

Nationally respected human rights law professors such as David Cole have associated the Holy Land case with McCarthyism, and other experts have called it a miscarriage of justice. The book that my father gave me had this subtitle: *A New Way of Looking at the World*. If one looks at our world with a fresh pair of eyes, he or she will see that Jim Jacks' request for harsher prison conditions is unnecessarily cruel, and that supporting the appeal process is the only way to achieve justice. He or she will also see that the Holy Land Five are political prisoners and that we live in a twisted time, a time when humanitarians are pursued relentlessly for political purposes.

Noor Elashi is a Palestinian-American writer based in New York City.



Top: Noor Elashi and her father, Ghassan Elashi
Bottom: Ghassan Elashi (center) in front of the Holy Land Foundation



Congo's Women on the Front Lines of a War for Wealth

by Sylvie Maunga Mbanga

The Congolese conflict is considered the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, and the deadliest since World War II. Since 1998, more than six million people have died as a result of this war. Over two million people have been forced to flee their homes, and some 400,000 Congolese have sought refuge in neighboring countries. Hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been kidnapped, raped and tortured.

The atrocious way that sexual violence is used in Congo is often indescribable. Women and even children are being attacked by multiple men, often in public and in front of their husbands, kids and neighbors. After the rape, the perpetrator sometimes fires his gun into the woman's vagina.

The purpose is not just to abuse women, but also to destroy the Congolese community, and to traumatize and humiliate people. Armed groups use rape to force civilians to leave mining areas so they can exploit the illicit but lucrative trade in minerals. Specifically, armed groups are profiting from the mineral "coltan" (or tantalum), as well as gold and tin, which each of us rely on daily to power our electronic devices. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is rich with mineral deposits, but it's the

armed groups, not the Congolese people, who benefit from this wealth.

We all have a responsibility to act, in every way we can.

During my experience working with survivors of sexual violence in eastern Congo as a coordinator

wanted: The only thing they asked for was peace.

To help women in Congo, the world needs to address the causes of the violence. Organizations would give women some money and help them

The purpose is not just to abuse women, but also to destroy the Congolese community.

for the Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation, I lived and breathed the suffering of women. One woman told me that all in the same day she was raped in front of her husband and kids, impregnated and infected with HIV. How is it possible?

I was unable to respond to all of the women's needs. Even with my tools and holistic approach, including psychological assistance, medical assistance, economic and legal resources, I couldn't clean away their horrible stories. And I couldn't give them what they really

reintegrate back into their villages, but after five months they come back and tell you that the rebellion has passed through their village, robbed them and raped them again. Justice was usually unattainable due to corruption.

More than 60 percent of intervention efforts are focused on the consequences of the war and violence. Yet to truly give the women what they want—peace—then we need to address the structural causes of the violence.

The Congolese government has an obligation to protect its citizens, yet during the last six years there has been no state authority in Congo. Local and foreign rebel groups still operate in the East. Even worse, many of the perpetrators of these atrocities have been integrated into the national army without any accountability for past abuses. At the same time, the U.N. peacekeeping mission continues to support the "Congolese" army, and the United States is training a number of Congolese troops through Africom.

The bottom line: Any intervention must "do no harm" and ensure that violence against women is prevented at all costs.

The Obama administration has undertaken several initiatives, including a grant of \$17 million to address sexual violence. But even more important will be the U.S. government's long-term plan to end the war. The Obama administration should make

sure that the Congolese government is addressing the people's needs, implementing democracy, and fostering accountability by training a professional army and ending political corruption. The Obama administration should also press the Congolese government to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 by ensuring the equal and full participation of Congolese women as active agents in peace and security.

The epidemic of sexual violence in Congo is a humiliation to all humanity, to our dignity and our values. The world must speak up and act now to end mass atrocities. Otherwise, the silence is complicity.

Sylvie Maunga Mbanga, a trained lawyer, dedicated her career to working with local Congolese organizations to fight sexual violence against women in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She currently lives in Washington, D.C., and continues to be a fierce advocate for women in Congo through the Enough Project's RAISE Hope for Congo campaign.



A Congolese woman holds on to her newborn child, whom she aptly named Tumaini, which means "Hope" in Swahili



Three women gather for a "town hall" meeting at the Buhimba camp for internally displaced persons in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo

*"We women, we have been victims of rape and we need security more than anything. We want that to stop so that no other woman is raped in future."
—Resident of rebel-held Bukavu*



by Amira Hass

An e w military order aimed at preventing infiltration will come into force this week, enabling the

deportation of tens of thousands of Palestinians from the West Bank, or their indictment on charges carrying prison terms of up to seven years.

When the order comes into effect, tens of thousands of Palestinians will automatically become criminal offenders liable to be severely punished.

Given the security authorities' actions over the past decade, the first Palestinians likely to be targeted under the new rules will be those whose ID cards bear home addresses in the Gaza Strip—people born in Gaza and their West Bank-born children—or those born in the West Bank or abroad who for various reasons lost their residency status. Also likely to be targeted are foreign-born spouses of Palestinians.

Until now, Israeli civil courts have occasionally prevented the expulsion of these three groups from the West Bank. The new order, however, puts them under the sole jurisdiction of Israeli military courts.

The new order defines anyone who enters the West Bank illegally as an infiltrator, as well as "a person who is present in the area and does not lawfully hold a permit." The order takes the original 1969 definition of infiltrator to the extreme, as the term originally applied only to those illegally staying in Israel after having passed through countries then classified as enemy states—Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.

The order's language is both general and ambiguous, stipulating that the term infiltrator will also be applied to Palestinian residents of Jerusalem, citizens of countries with which Israel has friendly ties (such as the United States) and Israeli citizens, whether Arab or Jewish. All of this depends on the judgment of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) commanders in the field.

The new guidelines are expected to clamp down on protests in the West Bank.

The Hamoked Center for the Defense of the Individual was the first Israeli human rights organization to issue warnings against the order, signed six months ago by then-commander of the IDF in Judea and Samaria Area, Gadi Shamni.

Two weeks ago, Hamoked director Dalia Kerstein sent GOC Central Command Avi Mizrahi a request to delay the order, given "the dramatic change it causes in relation to the human rights of a tremendous number of people."

According to the provisions, "a person is presumed to be an infiltrator if he is present in the area without a document or permit which attest to his lawful

IDF ORDER WILL ENABLE MASS DEPORTATIONS FROM WEST BANK



Israeli soldier checks IDs in Hebron, on the West Bank

presence in the area without reasonable justification." Such documentation, it says, must be "issued by the commander of IDF forces in the Judea and Samaria area or someone acting on his behalf."

The instructions, however, are unclear about whether the permits referred to are those currently in force or new permits that military commanders might issue in the future. The provisions are also unclear about the status of bearers of West Bank residency cards and disregard the existence of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the agreements Israel signed with it and the PLO.

The order stipulates that if a commander discovers that an infiltrator has recently entered a given area, he "may order his deportation before 72 hours elapse from the time he is served the written deportation order, provided the infiltrator is deported to the country or area from whence he infiltrated."

The order also subjects suspected infiltrators to criminal proceedings that could result in sentences of up to seven years. Individuals who can prove that they entered the West Bank legally but do not have permission to remain there will also be tried on charges carrying a maximum sentence of three years. (According to current Israeli law, illegal residents typically receive one-year sentences.)

The new provisions also allow the IDF commander in the area to require that infiltrators pay for the cost of their own detention, custody and expulsion, up to a total of \$2,300.

Currently, Palestinians need special permits to enter areas near the separation fence, even if their homes are there, and Palestinians have long been barred

from the Jordan Valley without special authorization. Until 2009, East Jerusalemites needed permission to enter Area A, territory under full PA control.

The fear that Palestinians with Gaza addresses will be the first to be targeted by this order is based on measures that Israel has taken in recent years to curtail their right to live, work, study or even visit the West Bank. These measures violate the Oslo Accords.

According to a decision by the West Bank commander that was not backed by military legislation, since 2007, Palestinians with Gaza addresses must request a permit to stay in the West Bank. Since 2000, they have been defined as illegal sojourners if they have Gaza addresses, as if they were citizens of a foreign state. Many of them have been deported to Gaza, including those born in the West Bank.

One group expected to be particularly harmed by

the new rules is Palestinians who moved to the West Bank under family reunification provisions, which Israel stopped granting for several years.

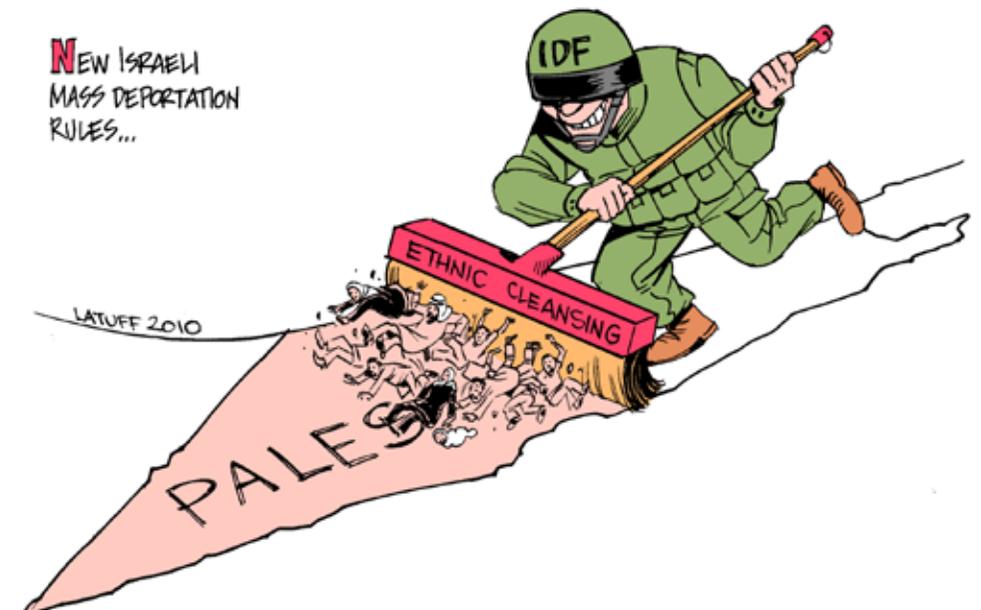
In 2007, amid a number of Hamoked petitions and as a goodwill gesture to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, tens of thousands of people received Palestinian residency cards. The PA distributed the cards, but Israel had exclusive control over who could receive them. Thousands of Palestinians, however, remained classified as "illegal sojourners," including many who are not citizens of any other country.

The new order is the latest step by the Israeli government in recent years to require permits that limit the freedom of movement and residency previously conferred by Palestinian ID cards. The new regulations are particularly sweeping, allowing for criminal measures and the mass expulsion of people from their homes.

The IDF Spokesman's Office said in response, "The amendments to the order on preventing infiltration, signed by GOC Central Command, were issued as part of a series of manifests, orders and appointments in Judea and Samaria, in Hebrew and Arabic as required, and will be posted in the offices of the Civil Administration and military courts' defense attorneys in Judea and Samaria. The IDF is ready to implement the order, which is not intended to apply to Israelis, but to illegal sojourners in Judea and Samaria."

This article originally appeared in Ha'aretz.

Amira Hass is a prominent leftwing Israeli journalist and author. She is particularly recognized for her reporting on Palestinian affairs in the West Bank and Gaza, where she has also lived for a number of years. Hass has won the 2000 Press Freedom Hero award from the International Press Institute, the 2002 Bruno Kerisky Human Rights Award, the 2003 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, the inaugural award from the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund in 2004 and the 2009 Hrant Dink Memorial Award.



Ten Reasons East Jerusalem Does Not Belong to Jewish Israelis

by Juan Cole

Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) recently, "Jerusalem is not a settlement." He went on to say that the historical connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel cannot be denied. He added that neither could the historical connection between the Jewish people and Jerusalem. He

of considering laws, rights or common human decency toward others not of his ethnic group.

So here are the reasons that Netanyahu is profoundly wrong, and East Jerusalem does not belong to him.

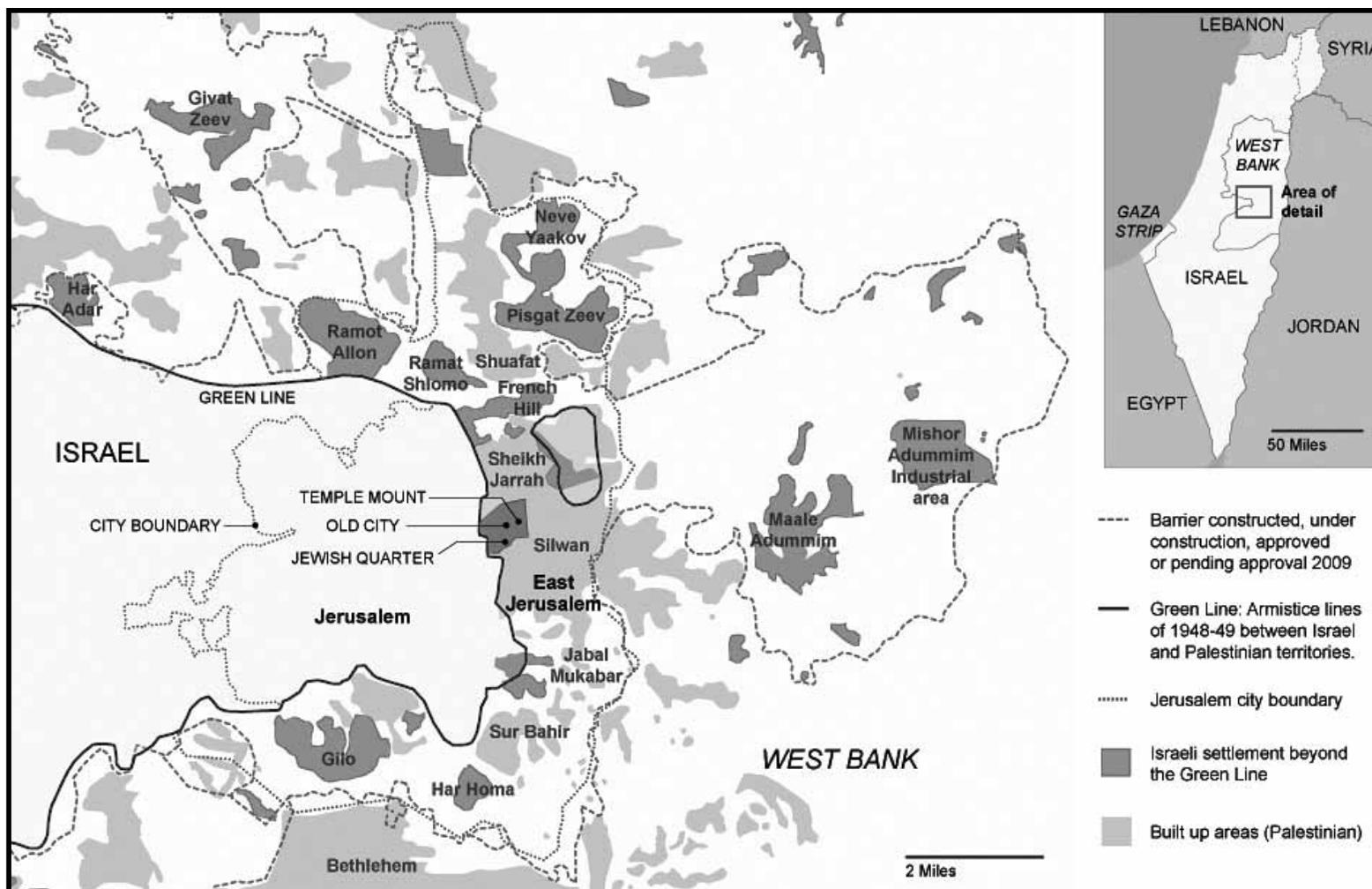
1. In international law, East Jerusalem is occupied territory, as are the parts of the West Bank that Israel unilaterally annexed to its district of Jerusalem. The

laughable. My back yard is empty, but that does not give Netanyahu the right to put up an apartment complex on it.

2. Israeli governments have not in fact been united or consistent about what to do with East Jerusalem and the West Bank, contrary to what Netanyahu says. The Galili Plan for settlements in the West Bank was adopted only in 1973. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin made commitments as part of the Oslo Peace

3. Romantic nationalism imagines a "people" as eternal and as having an eternal connection with a specific piece of land. This way of thinking is fantastic and mythological. Peoples are formed and change and sometimes cease to be, though they might have descendants who abandoned that religion or ethnicity or language. Human beings have moved all around and are not directly tied to any territory in an exclusive way, since

1000 BCE. First of all, it is not clear when exactly Judaism as a religion centered on the worship of the one God took firm form. It appears to have been a late development, since no evidence of worship of anything but ordinary Canaanite deities has been found in archeological sites through 1000 BCE. There was no invasion of geographical Palestine from Egypt by former slaves in the 1200s BCE. The pyramids had been built much earlier and had not used slave labor. The chronicle of the events of the reign of Ramses II on the wall in Luxor does not talk about any major slave revolts or flights into the Sinai



My back yard is empty, but that does not give Netanyahu the right to put up an apartment complex on it.

peninsula. Egyptian sources never mention Moses or the 12 plagues, etc. Jews and Judaism emerged from a certain social class of Canaanites over a period of centuries inside Palestine.

insisted, "The Jewish people were building Jerusalem 3,000 years ago and the Jewish people are building Jerusalem today." He said, "Jerusalem is not a settlement. It is our capital." He told his applauding audience of 7,500 that he was simply following the policies of all Israeli governments since the 1967 conquest of Jerusalem in the Six Day War.

Netanyahu mixed together romantic-nationalist clichés with a series of historically false assertions. But even more important was everything he left out of the history, and his citation of his warped and inaccurate history instead

Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Hague Regulations of 1907 forbid occupying powers to alter the lifeways of civilians who are occupied, and forbid the settling of people from the occupiers' country in the occupied territory. Israel's expulsion of Palestinians from their homes in East Jerusalem, its usurpation of Palestinian property there and its settling of Israelis on Palestinian land are all gross violations of international law. Israeli claims that they are not occupying Palestinian land because the Palestinians have no state are cruel and tautological. Israeli claims that they are building on empty territory are

Process to withdraw from Palestinian territory and grant Palestinians a state, promises for which he was assassinated by the Israeli far right (elements of which are now supporting Netanyahu's government). As late as 2000, then Prime Minister Ehud Barak claims that he gave oral assurances that Palestinians could have almost all of the West Bank and could have some arrangement by which East Jerusalem could be its capital. Netanyahu tried to give the impression that far rightwing Likud policy on East Jerusalem and the West Bank has been shared by all previous Israeli governments, but this is simply not true.

many groups have lived on most pieces of land. Jerusalem was not founded by Jews, i.e. adherents of the Jewish religion. It was founded between 3000 BCE and 2600 BCE by a West Semitic people or possibly the Canaanites, the common ancestors of Palestinians, Lebanese, many Syrians and Jordanians, and many Jews. But when it was founded Jews did not exist.

4. Jerusalem was founded in honor of the ancient god Shalem. It does not mean City of Peace but rather "built-up place of Shalem."

5. The "Jewish people" were not building Jerusalem 3,000 years ago, i.e.

6. Jerusalem not only was not being built by the likely then non-existent "Jewish people" in 1000 BCE, but Jerusalem probably was not even inhabited at that point in history. Jerusalem appears to have been abandoned between 1000 BCE and 900 BCE, the traditional dates for the united kingdom under David and Solomon. So Jerusalem was not "the city of David," since there was no city when he is said to have lived. No sign of magnificent palaces or great states has been found in the archeology of this period, and the Assyrian tablets, which recorded even

continued on page 15 ...

... continued from page 14
minor events throughout the Middle East, such as the actions of Arab queens, don't mention any great kingdom of David and Solomon in geographical Palestine.

7. Since archeology does not show the existence of a Jewish kingdom or kingdoms in the so-called First Temple Period, it is not clear when exactly the Jewish people would have ruled Jerusalem except for the Hasmonean Kingdom. The Assyrians conquered Jerusalem in 722 BCE. The Babylonians took it in 597 BCE and ruled it until they were themselves conquered in 539 BCE by the Achaemenids of ancient Iran, who ruled Jerusalem until Alexander the Great took the Levant in the 330s BCE. Alexander's descendants, the Ptolemies ruled Jerusalem until 198 BCE, when Alexander's other descendants, the Seleucids, took the city. With the Maccabean Revolt in 168 BCE, the Jewish Hasmonean kingdom did rule Jerusalem until 37 BCE, though Antigonus II Mattathias, the last Hasmonean, only took over Jerusalem with the help of the Parthian dynasty in 40 BCE. Herod ruled from 37 BCE until the Romans conquered what they called Palestine in 6 CE (CE is the "Common Era," or what Christians call AD). The Romans and then the Eastern Roman Empire of Byzantium ruled Jerusalem from 6 CE until 614 CE, when the Iranian Sasanian Empire Conquered it, ruling until 629 CE when the Byzantines took it back.

The Muslims conquered Jerusalem in 638 and ruled it until 1099 when the

Crusaders conquered it. The Crusaders killed or expelled Jews and Muslims from the city. The Muslims under Saladin took it back in 1187 CE and allowed Jews to return, and Muslims ruled it until the end of World War I, or altogether for about 1192 years.

Adherents of Judaism did not found Jerusalem. It existed for perhaps 2,700

D. The Iranians, who ruled it for 205 years under the Achaemenids, for three years under the Parthians (insofar as the last Hasmonean was actually their vassal), and for 15 years under the Sasanids.

E. The Greeks, who ruled it for over 160 years if we count the Ptolemies and Seleucids as Greek. If we count them as

[Jerusalem] existed for perhaps 2,700 years before anything we might recognize as Judaism arose.

years before anything we might recognize as Judaism arose. Jewish rule may have been no longer than 170 years or so, i.e., the kingdom of the Hasmoneans.

8. Therefore, if the historical building of Jerusalem and historical connection with Jerusalem establishes sovereignty over it, as Netanyahu claims, here are the groups that have the greatest claim to the city:

A. The Muslims, who ruled it and built it over 1191 years.

B. The Egyptians, who ruled it as a vassal state for several hundred years in the second millennium BCE.

C. The Italians, who ruled it about 444 years until the fall of the Roman Empire in 450 CE.

Egyptians and Syrians, that would increase the Egyptian claim and introduce a Syrian one.

F. The successor states to the Byzantines, which could be either Greece or Turkey, who ruled it 188 years, though if we consider the heir to be Greece and add in the time the Hellenistic Greek dynasties ruled it, that would give Greece nearly 350 years as ruler of Jerusalem.

G. There is an Iraqi claim to Jerusalem based on the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests, as well as perhaps the rule of the Ayyubids (Saladin's dynasty), who were Kurds from Iraq.

9. Of course, Jews are historically connected to Jerusalem by the Temple, whenever that connection is dated to.

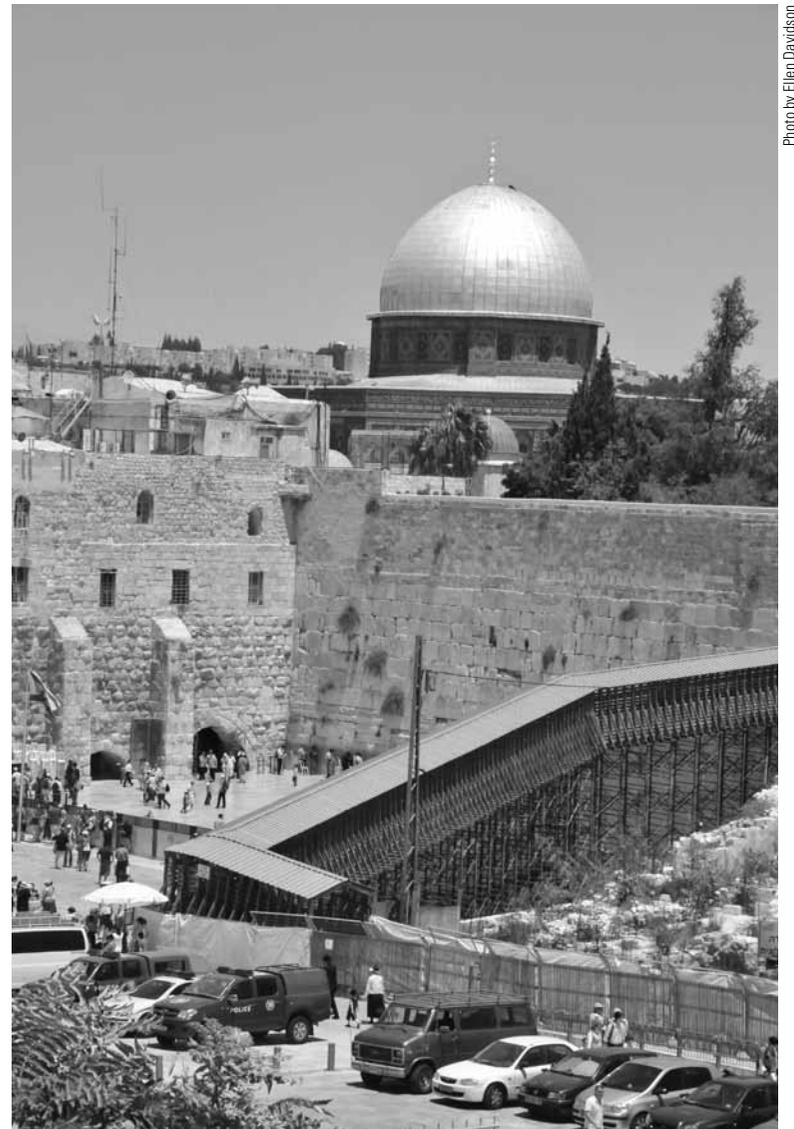


Photo by Ellen Davidson

Jerusalem: The Dome of the Rock and the Wailing Wall

But that link mostly was pursued when Jews were not in political control of the city, which was under Iranian, Greek and Roman rule. It cannot therefore be deployed to make a demand for political control of the whole city.

10. The Jews of Jerusalem and the rest of Palestine did not for the most part leave after the failure of the Bar Kochba

revolt against the Romans in 136 CE. They continued to live there and to farm in Palestine under Roman rule and then Byzantine. They gradually converted to Christianity. After 638 CE all but 10 percent gradually converted to Islam. The present-day Palestinians are the descendants of the ancient Jews and have every right to live where their ancestors have lived for centuries.

Walking

by Jane Toby

Inside the walled city of Bethlehem:

Walking. In the Rachel's Tomb area where the Wall looms high ("Rachel is my neighbor but I can't visit her anymore," Antoinette has told me. Rachel's Tomb is walled off to the Palestinians and Netanyahu recently announced that it would be added to the list of Israel's "Heritage sites.")

Walking. The Arab Educational Institute Sumud Story House. (AEI's Sumud Story house works with women and families surrounded by the Wall to foster creative nonviolence and "sumud"—steadfastness.)

Walking. The Paradise Hotel. (A cordon of Palestinian Authority soldiers and police abuts the sidewalks, guarding the streets, leery of a third "intifada"—uprising—alerted to stop protesters. The recent closure of the Al Aqsa Mosque to men under 50 and Netanyahu's announcement that his government will build 1,600 new homes in Occupied East Jerusalem have

brought thousands of Palestinians to the streets of Jerusalem, crying out; some throwing stones and burning of tires, and in response, being pummeled with tear-gas, stun-grenades and rubber-coated steel bullets. Mustafa Barghouti confirms on Al Jazeera that it doesn't matter if the Palestinians protest peacefully or violently—they are treated by the Israeli authorities with violence.)

Walking. Bethlehem Bible College. (The recent international conference "Christ at the Checkpoint: Theology in the Service of Peace and Justice" Family; Women's Union Club). Harat Al-Batin (Neighborhood), St. Joseph's Sister's Convent, Madbasfa Street, Salesian Convent and Church.

Walking. Terra Sancta Girls' School.

Walking. Climbing. The Mosque of Omar, Manger Square, Basilica of the Nativity, Milk Grotto Street. (A group of Italian tourists are visiting the Milk Grotto Chapel and the guide is speaking to them: "La Madonna vi si

continued on page 20...

Juan Cole is Richard P. Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan. For three decades, he has sought to put the relationship of the West and the Muslim world in historical context. His most recent book is *Engaging the Muslim World* (Palgrave Macmillan, March 2009) and he also recently authored *Napoleon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). He has been a regular guest on PBS's *Lehrer News Hour*, and has also appeared on *ABC Nightly News*, *Nightline*, *The Today Show*, *Charlie Rose*, *Anderson Cooper 360*, *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, *Rachel Maddow*, *the Colbert Report*, *Democracy Now!* and many other shows.

HUWAIDA ARRAF ARRESTED

Dear friends,

Thanks so much for your concern, solidarity and support. I was released last night at around 6:45 pm from Neve Tirtze prison in Ramle. Save for minor cuts and bruises, I am OK. I haven't gotten a chance to see Ellen Stark (the ISM volunteer shot in the arm) yet. I hear she has a broken wrist but is doing OK.

I was arrested on Friday at around noon as I tried to get the Israeli soldiers to stop shooting at people in Nabi Saleh (a small village of about 400 people), especially after ISM volunteer Ellen Stark was shot in the arm. We were in Nabi Saleh for a weekly demonstration by the villagers against the theft of their land. Simultaneous demonstrations were taking place in Jerusalem and in a number of villages throughout the West Bank. In Nabi Saleh, the demonstration took the form of people walking down a hill towards the confiscated land.

"Stop shooting... a woman has been injured and needs medical attention," I yelled at the soldiers, making my way back up the hill to the road they stood on (shooting down at us, knowing the rugged terrain we were on made it very difficult to move quickly to avoid their barrage of tear gas and bullets). When I got on the road the soldiers turned their guns on me but I just kept talking and walking towards them. "We have a woman that has been shot; she needs help. Stop shooting. There is no reason to be shooting at people like this. You are in THEIR village." For this I was handcuffed and thrown in a jeep, later accused of: 1) attacking a police officer, 2) cursing at the military and police, 3) obstructing the operations of the military and 4) being in a closed military zone.

Instead of being taken to a police station, as Israeli citizens and foreigners are supposed to be, I was taken to the illegal settlement of Haramish where I was held for nearly eight hours outside in the cold. Two other Palestinians from Nabi Saleh, Omar who is 23 and Amjad, 22, were also arrested and brought there. The soldiers and border police were particularly abusive to Omar and Amjad, pushing them around, forcing them to stand for hours,

handcuffed and blindfolded and every few minutes yelling at them to lift their heads, so they couldn't rest or fall asleep. When I protested this abuse I was told to "shut the f--- up" and if I didn't, I would get the same treatment. I responded, "I don't really care, but it's sad that you feel you have to treat people so inhumanely." "Shut the f--- up!"

At one point, when Omar couldn't feel his hands or move his fingers anymore (a combination of tight plastic cuffs and the cold, we were taken into a

were exposed to settler youth who surrounded and hurled profanities at us.

The ISM lawyer says that my arrest was illegal; that I should have been taken before a judge the same day I was arrested. Israeli citizens and internationals have that right. Palestinians don't. I was separated from Omar and Amjad at about 2:00 in the morning as after we were interrogated I was taken to a women's prison in Ramle, and they to the Ofer military prison. In the end I was detained for 31 hours

damaged 10 Palestinian homes and injured 25 people in Nabi Saleh aren't the violent ones. We are. Omar and Amjad are likely to have to pay a fine and/or post a hefty bail to be released, if they are not held for months first.

The police released me right before I was scheduled to come before a judge. This is likely because they had nothing to bring before a judge. I probably should have refused release and challenged their actions in court, but I really didn't want to make a big deal out of my arrest, when so many other worse things are happening.

Illustration by Frank Reynoso



"Stop shooting ... a woman has been injured and needs medical attention."

That said, so many good things are happening also. Solidarity actions around the world are on the rise, the BDS movement is gaining more support every day, and the spirit of the Palestinian people is high. Israel expects to be able to continue stealing land and resources, subjugating the indigenous people, and using violence to subdue any kind of protest from the colonized and their supporters. We don't have the weapons Israel has to fight back, but we have our spirit and our voices with which we will fight. Israel should be under no illusion that it can intimidate or break us.

Thanks so much again for your concern and support!

*In solidarity and struggle,
Huwaida*

Huwaida Arraf is a Palestinian activist and co-founder, along with her husband Adam Shapiro, of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). The stated mission of the ISM is to "resist the Israeli occupation of the West Bank using nonviolent tactics." Arraf, who is Christian, is the daughter of an Israeli Arab father and a Palestinian mother. Her parents moved from the West Bank to be able to raise Arraf away from the violence there. She and her

parents were able to visit Palestine every few years until Arraf was 10 years old. Arraf majored in Arabic and Judaic studies and political science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She also spent a year at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Arraf later earned a JD at American University's Washington College of Law. Her focus was on International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, with a particular interest in war crimes prosecution.

building supposedly to be checked by a doctor. The same officer who kept telling me to shut up, abusing his power because he can, ordered us to stand facing the wall. I refused this unnecessary measure and show of macho bullying and was dragged back outside, lifted by my arms, while still cuffed behind my back, and then thrown on the ground. The dehumanization of Palestinians was not only evident among the soldiers, but also the Jewish settlers. Since we were held outside in the settlement, we

then released. If I had not been released I would have come before a judge last night.

It will likely be at least another week before Omar and Amjad will be allowed to see a judge. At that point they will be accused of violence because they were protesting, unarmed, against the confiscation of their land. The heavily armed soldiers that invaded their village immediately began shooting tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets; the soldiers that

Eight Years of Guantánamo: What's Changed?



by Frida Berrigan

The first 20 detainees arrived at Guantánamo's Camp X-Ray eight years ago, on January 11, 2002. Just over seven years later, President Barack Obama—on his second full day after taking office—issued an order to shut the prison within a year.

His rhetoric was clear and decisive. "There is no time to lose," he said, remarking that the United States can fight terrorism without sacrificing "our values and our ideals." To that end he committed to real change: "I can say without exception or equivocation that the United States will not torture. Second, we will close the Guantánamo Bay detention camp and determine how to deal with those who have been held there."

That was January 22, 2009. But the Obama administration has failed to close the facility—where, by many accounts, inmates were harshly interrogated and even tortured—by its own deadline. Now there's talk that the prison will remain open at least through 2010. And the proposal to move detainees to a maximum security prison in Illinois superficially retires Guantánamo as a symbol, while retaining the legal problems it embodies. Equally troubling is the administration's expansion of detention facilities in Afghanistan, which are almost impenetrable for lawyers and humanitarian groups.

The "prolonged detention" without charge or trial that Obama plans for some inmates strips detained men of basic legal and human rights, more deeply corrupting American governance with the reckless assertion of the executive's near-limitless power.

The barely foiled Christmas Day attack by a suicide bomber aboard a flight to Detroit exposed ongoing weaknesses in our multi-billion-dollar security apparatus. But its aftermath has revealed how our ideals continue to falter, as Obama's policies mirror those of his predecessor and fail to match his own high-minded rhetoric.

The response to Flight 253 hasn't only been long lines, body scans at airports, and *mea culpas* from security agencies. There are also swift, loud and vicious proclamations from Republican leaders and conservative media that the only way to ensure security is to blast at our enemies and the rule of law with both barrels. Send "underwear bomber" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab to Guantánamo and keep the prison open forever. Suspend plans for civilian trials of terror suspects. Revive "enhanced interrogations." Summarily execute al-Qaeda suspects.

The Obama administration hasn't publicly challenged this nonsense. It has, however, already made a sad concession to this fear-mongering by suspending the release of all Yemeni men from Guantánamo, even those who have been cleared through the government's extensive Guantánamo Review Task Force. This decision, which condemns innocent men to months or years of more illegal detention, confirms a pattern of the Obama administration promising change but delivering more of the same. No less troublesome are a host of other Obama administration policies: the continued practice of rendition and operation of secret prisons; the planned use of Bush-style military commissions to try some detainees; the expansion of the Bagram prison in Afghanistan and the denial of *habeas corpus* rights to

inmates there not captured on the Afghan battlefield; the repeated, tendentious use of the "state's secrets" defense to block lawsuits by former detainees seeking redress for their mistreatment; and the effective grant of immunity to those who designed, ordered, and executed torture policies under the Bush administration.

In a worrisome sign of possible things to come, the Bush-appointed Judge Janice Rogers Brown recently asserted in an opinion rejecting the *habeas* petition of a man held at Guantánamo that the war against terrorism thrusts us into a new paradigm, "one that demands [that] new rules be written. . . . War is a challenge to law, and the law must adjust."

That's exactly the opposite of what must happen. The law needs our president as an authentic advocate—not just in words but in deeds—when times are "hard" and war rages. This is the case right now. To do anything else is to condemn this nation to a freefall into the "dark side" where Dick Cheney seems so comfortable.

Frida Berrigan is a columnist for *Foreign Policy in Focus* and a contributing editor of *In These Times* magazine. She is the author of reports on arms trade and human rights, U.S. nuclear weapons policy and the domestic politics of U.S. missile defense and space weapons policies. She has been a featured expert on national and regional radio outlets, and regularly speaks on national security issues to citizens organizations and at major conferences throughout the United States.

Iraq Occupation

... continued from page 1

from an Iraqi perspective it just tells a story of an average day under the occupation. But even from the Pentagon's perspective, that attack was nothing exceptional. Reuters demanded an investigation into this particular attack because two of its employees were killed in it, and the Pentagon has already conducted an investigation that cleared all soldiers who took part of the attack of any wrongdoing. The video does not show an operation that went wrong, or where "rules of engagement" were not followed. It is simply how the U.S. military has been doing business in Iraq for seven years now.

What is equally disturbing is the mainstream media coverage of the event. For example, in a piece published the day of the attack, *The New York Times* reported that two Iraqi journalists were killed "as U.S. forces clash with Militias." The *New York Times* piece confirmed "American forces battled insurgents in the area" and covered the following statement from the U.S. military:

The American military said in a statement late Thursday that 11 people had been killed: nine insurgents and two civilians. According to the statement, American troops were conducting a raid when they were hit by small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades. The American troops called in reinforcements and attack helicopters. In the ensuing fight, the statement said, the two Reuters employees and nine insurgents were killed. "There is no question that coalition forces were clearly engaged in

combat operations against a hostile force," said Lt. Col. Scott Bleichwehl, a spokesman for the multinational forces in Baghdad.

Now, after the video was leaked, we know that none of this is true. Iraqis killed in the attack were not "insurgents." U.S. troops were not "hit by small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades," the attack helicopters were not "called in" in response to hostilities and there was no "ensuing fight" that caused the massacre. In fact, after watching the video, there is no question that the U.S. forces were clearly NOT engaged in combat operations against a hostile force. In addition to making the entire story up, the Pentagon has very conveniently omitted the part about the two children being injured.

This story is similar to hundreds of other stories printed by *The New York Times* and other mainstream media during the last seven years. Imagine how many tens of thousands of Iraqis who were labeled "insurgents" and "militias" were killed and injured the same way. Imagine how many Iraqi children were killed and injured without a

UNDER NEW
MANAGEMENT...



July 12, 2007, helicopter attack shown in the leaked video. But I think this leaked video tells a bigger story than the attack itself. It tells a story of systemic, cold-blooded murder, and the shameful

in human lives, money and global reputation. And still others, such as Iran and other regional players, fear the re-emergence of a strong independent and united Iraq that would change the power balance in the Middle East.

While the video is shocking and disturbing to the U.S. public, from an Iraqi perspective it just tells a story of an average day under the occupation.

mention by the Pentagon or mainstream media. A number of international organizations, including Amnesty International, are now calling for an independent and impartial investigation into the

cover-up by mainstream media and silence by international organizations.

Remembering the last seven years and conducting investigations is important, but what is more important and urgent is to end this occupation. This month marks both the seventh year of occupation and the beginning of the combat forces withdrawal in accordance with President Obama's plan. The current plan for U.S. withdrawal is based on two sets of deadlines. Obama's own plan to withdraw combat forces between April and August 31, 2010, and the bilateral security agreement's December 31, 2011, deadline for the withdrawal of all troops and contractors and shutting down of all U.S. bases.

While the Bush administration adopted a conditions-based withdrawal plan based on the mantra "as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down," the withdrawal doctrine under Obama has been time-based, not linked to conditions on the ground. The main problem with a conditions-based withdrawal plan is that it creates a situation where deteriorating conditions lead to an extension of the military occupation. Unfortunately, many groups would like to see the U.S. occupation of Iraq continue. Some groups, such as the Iraqi ruling parties or the military-industrial complex in the United States, believe the occupation is in their self-interest. Others, such as al-Qaeda, hope to cripple the United States by keeping it engaged in a conflict that is taking an enormous toll

The conditions on the ground are rapidly deteriorating in Iraq. After last month's general election, there is a dramatic spike in violence and growing threats to the security and political stability of the country. This week alone, hundreds of Iraqis were killed and injured because of car bombs, assassinations, and other armed attacks. Meanwhile, the Iraqi political establishment is struggling to form the new government. The U.S. war machine is already trying to use this deterioration as an excuse to delay or cancel the withdrawal plan, or at least link it to conditions on the ground.

Going back to a conditions-based plan will cost the United States hundreds of billions more, will result in the deaths of countless more U.S. soldiers and Iraqi civilians and, most important, will not bring Iraq closer to being a stable and prosperous country. The U.S. occupation has never been a part of the solution and it will never be. Delaying or canceling the U.S. withdrawal will only diminish what's left of U.S. credibility and will add another layer of complications to the war-torn country.

The United States has been engaged in military hostilities with Iraq and Iraqis since 1991. Even if Obama abides by the security agreement and ends the occupation next year, the U.S. responsibility to compensate and help Iraqis help themselves will not be over. Our responsibility starts by ending the 20-year war, but it doesn't end there.

Raed Jarrar is an Iraqi-born political analyst and a senior fellow with Peace Action based in Washington, D.C.

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March 9 Protest at Waldorf Astoria



More than 600 protesters surrounded the Waldorf Astoria in New York City March 9 to protest a fundraising dinner by Friends of the Israel Defense Forces. For a dramatic video of the event, visit www.WoodstockInternational.us.

Wikileaks Reveals Video Showing U.S. Air Crew Shooting Down Iraqi Civilians

Footage of July 2007 attack made public as Pentagon identifies website as threat to national security

by Chris McGreal

A secret video showing U.S. air crews falsely claiming to have encountered a firefight in Baghdad and then laughing at the dead after launching an air strike that killed a dozen people, including two Iraqis working for Reuters news agency, was revealed by Wikileaks in April.

The footage of the July 2007 attack was made public in a move that will further anger the Pentagon, which has drawn up a report identifying the whistleblower website as a threat to national security. The U.S. Defense Department was embarrassed when that confidential report appeared on the Wikileaks site last month alongside a slew of military documents.

The release of the video from Baghdad also comes shortly after the U.S. military admitted that its special forces attempted to cover up the killings of three Afghan women in a raid in February by digging the bullets out of their bodies.

The newly released video of the Baghdad attacks was recorded on one of two Apache helicopters hunting for insurgents on July 12, 2007. Among the dead were a 22-year-old Reuters photographer, Namir Noor-Eldeen, and his driver, Saeed Chmagh, 40. The Pentagon blocked an attempt by Reuters to obtain the video through a freedom of information request. Wikileaks director Julian Assange said his organization had to break through encryption by the military to view it.

In the recording, the helicopter crews can be heard discussing the scene on the street below. One American claims to have spotted six people with AK-47s and one with a rocket-propelled grenade. It is unclear if some of the men are armed but Noor-Eldeen can be seen with a camera. Chmagh is talking on his mobile phone.

One of the helicopter crew is then heard saying that one of the group is shooting. But the video shows there is no shooting or even pointing of weapons. The men are standing around, apparently unperturbed.

The lead helicopter, using the moniker Crazyhorse, opens fire. "Hahaha. I hit 'em," shouts one of the



American crew. Another responds a little later: "Oh yeah, look at those dead bastards."

One of the men on the ground, believed to be Chmagh, is seen wounded and trying to crawl to safety. One of the helicopter crew is heard wishing for the man to reach for a gun, even though there is none visible nearby, so he has the pretext for opening fire: "All you gotta do is pick up a weapon." A van draws up next to the wounded man and Iraqis climb out. They are unarmed and start to carry the victim to the vehicle in what would appear to be an attempt to get him to hospital. One of the helicopters opens fire with armour-piercing shells. "Look at that. Right through the windshield," says one of the crew. Another responds with a laugh.

Sitting behind the windscreen were two children who were wounded.

After ground forces arrive and the children are discovered, the American air crew blame the Iraqis. "Well it's their fault for bringing kids in to a battle," says one. "That's right," says another.

Initially the U.S. military said that all the dead were

insurgents. Then it claimed the helicopters reacted to an active firefight. Wikileaks Director Assange said that the video demonstrated that neither claim was true.

"Why would anyone be so relaxed with two Apaches if someone was carrying an RPG and that person was an enemy of the United States?" he said. "The behavior of the pilots is like a computer game. When

Saeed is crawling, clearly unable to do anything, their response is: come on buddy, we want to kill you, just pick up a weapon . . . It appears to be a desire to get a higher score, or a higher number of kills."

Wikileaks says it will shortly release a second secret U.S. military video showing the deaths of civilians in an attack in Afghanistan. The Pentagon has been seeking ways to prevent classified material appearing on Wikileaks, including through "criminal sanctions." Wikileaks has made public classified U.S. army reports on weapons, military units and battle strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon report, reflecting the depth of paranoia about where Wikileaks is obtaining its material, speculates that the CIA may be responsible. But perhaps most embarrassing leak for the U.S. Defense Department was that of the 2008 report itself that appeared on the Wikileaks site last month.

For more information, see wikileaks.org.

This article was originally published in the British *Guardian*.

Chris McGreal has reported for BBC, *The Independent* and *The Guardian*. He won the National Print Journalist of the Year (British Press) award from Amnesty International in 1995, and in 2004 the Martha Gellhorn Award.



Namir Noor-Eldeen, the 22-year-old photographer killed in the Baghdad air strike

Photo by Khalid Mohammed/AP

In a piece published the day of the attack, The New York Times reported that two Iraqi journalists were killed "as U.S. forces clash with militias."

THE STATEMENT NOT GIVEN

Artist and activist Laurie Arbeiter was on trial recently for a March of the Dead action last year in Washington, D.C. On January 6, 2009, more than 65 people from places including New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky circled the Capitol as the new Congress was sworn in. At the same time, some 200 activists in Madison, Wis., created a March of the Dead also calling attention to the cruel and deadly consequences of the foreign policies of both the U.S. and Israeli governments. Approximately one hour after the march around the Capitol ended, activists in Washington went inside the Senate Hart Office Building, where they hung five massive banners: three 20-foot banners saying "Afghanistan," "Iraq" and "Palestine"; one 20-by-30-foot banner that read "The Audacity of War Crimes"; and the final banner, which read "We Will Not Be Silent." As the banners were being hung, activists in death masks created a presence on the floor of the building while others read names of the dead from Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine, including some of the more recent victims in Gaza. Seventeen were arrested and charged with unlawful assembly. Laurie Arbeiter was one of the organizers. The case against her was eventually thrown out. Her prepared statement, which she did not have to give, is very much worth reading. For more on the March of the Dead, go to www.thecriticalvoice.org and click on Bill Moyers. Moyers reflects on the recent violence in the Middle East, interviewing activists and showing footage of the March of the Dead.

"We never did get to mount our defense because there was so much else wrong, including the destruction of evidence, that at a certain point, not soon enough, the judge struck the testimony of the witness and the prosecutor threw out the case. I did prepare a statement in the event that I was convicted."

by Laurie Arbeiter

With all due respect, Your Honor, I find this process, subjecting us to prosecution for charges of committing criminal acts, at best misguided and at worst an organized attempt by the government to silence dissent. What has been on trial here are not just four individuals whose acts are being scrutinized, but more important, the choices we are allowed to make as free people at a time when we feel extreme urgency due to the fact that war crimes are being committed in our name. Where can we go to seek justice?

We live in a country where there is a disregard for the rule of law and common human decency by some



Left: Banner hung in the Hart Senate Building Jan. 6, 2009; right: Laurie Arbeiter



in power who seek to assert absolute power over others. In this time, so called civilized people in suits and ties sat down at their desks at the Justice Department and wrote out detailed barbaric practices constituting a U.S. torture program, secretly overriding national and international standards of law, taking us all to the dark side. We were blatantly lied to by government officials in order to set us on a path that led to the illegal invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. It is so clear that grave crimes have been committed by our government. Yet, the new administration refuses to prosecute officials of the Bush administration because it is not politically expedient to demand accountability and transparency up the chain of command. Everyone therefore is not treated equally under the so-called "rule of law."

In this same time frame, here we are tucked away in a corner of a municipal court building being taken through a petty bureaucratic procedure to determine if the volume of our voices was too loud

when we spoke out against war crimes being waged by our government—to determine if we in fact had disturbed the peace. Is this not dark irony, that we are prosecuted for speaking out against those who committed the most heinous acts against humanity as they remain free from any kind of investigation or prosecution? Free speech and our right to assemble are being discouraged, as the abuse of power is being protected in this country. Torture has become an acceptable practice and what we did bearing witness to these crimes is considered being disobedient. Now we have lost our way. Hannah Arendt warned us against the "banality of evil," when a system is so corrupted by the abuse of power and the crimes of the powerful that everyone becomes complicit in committing those crimes either through their actions or their silence. I will not be silent. You may convict me today for being too loud and disobedient, yet I was neither and had no intent to be loud or disruptive. On the contrary, I stood silently as I

listened to the countless names of the dead that were being read with reverence. I live with a much greater conviction, one that tells me I am right, not wrong, to speak out against a government that does not govern with integrity and within a framework of universal human rights and common decency. It begs the question, if crimes are being committed, why would a decent people not raise their voices to be heard, to call attention to the injustices committed by their government? We are struggling here for no less than the preservation of our humanity in the face of transgressions committed in our name. To remain silent and do nothing is not an option. My loyalty is to those who are suffering the terrible consequences of this government's grave crimes. In their names I will continue this struggle because it is the right thing to do and the right way to act as a human being.

History keeps a record of the names and deeds of those that commit the most heinous acts against humanity, those capable of the greatest cruelties. Alongside those names are the countless examples of acts of resistance and voices of dissent. These stories are the inspiration for our continued human struggle for justice and decency. We will not have been on the wrong side when this history is written. We came to do no harm but to stop harm from being done in our name. We came in peace and for peace and justice.

Laurie Arbeiter is an artist and fulltime political activist. She has been interviewed on *Democracy Now!* with Amy Goodman and on Grit TV with Laura Flanders. She is a member of The Critical Voice thecriticalvoice.org and ART Activists Response Team and is the creator of the well-known WE WILL NOT BE SILENT tee shirts wewillnotbesilent.net

Walking

... continued from page 15
sarebbe rifugiata durante la fuga in Egitto...") Further up the street, AEI Youth Center.

Walking. Looking over what was once a peaceful terraced countryside. Confronting the white skeletal settlement of Har Homa—hovering closer and closer like a death cloud—built where the most beautiful forest used to stand. Two years ago, in Bethlehem, Uri Avnery spoke at a conference against the Apartheid Wall:

"I want to apologize to all of you here for the terrible things done to the Palestinian people in the name of our government—even as I speak. I weep when I see Har Homa. I weep for the blockade and the siege of Gaza. This Wall will fall. (Applause) The Occupation will Fall. (Applause) And when I'm in Bethlehem—especially in Bethlehem—I think how beautiful this country could be if we had peace."

Back to earth: On the Wall across the street from the "Bahamas Fish Restaurant" someone has written the menu: Bahamas Seafood Fish Shrimps Calamari Millet

Mussels Beef Filet Scallops Garden Lobster Blue Crabs Desert. And at the edge of the Wall, someone else has scrawled another menu: Freedom Menu: Starters: Hope Faith Joy Knowing God Loving People Willing Hearts. Jesus He Paid for U.

Rest from walking. Hear the Islamic call to prayer rising over the city of Bethlehem.

Jane Toby is a member of Middle East Crisis Response and Women in Black currently in Bethlehem documenting Palestinian life under the Occupation. She is a writer and filmmaker and teaches Italian at the State University of New York, New Paltz.

A Tale of Government Assassination

The Assassination of Fred Hampton:

How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther

By Jeffrey Haas, Lawrence Hill Books

by Michael Steven Smith

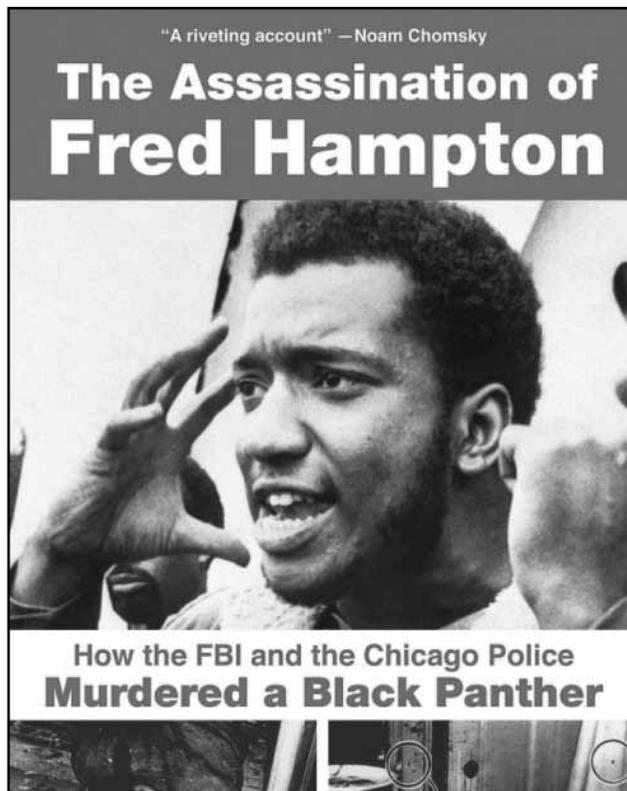
This is a remarkable work, a well-told tale, a true crime story, a page-turning legal political thriller that is as important for us to comprehend now as it was in the sixties.

Forty years ago this December 4, National Lawyers Guild attorney Jeffrey Haas was in a Chicago jail interviewing Fred Hampton's fiancée Deborah Johnson. She was in her nightgown, pregnant, shaking and sobbing, barely having survived the hail of 80 bullets that came into her apartment and into her bedroom just four hours before. She had been sleeping at 4 in the morning next to Fred Hampton, the extraordinary young leader of the Chicago Black Panthers. She described to Haas how the police pulled her from the room as Fred lay unconscious on their bed. She heard one of the officers say, "He's still alive." Next, two gunshots. A second officer said "He's good and dead now." She looked at Jeff and asked, "What can you do?"

Haas tells the story, interwoven beautifully with his own personal and political biography, of a truly amazing piece of movement lawyering. It took 13 years of grueling litigation and political agitation outside the courtroom. Finally, after an 18-month trial, which they lost, and an appeal to the Federal Circuit Court (*Hampton v. Hanrahan*, 600 F.2d 600), which they won in a famous civil rights decision, Haas, Flint Taylor, his People's Law Office collective, Dennis Cunningham and Morty Stavis from the Center for Constitutional Rights finally nailed the FBI, the Cook County States Attorney Edward Hanrahan and the Chicago police for their summary execution of the exceptionally promising—he was only 21 at the time—young black leader. "Who knows what he may have become, if they hadn't killed him?" his mother Iberia Hampton told Jeff.

The People's Law Office worked with the black community and presented the case in a political, not only legal, framework. They put the state on trial.

FBI head J. Edgar Hoover had an idea of what Hampton might become. He was concerned, in his words written in a Cointelpro directive, about "the rise of a new black Messiah." King and Malcolm had already been murdered. Haas and Taylor uncovered the story of how the government killed Hampton and remarkably, at the end of the day, made them all admit guilt by paying his parents a wrongful death settlement. It took over 37,000 hours of work. What a truly amazing piece of lawyering, especially since Jeff was barely out of the University of Chicago Law School at the time he undertook to represent the family, and Flint was still a law student at Northwestern. It is more amazing still when you consider that their law collective had no resources to speak of and were up against a mendacious, stalling government whose litigation fund was unlimited.



Lenny Bruce used to quip that "Chicago is so corrupt it is thrilling." It was run by the machine of Mayor Richard Daley, head of the Cook County Democratic Party, his true source of power. The machine appointed the judges, investigators, "independent panels," prosecutors and police. But Jeff, just out of law school, and Flint, still attending Northwestern, with little financial resources, took them on, exposing the conspiracy to assassinate Hampton, the raid and the subsequent cover-up.

Fred Hampton, even at 21, was an accomplished person. He worked a factory job and saved money to pay his college tuition. Like Malcolm, he wanted to be a lawyer. Fred was by all accounts a master orator. He studied Malcolm's speeches. While in high school he founded a youth chapter of the NAACP. When he turned 18 in 1966 he refused to register for the draft, like Muhammad Ali, who said, "I ain't got no quarrel with the Vietcong. No Vietcong ever called me nigger." Hampton was well read, rising at least two hours before facing the day to read Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Che Guevara, Mao, Marx, Lenin and DuBois. Like them, he understood that "a revolution is a class struggle. It was one class—the oppressed—versus those other classes—the oppressor. Indeed it was this sort of radicalism—the advocacy of black power and socialism—that made him dangerous. And Hoover knew it. Black power for Hampton, as Haas observes, was "not a tool to attack whites, but . . . a concept to bring blacks together and build their confidence."

Hampton was targeted by the police and arrested several times on technical traffic violations. After being arrested for "mob action," he was put on the FBI's Key Agitator Index, a group Hoover ordered FBI agents to monitor closely. The NAACP gave only lukewarm support to Hampton. Meanwhile the Black Panthers in Oakland, Calif., where they originated under the leadership of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, had caught Fred's attention.

He was impressed by their Ten Point Program. The program called for 1) freedom to determine the destiny of the black community, 2) full employment for blacks, 3) an end to capitalist exploitation of the black community, 4) decent housing, 5) informed education, 6)

exemption for black men from military service, 7) an end to police brutality and murder, 8) freedom for black prisoners, 9) black juries for black criminal defendants and 10) land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace. Fred signed on.

Fred's mother Iberia, a factory worker and union activist, was upset when he became a Panther. She thought the rhetoric of the Panthers was provocative and that it might get him killed. She was uncomfortable with their talk about guns because it increased hostility with law enforcement, and with Fred saying things like "You kill one pig, you get some satisfaction, you kill all the pigs, you get complete satisfaction." Haas reflected that "the rhetoric that energized the Panthers was often the same rhetoric that the police used to justify attacks on them." The murderous raid on Hampton's apartment was ostensibly performed to exercise a warrant in search of weapons. Fred's bodyguard was actually a police informer, a provocateur, who urged the Panthers to commit illegal acts, got them guns, and actually drew up a floor plan of the apartment and where Fred slept. It was used by the police, who knew exactly where to find Fred. The autopsy Haas got performed showed two gunshot wounds to Fred's head fired at a downward angle at close range. It also showed he had been drugged with barbiturates, which accounts for the fact that he was unable to rouse himself when the police shooting started.

The majority of black people in Chicago were horrified by the killing. To them it was a police assassination and they remained active in supporting the exposure of the crime. The People's Law Office worked with the black community and presented the case in a political, not only legal, framework. They put the state on trial. This public approach became critical in determining how the People's Law Office would represent the movement and victims of police and official misconduct in the future. Today, 40 years later, the firm is suing and scandalizing the police for torturing and extracting false confessions from over 100 black men in a south side police station. The current mayor, Daley's son, was involved in the cover-up.

Jeff Haas left the firm a few years ago in order to write this book.

"Who knows what he may have become, if they hadn't killed him?"

He reflects that "like others who heard Malcolm X, Dr King, and Fred Hampton speak in the 1960s, I learned that fighting injustice and inequality is the struggle of our lives, and perseverance in this struggle is what makes our lives valuable."

Michael Smith is co-host of the popular radio show *Law and Disorder* (lawanddisorder.org). In the sixties, he was in the Detroit National Lawyers Guild collective of Lafferty, Reosti, Jabara, Papahkian, James, Stickgold, Smith and Soble. He practices injury law in New York City, is on the board of the Center for Constitutional Rights and is the author of *Notebook of a Sixties Lawyer: An Unrepentant Memoir*.

Good Morning Revolution by Langston Hughes

You are the best friend
I ever had.

We gonna pal around together from now on.

Say, listen, Revolution:

You know the boss where I used to work,
The guy that gimme the air to cut expenses,
He wrote a long letter to the papers about you:
Said you was a trouble maker, a alien-enemy,
In other words a son-of-a-bitch.

He called up the police

And told 'em to watch out for a guy

Named Revolution

You see,

The boss knows you are my friend.

He sees us hanging out together

He knows we're hungry and ragged,

And ain't got a damn thing in this world—

And are gonna to do something about it.

The boss got all his needs, certainly,

Eats swell,

Owens a lotta houses,

Goes vacationin',

Breaks strikes,

Runs politics, bribes police

Pays off congress

And struts all over earth—

But me, I ain't never had enough to eat.

Me, I ain't never been warm in winter.

Me, I ain't never known security—

All my life, been livin' hand to mouth

Hand to mouth.

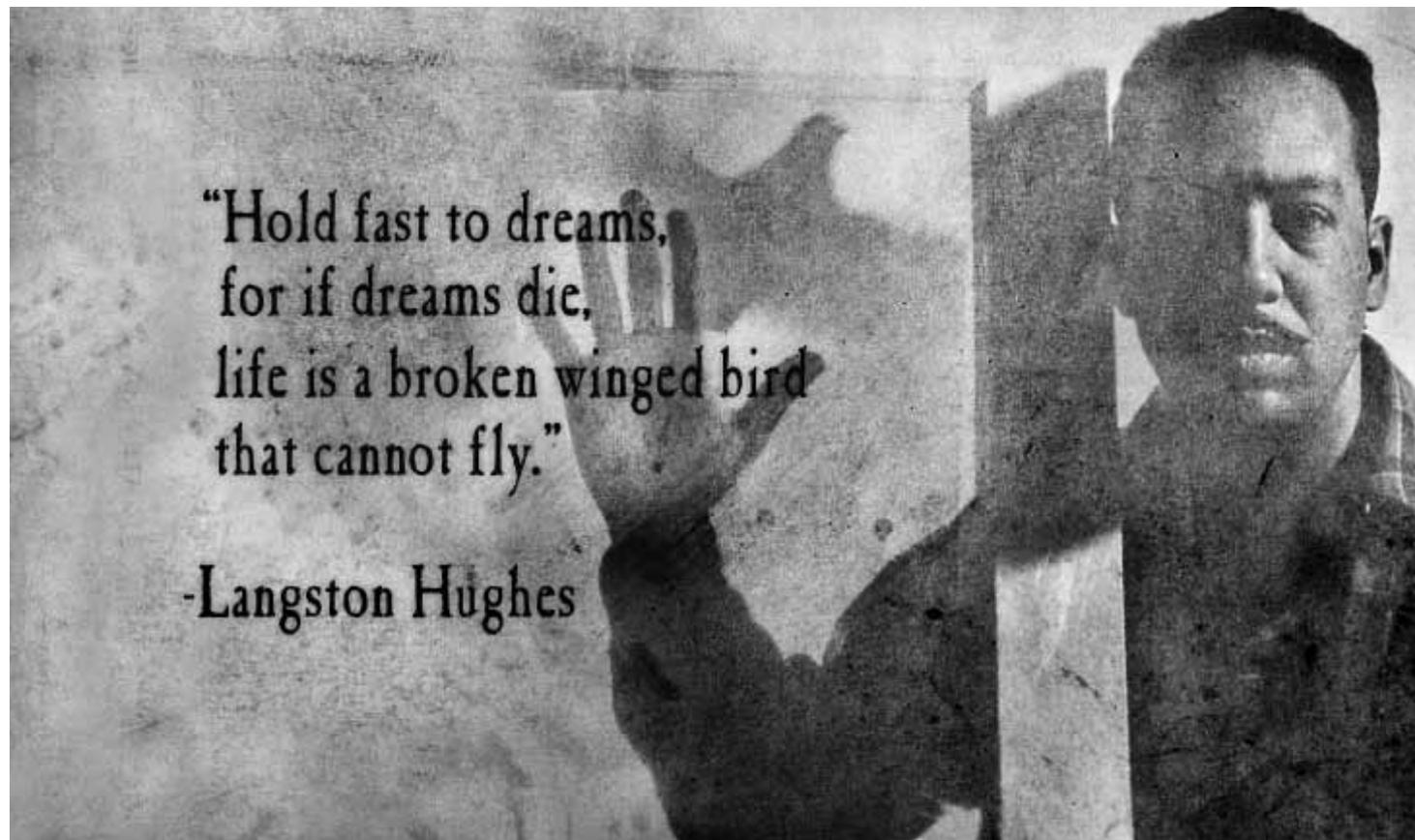
Listen, Revolution,

We're buddies, see—

Together,

We can take everything:

Factories, arsenals, houses, ships,



Railroads, forests, fields, orchards,
Bus lines, telegraphs, radios,
(Jesus! Raise hell with radios!)
Steel mills, coal mines, oil wells, gas,
All the tools of production.
(Great day in the morning!)
Everything—
And turn 'em over to the people who work.
Rule and run 'em for us people who work.
Boy! Them radios!

Broadcasting that very first morning to USSR:
Another member of the International Soviet's
done come
Greetings to the Socialist Soviet Republics
Hey you rising workers everywhere greetings—
And we'll sign it: Germany
Sign it: China
Sign it: Africa
Sign it: Italy
Sign it: America

Sign it with my one name: Worker
On that day when no one will be hungry, cold
oppressed,
Anywhere in the world again.
That's our job!
I been starvin' too long
Ain't you?
Let's go, revolution!

Original words by Eugène Pottier,
Paris, June 1871,
revised by Billy Bragg

Stand up, all victims of oppression
For the tyrants fear your might
Don't cling so hard to your
possessions
For you have nothing, if you have no
rights
Let racist ignorance be ended
For respect makes the empires fall
Freedom is merely privilege
extended
Unless enjoyed by one and all
So come brothers and sisters
For the struggle carries on
The Internationale
Unites the world in song
So comrades come rally
For this is the time and place
The international ideal
Unites the human race

The Internationale



The song of the First and Second International, "The Internationale" was written by a transport worker after the Paris Commune was crushed by the French government

Let no one build walls to divide us
Walls of hatred nor walls of stone
Come greet the dawn and stand
beside us
We'll live together or we'll die alone
In our world poisoned by exploitation
Those who have taken, now they
must give
And end the vanity of nations
We've but one Earth on which to live
And so begins the final drama
In the streets and in the fields
We stand unbowed before
their armor
We defy their guns and shields
When we fight, provoked by their
aggression
Let us be inspired by like and love
For though they offer us concessions
Change will not come from above

Letters to the Editor

Apply BDS to Egypt Too

Joseph Mayton's "Egyptians View Construction of Gaza Wall as Evidence of Government's 'Hypocrisy'" (April 2010) underscores the Egyptian government's complicity in the crimes against humanity that Israel, with U.S. support, is committing against the people of Gaza. It is sickening to see an Arab League member, which supposedly backs the Palestinian cause, collaborating in a relentless siege against its fellow Arabs. In addition to building that underground wall to cut off the vital Palestinian tunnels, Egypt has consistently obstructed the international groups trying to bring aid to the Gazans.

The only explanation I can see for Mubarak's betrayal of his fellow Arabs is money: He doesn't want to jeopardize the \$2 billion Egypt gets annually from the United States. Well, if it's all about money, let's hit Egypt there. So far the BDS campaign has focused on Israel and the United States, but it should be extended to Egypt, which would be especially vulnerable to boycotts of its tourism industry. Until Egypt changes its policies toward Gaza, nobody should tour Egypt to see its famed antiquities. Hopefully, readers will suggest additional ways to boycott Egypt. I also have contacted the BDS movement to urge them also to target Egypt.

Sincerely,
Gregory M. DeSylva
Rhinebeck, N.Y.



The Hideous Enginery of War, Greed, Apartheid

I continue to read about our "mission" in Afghanistan and its provinces and sadly anticipate what awaits our brave troops (led by uncourageous, unscrupulous profiteers) in those mountainous provinces as they are being lured into it.

I think of Vietnam. I think of the lives of our overmanaged and poorly led soldiers and: I think of the many more civilians we'll kill and the lessons

we never learned. Are we learning anything from the Israel/Palestine apartheid-driven civilian killings? Does history ever teach us anything?

Are we going to continue to command drones of mass destructions from our posh chairs from some comfortable gameland command center in middle America, as scores of civilians' blood is spilled to fill the coffers of war profiteers and corporate con men?

The lessons of history are unfortunately many in this country and are timeless! But it seems like the students are very few. For instance: during the U.S. war to take possession of Mexico, Horace Greeley wrote in the *New York Tribune*, May 12, 1846:

"We can safely defeat the armies of Mexico, slaughter them by the thousands, and pursue them perhaps to their capital; we can then conquer and 'annex' their territory; but what then? Have the histories of the ruin of Greek and Roman liberty consequent on such extensions of empire by the sword no lesson for us? Who believes that a score of victories over Mexico, the 'annexation' of half her provinces, will give us more Liberty, a purer Morality, a more prosperous Industry, ... Is not life miserable enough, comes not Death soon enough, without resort to the hideous enginery of War?"

Maurizio Morselli
Venice, Italy

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Call It Treason

There is nothing many members of Congress won't do to support Israel's illegal settlements in the West Bank. Risking the lives of American troops? No problem. Endangering U.S. interests in the Middle East? They don't care.

What if Congress represented the interests of the American people as much as it represents the right-wing government of Israel? Instead of sending \$3 billion a year in aid to one of the richest countries in the world, Congress could spend the money here on education and healthcare. Instead of arming Israel to the teeth to commit war crimes in the Occupied Territories, Congress could provide decent medical benefits for the tens of thousands of U.S. veterans severely wounded in our occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is something rotten about members of Congress putting Israel above U.S. interests. Of course, it is pressure from the Israeli lobby here with its tens of millions in campaign contributions to both parties. It is pressure from the rightwing Christian and Jewish extremist groups here that preach about end times and God's chosen people. But must we, the American people, be held hostage by these extremist groups?

There is a word to describe members of Congress who are willing to risk the lives of U.S. troops for cash from the Israeli lobby. The word isn't greed; it is treason.

Allan Farkas
Rhinecliff, N.Y.

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More than a Sportswriter: Lester 'Red' Rodney

by Dave Zirin

It didn't make SportsCenter, but one of history's most influential sportswriters died at the age of 98. His name was Lester Rodney. Lester was one of the first people to write about a young Negro League prospect named Jackie Robinson. He was the last living journalist of those who covered the famous 1938 fight at Yankee Stadium between "The Brown Bomber" Joe Louis and Hitler favorite, Max Schmeling. He crusaded against baseball's color line when almost every other journalist pretended it didn't exist. He edited a political sports page that engaged his audience in how to fight for a more just sports world. His writing, which could describe the beauty of a well-turned double play in one sentence and blast injustice in the next, is still bracing and ahead of its time. He should be in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Instead he was largely erased from the books.

If you have never heard of Lester Rodney, there is a very simple reason why: The newspaper he worked at from 1936 to 1958 was *The Daily Worker*, the party press of the U.S. Communist Party. Lester used his paper to launch the first campaign to end the color line in Major League Baseball. I spoke to Lester about this in 2004, and he said to me, "It's amazing. You go back and you read the great newspapers in the thirties, you'll find no editorials saying, 'What's going on here? This is America, land of the free and people with the wrong pigmentation of skin can't play baseball?' Nothing like that. No challenges to the league, to the commissioner, no talking about Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson, who were obviously of superstar caliber. So it was this tremendous vacuum waiting."

The campaign was integrated into the Party's anti-racist work of the 1930s: "I spoke to the leaders of the YCL [Young Communist League]. We talked about circulating the paper [at ballparks]. It just evolved as we talked about the color line and some kids in the YCL suggested, 'Why don't we go to the ballparks—to Yankee Stadium, Ebbets Field, the

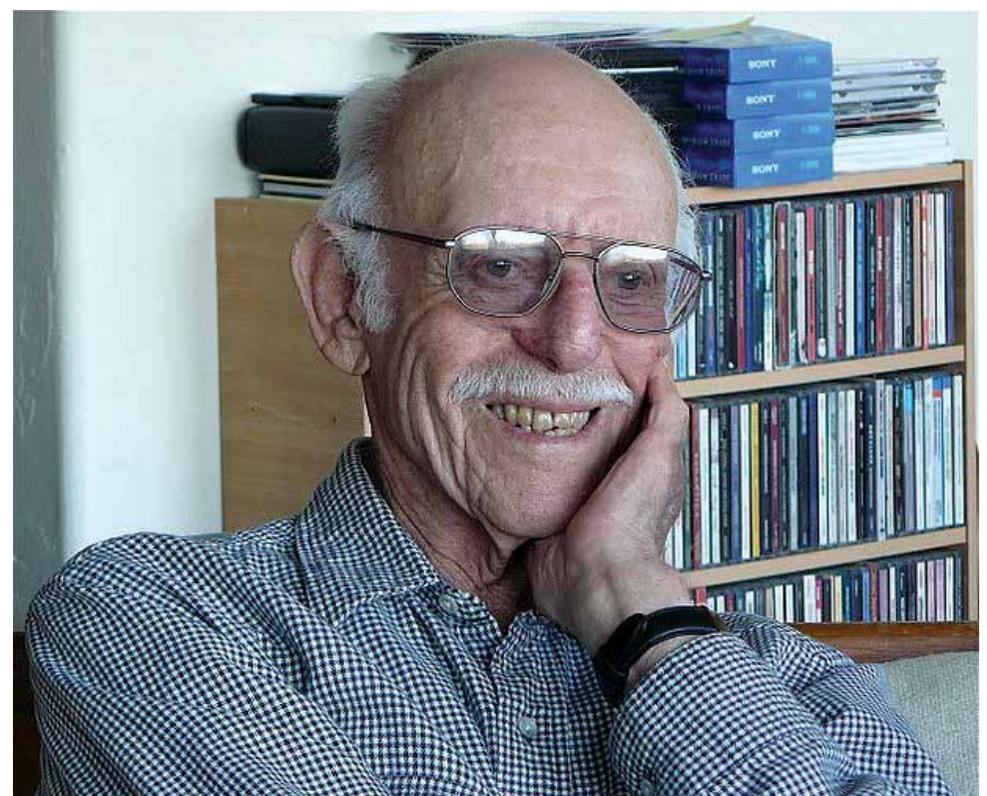
Polo Grounds—with petitions?' We wound up with at least a million and a half signatures that we delivered straight to the desk of [baseball commissioner] Judge Landis."

As Lester fought to end the color ban, he also never stopped highlighting and covering the Negro League teams, giving them press at a time when they were invisible outside of the African-American press. But it was Jackie Robinson who captured Lester's imagination. Armed with a press pass to the Ebbets Field locker room, he saw up close the way Robinson was told to "just shut up and play" despite the constant harassment during his inaugural 1947 campaign. "Jackie was suppressing his very being, his personality," said Lester. "He was a fiercely intelligent man. He knew his role and he accepted it. And the black players who followed him knew what he meant too."

Lester saw the way their play—and their courage—helped inspire the struggle for Civil Rights, especially in the South. Lester told me about a dramatic

He crusaded against baseball's color line when almost every other journalist pretended it didn't exist. ... He should be in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Instead he was largely erased from the books.

exhibition game in Atlanta where all the dynamics of the Black Freedom Struggle were on display. "This exhibition game wound up with the Black fans being allowed in because they had overflowed the segregated stands, they had poured in from outlying districts to see the first integrated game in Georgia history. The Klan had said, 'This must not happen.' That night there was this tremendous sight of Robinson, [Dodgers African American players] Don Newcombe, and Roy Campanella coming out and the black fans behind the ropes and in the stands standing and roaring their greeting. A large sector of whites were just sitting and booing. Then other white people, hesitantly at first, stood up and consciously differentiated themselves from the boosers and clapped. This was an amazing spectacle. This was



the Deep South many years before the words civil rights were widely known. So it had its impact. ... Roy Campanella, once said to me something like, 'Without the Brooklyn Dodgers you don't have Brown v. Board of Education.' I laughed, I thought he was joking but

he was. In fact, the first time he was asked to play at an old-timers' game at Yankee Stadium, he said 'I must sorrowfully refuse until I see more progress being made off the playing field on the coaching lines and in the managerial departments.' He made people uncomfortable. In fact it was that very quality which made him something special. He always made you feel that 'Buddy, there's still unfinished work out there.'" We can absolutely say the same about Lester Rodney, albeit with a twist. Yes, Lester made you feel like there was unfinished work out there. But he also made you feel like the great fun in life was in trying to get it done. That and seeing a perfectly turned 6-4-3 double play.

Read Irwin Silber's book *Press Box Red* for the best history on Lester's life.

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he was stubborn. He said, 'All I know is we were the first ones on the trains, we were the first ones down South not to go around the back of the restaurant, first ones in the hotels.' He said, 'We were like the teachers of the whole integration thing.'"

Lester would still become emotional when he recalls Jackie Robinson and his impact. "There are very few people of whom you can say with certainty that they made this a somewhat better country. Without doubt you can say that about Jackie Robinson. His legacy was not, 'Hooray, we did it,' but 'Buddy, there's still unfinished work out there' He was a continuing militant, and that's why the Dodgers never considered this brilliant baseball man as a manager or coach. It's because he was outspoken and unafraid. That's the kind of person



Robinson slides home



Max Schmeling and Joe Louis



Campanella makes the tag at the plate