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Bush Administration Announces Plans to Change the Name of The Colonial Administration in Iraq

In mid-November the Bush administration announced that by next June it plans to formally transfer the administration of Iraq from the Coalition Provisional Authority to a “transitional government” built around the current Iraqi Governing Council, a group of 24 former exiles and CIA operatives flown into Iraq after the U.S. war.

While the U.S. is advertising this makeover as the “restoration of Iraqi sovereignty,” the truth is that the U.S. will remain the colonial ruler of the country. Ahmad Chalabi, a member of the Governing Council and the leading candidate to head the new “government,” de-

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U.S. Prepares Sanctions Against Syria

In mid-November the U.S. Senate voted 89 to 4 to pass the “Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act” which calls for economic and diplomatic sanctions against Syria. The bill has already been approved by the House of Representatives, by a vote of 398 to 4, and Bush has announced his intention to sign the bill into law.

The bill demands that Syria 1) end “the development and deployment of medium and long range surface to surface ballistic missiles and cease the development and production of biological and chemical weapons”; 2) “halt support for terrorism” (which includes support for various Palestinian organizations); 3) “halt the ille-

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Thousands Protest Against FTAA and SOA

Demonstrations and Police Repression in Miami

On November 20, an estimated 10,000 people rallied and marched through the streets of Miami, protesting the ministerial meeting of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The FTAA is the expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to every country in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, except Cuba. It is a program for the annexation of all of Latin America by U.S. monopolies.

During the protest, and numerous other smaller demonstrations that took place from November 19-21, people from many walks of life and organizations, including trade unions, youth and student organizations, environmental groups, anti-war activists, women’s organizations, etc. raised the slogan “No to the FTAA!” and “Another World is Possible.” The demonstrators expressed their militant opposition to the agenda of monopoly capital — the anti-social agenda of slashing social investments and wages at home and the agenda of extending the economic and political dictate of U.S. imperialism throughout Latin America and the world. They also raised their opposition to the U.S. “war on terrorism” and the war in Iraq.

Thousands of Miami police officers, dressed in full riot-gear and backed by tanks and armored personnel carriers, confronted and assaulted the demonstrators repeatedly throughout the day on November 20. Using rubber bullets, concussion grenades, and tear gas, police charged into throngs of protestors in an attempt to break-up the march. A number of demonstrators were treated at local hospitals for injuries. Over 200 people were arrested during the march, and eyewitnesses report that throughout the three days of protests, hundreds more were arrested or detained simply for “looking or dressing like

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protestors.” Many were arrested on trumped up charges and held on \$10,000 bail. Activist convergence centers were also raided by police and scores of youth were locked-up without any charge. Huge numbers of protestors were also prevented from participating in the march due to police road-blocks and street-closings. On November 20, over 180 buses filled with demonstrators were reportedly stopped by police outside Miami and prevented from entering the city limits.

Protest at Fort Benning, Georgia

On November 22-23, thousands of people participated in protests at Fort Benning, in Columbus Georgia, to demand the closing of the "School of the Americas" (SOA). The SOA, which has recently been renamed by the Pentagon as the "Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation" (WHISC) is a U.S. army training facility for military officers from Latin America.

On November 22, over 8,000 demonstrators (the largest first-day gathering in the 14-year history of the protest) rallied at the gates of the base. Anti-war speeches targeting U.S. military aggression in Latin America as well as in Iraq, and an anti-war "puppet-parade," highlighted the day's events. The next day, on November 23, over 10,000 demonstrators participated in a march through the front gates, demanding that the school be immediately shut down. Scores of demonstrators "crossed the line" and were arrested for trespassing. One arrested protestor commented "The SOA is a terrorist training camp on U.S. soil...it needs to be closed!"

Since 1991, every year in November, demonstrations have taken place outside the gates of the base at Fort Benning. The struggle to close the SOA-WHISC, like the fight against the war in Iraq and the U.S. "war on terrorism," is part of a broad current of opposition to the aggressive foreign policy of the U.S. government.

Syria (from page 1)

gal imports and transshipments of Iraqi oil and illegal sales and supplies of weapons and military-related equipment to Iraq.” and 4) withdraw its 20,000 troops from Lebanon.

Until the U.S. President certifies that the above demands have been met, the new law bans the export of weapons to Syria as well as so-called “dual-use items,” those which the U.S. alleges have both civilian and military applications. The law also allows the U.S. President to impose a number of other sanctions, including banning all U.S. exports except food and medicine, freezing Syrian assets in the U.S., banning all U.S. investments, restricting the movement of Syrian diplomats in the U.S., forbidding Syrian-owned planes from entering U.S. airspace.

Over 9,200 U.S. Casualties From Iraq War

According to recently released Pentagon data, the number of U.S. casualties from the war in Iraq has passed 9,200. This figure includes troops killed, wounded or evacuated due to injury or illness.

In addition to 417 U.S. soldiers killed (as of November 22nd) and 1,967 wounded, 6,861 troops were medically evacuated for non-combat conditions, according to the Army Surgeon General's office.

That brings total casualties among all services to more than 9,200, and represents an increase of nearly 3,000 non-combat medical evacuations reported since the first week of October.

Of the non-combat medical evacuations:

— 2,464 were for injuries, such as those sustained in vehicle accidents.

— 4,397 were due to illness; 504 of those were classified as psychiatric, 378 as neurological, and another 150 as neurosurgery.

In early October, the Army Surgeon General's office said 3,915 soldiers had been evacuated from Iraq. The new total of 6,861 reported non-combat evacuations is a rise of 57 percent since then.

Name Change for Iraq Administration (from page 1)

scribed the plans this way: “This is good for everyone. We will have the U.S. forces here, but they will change from occupiers to a force that is here at the invitation of the Iraqi government.” Bush himself reminded the world that it is “inconceivable” that the U.S. military will pull out of Iraq. As for the Iraqi administrators, a senior official of the Bush administration emphasized that they are completely attuned to “values that we hold in common and are very comfortable with.”

In addition to remaining the military power ruling the country, the U.S. will have privatized and taken over the Iraqi economy by June 2004.

The “Syrian Accountability Act” follows the same Big Lie logic which the U.S. used to prepare its war against Iraq. The new law is part of the U.S. government's escalating pressure against Syria and against the Palestinian liberation movement. The U.S. aims firstly at silencing any opposition to its occupation of Iraq and its aggression in Palestine and at recolonizing the entire Middle East. The Syrian Accountability Act is a dangerous step on the road to yet another U.S. war.