

Anti-Imperialist News Service

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War in Iraq Continues

Although the U.S. claims it has "handed over power" to an Iraqi government, clearly nothing has changed.

The war against the Iraqi people continues with mounting death tolls and casualties for the people of Baghdad, Fallujah, and numerous other cities throughout the country. Missile strikes by U.S. warplanes have killed over nine people in Fallujah during the past two weeks. Gunbattles between U.S. soldiers and insurgents are commonplace in Baghdad while in Iraq's Anbar province, heavily armed U. S. soldiers supported by helicopter gunships, tanks and armored vehicles are carrying out deadly raids every day.

And the toll on U.S. forces reached a milestone on July 9, with the announcement that the number of U.S.-led coalition deaths in the war surpassed 1,000.

Resistance to the U.S. military occupation is also growing. In Baghdad and other Iraqi cities, insurgents have occupied police stations, blocked highways and launched daily attacks against U.S. soldiers and the U.S.-trained Iraqi puppet army and police.

On July 7, the Iraqi people got yet another lessons in U.S.-style "freedom and democracy," when the U.S.-installed puppet prime minister, Iyad Allawi, declared "emergency powers" and threatened to impose martial law. Under the new "Law for Defense of National Safety," Allawi will be able to close off entire towns and cities, impose curfews, restrict communications, and limit travel in and out of the country. Public demonstrations can be banned and arbitrary search and seizure sanctioned by law. All these repressive measures will be enforced, of course, by the U.S. military which continues to hold the gun to the head of the Iraqi people.

Meanwhile, both George Bush and John Kerry are promising to continue the U.S. occupation of Iraq and to "crush the violent insurgency."

George Bush repeatedly defends the occupation as part of the "war against international

terrorism," vowing to keep U.S. troops in the country "as long as necessary" while also promising to get more international support. In June, he boasted that NATO participation in the war would help alleviate the U.S. burden.

In identical fashion, John Kerry, the Democratic Party candidate, has in numerous speeches called for expanding and prolonging the U.S. presence in Iraq. In April he said "It would be unthinkable for us to retreat in disarray and leave behind a society deep in strife and dominated by radicals." In recent months, he has been pushing hard for a U.S.-dominated multilateral military force, saying "If our com-

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U.S. Stealing Billions from Iraq

Newly released reports show that U.S. officials stole billions of dollars of Iraq's oil money, and that up to 25 percent of its oil revenue continues to be illegally smuggled out of the country.

According to the "Open Society Institute's Iraq Revenue Watch," only \$10 billion remains from nearly \$20 billion collected by the Iraq Development Fund, a body created by the United Nations in 2003 to collect Iraq's oil revenue previously held by Saddam Hussein and the U. N.'s Oil-For-Food Program. The fund was designed to be spent for the interests of the Iraqi people, and was to be independently audited. Instead, the report says, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) led by Paul Bremer "paved the way for corruption and waste" and went on "a last-minute spending spree" in early June providing cash give-aways to U.S. corporations.

Another June 2004 report ("Fuelling suspicion: the coalition and Iraq's oil billions") by a British humanitarian group, "Christian Aid," states that "for the entire year that it has been

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Cuba (continued from page 4)

the relevant aspects of the act, but never took any action. Adding insult to injury, Bush is now making these provisions even tougher.

Disingenuously camouflaged as "aid to a free Cuba", the infamous volume of 450-plus pages full of hatred, lies and tiresome rhetoric, and goes into minute detail on the measures Washington would impose if it succeeded in getting possession of Cuba. The Cuban society would be entirely subjugated to the United States, which would dominate all its activities without exception. A complete account of this recipe for unbridled interventionism would be endless, but some aspects of the plan offer an idea of the degree of servitude and exploitation planned for Cubans:

- One of the first tasks of the so-called "transitional government" would be to restore their properties to the former exploiters, including houses and lands sought by the annexionist mafia that supported Batista in the past. The process would be quick and directed by Washington, which would set up a special mechanism to that end. This infamous document also specifically decrees the eviction of those living in reclaimed dwellings or unable to pay high rents, a return to the practice of arbitrarily evicting small farmers, as well as the dismantling of the farming cooperatives and restoration of the former latifundia. What was already foreseen in the Helms Burton Act is now expressed in a more blatant form.

- All sectors of the economy would be privatized, while a permanent U. S. government Committee for Economic Reconstruction, to be set up right away, would control the economy.

- The subsidies and price controls affecting goods and services supplied to the public would be abolished.

- The social security and welfare system would be dismantled and commitments to pay benefits and pensions would be invalidated.

- Healthcare and education services would be privatized.

This would be a return to capitalism in its most brutal form, under the yoke of a foreign power. The consequences for the Cuban people would be so terrible that even the report itself warns that "it would not be easy" to bring about "the transition", which would meet considerable rejection on the part of Cuban society. For this reason it identifies as an "immediate priority" the assembling of repressive forces that would be organized, trained, equipped and advised by Washington.

As proof of their real intentions to intervene and subject Cuba to an annexionist regime, the U.S. president would immediately appoint an official tasked with coordinating all the various aggressive measures aimed at overthrowing the Revolution. This person would subsequently lead the 'government of intervention', like Valeriano Weyler and Leonard Wood rolled into one: a truly genocidal strategy.

They will certainly not be able to bring such evil plans to fruition.

They would first have to invade Cuba, occupy the country militarily and then crush our people's resistance: that will never happen. We are ready and willing to fight to the last man and woman to prevent it. If they attack us here, they will find a united, educated people, with a glorious history of heroism, struggle and sacrifice for freedom, that will never give up its independence or its ideals of justice and solidarity, that will never renounce the fine, noble and profoundly humane society it has succeeded in building despite the empire's acts of aggression. If they attack us, they will sustain here their greatest and most humiliating defeat.

We shall confront these measures and any others our enemies may devise. We shall stand our ground and fight. Firmly united behind Fidel, Raúl and our Party and under its wise and consistent leadership, we shall advance ever onwards to victory.

War in Iraq (from page 1)

manders believe they need more American troops, they should say so and they should get them ... But more and more American soldiers cannot be the only solution ... The coalition should organize an expanded international security forces, preferably with NATO, but clearly under U.S. command" (Fulton, Missouri, April 30).

The plain truth is that U.S. imperialism will continue its war against Iraq until it is forced out of the country. The duty of the American people is to demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and foreign troops and to support the struggle of the Iraqi people for genuine sovereignty.

Stealing Billions (from page 1)

in power in Iraq, it has been impossible to tell with any accuracy what the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) has done with some \$20 billion of Iraq's own money...this failure puts the CPA in flagrant breach of the UN resolution."

The report also condemns the U.S. authorities refusal to publicly account for its spending, saying "with U.S. companies charging up to ten times as much as Iraqi companies, reports of corruption at every level in the contracting process, and with Iraqi unemployment running at more than 50 per cent, Iraqis need to be able to see that their money is being put to its best use. But they cannot."

In addition to out-right theft, the U.S. has created an environment ripe for corruption and fraud, leading to a largescale black-market.

Today, the report states, "it is estimated that between 10 per cent and 25 per cent of Iraq's refined oil is being smuggled abroad."

These reports offer further proof that U.S. monopoly capitalists are literally looting and taking over ownership of the Iraqi economy.

People can clearly see that in every way, the war and occupation of Iraq tramples underfoot international law and the sovereignty of countries. It is an imperialist war being waged in opposition to the expressed will of the peoples and governments of the world.

World Court Rules Against Israel's "Apartheid Wall"

On July 9, the International Court of Justice in the Hague ruled that Israel's ongoing construction of a wall across the West Bank is in violation of international law.

The wall which Israel is building across 437 miles of the West Bank includes electronic fences, armed watch towers, concrete walls and barbed wire ditches. The wall cuts deep into Palestinian towns and villages, confiscating Palestinian land and allowing Israel to de facto annex more territory. In its ruling, the International Court of Justice found that the wall "cannot be justified by military exigencies or by the requirements of national security" and that the wall violated the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the right to freedom of movement.

The ruling, entitled "Legal Consequences Of The Construction Of A Wall In the Occupied Palestinian Territory", reads, in part:

"The construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law; . . ."

"Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, in accordance with paragraph 151 of this Opinion; forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, in accordance with paragraph 151 of this Opinion; . . ."

"Israel is under an obligation to make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem; . . ."

"All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction; all States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 have in addition the obligation, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in that Convention; . . ."

"The United Nations, and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated régime, taking due account of the present Advisory Opinion."

As soon as the Court's decision was handed down, the Israeli government said it would continue construction of the wall in violation of the ruling. The U.S. government also continues to express support for the wall and openly calls for ignoring the Court's decision.

Deadly Israeli Raids in West Bank and Gaza

On June 26, Israel launched a military operation targeting top Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This on-going operation has already left nearly 20 Palestinians dead, with many more wounded.

In the city of Nablus, fierce fighting erupted when Israel launched a raid on June 26, killing six top leaders in Nablus. Another Palestinian was killed by a booby trap set by Israeli soldiers. On July 5, another raid in the city led to the killing of five Palestinians.

On July 1, Israeli troops, tanks, and armored vehicles stormed into Jericho and Nablus, sealing off the towns and imposing a curfew. A nine-year-old Palestinian boy was shot dead during the raid. During the fighting, Israeli tanks were called in for reinforcement and Israeli helicopters fired missiles into residential buildings. At one point, Israeli soldiers with loudspeakers ordered the residents to evacuate buildings. When Palestinians obeyed the orders, and exited the structures, they were shot dead. Medical officials and neighbors said an emergency medical unit was prohibited from entering the area by Israeli soldiers who had declared the street a closed military zone.

On July 8, Israeli occupation troops backed by helicopters and armored bulldozers killed at least 8 Palestinians, and injured many others in two separate incursions into the Gaza Strip.

U.S. Stealth Fighters Deployed to South Korea

A squadron of F-117 Nighthawks — stealth fighter-bombers — has been deployed to South Korea, U.S. officials said on July 1st.

The deployment includes one squadron of F-117s, to Kunsan, as part of the U.S.'s \$11 billion "force enhancements package" to South Korea, a U. S. official stated. South Korean military officials also confirmed the deployment, saying they had been notified of the move a few months back. A Ministry of National Defense spokesman said the deployment was part of "planned exercises."

Commenting on the deployment, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) stated on July 2:

...While putting unjustifiable pressure upon the DPRK under the pretext of the nuclear issue between it and the DPRK caused by it, the U.S. is massively deploying reinforced war equipment of latest types in and around south Korea and staging an unbroken chain of war rehearsals for a war against the DPRK.

On the other hand, it is hastening the transfer and relocation of its troops in south Korea. It must not go unnoticed that the United States has brought fighter bombers into south Korea for training to invade the north as soon as another round of the six-party talks for settling the nuclear issue between the DPRK and the U.S. ended. It is a robber-like act as preposterous as a thief crying "Stop thief!" For the U.S. to take issue with the DPRK's self-defensive military deterrent force while continuously introducing military hardware into south Korea and playing with fire. The DPRK is prepared to cope with any ultra-modern weapons.

Statement From the National Assembly of People's Power of the Republic of Cuba

Havana, July 1, 2004

The empire plans to crush the Cuban nation and is proclaiming its intentions with insulting arrogance.

It is intensifying the economic war, internal subversion, anti-Cuba propaganda and the pressures on the rest of the world designed to pave the way for a direct military intervention that would destroy the Revolution, end our independence and sovereignty and realize the old annexionist fantasy of seizing control of Cuba.

Yesterday, Washington enforced new, harsh measures against the Cuban people and against Cubans living in the United States. Their promoters refer to these steps as part of a plan to bring about "a rapid end" to the revolutionary government.

The new measures involve toughening the already unfair and discriminatory restrictions imposed on those Cubans, the only national group to which the U.S. government dictates the kind of relations its members can have with their families and country of origin, in flagrant violation of that country's Constitution. They no longer even have the right to visit Cuba once a year. Now they cannot do so more than once every three years and must apply for a specific authorization for the purpose, which will be for a maximum stay of 14 days. The limit on how much they can spend here has been severely reduced, as is the case with amounts that they can send their relatives. Such visits and remittances are now strictly restricted to what the Bush administration calls "immediate family", arbitrarily excluding aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces, among other relatives. What legal precedent can the American authorities cite for such an intrusion into people's private lives? Where are the "family values" which the current president and his friends tout so much? Is Mr. Bush still describing himself as a "compassionate conservative"?

The people who elaborated these measures and those tasked with enforcing them have warned that there will be no exceptions, that they will be applied retroactively and rigorously and that heavy fines and severe prison sentences await those who breach the blockade. A kind of apartheid has been created for Cubans living in the United States.

Yesterday also saw the cancellation of almost every license that, although subject to onerous restrictions, permitted certain Americans to visit Cuba. They have even eliminated the issuing of licenses in cases where the visitor would be spending no money here at all. The latter shows that the policy goes beyond tightening the blockade and damaging Cuba's economy. It is also aimed at preventing millions of Americans from having direct contact with Cuban reality, a right recognized for three consecutive years by a substantial majority in the U.S Congress. What are Mr. Bush and the ultra-reactionary mafia that dictated this irrational policy afraid of?

There is one aspect of the U.S. plan that is especially cynical. On the one hand, it places drastic restrictions on remittances from Cuban residents in the United States to their relatives in Cuba while, on the other, it allows and instigates anyone to provide money and material support to the traitorous grouplets operating here under Washington's orders. While depriving U.S. citizens of their right to visit Cuba, the administration spends large amounts of federal funds on arranging journeys from third-party countries by people whose declared intent is to supply these mercenaries. The budget for funding and directing other actions to undermine Cuban society over the next two years is 59 million dollars. This sum includes \$18 million for radio and television broadcasts from a C-130 military airplane, an irresponsible and illegal provocation that not only breaks the law but also infringes the international rules on aviation and telecommunications.

There is also the threat of increasingly arbitrary application of those sections of the Helms-Burton Act specifically designed to penalize businesspersons from third-party nations. In the celebrated "understanding" it signed with the European Union, Washington undertook to consider eliminating

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15th U.S.-Cuba Friendship Caravan

On July 8, the 15th U.S. Cuban Friendship Caravan crossed the U. S.-Mexico border enroute to Cuba. The Friendship is carrying 50 tons of humanitarian supplies, including medicines, computers, and school supplies, in defiance of the U.S. government's illegal embargo against Cuba.

This year's Caravan comes at a critical time when the U.S. government is tightening its economic blockade against Cuba. The Bush administration has virtually eliminated even visits to Cuban by Americans with family members in the countries, ended educational exchanges, and limited the amount of money which U.S. citizens can send to Cuba. The IFCO/Pastors for Peace, organizers of the Caravan, coordinated this year's campaign with three other organizations challenging the U.S. government's travel ban: the Venceremos Brigade, the African Awareness Association and the Committee to Free the Cuban Five. The Caravan has brought humanitarian supplies to Cuba every year since 1992.

Before arriving in Mexico, the Friendship Caravan visited more than 120 U.S. cities to collect supplies and to hold meetings and other activities in opposition to the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Across the country, thousands of people from many walks of life, including members of solidarity groups, churches, educational associations, civil rights groups, and others, participated in these activities.