

Anti-Imperialist News Service

Print Edition, August 30, 2004

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Huge Protest in New York City

On August 29, on the eve of the Republican Party national convention, hundreds of thousands of people marched in New York city to oppose the government's war program, to demand an end to the ongoing cutbacks in such vital social programs as education, health care, housing, income-support for the impoverished, etc., and to resist the government's attacks on democratic rights.

The protesters filled 20 city blocks as they gathered in the midtown area of Manhattan, and it took nearly five hours for the procession of demonstrators to pass Madison Square Garden, the site of the convention. The march itself was filled with row after row of colorful signs and banners. From nearly every state and countless

communities, from many different walks of life, people came to resolutely denounce George Bush and oppose U.S. imperialism's war program.

This demonstration, like thousands of similar actions which have taken place in cities and towns all across America during the past year, shows that the people are further organizing themselves, and once again testifies to the will of the American people.

As the U.S. government continues to defy the will of the people and remain on the war-path, the people have no choice but to further organize themselves in opposition to and struggle against the parties of war and imperialism.

International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian Political Prisoners

The following article is based on a report issued by the Committee for Families of Political Prisoners and Detainees.

"The families of the Palestinian political prisoners plead with you, the members of the international community, to join in solidarity with their sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters who are being held in Israeli prisons by organizing an International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian Prisoners on September 4, 2004 and by registering your own protest with political representatives and government ministers that they may bring pressure on the government of Israel to cease these violations of law and to treat Palestinian prisoners as human beings entitled to basic human rights.

"During the month of August 7,500 Palestinian political prisoners will take part in a massive series of hunger strikes hoping to draw in-

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More Israeli Settlements In the West Bank

This month, Israel announced that it would build 1,800 more settlements throughout the occupied West Bank territories.

Construction is well underway, for example, at Geva Binyamin, a settlement with 2,000 residents about six miles north of Jerusalem, where crews are working on dozens of duplexes. A few miles south of Jerusalem, some 100 homes are being built at the Har Gilo settlement.

At nearby Efrat, construction crews are building at least six multi-story residential buildings.

Although the United Nations and many European countries have condemned the new settlement plans as clear violations of international law, officials from the Bush administration announced on August 21 that the U.S. would be "flexible" on the issue.

According to White House officials, the Bush administration will now tacitly support building new homes within the boundaries of existing settlements.

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Palestinian Political Prisoners (continued from page 1)

ternational attention and support to a campaign against the gross violations of their rights and against the appalling conditions under which they are being detained.

"Whilst the Israeli authorities have tried to undermine the protest, dismissing it as a political action organized by the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement and Islamic Jihad, the complaints and demands of the prisoners clearly highlight the humanitarian nature of the campaign.

"The prisoners complain of arbitrary and indiscriminate beatings, the firing of tear gas into cells and intimidation by guards with guns, humiliating strip searches of prisoners and the subjecting of prisoners to solitary confinement for excessive periods of time, for months and even years, arbitrary imposition of financial penalties, confinement of children with adult prisoners and political prisoners with criminals, withholding or delaying medical treatment, the withdrawal of studying privileges that in the past allowed prisoners to continue their high school or university studies through correspondence courses, and restrictions placed on family members entitled to visit and the denial of travel permits to family members living in the West Bank or Gaza so that they cannot travel to prisons to see their relatives. Some prisoners have endured more than a full year without visits.

"Such treatment and conditions violate not only international law but also the Israeli state rules intended to govern the administration of prisons.

"With the help of international recognition of these facts the prisoners seek only to alleviate these harsh conditions, their demands calling for the most basic necessities such as food, water and air and for a standard of treatment that meets humanitarian requirements.

"In their statement entitled 'the uprising of the empty stomach' the prisoners demand:

"An end to collective and abusive punishment and to reintegrate the many prisoners held in isolation, improved visitation rights and visitor facilities, easing of restrictions regarding telephone calls and communication with families and lawyers, improvement of health facilities inside the prisons and the treatment of prisoners with emergency needs left without attention, provision of basic kitchen equipment such as cups as well as cleaning, bathroom and shaving products, recreational activities and books, ventilation of cells and removal of black covering from windows.

"The prisoners also demand that legal documents and prison policies are made available to them in their own Arabic language and that they are treated above all according to the confines of the fourth Geneva Convention.

"This campaign is not political rather its aim is to stop the excessively harsh treatment of Palestinian political prisoners and to ensure that the conditions under which they are imprisoned are consistent with international norms of human rights and basic decency.

"The Committee for the Families of Political Prisoners and Detainees has planned a month of solidarity activities to coincide with the hunger strikes. Solidarity tents have been set up in the centre of all the cities in the West Bank and in all the Red Cross Centres and will be occupied by the public around the clock for as long as the prisoners' strike lasts. The Palestinian Prime Minister's office has declared August 18th a National Day for Prisoners for all Palestinians to show solidarity and all government ministers, members of the Palestinian National Council and heads of all political parties and several civil society organizations will join the public in the Solidarity Tents and fast in support of the prisoners.

Action

"Register your protest with your own political representatives and governments ministers. Send a copy of your protest message to alhureih@yahoo.com.

"Messages of support from organizations would also be appreciated by the prisoners and their families. Send them to the same address with some details of the organization. For more information visit our temporary website at

www.palsolidarity.org/prisoners

telephone (972) 2 277 4602

email: info@palsolidarity.org

Families of Palestinian Political Prisoners,

PO Box 2151

Ramallah, Palestine.

Israeli Settlements (Continued from page 1)

Last April, President Bush also officially announced the U.S. government's support for Israel's plan to permanently annex large sections of the West Bank and thus effectively prevent the establishment of any viable, independent Palestinian state. In a White House statement and a letter to Ariel Sharon on April 14, Bush said: "In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949."

Currently, 350,000 Israelis live in more than 150 settlements in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza.

Israel began establishing settlements in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza immediately after its occupation of these territories in the 1967 war. Settlements are part of a deliberate strategy by the Israeli government to colonize and annex the occupied territories, to undermine the sovereignty of Palestine and keep it under the military thumb of Israel.

Non Alignment Movement To Impose Sanctions on Israel

Report, NAM, 20 August 2004 (excerpts)

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) called on its member states to bar all products and goods emanating from Israeli settlements at the end of the fourteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Alignment Movement (Mid-Term Review) in Durban, South Africa. The call for measures was issued by the Committee on Palestine of the Non-Alignment Movement.

The NAM declaration called for its members to "decline entry to Israeli settlers and to impose sanctions against companies and entities involved in the construction of the wall."

"With regard to member states, the ministers called upon them to undertake measures, including by means of legislation, collectively, regionally and individually, to prevent any products of the illegal Israeli settlements from entering their markets," said the declaration. The International Court of Justice, the UN's highest legal body, ruled last month that parts of the Separation Barrier built on occupied Palestinian territory were illegal and should be torn down.

XIV MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)

DECLARATION ON PALESTINE

1. The Ministers considered the developments regarding the critical issue of the construction by Israel, the occupying Power, of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, including the Advisory Proceedings of the International Court of Justice, undertaken pursuant to the request for an advisory opinion from the Court made by the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly in its resolution ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003.

The Ministers welcomed the Advisory Opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the "Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

The Ministers received the Advisory Opinion with the highest respect, fully accepted the authoritative findings and conclusions of the Court and considered this strong and comprehensive Opinion to represent an historic opportunity for a necessary return to the rule of international law in all efforts to justly and peacefully address the question of Palestine and resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

2. The Ministers recalled in particular the Court's conclusion that "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 regime, are contrary to international law". In this regard, the Ministers underscored the Court's findings re-

garding the violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, by Israel, the occupying Power, including, inter alia, the finding that the construction of the wall and its associated regime: create a 'fait accompli' on the ground which would be tantamount to de facto annexation; severely impede the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination and therefore violate that right; have led to the destruction or requisition of properties in contravention of relevant provisions of the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention; and violate the Palestinian people's freedom of movement and the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living. The Ministers further underscored the Court's conclusion that the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, have been established in breach of international law, and noted the Court's findings regarding the relationship between the route of the Wall and the illegal measures taken by Israel with regard to East Jerusalem and the settlements....

4. The Ministers strongly welcomed the adoption of resolution ES-10/15 on 20 July 2004 by the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, in which the Assembly, inter alia, demands that Israel, the occupying Power, comply with its legal obligations as mentioned in the Advisory Opinion and also calls upon all Member States of the United Nations to comply with their legal obligations as mentioned in the Advisory Opinion. The Ministers regarded the overwhelming adoption of this resolution as a first important step by the United Nations in follow-up of the Opinion. The Ministers seized the opportunity to call for respect of and compliance with the Advisory Opinion by Israel, the occupying Power, and by Member States, and expressed their strong hope and conviction that such respect and compliance would positively influence efforts for achieving a peaceful, political settlement of the conflict based on international law.

5. The Ministers, in the meanwhile, took note of the immediate negative response by Israel to the Advisory Opinion and its defiant declarations to continue constructing the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Ministers thus called for the following specific actions:

a. At the United Nations, the Ministers called for further measures to be taken, in accordance with operative paragraph 5 of resolution ES-10/15, and also called on the Security Council to fulfill its responsibilities by adopting a clear resolution and undertaking necessary measures in this regard. The Ministers also called on the Secretary-General

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Is the U.S. Really a "Human Rights Champion"?

The following is reprinted from an editorial published by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on August 28. Minor grammatical corrections made by the AINS.

Many civilians have been killed in Falluja and Najaf, Iraq, by indiscriminate U.S. missile attacks and bombing. The killings indicate that the Abu Ghraib abuses, which shocked the international community, are only the tip of the iceberg.

While perpetrating such brutal torture and murder in other countries, the U.S. has had the nerve to talk about "human rights".

Some time ago, the Washington Times reported a shocking document worked out by the U.S. Department of Justice at the request of the Bush administration in August 2002. The document states that physical torture should be defined as chronic injury, damage to physical functions, and death. It means that only making a person insane, or killing him or her, can be considered torture.

On the basis of this cruel logic, the U.S. Department of Defense in March 2003 worked out an unethical defense report stipulating that such torture is not illegal.

The facts show that U.S. human rights abuses, a target of worldwide denunciation, have been legalized as a state policy under the Bush administration.

In the middle of the last century the fascist states, prompted by an ambition for world supremacy, invented various evil laws to legalize torture and murder against other nations. But in the 21st century the Bush administration, which declared human slaughter as a state policy, is the general headquarters of human rights violations.

It is ridiculous for the U.S. to style itself a "champion of human rights" and "defender of liberty".

The Bush administration should not desecrate the term "human rights".

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U. S. Arms Buildup Denounced by North Korea

Excerpted from the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), August 22. Minor editorial corrections made by the AINS.

The U.S. imperialists are massively introducing their latest weapons and military equipment into south Korea while readjusting their military strategy against the DPRK...

The U.S. is planning to spend 11 billion more dollars to bolster its forces in south Korea...and has already introduced into south Korea all types of high performance weapons and the latest military equipment.

It intends to deploy two Aegis destroyers equipped with ultra-modern missile systems in the East Sea of Korea on a permanent basis, and two battalions of "PAC-3" and three squadrons of F-117 Stealth fighter bombers of the U.S. Air Force this year. It has also already completed the development of new types of missiles capable of destroying underground facilities, and plans to supply them to its forces in South Korea.

What also merits serious attention is that the U.S. Navy is planning to deploy the latest nuclear aircraft carrier, the John Stennis, in the waters off the Korean peninsula.

Sanctions on Israel (from page 3)

of the United Nations to expedite the work with regard to the request made by the Assembly in resolution ES-10/15 to establish a register of damages caused by the Wall and to ensure that the positions and documents of the Secretariat are fully consistent with the Advisory Opinion.

b. With regard to Member States, the Ministers called upon them to undertake measures, including by means of legislation, collectively, regionally and individually, to prevent any products of the illegal Israeli settlements from entering their markets consistent with the obligations under International Treaties, to decline entry to Israeli settlers and to impose sanctions against companies and entities involved in the construction of the wall and other illegal activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem....

6. The Ministers turned their consideration to the overall plight of the Palestinian people and their prolonged struggle to achieve their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination. The Ministers stressed that the main danger to the realization of the national rights of the Palestinian people and the achievement of the two-State solution is the settler colonialism and the construction of the Wall being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem....