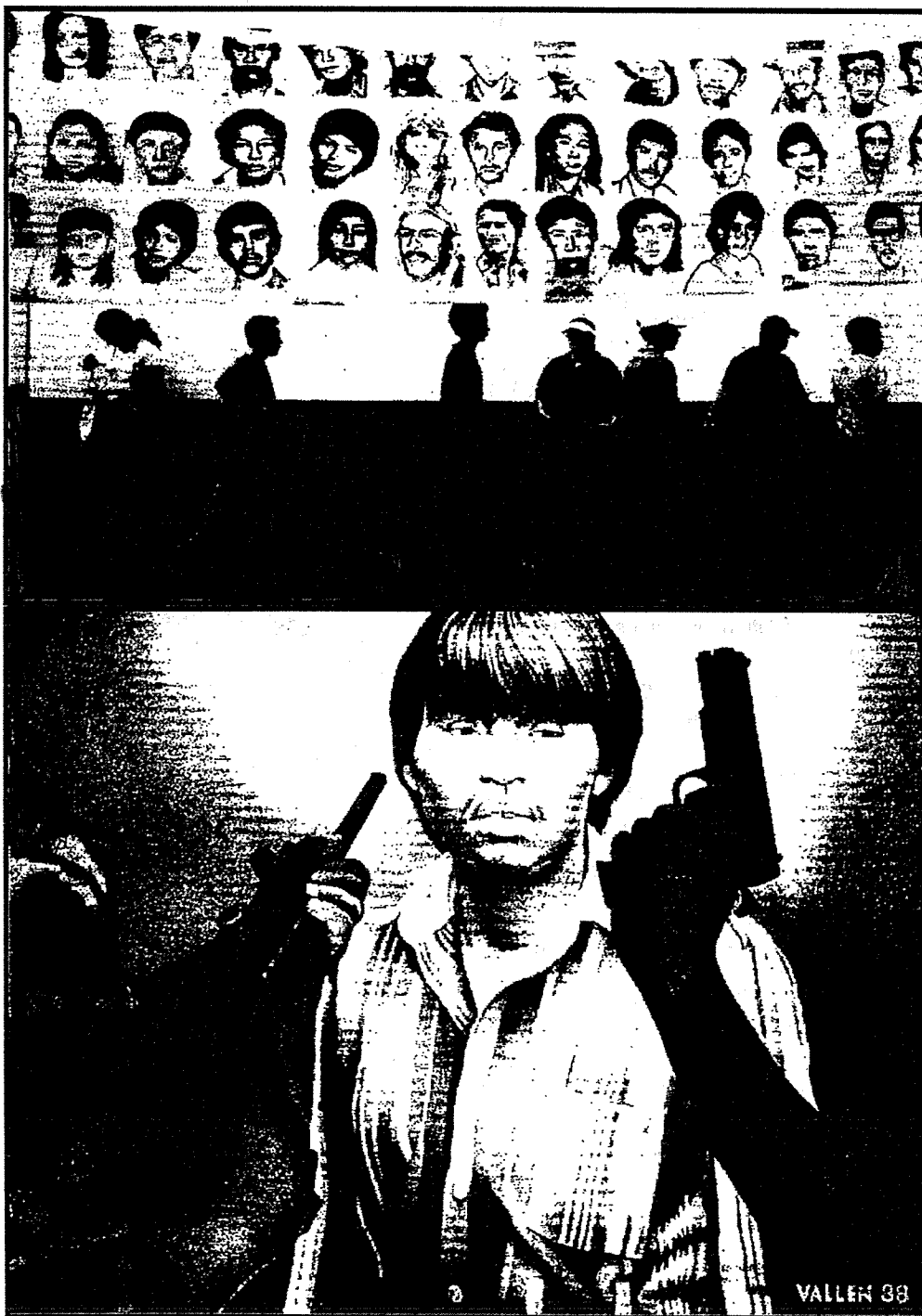


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Libertad



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GUATEMALA AS A TEMPLATE FOR AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND AMERICAN SPONSORED GENOCIDE

If one was looking for a template for discussing/describing post WWII Cold War U.S. imperialism, Guatemala would be the perfect example.



After years of oppression and exploitation, Guatemala enjoyed a period of reform (known as "The Ten Year Spring") between the years 1944 to 1954 in which two different democratically elected governments following one another instituted key reforms modeled on FDR's New Deal which brought America out of the Great Depression... Some examples of these reforms were free expression, a multi-party political system, the creation of unions to safeguard worker's rights, and land reform.

The last part was very important because Guatemala was/is a country with gross economic inequality. The descendants of the Mayan Indians are the majority but are for the most part very poor and treated like second class citizens whereas the lighter skinned descendants of Spanish colonialists are the ones who own everything including land which they got for next to nothing. A plan was put into effect whereas the largest plantations were required to sell small portions of their land back to the government which in turn sold it at reduced cost to poorer citizens. The amount paid for the land was equal to the value listed on the plantations' tax returns which was funny because they had been undervaluing the amount of their property from their inception in order to get out of paying taxes.

Unfortunately, the United Fruit Company was also a very large landowner in Guatemala and also greatly undervalued its holdings to the Guatemalan government to get out of paying taxes. The UFC executives scurried to Washington and screamed "communism" which resulted in the creation of a CIA trained and backed military force which overthrew the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz and installed a military dictatorship which massacred thousands. Many fled the country including an Argentinean doctor who was so disgusted by what he saw that he became permanently radicalized by the experience. His name was Ché Guevera.

Fast forward to the 1970's. Demands for reform were growing in an unfair system that enslaved the majority.

Small rag tag groups of guerillas began opposing government policies... Mayan Indians launched a peaceful protest in the Spanish Embassy. The government's response? Burn the embassy to the ground killing all the employees and the protestors.

This, Guatemala's version of Kristellnacht, was the beginning of what has been called "The Silent Holocaust". Up until 1986, under the pretense of fighting communism, the Guatemalan military launched a genocidal campaign against the Mayan Indians killing more than 200,000 people and eradicating 440 Mayan villages from the maps. Basically, they employed mass murder and rape filling up mass graves with bodies and burning down every town they came to. Torture was also common place.

In 1999, a United Nations truth commission agreed that genocide had been committed against the Mayans by the Guatemalan military and that up to 97% of war crimes during this period had been committed by the Guatemalan military... Unfortunately, a law passed in Guatemala makes it very hard to go after perpetrators as they have been granted a form of amnesty against prosecution for crimes against humanity. The only people prosecuted so far in the Silent Holocaust are relatively low level soldiers.

So what was the United States involvement in all of this?

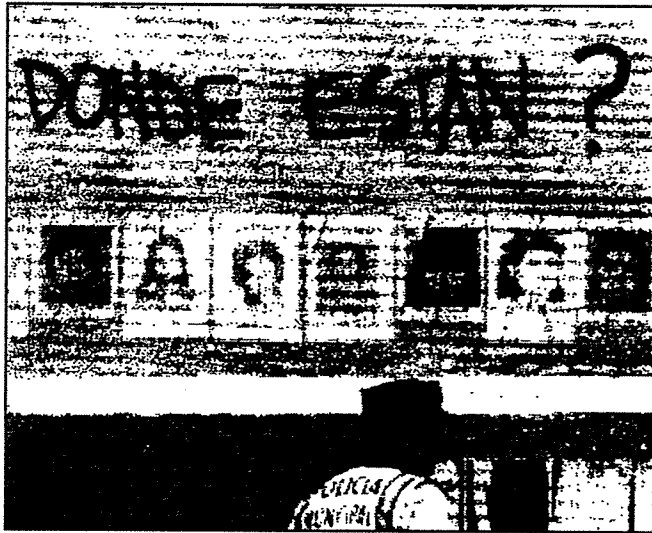
Well quite a lot it seems: in addition to the original coup that eliminated democracy in Guatemala, America had trained many Guatemalan military leaders in the fine art of torture and mass murder at that wonderful institution the School of the Americas. Millions of dollars were pumped to the Guatemalan military especially during the Reagan years to help with oppression. The newest armaments were also shipped there to be used against women and children and the overall slaughter of large groups of civilians. But worst of all, there have been a number of reports that U.S. forces (of a CIA covert type) were on the ground during the Silent Holocaust and contributed to the mass murder in some occasions.

This cannot be excused by the argument that there was a global war against Communism. Most of the people killed in Guatemala were civilians. Considering that land theft of the poor Mayans was also part of the deal, I think this was actually a war of capitalist oppression.

Why talk about this now? Because in this day and age of over simplification (good vs. evil for examples) it's time to obliterate America's patriotic marketing b*llsh*t. America is NOT the overriding force for good in the world. America relies on the exploitation of poorer countries in order for its citizens to enjoy their lifestyle.

IMO there's no good and evil in the world as it applies to the behavior of Western nations. There's only evil and more evil. America lies somewhere between the two.###

Posted by rgdinmalaysia



The Truth Under the Earth: The Relationship Between Genocide and Femicide in Guatemala

Written by Colm McNaughton, Wednesday, 21 October 2009

The war in Guatemala has never ceased. While the Peace Accords signed in 1996 demobilized some combatants and weapons – the killing, raping and torturing continues unabated. In 2009 the homicide rate for Guatemala, with a population of 13 million, is about 8,000 per year. Of these 8,000 murders approximately 10 percent are women and girls.

According to figures from Guatemala City based women's group Grupo Guatemalteco de Mujeres (GGM) between January 2002 and January 2009 there were 197,538 acts of domestic violence, 13,895 rapes and 4,428 women were murdered. What is perhaps even more disturbing is that for this tsunami of violence there is a 97 percent impunity rate. One of the main reasons for near total impunity in the Guatemalan context is that the people responsible for the genocidal civil war against indigenous people in which 200,000 people were murdered and 50,000 disappeared have never, nor are they ever likely to be held accountable.

In August and September of 2009 I visited Guatemala, at least in part, to examine how the civil war has been superseded by an as yet undeclared social war, part of which is an ongoing femicide.

This journey really starts for me in early September 2009 in the Ixil triangle, which is an area in the western highlands framed by the three townships of Nebaj, Chajul and Cotzal. It is a fiercely indigenous region which has resisted the colonialism and brutal immiseration forced upon the region since the times of the Spanish invasion. Consequently, it bore the brunt of the genocidal 'scorched earth' policies enacted by the consecutive military dictatorships of Romeo Lucas Garcia and Rios Mont in the early 1980s. At this time there were more than 200 massacres and 16,000 deaths, which led to a population decrease of the region by a quarter.

I visited Finca Covabunga, which is just up the road from Chul, a bumpy, dl:1sty, windy three hour trip through the mountains on the back of a pick up, north of Nebaj. On December 9, 1982, 75 men, women and children were massacred by the Guatemalan army. The exhumation of seven or so bodies from two graves – the rest had been eaten by dogs, birds and time – was organized by the Centre for Forensic Analysis and Scientific Application (CAFTA) and it was part of their ongoing campaign against impunity for genocide in Guatemala. In speaking with the folks from CAFTA they were not hopeful of a prosecution – there is no functioning legal system in Guatemala – but they keep on building the case anyway. Over the two days I was in the community, like everyone else I tried to find a little spot underneath the black plastic to watch the digging: a pair of gumboots here, a crumbling skull there, some paperwork in a pocket, all carefully collected, noted and packed. One of the most surreal experiences of my life is helping to clean up the site and carrying plastic bags full of clothing, body parts and personal affects of recently exhumed massacre victims to the four-wheel drive for further tests and safer storage. As the exhumation continued an old woman wept, someone let off fireworks, others cooked beans and tortillas, young boys played football and stony-faced older men talked softly in Conjobal, a Mayan language.

I talked and recorded survivors of the massacre. Margarheta lost her husband, animals, land and all her possessions on that day. She spent the next ten years living in the mountains running from the army. Digging up the bodies was painful for her as it brought back a flood of painful memories. I met another man, Juan, hunched over, with a tiny twisted frame, obviously in pain from years of unrelenting farm labor. He lost his whole family on that day, he kept repeating the same word 'everything,' 'everything.' He found it hard to walk, to talk.

A day or so after returning from Chul, I was visiting an activist friend, Nicolas, in his dirt-floored shack surrounded by his wife and eight beautiful kids. He had been unable to attend the exhumation because of other business. I played him the recordings and showed him the photos. He listened with a sharp intensity to every word. He looked at the pictures likewise, it was like he had lost something precious and he was looking for clues. He told me his grandfather and grandmother had been executed by the army. Later on, he explained he had only learned to read and write recently, after he and his people had come down from the mountains. I asked him if he was a guerrilla. He replied with some sadness: 'no, I was too young.' He was elated that people

from other countries are interested in learning about and telling the story of his people's suffering and resistance. He gave me a present, of a book, a powerful pictorial account of the struggle for memory in Guatemala. The title translates as 'the truth is under the earth.' Indeed.

The next day Nicolas and I and a couple of other activists visited a community on the outskirts of Nebaj. It is named June 30th which commemorates the date in 2006 in which the community reclaimed land from the army – who had stolen it after eradicating the owners – and started growing food, teaching their kids and various other projects of self-determination. All these families that made up this community had been dispossessed by the 'scorched earth' policies of the army in the region and been living in the mountains for more than a decade. Now this community is in a low-intensity conflict with the soldiers at the army base, which is situated on the other side of the hill. What this war largely consists of is the continual harassment, rape and sometimes torture and killing of women, which usually occurs when the women go out to collect firewood in the forests.

While at the community I met a young woman of sixteen who had a six month old baby, the father is a soldier and the conception method was rape. Nothing has ever happened in regards to this rape. In June of 2009 a woman who had five young children, was raped, murdered and cut up by soldiers. Nothing will likely ever happen to the person/s who committed this heinous act – impunity for such crimes is total in Guatemala. This woman's five children are now orphaned and being helped out for now by a much older aunt and they have no means of support. I visited these kids and the littlest one who is two, had her finger in her mouth the whole time, and she looked out at the world with big accusing eyes.

After a meeting with the community and many different perspectives on what is happening – in four different languages – we asked the community if they would like us to accompany them on a wood-sourcing mission. They enthusiastically agreed, so after lunch we set off into the forest, literally to confront power and to defend memory against institutionalized forgetting. On the way we were shown the spot where the mother of five was murdered, and stories were shared by the women who heard the screams and found the body. It was about half an hour into chopping and collecting wood when first contact was made with the army. They called for back-up immediately and the community gathered. First, we eyed five soldiers in shorts and runners with machetes, ropes and bags, obviously on some sort of collecting mission. They were soon joined by five more soldiers, wearing camouflage fatigues and heavily armed. They kept their distance, filmed the proceedings and generally added a malevolent presence and threat to the encounter.

The community members began to really speak their minds to the soldiers. After a while, the tension eased and soldiers and community members went on their way. As she was leaving, one older woman said to the soldiers, "I am not afraid of you. Back in the eighties and nineties we used to kill you sort of people, and we'll do it again if we have to." The soldiers were visibly shaken by her words.####



Ché Guevara legacy contested 40 years after his death

Submitted by WW4 Report on Mon, 10/08/2007 -17:01.

Commemorations taking place nearly throughout Latin America 40 years after the death of Ernesto "Ché" Guevara on Oct. 8, 1967, indicate just how much the world has changed since then-for better and for worse. Most significantly, in Bolivia – where he met his death, and where his name and image were anathema under military dictatorships and conservative regimes a generation thereafter – the official ceremony celebrating the legendary guerilla was presided over by the populist President Evo Morales. The commemoration was held at the village of Vallegrande in Santa Cruz department, where Guevara was captured, tortured and killed by Bolivian soldiers overseen by CIA agents.

Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's left-populist president, held a ceremony at Pico del Aguila, in the west of the country, which Guevara visited 55 years ago. In Brazil, under the left-center government of President Lula de Silva, a special session of the senate in Guevara's honor is to be held Oct. 23. A memorial to Ché is being built in his native Argentina – now also under a left-center government – to celebrate the 80th anniversary of his birth in June 2008. Even in Mexico and Guatemala, both under conservative governments, ceremonies are to be held honoring Guevara-who planned and raised funds for the Cuban revolution in Mexico, and earlier served in the agrarian reform program of the Guatemalan "social revolution" under President Jacobo Arbenz before it was overturned in a CIA-backed military coup in 1954.

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The main ceremony in Cuba was held in Santa Clara, in the Sierra Maestra, where Guevara fought during the revolution in 1958 and where his remains lie – having been exhumed and identified from a mass grave in Vallegrande in 1997. Aleida March, Ché's widow, attended the event, along with four of his children. Raul Castro presided in place of the ailing Fidel.

While once-impoverished Vallegrande is reaping a boom in Ché souvenirs, there was dissent from the festivities in Bolivia. "We feel sick about this grand show that goes on every year on the anniversary of his death," said Gary Prado, the commander of the Bolivian army rangers unit that captured Ché. "Rather than honor a man who came to invade the country, we should honor the armed forces, the soldiers who defended the country." Prado described the Bolivian ceremony as "an offense to the country's dignity." (Al Jazeera, AFP, Oct. 8)

Then there's Felix Rodriguez, the right-wing Cuban exile and CIA operative who interrogated Ché on his deathbed and pocketed the guerilla leader's wristwatch as a perverse keepsake. He would later boast of using the watch to time Contra resupply flights at El Salvador's Ilopango airbase as a member of the Reagan administration's "Secret Team" assigned to co-ordinate the Nicaraguan counter-revolution. Despite such treasonable offenses, Rodriguez continues to live peacefully in the Miami area, along with his buddy and accused terrorist Orlando Bosch. He admitted to the BBC that he presided over Ché's summary extrajudicial execution after receiving a coded order from the Bolivian high command – then said, seemingly oblivious to the hilarious irony: "Most people don't know the real Ché Guevara – the Ché Guevara who wrote that he was thirsty for blood, the Ché who assassinated thousands of people without any regard for any real legal process."

An Oct. 5 BBC report on the iconic stylized image of Ché's face that adorns posters, t-shirts and even rock album covers (Rage Against the Machine) worldwide, provides some fascinating historical details of the myth-making process. "There is no other image like it," said Trisha Liff, the curator of a touring exhibition on the iconography of Ché. "What other image has been sustained in this way? The birth of the image happens at the death of Ché in October 1967. He was good-looking, he was young, but more than that, he died for his ideals, so he automatically becomes an icon."

Jim Fitzpatrick, who produced the ubiquitous high-contrast drawing in the late 1960s as a young graphic artist, told BBC he actively wanted his art to be disseminated. "I deliberately designed it to breed like rabbits," he said of his image. "The way they killed him, there was to be no memorial, no place of pilgrimage, nothing. I was determined that the image should receive the broadest possible circulation."

The photo Fitzpatrick worked from was taken by Alberto Korda, Fidel Castro's official photographer, at a mass funeral in Havana on March 5, 1960, for 80 Cubans who had been killed when a French cargo ship loaded with ammunition exploded in the city's harbor – an act that Fidel blamed on U.S. sabotage. Korda describes Che's expression in the picture, which he labelled "Guerrillero Heroico," as "*encabronado y doliente/enraged and pained*."

Unpublished for a year, the shot was seen only by those who passed through Korda's Havana studio, where it hung on a wall. Finally, it was brought to Europe by the leftist

Italian publisher and intellectual, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, who distributed posters across Italy in 1967. From there it started to make its way to publications and activist groups across Europe. Fitzpatrick first tried to work with a small copy from the German magazine Stern, but there was insufficient detail for satisfactory results. Eventually, "I'd got an original copy of the image sent to me by a guy involved with a group of Dutch anarchists, called the Provo," said Fitzpatrick. The Provos, in turn, are said to have been given the photo by Jean-Paul Sartre, who was present at the Havana funeral when it was taken. After Guevara's death, an outraged Fitzpatrick furiously reprinted originals of the poster and distributed them to activist groups throughout Europe and the world.



Part of Fitzpatrick's anger stemmed from a vivid memory of working behind a bar in Ireland as a teenager-and seeing Ché walk in. The revolutionary was briefly exploring the homeland of his Irish ancestors – the full family name was Guevara Lynch – during a stopover on a flight to Moscow. "I must have been around 16 or 17," Fitzpatrick recollected. "I knew immediately who he was. He was an immensely charming man – likeable, roguish, good fun and very proud of being Irish."

Fitzpatrick recalled how his poster was the right image for the right time. "His death was followed by demonstrations, first in Milan and then elsewhere. Very soon afterwards there was the Prague Spring and May '68 in France. Europe was in turmoil. People wanted change, disruption and rebellion and he became a symbol of that change."

And that legacy still serves the image's power, even for those who don't know the history. "There is a theory that an image can only exist for a certain amount of time before capitalism appropriates it," said Trisha Liff. "But capitalism only wants to appropriate images if they retain some sense of danger."

Fitzpatrick's icon has been put to some appropriate purposes—such as the logo of Guatemala's Guerilla Army of the Poor (EGP) (active from the early '70s through mid-'90s). Even conservatives who peddle anti-Ché t-shirts with a red slash through the icon at least have an appreciation of what it means. Far worse is widespread decontextualized capitalist appropriation of the Guevara imagery and mythos—which reached its nadir with the (now happily abandoned for excessive political incorrectitude) Taco Bell ad campaign that featured Ché as a talking chihuahua. This would be hideous enough even if Taco Bell didn't viciously exploit farmworkers – who might have their own reasons to emulate the *real* Ché Guevara.####



The Cause of National Liberation, Democracy and Social Liberation in the Time of U.S.-led "War on Terror"

By Prof. Jose Maria Sison

Founder Communist Party of the Philippines
General Consultant, International League of Peoples' Struggle

January 18, 2004

Friends,

Warmest greetings of solidarity!

I am pleased and feel honored that you have invited me to contribute a paper to your workshop on the No.1 concern of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), which is the cause for national liberation, democracy and social liberation.

The resolution on this concern approved by the First International Assembly in 2001 is excellent and is worth reviewing for the purpose of reaffirming, further developing or updating certain points. But my task now is to concentrate on discussing the developments that affect this cause in the time of the U.S.-led "war on terror."

Such developments involve two contradictory trends: U.S. imperialism is undertaking unprecedentedly vicious acts against the cause of national liberation, democracy and social liberation and the peoples are rising more resolutely and militantly than ever before in order to bring the cause forward against the tremendous odds posed by imperialism, war and plunder.

US Policy of Terror and Plunder

Since the September 11, 2001 terror attacks supposedly by the Al Qaeda, a group whose leaders were previously close to the U.S., the Bush regime has been whipping up hysteria about terrorism, proclaiming the doctrine of pre-emptive war, justifying state terrorism in the U.S. and abroad and launching wars of aggression.

Under the banner of endless "war on terror," the U.S. has adopted the USA Patriot Act and has pushed other countries to adopt similar laws and follow the U.S. example of "terrorist" listing. It has misrepresented as terrorist certain countries or governments assertive of national independence, national liberation movements and a number of anti-imperialist leaders.

In quick succession, the U.S. launched wars of aggression against Afghanistan in late 2001 and against Iraq in early 2003. It proclaimed Southeast Asia as "the second front" in the "war on terror" in order to justify its military intervention particularly in the Philippines. It identified and threatened North Korea, Iraq and Iran as the "axis of evil" and eleven countries as "terrorist-harboring."

The war of aggression against Afghanistan did not yield Osama bin Laden but allowed the U.S. to further penetrate the Caucasus and former Soviet Central Asia (especially Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), take over Afghanistan, establish U.S. military bases, tighten U.S. control over oil and gas from the Caspian sea and Central Asian regions and pave the way for a planned pipeline to the Arabian seacoast and the Indian Ocean. The U.S. also increased its influence over Pakistan and India and its interference in Nepal against the armed revolutionary movement for national liberation and democracy.

The war of aggression against Iraq did not uncover any Iraqi weapon of mass destruction, nuclear, biological or chemical but allowed the U.S. to gain complete control over the second largest oil resources in the world, tighten control over OPEC and the entire global oil business, keep the U.S. dollar as the currency of oil transactions, establish U.S. military bases in Iraq for controlling the entire Middle East and keep the Israel Zionists riding roughshod over the Palestinian people.

In attending to what it called the "second front" in Southeast Asia, the U.S. focused on the Philippines by sending U.S. military troops to south-western Mindanao and other parts of the Philippines. The announced objective was to go after the Abu Sayyaf (a terror group organized by the CIA in 1992). The rabid puppet defense secretary Angelo Reyes boasted that the full force of the U.S. would be subsequently turned against the New People's Army led by the Communist Party of the Philippines.

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The U.S. has a plan to establish military bases and facilities in Mindanao in order to tighten its control over the oil and other resources of Southeast Asia as well as over the sea and air trade routes for more than 50 per cent of the world's goods. To advance its plan, the U.S. has hyped the Abu Sayyaf gang as a huge "terrorist" force beyond its tiny proportions and, with the help of Generals Reyes and Corpus, deployed intelligence and demolition experts to engage in terrorist bombings, killing and maiming civilians in various cities and towns of Mindanao.

The U.S. expects to build U.S. military bases in the Philippines that would become part of the arc of U.S. military bases extending from Japan, Korea and Taiwan as the first line of defense against China as the putative adversary, with the U.S. military bases in Australia and the Pacific serving as the, second layer of defense. At the same time, along with its newly established bases in Afghanistan and Central Asia, the U.S. has China nearly encircled with military bases to its west, south and east.

However, the U.S. is still engaged mainly in a policy of engagement vis a vis China. It calculates that by further tightening its control over the oil sources and supply routes it can keep China in tow. It makes threats against North Korea but stays short of what is unacceptable to both China and North Korea and even to Japan and South Korea, both of which are not eager to suffer the costs of war with their neighbors for the benefit of the U.S.

Since 9/11, the wars of aggression against Afghanistan and Iraq have appeared to be lucrative and to promise bigger rewards for the U.S. imperialists in the near future. Thus, the neoconservatives are thriving around the Bush presidency. Their "project for a new American century" is for the U.S. to use its position as sole superpower and its high-tech weapons of mass destruction to destroy or discourage any potential or upcoming rival and keep the entirety of humanity under the terms of Pax Americana.

The Bush regime calculates that hysteria whipped up against "terrorism" and actual wars of aggression are the means for stimulating the US economy, particularly the military-industrial complex. It has given the tax cuts to the monopoly bourgeoisie and made cutbacks on social spending. In line with military Keynesianism, it has gone into heavy deficit spending for military operations and acquisition of military equipment.

The problem with using war production for reviving the U.S. economy is that, especially nowadays, the most gilded state contracts for high tech weaponry generate little or no employment. The Bush regime can boast of some increase in growth rates for the second and third quarters of year 2003. But that means only growth of corporate profits but no growth of employment. Unemployment in the U.S. approaches 6 per cent and should be much bigger if those who have stopped looking for a job are counted. A big portion of the American population has also lost its savings as a result of the bursting of the stock market bubble.

The U.S. will continue to be severely afflicted by the crisis of overproduction and the consequent financial crisis. Manufacturing is still on the decline. The trade and budgetary deficits have grown so fast and have enlarged the public debt in an extreme way. The U.S. has no way of recovering soon even only the economic level of 1999, the

last year before the protracted slide from 2000 to the present. It becomes more aggressive as it tries to solve its economic and political problems through war production and bellicose adventures.

Major Contradictions in the World

The crisis in the U.S. adversely affects other global centers of capitalism, Japan and the European Union, in a big way because these have invested heavily in the U.S. and are very dependent on the U.S. market for their exports. Their tendency is to look after their own interests, especially because the U.S. has hogged the spoils of the wars of aggression since 1991.

The inter-imperialist contradictions are becoming more conspicuous. The trade war is intensifying because of the global crisis of overproduction in all types of goods and because the US is deliberately undervaluing the U.S. dollar to favor U.S. exports. In the run up to the recent US war of aggression against Iraq, the US failed to take on board France, Germany, Russia and China not only because the U.S. was violating the UN charter but also because the U.S. was hell bent on discarding substantial contracts and concessions previously granted by the Iraqi government to the companies of these countries.

But the overwhelming majority of the people of the world who live and work in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the retrogressive countries of the former Soviet bloc have been the ones most ruined and impoverished by the ongoing global crisis. The types of goods (mainly raw materials) that these countries produce for the global market are in oversupply. Trade and budgetary deficits have resulted in crushing debt burdens

The neoliberal policy stress of "free market" globalization has victimized mainly the people in the third world and former Soviet bloc countries and has accelerated the concentration and centralization of capital in the imperialist countries, chiefly the U.S. The shrinkage of the global market has recoiled upon the imperialist countries.

But there is a further round of oppression and exploitation for the people as the imperialists engage in a struggle to redivide the world. These compete to grab economic territory as sources of cheap raw materials and cheap labor, markets, fields of investment, spheres of influence and positions of strength. The U.S. has taken the lead in waging wars of aggression and has even reverted to the old practice of colonial occupation in Iraq.

It is correct to say that the most encompassing contradiction is between the proletariat and people of the whole world on the one hand and the imperialists and the puppet reactionaries on the other hand. In this regard, we mark U.S. imperialism as the No.1 enemy of the people. But there are four major types of contradictions that must be distinguished and taken into account in analysis and action.

These are the contradictions between the imperialists and the oppressed peoples and nations, between the imperialists and the countries or governments assertive of national independence, among the imperialist powers and between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat in imperialist countries.

At the moment, the main contradiction is that between the imperialists and the oppressed peoples and nations. The

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extreme forms of oppression and exploitation are driving the peoples and nations of the underdeveloped third world countries and the retrogressive countries of the former Soviet bloc to resist the unjust violence and cruel impositions of imperialism with revolutionary armed struggle and other forms of struggle.

There are revolutionary armed struggles led by Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties in countries like India, Nepal, Peru, Philippines and Turkey. There are other revolutionary armed struggles in such countries as Colombia, Eelam, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. All these manifest the high intensity of struggle involving the current main contradiction. The patriotic wars of resistance in Iraq and Afghanistan have a high potential for putting the U.S. in a quagmire and igniting widespread conflagration of armed resistance in the Middle East and Central Asia.

The next major contradiction is that between the imperialists and the countries or governments that are assertive of national independence. This is related to the main contradiction. The imperialists make excessive demands on governments and the political leaders respond by asserting national independence. Such leaders usually invoke bourgeoisie nationalist or socialist motivations.

With or without its imperialist allies, the U.S. has exacerbated its contradiction with certain countries or governments. It has launched wars of aggression against Iraq and Afghanistan and occupied them. It uses military threats and economic sanctions against such countries as Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Syria and Libya. It also uses a two-edged policy of engagement and containment vis a vis China.

We have seen in history that inter-imperialist contradictions can rise to the level of main contradiction, as in World War I and World War II in the previous century. But at this time, notwithstanding the controversy regarding the U.S.-U.K. invasion and occupation of Iraq, the imperialist powers are still basically in alliance for the exploitation of the proletariat and people of the world, especially in the semicolonies and dependent countries.

There have been economic threats and counter threats related to steel and bananas. Such lesser imperialist powers as France, Germany and Russia have grievances against the U.S. for taking over oil resources in Iraq, getting the prime contracts and discarding the concessions previously given by the Iraqi government to their companies and contractors. But there are yet no military threats and counter threats among the imperialist powers even as they compete in military production and sales.

How far the Bush regime will use the terrorism scare in order to clinch the 2004 U.S. presidential elections still remains to be seen. An increasing number of people anticipate that Bush will once more invoke the doctrine of preemptive war to attack another country and ride on a new wave of war hysteria to keep his presidential seat. On the other hand, there are expectations that U.S. casualties in Iraq would rise to a level that would prove politically lethal to Bush. As the people blow up the pipelines, the costs of U.S. occupation might become prohibitive to the U.S.

The contradiction between the monopoly bourgeoisie and the proletariat in imperialist countries is a major contradiction. This is now surfacing and gaining intensity. The economic crisis is worsening to the point that the

monopoly bourgeoisie openly uses force against the workers and whips up fascism, racism and war hysteria. The workers respond by resisting their class enemy and waging class struggle in alliance with the unemployed, urban petty bourgeoisie and the youth.

There are general strikes of workers against the monopoly capitalist state and their employers. There are mass protests, joined by organized and spontaneous masses of workers, women, youth and others, against the imperialist states and against their multilateral groupings (e.g. Group of 8, OECD and OSCE), agencies (IMF, World Bank and WTO), military alliances (e.g. NATO and U.S.-Japan Security Treaty) trade agreements (e.g. NAFTA, Mercosur), conferences (e.g. APEC) and fora (e.g. WEF).

Since 9/11 the biggest protest actions have been against the U.S. war of aggression against Iraq. These were joined by tens of millions of people in many cities of imperialist countries within the first quarter of 2003. You can make a good tabulation of the protest mass actions in the U.S. and other imperialist countries as well as on a global scale by visiting the websites of International ANSWER, Not in Our Name and United for Peace and Justice.

The present crisis conditions in the world capitalist system drive the imperialists and local reactionaries to escalate oppression and exploitation and to inflict terrible suffering on the people of the world. But they also drive the broad masses of the people to resist. Thus, there is a resurgence of mass struggles for national liberation, democracy and social liberation.

Tasks Related to the Concern

I propose that you consider for inclusion in your list of tasks the following:

1. Arouse, organize and mobilize the people in various countries, especially the oppressed peoples and nations, for national liberation, democracy and social liberation against imperialism and all reaction.
2. Fight the imperialist multinational firms and banks, the IMF, World Bank and WTO as tools of neocolonialism and the U.S.-instigated neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization and unbridled plunder.
3. Stop the imperialists and their puppets from categorizing as "terrorist" revolutionary leaders, national liberation movements and governments assertive of national independence.
4. Expose and oppose the spread of repression and fascism under "anti-terrorist" laws, military intervention and wars of aggression being unleashed under the pretext of a permanent "war on terror" by the real terrorists, U.S. imperialism and puppet governments.
5. Condemn the doctrine of preemptive war as barbarism and flagrant violation of the UN charter.
6. Campaign against the U.S. for perpetuating aggressive bilateral and multilateral military agreements, for stockpiling weapons of mass destruction and establishing more military bases, forward positions and, outposts throughout the world.
7. Fight the unilateral efforts of the U.S. as well as the collective efforts of the imperialist powers to escalate the oppression and exploitation of the people.

8. Oppose the U.S. policy to step up war production to revive the U.S. economy and to equip U.S. military forces for wars of aggression and grabbing economic territory for plunder.
9. Engage in all forms of political struggle for national liberation, democracy and social liberation.
10. Support the national liberation movements.
11. Expose and oppose the various types of reformists (like those in WSF and other imperialist-funded formations) that seek to undermine and frustrate the people's revolutionary struggles.
12. Unite, cooperate and coordinate with all forces that are desirous of a broad anti-imperialist united front. ###

Eye on the Prize!

By Comrade TBW

In revitalizing the Black Liberation Struggle and other struggles against racist national oppression in Amerika, it is important that we keep in view the goal of ending all oppression and exploitation. Even if racism could be eliminated under capitalism, the majority of Black and other people of color in the U.S. would still suffer and be victimized by class exploitation and the oppression that goes with it. But racism is an integral part of capitalism and has been since its inception. Amerika was built on slave labor and the trade in slaves.

Amerika was always rich in (stolen) land and labor hungry. Racism provided the justification for the super-exploitation of and denial of democratic rights to non-white people. Slavery provided the cheap source of labor power to work the land which could not itself take advantage of the availability of "free" land on the frontier. The promise of 40 acres and two mules made to Blacks during the Civil War was reneged upon after the war as Blacks were forced into a semi-feudal bondage to their ex-slavemasters under conditions of "Jim Crow" segregation and KKK and state terror. A similar situation of racist oppression was forced on the Chicano people in the Southwest, while Indians were confined to government-run reservations and Asians were confined to "Chinatowns" and menial jobs in agriculture and the service sector.

Not until "share-cropping" became economically unfeasible and there was a demand for Black labor in the basic industries was "Jim Crow" overthrown. But even as the Civil Rights Movement was winning concessions on integration, the basic industries had begun their "Great Migration" away from the U.S. industrial centers to countries where the workers could be more intensively exploited and ruthlessly oppressed – in other words, *where the rate of profit was highest.*

Capital is drawn like iron filings to a magnet wherever the rate of profit on investment is highest. This is a fundamental law of capitalism. The tendency in modern production is for it to become more capital intensive and for the rate of profit to decline. To stay competitive, capitalists are forced to cut wages and benefits and squeeze more productivity out of their workers while reducing the workforce. The more free the "free market" is the greater the degree of exploitation for the workers, and the more freedom for the capitalists to relocate production internationally.

The deindustrialization of Amerika has left the Black masses and other oppressed people in a very bad situation. Masses of people are being marginalized from the mass economy and pushed into long-term unemployment and survival by-any-means-necessary – which for many means a lifetime of prison slavery. Still, masses of new arrivals seeking employment and escape from Third World poverty and oppression keep coming – legally or "illegally."

Conditions throughout the Third World have grown more and more desperate as capitalist development of agriculture pushes peasants from the land to crowd into and around the urban centers where only a fraction can find work in sweatshops at starvation wages. This condition is aggravated by the rising cost of food and the spread of preventable diseases, crime, corruption and violence.

The governments of the former colonies have been ensnared by "Dollar Diplomacy" into a condition of overwhelming debt for which they must submit to "economic restructuring" by the imperialists as a condition for "bailing out" their national banks with more loans to service their national debts. A condition that Greece and other poor countries in Europe are now facing. Meanwhile, the U.S. has itself become the "World's No. #1 Debtor Nation." The downward spiral of crisis that grips the world economy is rooted in the contradictions within capitalism itself. It cannot escape this nor the reality that the steps it takes to stimulate the economy set the stage for deeper crisis down the road.

Economists are now talking about a "W"-shaped crisis as the temporary "recovery" after the bailouts fades into memory, and pressure builds for cuts in government spending on the poor and more tax cuts for the rich and middle class. The thinly-disguised racism of the "tea-baggers" and other right-wing forces calling for "Taking America Back," represents a nostalgia for the "good old days" of Post World War II prosperity when the U.S. was an industrial giant with military and economic hegemony over the "Free World."

But those days are gone and won't return. What we're looking at now is a global empire in decline, where wealth and power keeps concentrating into fewer and fewer hands and more than half the world is forced to live (and die) in wretched poverty. The gross inequality of the distribution of wealth is not only unjust but dysfunctional and will only grow more so until this political-economic system is overthrown and replaced by proletarian socialist revolution.

The mouthpieces of the capitalists say there are twice as many people as there should be. But at the same time the U.N. reports that more than enough food is being grown to feed everyone on the planet decently. In fact we could feed many times this number with available cultivated land. The problem is not too many people but a dysfunctional system that only works to make the super-rich richer and the poor poorer. If there were half as many people half of them would be marginalized poor unable to afford enough to eat and even less people would be productively employed.

Only a planned socialist economy can provide full employment and a decent standard of living for everyone. But we can do better than that and abolish all exploitation and the oppression that goes with it. We can put an end to nation states and wars, bring society in balance with the environment, and free the masses from living lives of drudgery.

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Socialism is the stage of transition to classless society – Communism – which can only exist as a global system and is based upon the principle of “from each according to his or her ability and to each according to their need.” Socialism is based upon the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat” just as capitalism is based upon the dictatorship of the capitalist ruling class. The Proletariat leads the people in transforming all of society to eliminate exploitation and create communism, advancing in stages to build people’s power.

So far there have been Three Great Waves of the World Proletarian Socialist Revolution, and a fourth wave is on the rise. The Three Great Waves have given us the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) which illuminates the ideological and political line of the United Panther Movement (UPM) led by the New Afrikan Black Panther Party Prison Chapter (NABPP-PC). We are continuing the legacy of the original BPP and the movement it inspired. Like the original Black Panthers, we are committed to creating People’s Power and All-The-Way World Socialist Revolution.

That’s the prize we keep our eyes on while organizing to address the struggle of the day. There isn’t going to be a “Black Revolution” because there is only one exploiting class oppressing everybody on the planet. Everybody has a stake in overthrowing them and their dysfunctional system. Our strength is in our unity which we must build intercommunally. Within this, the New Afrikans in Amerika have a vanguard (leadership) role to play – including those inside the “Belly of the Beast,” where our task is to transform the “Slave Pens of Oppression” into “Schools of Liberation.”

With this strategic orientation, we need to work to build an international movement to fight for prisoners’ human and democratic civil rights that is led by prisoners and their families and rooted in the oppressed communities. Within these

communities where poor and oppressed people are concentrated, our strategic goal is to create base areas of cultural, social and political revolution in the context of building a worldwide United Front Against Capitalist-Imperialism.

“Pantherism” combines the creation of “Serve The People” (STP) survival programs and institutions of community-based people’s power with revolutionary agitation, education and organizing. These programs and base areas will in turn be linked intercommunally through the United Panther Movement and its press.

On the Cultural Front: Pantherism calls for a “Total Assault on Capitalist-Imperialist Death Culture” and the “Culture Vultures” who promote it in our communities to degrade, demoralize and misdirect our youth. In opposition to this we must create and promote revolutionary culture that will uplift and inspire our people to struggle and to win.

On the Social Front: We must pull our communities together with community centers and events that have a liberating and uplifting effect, and we must practice self-reliance and cooperative enterprise to fund our movement and STP survival programs.

On the Political Front: we need to build our vanguard party and various types of mass organizations through which the Party can work to involve all segments of our communities. We need to work towards a Founding Congress for the Party and the development of an in-depth and detailed program for achieving the goal of ending all exploitation and oppression. The struggle for Communism is the expansion of human rights to include all human needs.

Dare to Struggle – Dare to Win!

All Power to the People!



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