$1.6 million bail

THAT INVOLVED SIX OTHERS ARRESTED

claimed by the Earth Liberation Front

from several unsolved fires that were

The charges against the defendants stem

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December 7 while he was working at

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“McGowan’s arrest comes in the

context of a nationwide sweep

that involved six others arrested in

Oregon, Virginia, and Arizona.”

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On January 25, Daniel McGowan,
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In his budget released on January 13, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signified to an old script: increase funding for the state’s massively troubled prison system. Elected on a platform that promised to “shut up billions,” the governor continues to fall in line with expensive and ineffective “tough on crime” policies despite widespread voter frustration at pouring ever more resources into a failed prison system.

While many of California’s students struggle in drably overcrowded and unhealthy schools and nearby 1.1 million children live without health insurance, this year’s budget proposes building more prisons. “It has become more apparent that the governor’s priorities are with corporations, not communities, and definitely not with making fiscally responsible decisions,” commented Susan Burton, executive director of the New Way of Life Foundation in Los Angeles.

The governor’s budget and last week’s announcement of a proposed $12 billion, 90,000-cell prison and jail expansion project suggest that the gover-

...
California Peace Groups Under Surveillance

Pentagon Calls Anti-War Protestors “Credible Threat”

At the same time that information circulates implicating President Bush in illegal surveillance, it has been discovered that local police, the National Guard, and the Pentagon have been spying on peace groups in California as well. Documents obtained by the ACLU “showed the FBI expanding the definition of ‘domestic terrorism’ to include citizens and groups that participate in lawful protests or civil disobedience,” according to a press release.

“The broad based federal surveillance programs are disturbing and reflect an unhealthy suspicion of dissenting political activity,” said Mark Schlosberg, Police Practices Policy Director of the ACLU of Northern California in the press release.

“Over the past several years, we have seen local law enforcement resources used to infiltrate peace groups and monitor protest activities.”

The groups being watched and surveillance tactics employed vary, but all may violate California laws that prohibit the monitoring of religious, political, social, or educational meetings if there is no evidence of criminal activity.

In December, NBC reported the Pentagon included a Santa Cruz Students Against War protest of military recruiters at a job fair on a list of “credible threats.” In a separate occurrence, undercover Santa Cruz police officers attended planning meetings for a New Year’s Eve parade, enraging citizens there.

In Fresno, undercover agents attended an event held by CSU-Fresno’s Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition. Peace Fresno, an anti-war group, has also been infiltrated.

Last Mother’s Day, the California National Guard’s anti-terrorist unit monitored a protest by women’s groups in Sacramento that included Codepink and the Raging Grannies.

The ACLU has requested intelligence files on other groups thought to be under surveillance, including PETA, Food Not Bombs, Greenpeace, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. "The things that we know about are really just the tip of the iceberg," Schlosberg said.

The statutes of limitations for some of the original six, Kevin Tankersly, have agreed to cooperate with federal investigators. Jen Kolar, who has not been convicted. One, Stanislas “Jack” Meyerhoff, including Daniel, are facing life imprisonment if his doubtful credibility, his cooperation has had widespread consequences. At least three people, and animal rights conferences. During his time as a CW, Jacob was a heroin addict with an addiction that was either ignored or facilitated by federal agents. Now, though facing life imprisonment, he is walking free and was seen driving around Eugene in a new SUV. Despite his doubtful credibility, his cooperation has had widespread consequences. At least three people, including Daniel, are facing life imprisonment if convicted. One, Stanislas “Jack” Meyerhoff, immediately agreed to cooperate with the FBI after his arrest, and another, William Rodgers, ended his life by suffocating himself with a plastic bag. In addition to Tankersly, two more of the original six, Kevin Tibbbs and Sarah Kendall Tankersly, have agreed to cooperate with federal investigators. Jen Kolar, who has not been arrested, has also been named as a CW.

Before his transfer, Daniel was being held in Lane County Jail in Eugene, Oregon, where his conditions were geared to punish him for his past activism. He was held in a terrorist cell-block in Manhattan before being shuttled around to Oklahoma and California, finally arriving in Oregon after two weeks. He has been held in minimum security; with only one hour out of his cell per day, a limit of 20 pieces of paper in his cell at any given time, and only ten dollars available per week to use in his commissary, none of which could be spent on food. A vegetarian, he has lost over ten pounds since he hasn’t had access to enough food and was forbidden from trading food with other detainees. A vegetarian, he has lost over ten pounds since he hasn’t had access to enough food and was forbidden from trading food with other detainees.

Daniel's arrest comes as a great addition to the increased repression of political dissent in the United States. Fault Lines will continue to follow the cases of Daniel and other political prisoners around the U.S.
NYC Cops Crash Into Each Other During Critical Mass Crackdown

EMT-licensed cyclist Lake Son was the first responder in an incident where two police scooters collided while chasing participants in New York’s January Critical Mass bike ride. "The behavior of the undercover agitators has gotten progressively more dangerous and what happens tonight is a perfect example. People are getting hurt on the streets," said Time’s Up! volunteer Barbara Ross. Son, a volunteer mechanic with Time’s Up!, stated that as scooters were blocking the line of riders and driving into cyclists, he witnessed one police officer slam his scooter into another. Son dismounted, yelling “I’m an EMT,” and attended to the fallen police officers, fully aware that other cyclists were being arrested next to him.

Despite the evident dangers of such behavior, police continued later that night to use hazardous tactics in their attempts to prevent cyclists from continuing to ride. Cyclist Luke Son was also reported to have been opposing this project since it was first proposed. Ironically, the geo-thermal energy extracted from the area would be bought and sold as "green energy."

On February 22, it was reported that the Bush administration proposed to stop financing the construction of new housing for the mentally ill and physically handicapped, and that the federal government would discontinue financing housing for people with spinal cord injuries or psychiatric illnesses residing in nursing homes or psychiatric hospitals.

In another report, it states the "federal minimum wage remains unchanged for eight straight years, falls to 56-year low relative to the average wage".

September 19 - It was reported that 302,000 housing units were destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Katrina, and 216,000 units, or 71 percent, were affordable to low income households. In New Orleans, 142,000 units were damaged or lost, 79 percent of which were affordable to low income households.

October 27 - More than 70 law enforcement officers from a wide variety of city, county, state and special district police departments attacked 24 homeless encampments in Contra Costa County.

December 19 - The House of Representatives passed a devastating budget-cutting bill that cuts $39.7 billion from mandatory programs for the poor from FY 2006 to FY 11. The battle to block the $39.7 billion five-year deficit reduction bill is not over, and advocates have one more chance during January to keep this bill from going into effect.

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West Virginia, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Coal and MTR mining accounts for 44 percent of US energy is derived from MTR-mined mining two to one. Today, five percent of the coal industry began developing surface, or strip mining, practices instead of traditional underground mining. Strip mining includes contour mining and Mountaintop Removal (MTR), the latter being the more devastating to the land and people. The first MTR mine was opened in 1967 in Cannehelton, West Virginia, when new technologies in the industry allowed coal to be extracted more quickly and lucratively with devastating to the land and people. The first MTR mine was opened in 1967 in Cannehelton, West Virginia, when new technologies in the industry allowed coal to be extracted more quickly and lucratively with "valley fills" severely impact headwaters. These hollows and creeks have long been barrens. It is a dead zone.

Reaping black gold
In the middle of the last century, the coal industry began developing surface, or strip mining, practices instead of traditional underground mining. Strip mining includes contour mining and Mountaintop Removal (MTR), the latter being the more devastating to the land and people. The first MTR mine was opened in 1967 in Cannehelton, West Virginia, when new technologies in the industry allowed coal to be extracted more quickly and lucratively with the aid of fewer miners. By 2003, strip mining outnumbered deep or underground mining two to one. Today, five percent of US energy is derived from MTR-mined coal and MTR mining accounts for 44 percent of the strip-mined land in Appalachia and is practiced in Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Sludge dams and devastated landscapes MTR begins with clear-cut logging of the mine site (with permit boundaries often illegally stretched by mining companies), followed by dynamite blasting to remove the top of the mountain. Any soil, rock, and vegetation removed is termed "overburden" and dumped into a valley. These "valley fills" severely impact headwaters. The liquid waste that results from coal washing is a sludge that contains heavy metals including arsenic and mercury. These forested mountains of southwestern Appalachia are among the most biologically diverse areas on the continent. The climate functions like a giant "edge effect," flourishing where the northern colonies meet the subtropical climates of the southern United States. These hollows and creeks have long been devastated by deforestation and loss of endangered human cultures both Native and European, as well as fauna and flora like the now endangered American chestnut tree. Despite such traits, only weak legislation protects the land and people from coal corporations. The current federal administration has cut environmental protections one after the other in its quest for cheap fossil fuels, and the coal corporations govern the legislatures of states like West Virginia. Even the 1977 Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) is ineffective. Despite the mandate that areas affected by MTR must be returned to near-original condition (an impossible feat that results in piles of rubble with castings of grass seeds), a loophole in the act allows companies to duck the expense and obligation of "reclamation" by claiming that the leveled site is destined for post-mining use. When such land is developed, the resulting condominiums or golf courses or toxic tourists slips by on its way to economic social compensation for the local communities. Mountain top Preservation While many have been living with the consequences of such environmental degradation since the beginning of Mountaintop Removal mining, the last ten years have seen an exponential increase of resistance from individuals, community groups, nonprofits, and radical environmental groups. Local tactics by residents have included speaking tours and road shows like of Dave Cooper’s, of Kentucky, and the militant defense of home and family cemetery by Larry Gibson on Kayford Mountain. Coal River community organizer Judy Bonds watched the destruction of the hollow where she was raised and risks daily the safety of her family to speak out against MTR. When former miner Ed Wiley discovered the health risks his granddaughter suffered at Marsh Fork Elementary, he began a vigorous resistance, which included refusing to move from the steps of the capitol in Charleston, WV, until granted an audience with Governor Manchin.

Kayford Mountain January 4, 2006, West Virginia

Sludge dams are precarious, often leaking or bursting, and overloaded coal trucks drive dangerously through mountain communities and leave billows of coal dust in their wake. Flooding occurs due to the lack of vegetation that would otherwise absorb water, and wells and drinking water are contaminated by runoff from mine sites. Activists with the Coalfield Sustainability Project in West Virginia note that the coal companies provide very little sustainability for local communities. MTR mining employs few workers but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars. The week after a military jury in Colorado convicted nine of the twelve MTR contractors of conspiracy, those facing a maximum sentence of six months in prison. The 32 defendants, ranging in age from 19 to 81, are charged with trespass after peacefully speaking tours and road shows like of Dave Cooper’s, of Kentucky, and the militant defense of home and family cemetery by Larry Gibson on Kayford Mountain. Coal River community organizer Judy Bonds watched the destruction of the hollow where she was raised and risks daily the safety of her family to speak out against MTR. When former miner Ed Wiley discovered the health risks his granddaughter suffered at Marsh Fork Elementary, he began a vigorous resistance, which included refusing to move from the steps of the capitol in Charleston, WV, until granted an audience with Governor Manchin. Sludge dams are precarious, often leaking or bursting, and overloaded coal trucks drive dangerously through mountain communities and leave billows of coal dust in their wake. Flooding occurs due to the lack of vegetation that would otherwise absorb water, and wells and drinking water are contaminated by runoff from mine sites. Activists with the Coalfield Sustainability Project in West Virginia note that the coal companies provide very little sustainability for local communities. MTR mining employs few workers but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars, thus, millionaires but makes billions of dollars.

Catenary Coal Company, Kayford Mountain, June 15, 2005, West Virginia

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FL: Why did you write about the Contra War?
RDO: I had planned a history from 1975 to the present, but when Bush was elected in 2000, he appointed all these architects of the Contra War: John Negroponte, Eliot Abrams, Richard Perle, John Poindexter, and Dick Cheney -- who was a senator at the time and pushed through the funding. Others, like Oliver North, were out there making $50,000 per speaking gig. And I said, “I really have to write this book about the Contra War. I was an eye witness.”

FL: What is the relationship between the U.S. political policies during the Contra War and current policies?
RDO: It goes way back to the beginning of the United States. There’s been a consistent attitude towards Central America, the Caribbean, and Latin America of keeping them under control, ever since their independence movements, and in some cases occupying to this day, like Puerto Rico and Haiti. And I think that’s what some people don’t get. This is part of the state’s geopolitical mentality of what is theirs to control. And that’s imperialism and colonialism. And most Americans just can’t think that way about their country because they’re not taught it. I mean, if you’re a British kid, you can’t help but learn about the British empire or history. In the U.S. you should have the same awareness, but kids don’t, U.S. imperial history is completely obfuscated.

“IT GOES WAY BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE’S BEEN A CONSISTENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS CENTRAL AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN, AND LATIN AMERICA OF KEEPING THEM UNDER CONTROL EVER SINCE THEIR INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS”

FL: In your book, you argue that the Carter administration laid the foundation for everything that’s attributed to Reagan. Could you say a little more about that?
RDO: Well, Carter announced a very sophisticated neo-colonial policy. He belonged to that circle set up mostly by moderate Republicans, the Rockefellerites, to emphasize the velvet glove rather than the iron fist, to brie the Third World, and to create the Counter-Revolution, which meant setting up free trade, benefiting agri-business, etc. The globalization thing and breaking down trade barriers was really hatched in Carter’s wake. In 1974, I began work on the International Indian Treaty Council. Carter came into office in 1976. I didn’t really trust his administration at all. From a Native American point of view, there’s very little difference between Republicans and Democrats. They all want the same thing, to control the land, and pretty much to get rid of Indians.

Additionally, the Carter administration was definitely trying to prevent revolutions in Central America. For example, when it became clear that the Sandinistas were going to come to power and take over, Carter took Somoza out. Then, Carter forced the Sandinistas to take over Somoza’s enormous international debt, so they started off financially, but they were not about to hand over the country after losing 50,000 people to this civil war. So Carter imposed the first economic boycott on Nicaragua.

...continued on page 10
Chile struggles to shed its painful past

Pinochet’s legacy lives on.

Bachelet and her mother were also held briefly and tortured at the National Stadium prison in 1973, before fleeing the country. Her father died during his own detention and torture. Though Bachelet made little reference to his role during his own term for office, it was very much on many people’s minds throughout the campaign. Her victory could mean a chance to heal for those victimized during 16 long years of a brutal dictatorship.

A win for the other side – her opponent Sebastian Piñera – would have signaled a return to the old order to a certain degree. Piñera, a billionaire businessman, was quite successful during Pinochet’s reign. Many former Pinochet supporters made up his base of support. It is interesting, yet unsurprising, that this was left virtually unsaid in the media.

Chile is not the only nation in South America still healing from old wounds. During the 70s and 80s, the US government supported many brutal and repressive regimes throughout Latin America, helping install dictators in place of democratically elected officials. Since then, South American electoral politics have moved noticeably to the right, as promoted by the current administrations in Brazil, Venezuela, and Uruguay. The trend continues with recent election of Morales in Bolivia, Bachelet in Chile, and Kirchner in Argentina. Little has been done to serve justice in the years after the fall of the military regimes. In

politics in the art of torture in order to suppress rebel activity. The torture and killing was mainly directed at the Tupamaros, clever guerillas who repeatedly rebelled by embarrassing public officials and opposing corporate corruption.

Now that Tabare Vazquez, Uruguay’s new left-leaning president, is in office, many who were persecuted by the regime are demanding truth, justice and accountability. This process that has meant killing many innocents continues, it is said, in order to not open wounds that have healed.

The country cannot forget what it lived.”

CHILE 1964-1973: After the CIA unsuccessfully supported Sadaraba Allende from winning the Chilean presidency by explicit propaganda and funding the opposition, it concentrated its efforts on getting Allende overthrown. The campaign, which involved financing, spreading misinformation, was eventually successful and brutal dictator General Augusto Pinochet overthrew Allende. Allende was assassinated in the ninetieth year of repression military rule followed.

The recently elected Chilean president, Michelle Bachelet, is remembered and revered for her role in Pinochet’s regime, as her father, who died while in captivity. In her acceptance speech, she declared that Pinochet’s actions were “a crime against the human race.”

Because I was the victim of hatred, I have dedicated my life to reverse that hatred and turn it into love."

BOLIVIA 1984-75: In 1982, as part of popular revolt defeated the military, displaced the oligarchy, nationalized the mines, increased local self-sufficiency, set up a new government and reduced the military to an impotent force. Yet under the training of the State and with the support of the CIA and the Pentagon, the military got built up again and overthrew President Victor Paz in 1984 because they refused to support Washington’s Cuba polices.

(Note: This was nothing new for Bolivia, which has experienced the passage of governments more frequently than the passing of years.) This year, as Evo Morales was sworn in as Bolivia’s independent president, he signed a future of indigenous rule, saying, “We are here to say enough of the 500 years of Indian resistance. From 500 years of resistance, we pass to another 500 years in power.”

ARGENTINA 1970’s: While Argentina was receiving worldwide condemnation for their human rights abuses during the “Dirty War” against leftist dictators, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was recorded giving the go-ahead to then-Argetinian President Augusto Genocid. “We would like you to succeed,” said Kissinger of the civil war against the Argentine leftists. From 1975 to 1983, about 30,000 civilians accused of subversion either died or disappeared.

NICARGUA 1978-1990: When the Sandinistas overthrew the Somoza dictatorship in 1979, the U.S. was frightened by what they thought could be a second Cuba. President Jimmy Carter tried to sabotage the revolution through economic and diplomatic, and later Reagan and violence. For eight years, Nicaragua faced military attacks by the U.S. funded Contras (Reagan’s “freedom fighters”). In 1989, the U.S. interfered in national elections, and the Sandinistas were defeated. According to Oxfam, the international development organization, Nicaragua under the Sandinistas was “exceptional in the strength of that government’s commitment...to improving the condition of the people and encouraging [an] active development process.” Now, Nicaragua is one of the poorest nations in the hemisphere, with widespread illiteracy and malnutrition.

HONDURAS 1980’s: Honduras was under the sway of the U.S. during the Contra war in Nicaragua. Thousands of U.S. troops were housed there and it was used as a supply and [ILLEGAL] bridge for the Contras. The U.S. funded the Contras by covertly and illegally selling arms to Iran (known as the Iran-Contra Affair).

Continued from Front Cover...

(grande)

FAULT LINES | February/March 2006 | 7

Women at the national stadium watch the votes being counted.

“It we want to forget the past, that is impossible. The country cannot forget what it lived.”

Panama 1989: Just weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the U.S. invaded Panama, killing thousands and leaving many more wounded and homeless. All this to get a previous buddy of the U.S., Manuel Noriega.

Mexico, Peru, and Colombia 1990’s to Present: as a result of the war, the U.S. has given military aid to these countries despite their poor human rights records. This might is then used to fight rebel forces.

Venezuela: Recent U.S. intervention in Venezuela manifests itself as millions of dollars in contributions to political opponents of leftist President Hugo Chavez. The short-lived 2002 coup d’etat that kidnapped the democratically elected president was orchestrated by groups who had received funding from the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED). When the opposition took power, they dissolved all of Venezuela’s democratic institutions, including the National Assembly, the Supreme Court, the Constitution, the General Attorney, and the Public Defender’s office. Meanwhile, they placed promising a return to free market economic policies. The coup only lasted two days before a popular resistance reinstated Chavez.

This information was largely taken from William Blum’s Clas- sics, “Killing Hope” and “Rogue State.” William Blum worked for the State Dept. until 1968, when he quit because he did not agree with what the U.S. was doing in Vietnam.

Grenada 1979-1983: A 1979 coup took control of this small island country and attempted to install socialistic reforms. The Reagan administration used destabilization tactics and eventually invaded in 1983, resulting in U.S. as well as Grenadian and Cuban casualties.

El Salvador 1980-02: After supporting the Duvalier family dictatorship and installing Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the U.S. permitted to support the elec- tions that returned Aristide to power after he was ousted by a 1991 military coup. Meanwhile, they warned Aristide that they would only allow him to remain in power if he had promised to adhere to free market policies. Aristide did not remain in power for long, however, and in a subsequent interview with Naomi Klein, he blamed his departure from power on his refusal to mention Haiti’s state-owned enterprises. The 2004 coup was orchestrated by the leaders of the FRAPH, a Haitian Front for Advancement and Progress, a CIA-backed organization that carried out state terror against opponents of the military regime that ruled the country from 1991 to 1994. Another leader in the armed coup against Aristide was Guy Philippe, a former member of the Haitian mili- tary who received training from U.S. Special Forces in El Salvador in the 1990s. After these forces pushed Aristide into exile, the U.S. stepped in to restore stability in Haiti, now under new rule. Since Aristide’s removal from power, no support has been targeted by the UN forces now tasked with “peacekeeping,” a process that has meant killing many innocents from Haiti’s poorest neighborhoods.

Continued from Front Cover...
Blood, Sweat, and Tears: Asia's Poor Build U.S. Bases in Iraq

BY DAVID PHINNEY

Jing Soliman left his family in the Philippines for what sounded like a sure thing—a job as a warehouse worker at Camp Anaconda in Iraq.

His new employer, Prime Projects International (PPI) of Dubai, is a major, but low-profile, subcontractor to Halliburton’s multi-billion dollar deal with the Pentagon to provide support services to U.S. forces.

But Soliman wouldn’t be making anything near the salaries—starting at $80,000 a year and often topping $100,000—that Halliburton’s engineering and construction unit Kellogg, Brown & Root (KBR) pays to the truck drivers, construction workers, office laborers, and other laborers it recruits from the United States.

Instead, this 15-year-old father of two anticipated $615 dollars a month, including overtime. For a 40-hour work week, that would be just over three dollars an hour. But for the 12-hour day, seven-day week that Soliman planned to send most of his $7,380 annual pay to his family in the Philippines for more than three dozen countries. They are lured by jobs with companies working on projects led by Halliburton and other major U.S.-funded contractors hired to provide support services to the military and reconstruction efforts.

The Big Picture

Could this “third country national” (TCN) in contractors’ parlance, these laborers hail largely from impoverished Asian countries such as the Philippines, India, and Pakistan, and Eastern countries and then pressuring them to go to Iraq, such as the Philippines, India, Pakistan, and Turkey. The average annual income in Manila is $4,384, and the World Bank estimates that nearly half of the nation’s 84 million people live on less than two dollars a day.

“The living conditions were very, very bad,” said Soliman during a recent telephone interview from his home in Quezon City near Manila. “It was good money.”

His new employer, Prime Projects International (PPI) of Dubai, is a major, but low-profile, subcontractor to Halliburton’s multi-billion dollar deal with the Pentagon to provide support services to U.S. forces.

In fact, the $30 billion Halliburton contract in Iraq has been responsible for the recruitment of thousands of low-wage workers like Soliman to travel to Iraq from more than three dozen countries. They are lured by jobs with companies working on projects led by Halliburton and other major U.S.-funded contractors hired to provide support services to the military and reconstruction efforts.

Challenging Halliburton and Army assurances, former KBR supervisors say they frequently witnessed subcontractors failing to meet required conditions. At the same time, some TCNs share horror stories with claims that they were falsely recruited, believing they were signing up for work in Kuwait and then having their contract changed to Iraq.

“I had no idea that I would end up in Iraq,” said Ramiel Antonio, who signed with MGM Worldwide Manpower and General Services in the Philippines. The 37-year-old air conditioning service worker thought he would make up 35,000 KBR’s 48,000 workers in Iraq employed under its sweeping contract for military support. In Harm’s Way

The TCNs not only do much of the dirty work, but, like others working for the U.S. military, risk and sometimes lose their lives. Many are killed in mortar attacks, some are shot. Others have been taken hostage before meeting their deaths.

The Pentagon keeps no comprehensive record of TCN casualties. But the Georgia-based nonprofit, Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, estimates that TCNs make up more than 100 of the estimated 269 civilian fatalities. The number of unreported fatalities could be much higher, while unreported and life-altering injuries are common.

Soliman was one TCN who barely escaped death on the night of May 15, 2004, when his living quarters at Camp Anaconda was blown apart by a bomb attack. Sardonically dubbed “Motoravittale,” the camp sits 42 miles north of Baghdad. Some 17,000 US soldiers and thousands of contractors have dug into the former Iraqi airbase for Hussein’s hidden weapons of mass destruction.

There were others injured along with Soliman that night. One roommate, 25-year-old fuel pump attendant Raymond Natividad, was killed. Soliman flew home to the Philippines in a wheelchair days later because he wanted medical treatment in his own country.

But even after surgery and skin grafts, he sometimes feels nagging pain in his leg. “I’ve heard of anything, let me know,” Soliman said at the end of the interview. “I would even go back to Iraq.”

This article was excerpted from an article originally written for CorpWatch. www.corpwatch.org and www.worldof freed伫
Nuclear War Crimes

By Angela Morano

I am neither a scientist nor a writer of fiction, but the notion that a government would knowingly dust human beings with radioactive heavy metal powder or place them in toxic zones without warning resembles a science fiction nightmare come true. Yet this is just what the Department of Defense (DOD) is doing. Plating weapon strength over long-term health and environmental considerations, the U.S. is using material that has poisoned our own troops, dusted thousands of tons of this toxic waste at home and abroad, and broken international law in the process. Meanwhile, the controversial nature of this material has led the U.S. government to deny its devastating side effects and long-term consequences. The substance is a heavy metal radioactive material called Uranium 238 (U-238), also known as Depleted Uranium or DU.

The word “depleted” is a misnomer. U-238 is made as a byproduct of the uranium enrichment process. When natural uranium is enriched, less than one percent of the mass is enriched, less than one percent of what is produced is used by nuclear power plants or conventional fissionable weapons. The word “depleted” is a misnomer. Uranium: www.traprockpeace.org. For more information on Depleted Uranium: www.traprockpeace.org.

Mainstream Media Coverage

On September 29, 2004, the New York Daily News reported that many soldiers of the 442nd Military Police, a National Guard unit, returned home sick after four months in Samawah, Iraq. Frustrated with the way the military was handling their concerns, they went to the press. There they found a voice in Juan Gonzales, and the New York Daily News paid for them to be properly tested through Dr. Durakovic, the director of Uranium Medical Research Center (UMRC). Previously, he was the chief of Nuclear Medicine at the VA in Maryland until his reports on DU were no longer acceptable. Several of the vets tested positive for Depleted Uranium heavy metal poisoning and Gerard Matthew had even fathered a daughter with a birth deformity.

The only other mainstream investigative media coverage was in December 2004, when Vanity Fair published a comprehensive article on Depleted Uranium, “Weapons of Self-Destruction,” by David Rose. In this article, Staff Sergeant Raymond Ramos is described as a physically fit former-New York City cop who began to suffer from constant headaches, fatigue, memory loss, respiratory problems, and even sleep apnea after being stationed on a makeshift base in Iraq where first tank battles had taken place. In the article, Rose explains that these are the same symptoms that have been reported in soldiers returning from the First Gulf War. They were labeled the Syndrome and Balkans Syndrome respectively, diseases that many scientists now attribute to DU.

In February 2005, Arthur Bemklau, Executive Director of Veterans for Constitutional Law in New York, reported a little known VA statistic that of the 580,400 soldiers in the First Gulf War, 11,000 are now dead and 325,000 were on permanent disability as of the year 2000. This means that 56 percent of the returning veterans have permanent disabilities in contrast to 10 percent in Vietnam. DU is worse than Agent Orange! Where is the outrage?

Almost twice as dense as lead, DU is used in the ballasts of some commercial planes for balance and in protective armor plating on Abrams Tanks. Placed as solid plating on Abrams Tanks. Placed as solid cores in the tips of bombs and bullets, DU greatly enhances penetrating ability. It is also pyrophoric, which means the friction created when it is deployed will cause it to spontaneously combust, burning and releasing micron-size isotopes that can be inhaled or ingested. According to the “Wakayama Report” by Army Colonel and physician Junro Wakayama, these particles can lodge in your body, emitting radiation and heavy metal toxins that compromise your immune system and can cause neurological or organ damage, cancers, and genetic mutations. Several thousand tons have been dispersed all over the Gulf, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, and elsewhere in our recent military operations, in addition to all the areas where it has been mined, manufactured, and tested in the past decades.

In addition, the National Lead Industry in Albany, New York, used to manufacture DU weapons in the 70’s. During that time, they would throw the leftover shavings in their chimney fires. This produced unregulated, unregulated, unregulated gas mishandling of DU and other chemicals finally led to their closure in 1984. The Department of Defense has been in charge of site remediation and the cleanup of as many as 56 neighboring properties at a cost to date of over $155 million. For twenty years, an active neighborhood group has been vigilant and pursuing compensation for health effects they believe are the consequences of DU.

Many Naval facilities, such as the San Francisco Naval Shipyard at Hunters Point, whole islands, like Vieques, Puerto Rico, and most recently Schofield Barracks, an Army base in Hawaii, have become playgrounds for the Military to conduct experiments and dump their waste. According to a study by the Puerto Rico Health Department for 1990-1994, the cancer rate at Vieques was 27 percent above Puerto Rico’s average.

In 2003, I heard Major Doug Rokke speak at a grassroots community center. Commissioned by the military, he established a DU protocol, Army Regulation 700-48. Yet, he continues to tell us, the protocol is being disregarded everywhere. My first reaction to Rokke’s words was disbelief, which later turned to anger the more I understood the issue. Many members of Rokke’s DU cleanup crew have since died. Like so many soldiers, they were usually unaware of what they had been exposed to.

Since this meeting, with great sorrow I began to show everyone, including my own family, Marcia Hinchen, pictures from www.warhurt.net of sick children with birth deformities. To raise awareness about DU and for a federal level, a proposal has been made with the support of Congressman Hinchey to sponsor a press conference and briefing in Washington on DU. Hinchen is waiting for the right moment and a popular groundswell from others across the country to ignite a fire under their Representatives’ doors. When you are moved to take some action, let’s ignite some fires. Call your Representatives and the Progressive Caucus. Let them know that you want Congress to break the silence on DU and hold a press conference and brief the media on DU.

Legislative Reaction

The latest initiative is to get a DU Bill passed in every state. Louisiana and Connecticut have already done so and others are following. Since they have jurisdiction over their National Guard, these states are passing a bill that establishes a task force and protocol to register, "properly" test, and help provide medical care to those in the National Guard who are concerned they may have been exposed to toxins and DU. Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz is introducing a similar bill in New York this February. Thinking globally, acting locally still works.

Other nations, such as the UK, France, and Russia, have purchased DU weapons. The European Parliament has called for a moratorium on all DU munitions. San Francisco-based international lawyer Karen Parker has addressed the UN and is quick to point out that DU will continue to indis- criminatorily affect people and the environment for generations to come. These “dirty bombs” have been pronounced illegal and criminal and are already outlawed by inter- national standards.

For those who feel that none of this affects them: the World Health Organization announced global cancer will increase 50 percent by 2020. In the words of Chief Seattle, “All things share the same breath—the beast, the tree, the mountain, the air shares its spirit with all life it supports.” Let’s expose DU as the trin- cidal killer that it is and stop this criminal nuclear nightmare!

In Peace and Hope,
Angela Morano, sonia@2180@hotmail.com

Angela is a member of the No DU Coalition of the Hudson Valley

For more information on Depleted Uranium: www.traprockpeace.org.
Since Dec. 23, 2005, KNOU-FM, has transformed itself into a national radio station, broadcasting on the Internet to the hundreds of thousands of New Orleans evacuees, like Alicia, who were displaced around the nation last September. KNOU cut back on their music programming to devote the majority of their coveted morning drive time to finding homes, jobs and funding for many listeners who have fallen through the cracks of government assistance programs.

“We decided to use the Internet to take the station to the people and give them the critical information they desperately need to rebuild their lives,” said Jeffery “Big Herc” Reese, production manager and host of KNOU’s popular “Big Ass Morning Show.”


RDO: Well, I was coming back to activism in 1972 or 1973, after the 1960s. People who were youngish in the 1970s, they were very cautious because they saw the sixties as a big failure. So they turned to lobbying and electoral process a lot and I think too much so.

The state consistently works to maintain imperialism. This brings up questions about electoral politics. You see people after the elections in a slump. Or people taking to the streets and wondering why it doesn’t have any effect.

FL: What lessons do you think can be gleaned from the Contra War for our current political context?

RDO: For those of us now involved in the anti-Iraq War movement there’s a lot to learn - negative and positive - from the anti-intervention movement in Central America. For example, having a broad-based solidarity movement with pretty clear principles worked really well. But we were also pretty factionalized.

It seems like each generation has to learn anew these things because there is a wiping out of historical memory. It’s like re-constructing the wheel every time. I work with a lot of young people, and I really had them in mind as an audience when I wrote the book, thinking they could integrate this into their thinking about the present, into the anti-globalization movement.

FL: What are some of the negative experiences of that era from which you’ve learned?

RDO: The most recent addition to the mounting resistance was Mountain Justice Summer (MJS) campaign that began organizing itself in the winter of 2004 with large representation from Kentucky Earth First! chapters in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. MJS organized to function as a solidarity group in each of the states it came to organize in.

The campaign participated in Listening Projects to aid local communities in rallying residents. One element of the campaign ranged from organized protests and direct actions, such as the rally in Richmond on July 8, 2005, on the international day of action against the G-8, to letter writing and banner hangs. In mid-August 2005, MJS organizers coordinated a mountain takeover against the National Coal Corporation on Zeb Mountain in Campbell County, TN, in an effort to shut down daily operations and call national attention to the devastation in coal country. Among other groups working for economic and environmental justice in the coalfields, MJS organized with Coal River Mountain Watch (WV), the Coalfield Sustainability Project (WV), Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (WV), and United Mountain Defense (TN), to help defend the Lower 9th Ward from the bulldozing that is likely to begin again very soon.

They provide housing, food, and direction for volunteers. CUC also needs volunteers to help clean out flooded houses, distribute goods, and much more.

NOLA LAND STRUGGLE

continued from front page

The struggle for housing just at the moment. New Orleans Back Commission, made up mostly of white businessmen, is responsible for putting together a reconstruction proposal for the city. One of the more recent and non-binding recommendations of the Commission suggests that neighborhoods hit hardest by the disaster must prove their ability to survive before rebuilding is allowed to take place. The Commission’s report also speaks of “shrinking the city’s footprint” by not allowing all neighborhoods to return as viable communities.

The Lower 9th Ward is part of the area identified to be shrunk from the footprint. The 9th Ward has the highest rate of black homeownership in the country, with roughly 60% of homes owner-occupied.

Many residents and other activists fighting for the right of return to New Orleans believe the city is doing everything it can to drive African Americans and poor people from big swathes of New Orleans. They point to the lack of basic needs in neighborhoods like the Lower 9th Ward.

Common Ground Collective is strongly urging volunteers to come to New Orleans to help defend the Lower 9th Ward from the bulldozing that is likely to begin again very soon. They provide housing, food, and direction for volunteers. CUC also needs volunteers to help clean out flooded houses, distribute goods, and much more.

Mountain Top Removal

continued from page 5

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FL: Now that you are always on tour do you miss having a core group of activists and friends in your life to inspire you?

WO: We did come from a tight-knit political movement [in Florida], so I feel like it’s affected my songwriting because when we first started as a band I used the term ‘we’ a lot. I feel like when I said that, there was a specific group of people I was speaking about. I don’t necessarily feel that sense of camaraderie anymore.

FL: How do you embody and involve anarchism in your life?

WO: For me, it’s a philosophy or an ideology that comes before politics. Before I even think about how I feel about a certain issue, I try to really figure out what satisfies me and makes me have peace of mind in existence. And starting with that point and trying to be aware and in touch with my actual honest desires, I then try to act as consistent like that as I can.

FL: What about voting - how would you recommend an anarchist vote?

WO: Is there anything wrong with being popular?

WO: I don’t think there’s anything inherently wrong with it, if you believe in the music you are making...it’s not something I want to debate. There are a lot of really great DIY bands you could totally support if you have critiques of how other bands are operating. I think there’s room for it all.

TG: In coming from a movement that encourages freethinking and individual thought, the fact that you have to justify your actions to anybody is really lame. I don’t feel like explaining things to people. I get annoyed at the idea of it.
Sunday, February 12

Calculate Radical Mental Health Group
Join us for food, deconstruction of a film or reader about Radical Mental Health. 7:30 p.m. Long Hall Fellowship, 1214 Market Ave, Berkeley. BYO-21 seating: (N.O.T.A.F.L.O.F. All... (N.O.T.A.F.L.O.F.) All... (N.O.T.A.F.L.O.F.)

Thursday, February 16

Radical Open Mic
Weekly anarchist open mic. Readings, music and acoustic performances from local favorite Little Boy Blue and more. 8 p.m. Nikolaev Bakery, 1288 Russell Ave, (at Berkeley College. Free. Info: 510-441-RAKE.

Wednesday, February 22, 2006

Pushed to the Altar: Marriage, Poverty, & Politics
A forum focusing on the Bush administration's marriage promotion policies as a quick fix to end poverty for poor women and their children. Running: Attorney, Legal Aid from the National Council for Poverty Rights; Lanita Hunter, founder and President of the Political Research Associates; Joanie Hare from Family Violence Prevention Fund; Policy Analyst Artist Roza Pims from the Welfare Radio Collaborative. 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. The Women's Building, 360 10th St, SF. $5-10 suggested donation (N.O.T.A.F.L.O.F.).

Thursday, February 23

Critical Mass
Cyclists gather the last Friday of each month at Justin Herman Plaza, 6 p.m. Free.

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The annual Ball of Enchantment is a ball of epic dancing. Please bring food, anything you feel sexy and comfortable in and exotic dancing.

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