

**Honor Dr King
Stop War On Iraq
March & Rally
Jan 18, 2003
San Francisco**

**Assemble:
11 AM Embarcadero
LABOR CONTINGENT
Gather in front of Hyatt Hotel on Market St
"GLOBALIZE JUSTICE NOT WAR"
1 PM RALLY - CIVIC CENTER**

Labor Committee for



Peace & Justice

"The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives." - Eugene V. Debs

Teach-Ins Resist Bush War Plans Oakland Teachers Create Lesson Plans for Peace

by Bill Balderston

The Oakland Education Association, the 4000 member union of teachers and other certificated school personnel in Oakland, has a long and proud history of a strong progressive agenda, including organizing for peace and international solidarity. Within ten days of the September 11th events, we passed a resolution opposing military intervention in Afghanistan and ethnic scapegoating and defending civil liberties, while commending Rep. Barbara Lee for her vote against war powers. Further, we took this position to our parent union, the California Teachers Association, fighting unsuccessfully for a like statement, but still helping to educate thru a forum and discussion. More recently (Sept.16, 2002), we passed a statement against possible intervention in Iraq and linking it to opposition to the proposed use of troops against the ILWU.

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We have had OEA contingents at every major anti-war demonstration, from Sept.29,2001 to the recent October 26 mass action in San Francisco and have assisted in the various Labor for Peace & Justice events earlier this year.

OTHER STORIES

- **Palestinian Trade Unionists Solidarity Tour**
- **AFL-CIO - Pride @ Work "No War!"**
- **Teamsters VS War on Iraq**
- **Workers Delegation to the Middle East**

But even more important, we have consistently developed educational forums (and curriculum) for members, students, and community activists, informing not only about Afghanistan, Palestine and other parts of that Asian region, but linking the anti-war effort to struggles at home against militarism and for social service resources and youth rights. Speakers at these events included military resister Jeff Patterson, County Supervisor Keith Carson, AFSC organizer Wilson Riles, Dr. Hatem Bazian of UC Berkeley, and a representative of the Revolutionary Women of Afghanistan.

More recently, OEA President Sheila Quintana co-authored a resolution with Oakland School Board member Dan Siegal to have a series of teach-ins on Iraq and the possible US military intervention; this was agreed to by the Board in November. We are now planning for a major effort in more than two dozen schools (including elementary ones) on January 14th.

One result of all this has been the revival of the OEA Peace and International Relations Committee and the establishment of a peace and justice caucus. Overall, the elected leadership and the members continue to prioritize these issues, even in the midst of fiscal and political crisis close to home, not only because of our resistance to US aggression internationally, but because of our awareness of the costs for the schools and especially our students, mainly working class youth of color.

Bill Balderston is a teacher at Castlemont HS and member of the Oakland Education Assoc. executive board

The Many Faces of Terror An Activist's Response

by Astraea Kelly

As the first dark, devastating clouds of smoke and burnt bodies cleared on our TV screens the realities that life had changed forever for each of us in the United States and the world, we opened our eyes slowly and painfully to the realities of 9/11. Quietly, we all grieved for the lives lost and families destroyed. Then we began the painful process of asking why this happened and how it happened to us as a nation. Our first response was of determined and sometimes angry solidarity and nationalism. Immediately, the first horrors of rage became evident and the dangers, as violence was initiated to Middle Eastern citizens, businesses or religious organizations. Senators and Congressional representatives began slowly to call for sane and compassionate response to our fears; the lone and brave voice of Barbara Lee stood out for peace. We need evidence before we attack another country and will the counter attack only increase our problems? We began discussing pre-emptive war and nuclear and biological weapons. Suddenly that "war on terror" turned on us as citizens. Unions became alert immediately as did student activists and ethnic "minorities" that they had now become the potential "enemy of the state" along with anyone who appeared to question the current administration or the president and his policies.

Pride At Work seemed a logical place to test an official resolution against the war. We understand from our own lives what unfair discrimination and hatred can be. Our AFL-CIO leaders were silent. We had no direction as to what our official union stance would be. They were waiting to see what the union members wanted. The movement had to come from the rank and file. "Could it be something is wrong with our information polls, they don't seem accurate." were voices expressed. Generic resolution examples against war were placed on peace Internet sites. I talked with our local PAW chapter and we agreed to make a resolution against pre-emptive war. I talked with Washington, D.C. and our national contacts and they indicated they would consider it if we sent one. Everyone was waiting for the other to go first. Within a month the national Pride At Work policy convention met and voted for their resolution against war, using ours as an example. Each union that made a resolution increased the critical mass for others to do so.

Sometimes we are discouraged by walls of silence. We simply do what we have always done. We educate ourselves, talk to each other, hash out our differences and respect each other's differences, follow our conscience and our hearts and ORGANIZE. It is our moral and ethical responsibility to do so. "The only thing to fear is fear itself." We can change our world and future. We have the tools and we have the intelligence and I believe we have the heart and soul to be leaders and not blind followers in this life. We are union and we lead the way. We always have.

Astraea Kelly is a SEIU Local 250 steward at Kaiser Hospital, Vallejo and a community organizer for East Bay Pride At Work, affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS OPPOSE WAR

by Bob Mattingly

Teamsters Local 705, the largest truck driver and warehouse local in the country, overwhelmingly voted for a "No War In Iraq" resolution in October.

Nearly 400 members attended the meeting. The resolution passed with only one dissenting vote. Members whose fathers served in the Viet Nam conflict, and Teamsters who are Marine and Army veterans urged support of the resolution.

Local 705 Secretary-Treasurer Gerald Zero voiced surprise, saying that he thought the vote would split about 50-50. The vote showed, he said, "that average Americans have deep concerns about the direction George Bush is taking on this issue."

The resolution was brought to the meeting by a group of UPS Teamsters, who earlier had organized themselves to win a better UPS contract. The resolution stated that the local, "Stands firmly against Bush's drive for war," which "serves as a cover and a distraction for the sinking economy, corporate corruption, lay-offs, [and] Taft-Hartley (used against the locked-out ILWU longshoremen) ."

On January 11th in Chicago, Local 705 will host the first national meeting of labor organizations that have come out against the Bush administration's drive to war. (The next issue will report on the outcome of this important event.)

Bob Mattingly is a Retired Teamster



Left: ILWU DrillTeam performs for a crowd at SF anti-war march on 4/20/02

Right: ILWU Drill Team leads hundreds of thousands of working people in a march against the war in Washington DC on 10/26/02

Bay Area Teamsters Not Excited About War

by Roger Wilkins

While our Local, Teamsters 315 hasn't yet sought to resist the war officially, the talk in the shop has 'gone there.'

In a sharp reversal, post-911 parking lot displays of 'standing united' with Bush have faded. Shiny new bumper stickers announcing opposition to Bush's war have been replacing them.

Nobody's excited about Bush's war, at least where I work at UPS in Richmond, CA. Instead many of my co-workers have joined in the various anti-war protests.

Roger Wilkins is member of Teamster Local 315.

From the front lines...

Palestinian Trade Union Leaders Appeal for International Labor Solidarity

by Marcy Rein

Mohammed Saleh, member of the National Executive Committee of the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) has four children: a son, 13 years old; two daughters, 11 and nine, and a son who's six. Shortly after midnight last April 18, the Israelis began bombing the city of Ramallah, where they live.

"My kids got up, frightened and crying," Saleh said. "I told them, 'You are safe, come in my room.' My younger son refused to sleep between my arms on the bed. He wants to sleep under the bed, because he feels more safe," he said.

As the bombings continued, Saleh moved his children from room to room. "If they hit from the east, I move my kids to the west room. If they come from the west, I move to the east room. This is the situation for all the people. They attack all the city."

The mounting violence of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has smashed any semblance of normal life for their Palestinian residents.

"The escalation of violence and the military occupation of the territories have caused great physical damage to the infrastructure," the Australian group Union Aid Abroad reported after a fact-finding trip in May 2002. Homes, factories and public buildings sit in ruins, they reported. Electric, water and sewage service has been cut off in many areas. Curfews, checkpoints and shootings keep people from buying food, getting medical care and going to school or work.

To respond to this crisis, the PGFTU has focused on relief and solidarity efforts. Saleh toured the U.S. from Nov. 20 to Dec. 18 with Hekmat Elsarraj of the PGFTU Women's Dept. to build awareness, relationships and support among U.S. unionists. Abdel Khateeb, longtime representative for Jerusalem's hotel and service workers, could not get a visa to join the delegation as planned.

The San Francisco Central Labor Council hosted a talk by Saleh and Elsarraj Nov. 25, the first of two presentations leading up to a forum planned for early in the new year. (The second presentation will give a view from the Israeli trade union movement.)

"We have 65 percent of our people unemployed," Saleh told 40-some Labor Council delegates and guests.

"Around 55,000 workers once had passes that let them cross the border to work in Israel. That's no longer allowed. They are out of work, without income," he said. Even if their workplaces have escaped bombing, many workers in the occupied territories also find it impossible to get to work. "They put up hundreds of checkpoints, so people try to go through the mountains," Saleh said. "Then they shoot against them. Many get killed trying to get to work."

"We [PGFTU] can't meet to fulfill our strategic plan, so we have an emergency plan. For each unemployed worker, we have a \$150 emergency gift and a package of food. So far 225,000 have gotten the emergency gift and another 200,000 got the package of food. There are 400,000 more waiting for this same gift.

"Also we give free legal advice. We have 14 lawyers working with us. We have also arranged for them to get free health insurance and not to pay anything at all the schools, colleges and universities. This is what we can do.

"Sometimes we are under curfew and no one can leave their houses, so we do our work from our houses. We are lucky, because we have computers and internet so we can be in touch with our colleagues and get news out," he said. The same bombing that so frightened Saleh's children destroyed the PGFTU office in Ramallah.

Elsarraj, who lives in Gaza, described the depth of the crisis in Palestine through the eyes of children.

"I ask my children what they dream, what they want for the future. My daughter says, 'Maybe we die tomorrow. Why ask us about days ahead?'"

"For 24 hours a day they live in fear. They're in danger just going to school. Maybe they could wait a day, or six or seven or 12 hours at the checkpoints to get through in an ambulance.

"Their parents aren't working, so the children feel responsible to feed the family. They don't like to do anything, to run, to play. We have a hard time making them realize they are not old people, they are children," she said.

"Our brothers, our sisters, we need justice. We feel we are part of this big family, the family of working people all over the world—and we hope all the workers' movements will support the Palestinians to have justice," Saleh said.

The San Francisco Central Labor Council endorsed a resolution in support of a U.S. labor fact-finding delegation to Israel and Palestine at its regular November meeting. The Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace and Justice is organizing this delegation, and plans meetings with labor and human rights groups reflecting a range of views. For more information, contact the Labor Committee by e-mail at <labor-for-peace-and-justice@igc.org> or via the postal service at P.O. Box 14156, Berkeley, CA 94712-5156.

Marcy Rein works in the ILWU Organizing Dept. This article will appear in a forthcoming issue of The Dispatcher, newspaper of The International Longshore and Warehouse Union, along with a report on the other events planned by the San Francisco Labor Council.

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Above: HERE 2850 presents solidarity shirts.
Top: SEIU 250 makes Hekmat & Mohammed
Honorary members and presents shirts.
Right: CUE presents a contribution for the tour.

"Our brothers, our sisters, we need justice. We feel we are part of this big family, the family of working people all over the world—and we hope all the workers' movements will support the Palestinians to have justice." - Mohammed Saleh, PGFTU

Workers Delegation to Middle East



by Shadow Moyer

The Labor Committee for Peace and Justice has begun work on an exciting project aimed at furthering dialogue within the US labor movement about the issues facing Palestinian and Israeli workers, while at the same time furthering a real dialogue between workers in this country and those in the Middle East. This project consists of a delegation to the region and report-backs to labor councils, union halls and other gatherings of working people across the country.

Delegation members will have the opportunity to meet with officials and activists from the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and the Israeli labor federation, the Histadrut. Meetings will also be held with various NGO's and community groups working to improve the situation of workers there. Emphasis will be put on the material conditions facing workers, violence affecting the entire region, the destruction of workplaces in the West Bank and the subsequent unemployment rate, and the cutbacks in social services faced by workers due to the ongoing occupation and resulting conflict.

Upon their return, participants will have the chance to speak at labor councils and union halls in the area and at events across the country. The first hand experience











and knowledge that participants will bring back can help spark discussion about what role the labor movement can play here to help our union sisters and brothers there.

The delegation is tentatively slated to leave in early Spring, but will depend on the situation there and the situation in Iraq. Participants will stay in the region for approximately 10 days, but of course can stay longer if they like.

In order to make this project a reality we need your help. We need more unions and more councils to show support. So far the San Francisco Labor Council and South Bay Labor Council have led the charge, but now we need your local to support too; to say nothing of support from other councils & regions.

We also want to continue seeking out additional participants. As the delegation is limited in it's size, not everyone may be able to go, and we want the best and broadest cross section of union or other labor movement folks possible. Help make this delegation a success and get involved. For more information, a copy of the support resolutions, or an application or two, email the Labor Committee at <labor-for-peace-and-justice@igc.org> or call Shadow Moyer at 510-866-6369.

Shadow Moyer is a member of the Marine Fireman's Union and works on the docks in Oakland.

<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>WAR</p>	<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>UNEMPLOYMENT</p>	<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>RETIREMENT INSECURITY</p>	<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>LOW WAGES</p>
<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>NO HEALTH CARE</p>	<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>POOR HOUSING</p>   <p>ON BUSTIN</p>		<p>I PROMISE YOU</p>  <p>UNDER FUNDED SCHOOLS</p> 

This first issue was prepared by a computer tech, a telephone repairman, a grocery stocker, a few teachers, a dockworker, a nurse, an organizer and others; you get the point. We came together because we're workers against the war. Bush's plan of developing a police state here and perpetual war internationally has nothing to do with the needs of working people. We've created this journal to encourage other workers to resist and to increase coordination of our collective resistance. We hope it helps.

Labor Committee for Peace & Justice

We meet the first Sunday from 10-12 at the Institute for Industrial Relations 2521 Channing Way - Berkeley, CA

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Please send articles & comments to chris98@pacbell.net

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