

Open letter on movement building

by Numerous Authors:
February 21, 2003

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the anti-war movement,

Attached is an open letter raising issues of racism in the anti-war movement. In it, we identify racist practices that have hindered our ability to work together and will continue to do so, unless movement organizers take aggressive steps to overcome these dynamics.

We wrote and signed this letter before the recent historic Feb. 15 rallies in NYC and around the world.

Many of us were active in organizing for the demonstration in NYC. We believe the assertion of the anti-racist politics outlined in our letter was critical to achieving an event with unprecedented inclusion of the majority, people of color, communities in NYC (as well as labor and working class people) in both the leadership, the program and the entire demonstration. These were important steps forward, and we welcome this progress.

At the same time, the racist dynamics we discuss in our letter were and remain a powerful factor in our work together, preventing the fullest unity and effectiveness. There are already signs that, with Feb. 15 behind us, long-standing racist patterns of operating are reemerging.

In order for future demonstrations and coalitions to build on the advances that were made and increase participation of all of our communities, it is urgent that the issues we raise in our letter be forthrightly addressed by the entire movement.

We urge you to give immediate, focused attention to this letter in that spirit.

To respond to this letter, please email the signers at: antiracismmovement@yahoo.com

An Open Letter To Activists Concerning Racism In The Anti-War Movement

February 13, 2003

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

We, the undersigned, are peace and justice activists in New York City. We are organizing to defeat the United States government's offensive of war, racism and repression against the people of the world, both abroad and within the borders of the U.S. We come from many communities, some of us from other nations. We are all colors, multi-generational, workers, students, unemployed, queer and straight. We are writing to you out of concern that destructive patterns of behavior are hindering the growth of the broadest possible long-term movement against war at home and abroad, and preventing the attainment of the social justice we all seek.

We have urgent tasks before us: stopping a war against Iraq and others around the world, as well as preventing further attacks on people within the United States. To do this work in a principled way, in ways that address the root causes of oppression, requires that we acknowledge the connection between the forms and institutions of white supremacy embedded in U.S. society and the practice of white supremacy within our movement. As we dig in for the long haul and try to bring together the broadest possible grouping of people, we must be conscious of how our histories-organizational and personal-influence how we work together.

Background

Since the turn of the year, hundreds of

activists have come together in New York City to plan anti-war actions. Along with the work being done for February 15, these gatherings will hopefully lead to more and better coalition-building in the future. However, at least two other promising coordination efforts in this city, since 9/11/2001, also began by involving diverse forces and ended badly. One series of meetings, attended by hundreds, led to the formation of the New York Coalition for Peace and Justice-but only after a disastrous split around the question of calling for the use of "international law" as an alternative to war against Afghanistan.

A second series of meetings, held last Spring to plan antiwar commemorations of 9/11, produced Stand Up New York-but that coalition foundered when one group insisted on organizing a vigil "autonomously," without being responsible to the coalition as a whole. In our view, destructive racial dynamics and white supremacy are implicated in the disruption of both of these unity initiatives: Predominantly white forces failed to grasp the importance of self-determination and certain concerns in communities of color. Indeed, this was the clear perception of most activists of color who were involved in the events.

The problem of racism in anti-war activism is not new. For many years, people of color and their white allies have cited its debilitating effects, to no avail. A new era of activism presents us with the opportunity to come to grips with the issues of race and anti-racism in our movement, instead of continuing to ignore them. We believe that such an accounting is crucial to the success of coalition-building among the anti-war sectors of New York City, and we offer this letter as a means of getting started.

Who is Most Affected by War

At home and abroad, repression, militarism and war take their greatest toll on people of color. Following 9/11, the U.S. government and its agents escalated their longstanding aggression against us to the level of an endless "war on terrorism." Abroad, that war is waged on Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Colombia, Vieques, Puerto Rico, and other nations in the global South. "Endless war" crowns the economic embargos and sanctions, IMF/World Bank-generated debt, covert support for torture and death squads, and environmental degradation long imposed on nations whose inhabitants are viewed through a Eurocentric lens as alien demons, in order to rationalize their domination and destruction. At home, the state demonizes and criminalizes people of color in order to rationalize targeting us for police abuse and repression, in the name of "crime-fighting" and "security." Secret detention and deportation of immigrants, racial profiling, police brutality, incarceration and cut-backs of social services are all part of the arsenal used by the state to control communities of color and constrain their development.

As the primary victims of militarism and repression, people of color have waged organized resistance against these scourges for centuries, without recognition of our frontline activism by whites: We know only too well, if others do not, that the peace movement has always been multiracial and international. Consistent with this history, Arab, Asian, Latino, Caribbean and African Americans were organizing in their New York City communities before 9/11, and since the 9/11 attacks have turned out significant numbers on several occasions. For example,

there were the 9/11 anniversary/anti-war events sponsored by Third World Within, under the banner "No More Lost Lives," and there was the "We Ain't Going Nowhere" march and rally in Harlem sponsored by Uptown Youth for Peace and Justice. In addition, South Asian and Arab American community-based groups have spearheaded street protests downtown and in Times Square against detentions and other abuses of immigrant rights that continue to this day.

The Movement Today: Reaching The Mainstream

The anti-war movement as a whole can take great pride in the national mobilizations that brought hundreds of thousands to Washington, D.C. on April 22, October 26 and January 18. Undaunted by the drumbeat for an invasion of Iraq and heightened repression at home, our movement has mounted an undeniable challenge to policies that, if allowed to prevail, can only lead to the devastation of peoples and nations. The success of these demonstrations was due, in no small part, to the hard work done by diverse grass roots, neighborhood-based groups in New York and other locales.

The energy and commitment emanating from our local anti-war formations create a good basis for developing future peace and justice work in our city. But to realize our potential for building a mass movement requires, first and foremost, clarity as to who actually constitutes the "mainstream" and why. The right, the corporate media and elite policy makers persist in painting "mainstream America" as white and middle class. Even many white liberals cling to the notion that building a mass movement against war necessitates the use of techniques and rhetoric that "don't scare away" middle class whites. This way of thinking is anachronistic. The nation's demographics have changed sharply over the last 40 years, even more dramatically over the last decade, with the result that people of color are fast becoming a majority in the U.S. More importantly, since people of color-war's principal targets-have the greatest interest in holding back the war tide and, thus, activists of color have the most politically developed perspectives on the subject, they are a key source of ideas on how to strengthen work and improve outreach. Add to this the fact that more and more white working class and middle class families are struggling to survive under the crushing burden of globalization's negative effects and it becomes clear that resistance against the Bush war machine must reflect the spectrum of needs, aspirations, goals, intellectual resources and colors of a multiracial, multinational, multilingual and multi-class mainstream.

Unfortunately, white supremacy and white privilege in our work present obstacles that, if left unaddressed, will limit our ability to consolidate an effective movement within today's realities.

Addressing White Supremacy in the Peace and Justice Movement

A persistent dynamic of white supremacy/racism and white privilege within many organizations, and the resultant perpetuation of racist practices, takes various forms: resistance by predominantly white organizations to sharing leadership with much less following the leadership of activists and organizations of color; the failure of predominantly white organiza-

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the new indicator

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What is UCAB?

The University Centers Advisory Board, of course!

While most UCSD students have heard of the Associated Students or the Graduate Student Association, few have heard of the University Centers Advisory Board even though the latter is responsible for more than twice the amount of student fees than the two student governments combined. Although there is a lot of pomp surrounding AS elections every year and many students put in a large effort to get elected, the AS collects about \$21 per student per quarter which comes out to be about \$1,130,000 per year total. The GSA accounts for even less at just over \$100,000 per year. In comparison, UCAB collects \$37 per student per quarter (from both graduates and undergraduates) which works out to almost 2.5 million per year. Not only does UCAB collect these fees, but it also collects rent from the business in the University Centers (such as the Jamba Juice, Wendy's, and Roma in the Price Center, and the General Store, the Grove Café and AS lecture notes in the Student Center). It is important to keep in mind that this revenue is being generated from an investment of student's money into the University Centers.

AS and GSA are (mostly) democratically elected, however, UCAB is not. UCAB is comprised of student, faculty, alumni and administrative members. The student members of the board are representatives from the five colleges (sixth college is so far not included), AS, GSA, SAAC plus the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Member-At-Large. The five college reps are selected by a committee who interviews the applicants and decides amongst themselves who to appoint to the board.

In a recent survey, students said that the price center was too much like a strip mall. UCAB is directly responsible for how space in the Price Center and the Student Center are used and how the money generated from student fees as well as revenue from rent is spent. In the past, UCAB has kept meetings secret; failing to post when and where they were meeting until the same day. UCAB has a history of colluding with administrators in order to attempt to pass unsupported fee referenda on this campus.

The University Centers Advisory Board was not always like this however. When UCSD opened in 1963, there was no student union. In 1966, the first student buildings were built. Actually, student fees paid for the foundation and moving costs of the buildings, which were Quonset huts donated from the military base that preceded UCSD. The first student center consisted of a small bookstore adjoined to a student run cafe/restaurant. Later, in 1980 this building was to become the site of the Ché Café. In 1976, over protests from students about increasing fees, the Student Cooperative Center was built (now referred to erroneously as the Student Center or the "Old Student Center"). Students lobbied hard to have the building filled with co-op and student run services. At one time the Student Cooperative Center had as many as 8 co-ops. While some of these co-ops disappeared (like the vinyl co-op), some were taken over by the university (like the Recycle Co-op) and other became private businesses (like the bike store), we still have a few of these original co-ops (like Groundworks and the Food Co-op).

When the Student Cooperative Center was built, there was an ALL STUDENT board created to allocate the money generated from the fees and the rent revenue. This board was called the Student Center Board (or SCB). Even though the SCB



Joseph Watson: he did it!!

repeatedly informed the administration that the new Student Center was named the Student Cooperative Center, and they referred to this fact in their minutes, the name has been systematically ignored. Signage in the center has repeatedly left out the "cooperative" and someone has meticulously gone back in all minutes where it was referred to as the "Student Cooperative Center" and crossed out the word "Cooperative".

When, in 1989, a new referendum (barely) passed to build a new student center the SCB became the University Centers Board (UCB) but remained basically the same. In 1992-1993 the UCB tried to fire the then director of the University Centers, Jim Coruthers for repeatedly refusing to follow decisions made by the board (the director of the University Centers is paid by money generated from student fees and so was believed to be accountable to the students through the UCB). The UCSD administration did not like these decisions and Joe Watson, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs (a department that has many offices in the Price Center, despite its being a separate entity) disbanded the UCB with a letter to the U.C. Office of the President and re-established a new board with new members, including administration and faculty called the University Centers Advisory Board. This move made it extremely clear how the Administration sees students rights to spend the money that they raise for student good.

It is important here to understand the structure of fees at U.C. First there are mandatory fees. These are the basic fees that are the same U.C. wide. We pay the same amount of these as does a student at Berkeley, UCLA or UC Davis. The Regents decide the amount that this fee will be. After the mandatory fees, comes the Student Fees. Student Fees vary from campus to campus because it is up to the students to raise these fees. The philosophy behind student fees is to fund events, groups and structures that will benefit the student body as a whole. Student Fees are meant to be raised by students for students. Specifically, the law states that they must be used for the advantage of students and they must be used for educational purposes. Basically, student fees have to operate on the principals of a non-profit organization, which the University of California is supposed to be. While the philosophy of student fees is important, in practice, it is usually the administration that lobbies for specific fee increases. The idea is to get students to fund as much as

Student Fees

What every student at UCSD pays every quarter, every year

In total, most UCSD undergraduates pay \$1,631.75 per quarter in fees. Non-resident undergraduates pay 5,913.75 per quarter. In state graduates pay \$1805.50 per quarter and non-residents pay 5,578.50 per quarter. These fees are split up into different categories that determine who decides how much the student pays and where the money raised goes to. Below we will list and explain all of the mandatory fees that all undergraduates at UCSD pay.

Registration Fee: \$237.00 every quarter

This mandatory fee is collected to support non-academic programs and services on campus. It funds programs ranging from OASIS to the Career Center.

Educational Fee: \$1,040.00 every quarter

This is the fee that is collected to pay faculty salaries, administrator's salaries, operation of the libraries, operations of administrative offices such as the registrars, operation of the power plant and other things. These Fees are determined by the Regents every year. They are the same for all nine of the University of California campuses. In addition, each campus may set additional fees called "Student Fees". These fees are determined by referendum by the students themselves and are supposedly for the purpose of enhancing student life and community on campus. UCSD has five student fees, some of which only apply to undergraduates and one of which only applies to graduates.

Campus Activity Fee: \$21.00 every quarter

This fee is paid by all undergraduates. It is collected by UCSD administration (by the department of Student Affairs) and allocated by the Associated Students (the undergraduate student government). This fee goes towards funding student organizations (for example, printing of this paper is funded through this fee). It also funds events like Sun God week and AS concerts in RIMAC or the Price Center.

Graduate Student Association Fee: \$12.00 every quarter

This fee is paid by all graduate students. It is collected by UCSD administration (department of Student Affairs) and allocated to the Graduate Student Association. The money generated by this fee goes mostly to graduate student parties, lounges, and a few events.

University Center Fee: \$37.50 every quarter

This fee pays the debt service on the bond for constructing the Price Center. It funds general maintenance in the Price Center, Student Center and the Ché Café. It also pays for the administrative staff for the University Centers as well as advertising for the centers.

Recreation Fee: \$87.00 every quarter

This fee pays for the debt service on the construction of RIMAC. This fee was contested by students because there were many blank ballots found that pushed the number of votes above the minimum of 20% of the student body voting that is required. Students took this to court but UCSD administration had already signed a contract with an building firm by the time the case was brought to court and therefore obligated students to pay for this contract.

Inter Collegiate Athletics Student Activity Fee: \$28.25 per quarter

This is the most recent fee, voted on last year by students. It covers costs of UCSD administration's choice to move UCSD from Division III athletics to Division II. Students were forced to choose between raising fees to cover these costs or to loose about half of the already existing intercollegiate teams.

Mandatory Health Insurance: \$181.00 every quarter

Health Insurance provided through UCSD. In addition to all of these fees, four out of the six colleges have a small fee of between \$2 and \$7 for college programming.

possible to leave the state budget open for other important matters, like union busting or lining administrators pockets. So, for example, when the administration wants UCSD to have a bigger sports program to bring in more alumni donors, they con the students into paying for it. Or when, the administration wants more office space and a less crowded price center, they put the burden onto students. Or when, through poor planning by UCSD, academic classes are taught in the Price Center theatre, students should pay for this, even though their mandatory fees supposedly cover educational costs. In general, students are not the primary beneficiaries of the student centers, even though students foot the bill.

UCAB is the board at the center of all of this. UCAB serves to justify the administration's control over student fees used towards the University Centers. While UCAB contains a majority of students it is given a specific charter and labeled as Advisory, thus limiting the scope of the board to what the administration is comfortable with. The only time this poses a problem for the administration, is when they wish to collect more fees. Fortunately for the students, there are more democratic rules in place for raising fees

than for choosing members of UCAB. To raise student fees, at least 20% of the student body has to vote and at least 50%+1 have to pass the fee in order for it to go into effect. Of course, it used to be even harder to pass new fees: the minimum turnout used to be 25%. (The only time a fee referendum received that much of a vote at UCSD was two years ago when students overwhelmingly voted down a fee referendum with 33% of the student body voting).

It is clear that UCAB needs reform. First, since it is student fees that it allocates, it needs to be a student body, not just a board with a majority of student members. Faculty and administrators should be advisory to the board not the other way around. UCAB should either be more democratically elected and accountable or it should be advisory to student government instead of to the administration. Students need the final say in how their fees are spent. More than anything, members of UCAB need to better represent the student body. This is done by doing more outreach and actually communicating their decisions and process to the campus community while at the same time giving students more opportunities to express their opinions about their fees.

War:

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to Montana - will not meekly withdraw. Unlike the shallow support for the war, the opposition to the war is deep, cannot be easily dislodged or frightened into silence.

Indeed, the anti-war feelings are bound to become more intense. To the demand "Support Our GIs", the movement will be able to reply: "Yes, we support our GIs, we want them to live, we want them to be brought home. The government is not supporting them. It is sending them to die, or to be wounded, or to be poisoned by our own depleted uranium shells".

No, our casualties will not be numerous, but every single one will be a waste of an important human life. We will insist that this government be held responsible for every death, every dismemberment, every case of sickness, every case of psychic trauma caused by the shock of war.

And though the media will be blocked from access to the dead and wounded of Iraq, though the human tragedy unfolding in Iraq will be told in numbers, in abstractions, and not in the stories of real human beings, real children, real mothers and fathers - the movement will find a way to tell that story.

And when it does, the American people, who can be cold to death on "the other side", but who also wake up when "the other side" is suddenly seen as a man, a woman, a child - just like us - will respond.

This is not a fantasy, not a vain hope. It happened in the Vietnam years. For a long time, what was being done to the peasants of Vietnam was concealed by statistics, the "body count", without bodies being shown, without faces being shown, without pain, fear, anguish shown. But then the stories began to come through - the story of the My Lai massacre, the stories told by returning GIs of atrocities they had participated in.

And the pictures appeared - the little girl struck by napalm running down the road, her skin shredding, the mothers holding their babies to them in the trenches as GIs poured rounds of bullets from automatic rifles into their bodies.

When those stories began to come out, when the photos were seen, the American people could not fail to be moved. The war "against Communism" was seen as a war against poor peasants in a tiny country half the world away.

At some point in this coming war, and no one can say when, the lies coming from the administration - "the death of this family was an accident", "we apologize for the dismember-

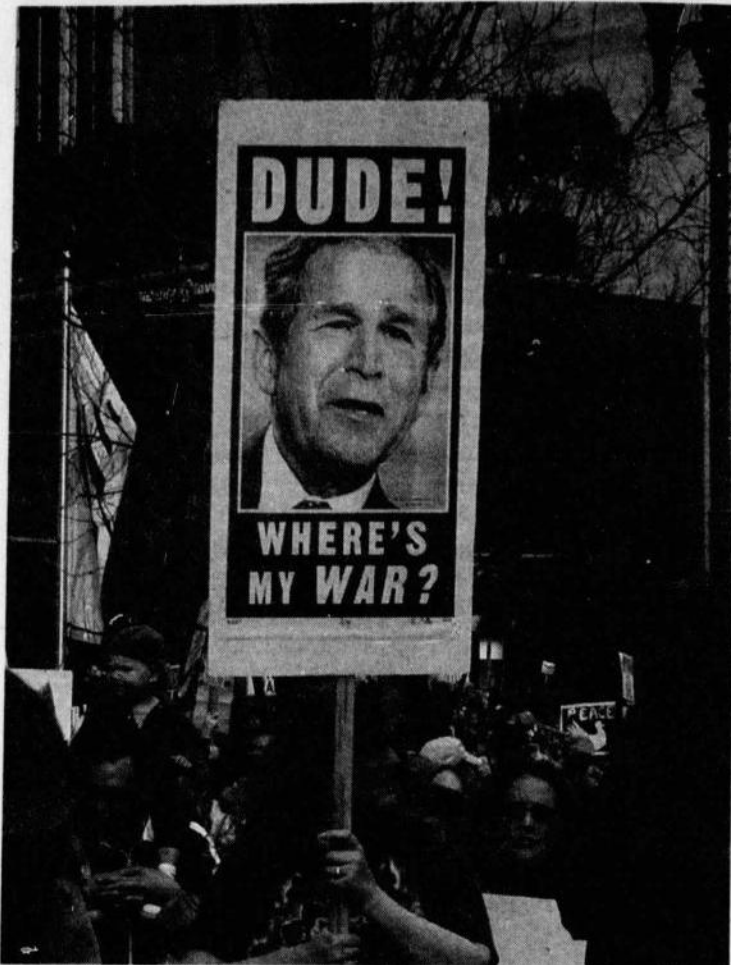
ment of this child", "this was an intelligence mistake", "a radar malfunction" - will begin to come apart.

How soon that will happen depends not only on the millions now - whether actively or silently - in the anti-war movement, but also on the emergence of whistle blowers inside the Establishment who begin to talk, of journalists who become tired of being manipulated by the government, and begin to write to truth. And of dissident soldiers sick of a war that is not a war but a massacre - how else describe the mayhem caused by the most powerful military machine on earth raining thousands of bombs on a fifth-rate military power already reduced to poverty by two wars and ten years of economic sanctions?

The anti-war movement has the responsibility of encouraging defections from the war machine. It does this simply by its existence, by its example, by its persistence, by its voices reaching out over the walls of government control and speaking to the consciences of people.

Those voices have already become a chorus, joined by Americans in all walks of life, of all ages, in every part of the country.

There is a basic weakness in governments, however massive their armies, however wealthy they are, however they control the information given to the public, because their power



depends on the obedience of citizens, of soldiers, of civil servants, of journalists and writers and teachers and artists. When these people begin to suspect they have been deceived, and withdraw their support, the government loses its legitimacy, and its power.

We have seen this happen in recent decades, all around the globe. Leaders who were apparently all-powerful, surrounded

by their generals, suddenly faced the anger of an aroused people, the hundreds of thousands in the streets and the reluctance of the soldiers to fire, and those leaders soon rushed to the airport, carrying their suitcases of money with them.

The process of undermining the legitimacy of this government has begun. There has been

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War:

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a worm eating at the innards of its complacency all along - the knowledge of the American public, buried, but in a very shallow grave, easy to disinter, that this government came to power by a political coup, not by popular will.

The movement should not let this be forgotten.

The first steps to de-legitimize this government are being taken, in the small but significant ways. The wife of the President must call off a gathering of poets in the White House because the poets have rebelled, because they see the march to war as a violation of the most sacred values of poets through the ages.

The generals who led the Gulf War of 1991 speak out against this impending war as foolish, unnecessary, dangerous. The C.I.A. contradicts the president by saying Saddam Hussein is not likely to use his weapons unless he is attacked.

All across the country - not just the great metropolitan centers, like Chicago, but places like Boesman, Montana, Des Moines, Iowa, San Luis Obispo, California, Nederland, Colorado, Tacoma, Washington, York, Pennsylvania, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Gary, Indiana,

Carrboro, North Carolina -- fifty-seven cities and counties in all -- have passed resolutions against the war, responding to their citizens.

The actions will multiply, once the war has begun. The stakes will be higher. People will be dying every day. The responsibility of the peace movement will be huge - to speak to what people may feel but are hesitant to say. To say that this is a war for oil, for business. Bring back the Vietnam-era poster: "War Is Good For Business - Invest your Son". (In this morning's Boston Globe, a headline: "Extra \$15 Billion for Military Would Profit New England Firms")

Yes, no blood for Oil, no blood for Bush, no blood for Rumsfeld or Cheney or Powell. No blood for political ambition, for grandiose designs of empire.

No action should be seen as too small, no non-violent action should be seen as too large. The calls now for the impeachment of George Bush should multiply. The constitutional requirement "high crimes and misdemeanors" certainly applies to sending our young halfway around the world to kill and be killed in a war of aggression against a people who have not attacked us.

Those poets troubled Laura Bush because by bringing the war into her ceremony they were doing something "inap-

propriate". That should be the key; people will continue to do "inappropriate" things, because that brings attention - the rejection of propriety, the refusal to be "professional" (which usually means not breaking out of the box in which your business or your profession insists you stay in).

The absurdity of this war is so starkly clear that people who have never been involved in an anti-war demonstration have been showing up in huge numbers at recent rallies. Anyone who has been to one of them can testify to the numbers of young people present, obviously doing this for the first time.

Arguments for the war are paper thin and fall apart at first touch. Weapons of mass destruction? Iraq may develop one nuclear bomb (though the UN inspectors find no sign of development) - but Israel has 200 nuclear weapons and the US has 20,000 and six other countries have undisclosed numbers. Saddam Hussein a tyrant? Undoubtedly, like many others in the world? A threat to the world? Then how come the rest of the world, much closer to Iraq, does not want war? Defending ourselves? The most incredible statement of all. Fighting terrorism? No connection found between Sept. 11 and Iraq.

I believe it is the obvious emptiness of the administra-

tion position that is responsible for the unprecedentedly quick growth of the anti-war movement. And for the emergence of new voices, unheard before, speaking "inappropriately" outside their professional boundaries. 1500 historians have signed an anti-war petition. Businessmen, clergy, have put full page ads in newspapers. All refusing to stick to their "profession" and instead professing that they are human beings first.

I think of Sean Penn traveling to Baghdad, in spite of mutterings about patriotism. Or Jessica Lange, speaking at a movie festival in Spain: "I despise George Bush and his administration." The actress Renee Zellweger spoke to a reporter for the Boston Globe, about "how public opinion is manipulated by what we're told. You see it all the time, especially now....The good will of the American people is being manipulated. It gives me the chills...I'm so going to go to jail this year!"

Rap artists have been speaking out on war, on injustice. The rapper Mr. Lif says: "I think people have been on vacation and it's time to wake up. We need to look at our economic, social and foreign policies and not be duped into believing the spin that comes from the government and the media."

In the cartoon, "The Boondocks", which reaches 20 million readers every day, the

cartoonist Aaron Magruder has his character, a black youngster named Huey Freedman, say the following: "In this time of war against Osama bin Laden and the oppressive Taliban regime, we are thankful that OUR leader isn't the spoiled son of a powerful politician from a wealthy oil family who is supported by religious fundamentalists, operates through clandestine organizations, has no respect for the democratic electoral process, bombs innocents, and uses war to deny people their civil liberties. Amen."

The voices will multiply. The actions, from silent vigils to acts of civil disobedience (three nuns are facing long jail terms for pouring their blood on missile silos in Colorado), will multiply. If Bush starts a war, he will be responsible for the lives lost, the children crippled, the terrorizing of millions of ordinary people, the American GIs not returning to their families. And all of us will be responsible for bringing that to a halt.

Men who have no respect for human life or for freedom or justice have taken over this beautiful country of ours. It will be up to the American people to take it back.

Dr. Howard Zinn is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Boston University.

Corporations:

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purpose the Legislature may deem most conducive for the common good."²

During the 19th century, both law and culture reflected this relationship between sovereign people and their institutions. People understood that they had a civic responsibility not to create artificial entities which could harm the body politic, interfere with the mechanisms of self-governance, assault their sovereignty.

They also understood that they did not elect their agents to positions in government to sell off the sovereignty of the people. In other words, they were human beings who tried to act as sovereign people. One thing they did was to define the nature of the corporate bodies they created. If we look at mechanisms of chartering—and at the language in corporate charters, state general incorporation laws and even state constitutions prior to the 20th century—we find precise, defining language that was often mandatory and prohibitory and self-executing in nature. These mechanisms defined corporations by denying corporations political and civil rights, by limiting their size, capitalization and duration, by specifying their tasks, and by declaring the people's right to remove from the body politic any corporations which dared to rebel.

Here is an example of

language which sovereign people—responding to the rise of corporations after the Civil War—placed in the California Constitution of 1879, and which appears in other state constitutions at about that time:

"Article 1, section 2: All power is inherent in the people...."

"Article 1, section 10: The people shall have the right freely to assemble together to consult for the common good, to instruct their representatives...."

"Article XII, section 8: The exercise of the right of eminent domain shall never be so abridged or construed as to prevent the Legislature from taking the property and franchises of incorporated companies and subjecting them to public use the same as the property of individuals, and the exercise of the police power of the State shall never be so abridged or construed as to permit corporations to conduct their business in such manner as to infringe the rights of individuals or the general well-being of the State."³

The principal mechanism which sovereign people used during the 19th century to assess whether their corporate creations were of a suitably subordinate nature was called quo warranto. The quo warranto form of action, as attorney Thomas Linzey has noted,⁴ is one of the most ancient of the prerogative writs. In the words of the Delaware Court of Chancery, "the remedy of quo warranto extends back to time whereof

the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

Quo warranto simply means "by what authority?" All monarchs understood how to use this tool in self-defense. They realized that when a subordinate entity they had created acted "beyond its authority," it was guilty of rebellion and must be terminated.

Sovereignty is in our hands now, but the logic is the same: when the people running a corporation assume rights and powers which the sovereign had not bestowed, or when they assault the sovereign people, this entity becomes an affront to the body politic. And like a cancer ravaging a human body, such a rebellious corporation must be cut out of our body politic.

During the first hundred years of these United States, people mobilized so that legislatures, attorneys general and judges would summon corporations to appear and answer to quo warranto. In 1890, the highest court in New York State revoked the charter of the North River Sugar Refining Corporation in a unanimous decision:

"The judgment sought against the defendant is one of corporate death. The state which created, asks us to destroy, and the penalty invoked represents the extreme rigor of the law. The life of a corporation is, indeed, less than that of the humblest citizen, and yet it envelopes great accumulations of property, moves and carries in large volume the business and enterprise of the people, and may not be destroyed

without clear and abundant reason.... Corporations may, and often do, exceed their authority only where private rights are affected. When these are adjusted, all mischief ends and all harm is averted. But where the transgression has a wider scope, and the abuse of its franchise and the violation of its corporate duty.... The abstract idea of a corporation, the legal entity, the impalpable and intangible creation of human thought, is itself a fiction, and has been appropriately described as a figure of speech.... The state permits in many ways an aggregation of capital, but, mindful of the possible dangers to the people, overbalancing the benefits, keeps upon it a restraining hand, and maintains over it a prudent supervision, where such aggregation depends upon its permission and grows out of its corporate grants.... the state, by the creation of the artificial persons constituting the elements of the combination and failing to limit and restrain their powers, becomes itself the responsible creator, the voluntary cause, of an aggregation of capital.... the defendant corporation has violated its charter, and failed in the performance of its corporate duties, and that in respects so material and important as to justify a judgment of dissolution.... Unanimous."⁵

Such a judgment should not be regarded as punishment of the corporation, but rather a vindication of the sovereign people. When our sovereignty has been harmed, we are the ones who must be made whole. The concept is similar to what Hannah Arendt described in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963),

writing about Nazi crimes against humanity.

"The wrongdoer is brought to justice because his act has disturbed and gravely endangered the community as a whole, and not because, as in civil suits, damage has been done to individuals who are entitled to reparation. The reparation effected [here] is of an altogether different nature; it is the body politic itself that stands in need of being 'repaired' and it is the general public order that has been thrown out of gear and must be restored, as it were. It is, in other words, the law, not the plaintiff, that must prevail."⁶

There is no shortage of court decisions affirming the sovereignty of the American people over corporate fictions, recognizing the need to restore the general public order. In *Richardson v. Buhl*, the Nebraska Supreme Court in the late 19th century declared:

"Indeed, it is doubtful if free government can long exist in a country where such enormous amounts of money are... accumulated in the vaults of corporations, to be used at discretion in controlling the property and business of the country against the interest of the public and that of the people, for the personal gain and aggrandizement of a few individuals."⁷

In the late 19th century, the Supreme Court of Georgia, in *Railroad Co. v. Collins*, wrote:

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publicly announced, as have other spokespersons.

But let us put these matters aside and consider a few other questions. Why do peasants in Colombia grow cocaine, not other crops? The reasons are well known. "Peasants grow coca and poppies," Vargas observes, "because of the crisis in the agricultural sector of Latin American countries, escalated by the general economic crisis in the region." He writes that peasants began colonizing the Colombian Amazon in the 1950s, "following the violent displacement of peasants by large landholders," and they found that coca was "the only product that was both profitable and easy to market." Pressures on the peasantry substantially increased as "ranchers, investors and legal commercial farmers have created and strengthened private armies"—the para-militaries—that "serve as a means to violently expropriate land from indigenous people, peasants and settlers," with the result that "traffickers now control much of Colombia's valuable land." The counterinsurgency battalions armed and trained by the U.S. do not attack traffickers, Vargas reports, but "have as their target the weakest and most socially fragile link of the drug chain: the production by peasants, settlers and indigenous people." The same is true of the

chemical and biological weapons that Washington employs, used experimentally in violation of manufacturer's specifications. These measures multiply the "dangers to the civilian population, the environment, and legal agriculture." They destroy "legal food crops like yucca and bananas, water sources, pastures, livestock, and all the crops included in crop substitution programs," including those of well-established Church-run development projects that have sought to develop alternatives to coca production. There are also uncertain but potentially severe effects "on the fragile tropical rainforest environment."

Traditional U.S. programs, and the current Colombia Plan as well, primarily support the social forces that control the government and the military/paramilitary forces, and that have largely created the problems by their rapacity and violence. The targets are the usual victims.

There are other factors that operate to increase coca production. Colombia was once a major wheat producer. That was undermined in the 1950s by Food for Peace aid, a program that provided taxpayer subsidies to U.S. agribusiness and counterpart funds for U.S. client states, which they commonly used for military spending and counterinsurgency. A year before President Bush announced the "drug war" with great fanfare (once again), the international coffee agreement was suspended under U.S. pressure, on grounds of "fair trade violations." The



The Under Secretary of the U.S. Army Les Brownlee poses with Colombian military units

result was a fall of prices of more than 40 percent within two months for Colombia's leading legal export.

Other factors are discussed by political economist Susan Strange in her last book. In the 1960s, the G77 governments (now 133, accounting for 80 percent of the world's population) initiated a call for a "new international economic order" in which the needs of the large majority of people of the world would be a prominent concern. Specific proposals were formulated by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which was established in 1964 "to create an international trading system consistent with the promotion of economic and social development." The UNCTAD proposals were summarily dismissed by the great powers, along with the call for a "new international order" generally; the U.S., in particular, insists that "development is not a right," and that it is

"preposterous" and a "dangerous incitement" to hold otherwise in accord with the socioeconomic provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the U.S. rejects. The world did move—or more accurately, was moved—towards a new international economic order, but along a different course, catering to the needs of a different sector, namely its designers—hardly a surprise, any more than one should be surprised that in standard doctrine the instituted form of "globalization" should be depicted as an inexorable process to which "there is no alternative," in Margaret Thatcher's cruel phrase.

One early UNCTAD proposal was a program for stabilizing commodity prices, a practice that is standard within the industrial countries by means of one or another form of subsidy, though it was threatened briefly in the U.S. when Congress was taken over in 1994 by ultra-rightists who seemed to believe their own

rhetoric, much to the consternation of business leaders who understand that market discipline is for the defenseless. The upstart free-market ideologues were soon taught better manners or dispatched back home, but not before Congress passed the 1996 Freedom to Farm Act to liberate American agriculture from the "East German socialist programs of the New Deal," as Newt Gingrich put it, ending market-distorting subsidies—which quickly tripled, reaching a record \$23 billion in 1999, and scheduled to increase. The market has worked its magic, however: the taxpayer subsidies go disproportionately to large agribusiness and the "corporate oligopolies" that dominate the input and output side, Nicholas Kristof correctly observed. Those with market power in the food chain (from energy corporations to retailers) are enjoying great profits while the

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WAR IS GOOD BUSINESS



THEY REAP THE PROFITS OF WAR:

right to left

University of California President, Richard Atkinson	0.7 billion in 2002
UCSD Chancellor Robert C. Dynes	159 million in 2002
Lockheed Martin CEO Vance D. Coffman	17.0 billion in 2002
Boeing CEO Philip M. Condit	16.6 billion in 2002
Northrup Grumman CEO Kent Kresa	8.7 billion in 2002
Raytheon CEO Dan Burnham	7.0 billion in 2002
Raytheon President William H. Swanson	7.0 billion in 2002
United Technologies CEO George David	3.6 billion in 2002
GE CEO Jeffrey Immelt	1.5 billion in 2002
Van B. Honeycutt CEO CSC/DynCorp	1.3 billion in 2002
Textron CEO Lewis B. Campbell	0.9 billion in 2002
Harris CEO Lance Hires	0.4 billion in 2002
Motorola CEO Chris Galvin	0.3 billion in 2002

University of California figures: 2002 Federal Contracts & Grants (approx. for all campuses) plus moneys for operation of DoE Labs compiled from research annual reports for all campuses

UCSD Figures: 2002 Federal Contracts & Grants from DoD, DoE, NASA, NSF, exact figures at: http://ocga2.ucsd.edu/annual_report/2001/

All Industry Figures: <http://web1.whs.oed.mil/peidhome/proctar/p01/hy2002/top100.htm>

INVEST IN YOUR SOUL!

Corporations:

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"All experience has shown that large accumulations of property in hands likely to keep it intact for a long period are dangerous to the public weal. Having perpetual succession, any kind of corporation has peculiar facilities for such accumulations, and most governments have found it necessary to exercise caution in their grants of corporate charters. Even religious corporations, professing and in the main, truly, nothing but the general good, have proven obnoxious to this objection, so that in England it was long ago found necessary to restrict them in their powers of acquiring real estate. Freed, as such bodies are, from the sure bounds—the grave—to the schemes of individuals they are able to add field to field, and power to power, until they become entirely too strong for that society which is made of up those whose plans are limited by a single life."⁸

Justices White, Brennan and Marshall, dissenting in a 1978 case, *First National Bank of Boston v. Belotti*:

"It has long been recognized, however, that the special status of corporations has placed them in a position to control vast amount of economic power which may, if not regulated, dominate not only the economy but also the very heart of our democracy, the electoral process... The State need not permit its own creation to consume it."⁹

Chief Justice Rehnquist, dissenting in the same case:

"...the blessing of potentially perpetual life and limited liability, so beneficial [sic-R.G.] in the economic sphere, poses special dangers in the political sphere."¹⁰

A great achievement of corporations, as they set out towards the end of the 19th century to transform the law and recreate themselves, was to replace basic tools of sovereign people—chartering, defining incorporation laws, "by what authority" proceedings and charter revocation—with regulatory and administrative law, new legal doctrines and fines as corporate punishment. Many people of that time understood that these changes amounted to a counterrevolution, and so they resisted with great passion and energy.

Farmers and workers were not willing to concede that the corporate form would define work and money and progress and efficiency and productivity and unions and justice and ethical conduct and sustainability and food and harmful and reasonable behaviour. They were not willing to concede that corporations should have the rights and privileges of persons.

So they organized, educated, resisted. They were crushed by giant corporations' ability to use state and federal government to take rights away from people and bestow them upon corporations.

Over time, corporations were

able to claim for themselves rights and privileges taken from the sovereign people via violence, with favorable decisions by federal judges. Corporations were conceded personhood, and a long list of civil and political rights such as free speech, and property rights, such as the right to define and control investment, production, and the organization of work.

By the beginning of the 20th century, corporations had become sovereign and they had turned people into consumers, or workers, or whatever the corporation of the moment chose to define humans as.

Without a clear understanding of history, most citizen efforts against corporations in this century have been struggles against the symptoms of corporate domination, which we have waged in regulatory and administrative law arenas.

But these are not arenas of sovereignty. These are stacked-deck proceedings, where people, communities and nature are fundamentally disadvantaged to the constitutional rights of corporations. Here, we cannot demand "by what authority" has corporation X engaged in a pattern of behavior which constitutes an assault upon the sovereign people? Here, we cannot declare a corporation ultra vires, or "beyond its authority." To the contrary, regulatory and administrative law only enables us to question specific corporate behaviors, one at a time, usually after the harm has been done... over and over and over again.

In these regulatory and administrative proceedings, both the law and the culture concede to the corporation rights, privileges and powers, which earlier generations knew were illegitimate for corporations to possess. In addition, in these proceedings, the corporation has the rights of natural persons: a human and a corporation meet head on, in a "fair fight."

Today, our law and culture bestow our sovereignty on corporations. So do most of our own citizen organizations dedicated to justice and environmental protection and worker rights and human rights. Consequently, our organizations use their energy and resources to study each corporation as if it were unique, and to contest corporate acts one at a time, as if that could change the nature of corporations.

Folks relentlessly tally corporate assaults, study the regulatory agencies and try to strengthen them. We try to make corporate toxic chemicals and corporate radiation and corporate energy and corporate banking and corporate agriculture and corporate transportation, corporate buying of elections, and corporate writing of legislation, and corporate education of our judges and corporate distorting of our schools, a little less bad.

Isn't it an old story? People create what looks to be a nifty machine, a robot, called the corporation. Over time the robots get together and overpower the people. They redesign themselves and reconstruct law

and culture so that people fail to remember they created the robots in the first place, that the robots are machines and not alive. For a century, the robots propagandize and indoctrinate each generation of people so they grow up believing that robots are people too, gifts of God and Mother Nature; that they are inevitable and the source of all that is good. How odd that we have been so gullible, so docile, so obedient.

Isn't it odd that we don't remember who We the People are? How sovereign people should regard ourselves, how sovereign people should act? We need to realize what power and authority we possess, and how we can use it to define the nature of corporations, so that we do not have to mobilize around each and every corporate decision that affects our communities, our lives, the planet.

In the face of what we experience about corporations, of what we know to be true, why are so many people so obedient? Why do we hang on to the hope that the corporation can be made socially responsible? Isn't this an absurd notion? After all, organizations cannot be responsible. This is just not a relevant concept, because a principal purpose of corporations is to protect the managers, directors and stockholders from responsibility for what their corporations do.

But only people can be responsible. How? By defining ourselves as sovereign people so that we then can define all the corporate bodies that we create (governmental, business, educational, charitable, and civic).

We the People are the ones who must be accountable. We are not accountable when we create monster robots which run rampant in our communities and which, in our names, sally forth across the world to wreak havoc upon other places and upon other people's self-governance.

We are not being socially responsible or civically accountable when we don't act like sovereign people.

We are not being socially responsible or civically accountable when we play in corporate arenas by corporate rules.

We are not being socially responsible or civically accountable when we permit our agents in government to bestow our sovereignty upon machines.

We are not being socially responsible or civically accountable when we organize our communities and then go to corporate executives and to the hacks who run corporate front groups and ask them to please cause a little less harm; or when we offer them even more rewards for being a little less dominating.

Sovereign people do not beg of, or negotiate with, subordinate entities which we created. Sovereign people instruct subordinate entities. Sovereign people define all entities we create. And when a subordinate entity violates the terms of its cre-

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tions to endorse or participate in anti-war activities sponsored by people of color groups; a discussion climate that excludes or demeans the contributions of activists/organizations of color, and disparaging or insensitive remarks by individuals. These practices have alienated individuals and organizations, and they have prevented cooperative bonds from forming as we work to build broad and deep opposition to war.

Serious attempts have been made in the past to build anti-racist/racial justice politics among white activists. Yet we still see white activists and predominantly white organizations acting in ways that effectively marginalize and disrespect activists and organizations of color in anti-war work. While many of these individuals and organizations view themselves as anti-racist, their words and actions—consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or not—replicate white supremacy and white privilege. In addition, they advocate certain positions within the movement that fail to address, and in some instances actually support, structural white supremacy.

Definitions

What do we mean by white supremacy and white privilege? We are unaware of any universally agreed upon definitions, but we have found those put forth by the Challenging White Supremacy Workshop (CWS at <http://www.cwsworkshop.org>) to be useful. CWS states that white supremacy is a system, historically constructed by white peoples, European nations and the United States, to exploit and oppress nations and peoples of color. The point of the system is to maintain and perpetuate wealth, power and privilege for nations and peoples of European descent. White privilege is also a system, institutionally based, that (1) rewards and privileges white people solely because of their skin color and European origins; and (2) exempts whites and European-descended peoples from oppression. White supremacy anchors white privilege and racial oppression in our society, meaning that it is not simply about individual prejudice. Individual and organizational acts of racial prejudice are rooted in, and replicate, an entire social construct of white supremacy. If we wish to build a lasting peace and justice movement that effectively unites the broadest possible strata of society, then our fight against racism must be fully conscious and ongoing. We must face the issue externally in our platforms, positions and actions, and internally in our movement work.

Examples of White Supremacy & Privilege within the NYC Peace & Justice Movement

Based on the foregoing defini-

tions, here are examples of practices that we and other movement activists have witnessed in peace and justice activities since 9/11/2001:

Refusing to acknowledge and accept leadership from activists and organizations of color:

- refusing to participate in people of color-led events.

- refusing to participate in broad anti-war activities with strong POC participation or leadership, e.g., the summer split when War Resisters League withdrew from Stand Up New York (commemoration of September 11).

- white groups starting coalitions without input from, or honest outreach to, organizations of color and then calling their groups "citywide." One activist dismissed the lack of input and outreach, saying "I long ago gave up paying attention to skin color. On such matters, I'm with Dr. King... What's important about people is not the color of their skin, but the content of their character."

- white activists making strategy decisions without consulting activists of color, whose work is critical to implementing the decisions.

- white activists using their greater financial or volunteer resources to attract resources, and to dominate leadership or staff positions and decision-making ("do it my way, and I'll raise the dollars").

- A variation on "divide and rule": White activists using rhetoric in a discussion that effectively pits groups against each other, particularly groups of color—for example, insinuating that one group has unfairly tried to dominate space within a project that must accommodate the interests of many different sectors.

Promoting positions that challenge the impact of war on more privileged populations, while ignoring or even justifying its impact on people of color and immigrants.

- refusing to recognize the centrality of white supremacy and racism in the war drive at home and abroad. One long-time peace activist in reference to the U.S. war against Afghanistan, "A racist war? It isn't. Vietnam was. But the Afghans for the most part are not dark skinned. A criminal war, yes. An illegal war, yes. An unconstitutional war, yes. But a racist war? Bull shit!"

- denying the impact on people of color of the war at home and abroad.

- denying that non-Arab people of color within the U.S. are particularly targeted by the war.

- appealing to racism or national

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agricultural crisis, which is real, is concentrated in the middle of the chain, among smaller farmers, who produce the food.

One of the leading principles of modern economic history is that the devices used by the rich and powerful to ensure that they are protected by the nanny state are not to be available to the poor. Accordingly, the UNCTAD initiative to stabilize commodity prices was quickly shot down; the organization has been largely marginalized and tamed, along with others that reflect, to some extent at least, the interests of the global majority. Reviewing these events, Strange observes that farmers were therefore compelled to turn to crops for which there is a stable market. Large-scale agribusiness can tolerate fluctuation of commodity prices, compensating for temporary losses elsewhere. Poor peasants cannot tell their children: "don't worry, maybe you'll have something to eat next year." The result, Strange continues, was that drug entrepreneurs could easily "find farmers eager to grow coca, cannabis or opium," for which there is always a ready market in the rich societies.

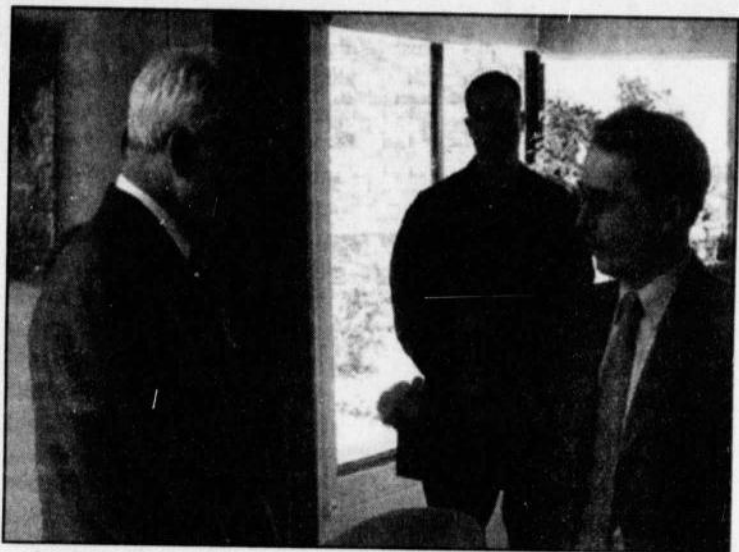
Other programs of the U.S. and the global institutions it dominates magnify these effects. The current Clinton plan for Colom-

bia includes only token funding for alternative crops, and none at all for areas under guerrilla control, though FARC leaders have repeatedly expressed their hope that alternatives will be provided so that peasants will not be compelled to grow coca. "By the end of 1999, the United States had spent a grand total of \$750,000 on alternative development programs," the Center for International Policy reports, "all of it in heroin poppy-growing areas far from the southern plains" that are targeted in the Colombia Plan, which does, however, call for "assistance to civilians to be displaced by the push into southern Colombia," a section of the Plan that the Center rightly finds "especially disturbing." The Clinton administration also insists—over the objections of the Colombian government—that any peace agreement must permit crop destruction measures and other U.S. counternarcotics operations in Colombia. Constructive approaches are not barred, but they are someone else's business. The U.S. will concentrate on military operations—which, incidentally, happen to benefit the high-tech industries that produce military equipment and are engaged in "extensive lobbying" for the Colombia Plan, along with Occidental Petroleum, which has large investments in Colombia, and other corporations.

Furthermore, IMF-World Bank programs demand that

countries open their borders to a flood of (heavily subsidized) agricultural products from the rich countries, with the obvious effect of undermining local production. Those displaced are either driven to urban slums (thus lowering wage rates for foreign investors) or instructed to become "rational peasants," producing for the export market and seeking the highest prices—which translates as "coca, cannabis, opium." Having learned their lessons properly, they are rewarded by attack by military gunships while their fields are destroyed by chemical and biological warfare, courtesy of Washington.

Much the same is true throughout the Andean region. The issues broke through briefly to the public eye just as the Colombia Plan was being debated in Washington. On April 8, the government of Bolivia declared a state of emergency after widespread protests closed down the city of Cochabamba, Bolivia's third largest. The protests were over the privatization of the public water system and the sharp increase in water rates to a level beyond the reach of much of the population. In the background is an economic crisis attributed in part to the neoliberal policies that culminated in the drug war, which has destroyed more than half of the country's coca-leaf production, leaving the "rational peasants" destitute. A week later, farmers blockaded a highway near the



Les Brownlee meets with Colombian Narco-President Uribe

capital city of La Paz to protest the eradication of coca leaf, the only mode of survival left to them under the "reforms," as actually implemented.

Reporting on the protests over water prices and the eradication programs, the Financial Times observes that "The World Bank and the IMF saw Bolivia as something of a model," one of the great success stories of the "Washington consensus." But after the April protests we can see that "the success of eradication programmes in Peru and Bolivia has carried a high social cost." The journal quotes a European diplomat in Bolivia who says that "Until a couple of weeks ago, Bolivia was regarded as a success story"—by some, at least; by those who "regard" a country while disregarding its people. But now, he continues, "the international community

has to recognise that the economic reforms have not really done anything to solve the growing problems of poverty"; a bit euphemistic. The secretary of the Bolivian bishops' conference, which mediated an agreement to end the crisis, described the protest movement as "the result of dire poverty. The demands of the rural population must be listened to if we want lasting peace."

The Cochabamba protests were aimed at the World Bank and the San Francisco/London-based Bechtel corporation, the main financial power behind the transnational conglomerate that bought the public water system amidst serious charges of corruption and give-away, and then immediately doubled rates for many poor customers. Under Bank pressure, Bolivia has sold

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chauvinism in opposing the war.

Discrediting, ignoring or minimizing the history and prominent roles of people of color in the peace and justice movement:

- "dissing" or discrediting people of color organizations.

- dismissing the roles of people of color in anti-war movements: One movement activist claimed that Angela Davis and Muhammad Ali were not serious anti-war activists during the Vietnam war.

- engaging in "the politics of privileged projection": Some white activists, comfortable with a "white" peace movement, claim that activists of color are "too busy with domestic issues" to do anti-war work. This perception can be a cover for the white person's enthusiastic involvement in activism against the war abroad, but indifference to opposing the wars at home—which, after all, primarily target communities and people of color. Apparently, it hasn't occurred to this activist that his/her "whiteness," along with class privilege, both enables and influences the luxury of choosing on which issues s/he will focus.

Creating an atmosphere of

marginalization, disrespect or neglect towards people of color in anti-war meetings and events:

- white activists tending to dominate discussions and favor the most "articulate"

- not calling on activists of color to speak and chair meetings.

- white people assuming that their experiences are the norm, and viewing people of color's realities as the "other" or "the exception."

- judging what political approach will work with "the average person" by the experience in white neighborhoods.

- using terms like "us" and "them."

Creating an environment in meetings, through certain actions, that is threatening to, or uncomfortable for, immigrants

- exposing immigrants and other people of color to the risk of arrest in civil disobedience (CD) actions, or promoting CD in communities of color without understanding that immigrants risk jail, deportation and/or police violence that could lead to serious injury or death.

- insensitivity to immigrants' religious and cultural practices.

Such practices reproduce in our movement the white

supremacy that permeates U.S. society. A similar dynamic involves class: those with greater access to education, wealth and power often marginalize working people, and involves gender: male supremacy creates unfavorable conditions for women's equal participation. Most white activists don't see how "whiteness" privileges them and perpetuates white supremacist social relations in movement work. White activists have a responsibility to struggle against white supremacy, a struggle that includes: 1) Sharing leadership with, and being willing to follow the lead of, people and organizations of color; 2) maintaining an attitude of collectivity and not dominating discussion; 3) challenging racist language and actions (especially within movement spaces), and 4) prioritizing the issues, experiences and struggles of people of color.

Importance of Leadership of Communities of Color

Real peace can only be achieved if our movement comes to understand, and addresses, the racist roots of modern militarism and warfare. It follows, therefore, that real justice can only be achieved if the people most affected by injustice are in the leadership of movements seeking change.

By no means do we discount the role of white activists and predominantly white organizations within the peace and justice movement. In order

to achieve the broadest and strongest opposition to war, we need unified action across all lines—and white communities are obviously an integral part of that movement-building. But especially in New York City, given its racial and ethnic composition, people of color must have a place at the helm in coalition work. White activists and predominantly white groups must tackle this issue directly. In a country founded on genocide, slavery and territorial conquest, that is still plagued by racism and by the unequal distribution of power and resources, people of color can tell when white folks don't welcome their input, much less their leadership. And understandably, we are turned off of trying to work with people who dismiss, marginalize or patronize us. In addition to treating people of color with respect, white activists and groups need to embrace the principle of power-sharing and the sharing of resources.

Activists of color who are on the receiving end of racist behavior face vexing decisions about whether or how to interact with predominantly white projects. Some opt to concentrate on building a base in their own communities. Others work in multiracial settings, where they often find themselves the brunt of racist dynamics. In the latter case, unpleasant experiences have made some people skeptical about white activists' dedication to power-sharing and fighting white supremacy. For

those activists of color who are committed to citywide organizing, despite being tempted to dismiss the so-called "white left" (an oxymoron), it's important that white activists indicate a willingness to engage in a serious dialogue within the context of political struggle.

We ask peace and justice activists in NYC to reflect on the content of this letter, discuss it and respond. How can our organizations and coalitions best deal with these problems? We look forward to a dialogue on the issues. Most important, we hope and expect that out of that dialogue will come lasting changes in the ways we work together.

In solidarity,

Steve Bloom
Jean Carey Bond
Humberto Brown
Saulo Colón
Bhairavi Desai
Cherene Horazuk
Randy Jackson
Hany Khalil
Ray Laforest
Ngó Thanh Nhàn
René Francisco Poitevin
Merle Ratner
Liz Roberts
Juliet Ucelli
Lincoln Van Sluytman

To respond to this letter, please email the signers at: antiracismmovement@yahoo.com

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major assets to private (almost always foreign) corporations. The sale of the public water system and rate increases set off months of protest culminating in the demonstration that paralyzed the city. Government policies adhered to World Bank recommendations that "No subsidies should be given to ameliorate the increase in water tariffs in Cochabamba"; all users, including the very poor, must pay full costs. Using the Internet, activists in Bolivia called for international protests, which had a significant impact, presumably amplified by the Washington protests over World Bank-IMF policies then underway. Bechtel backed off and the government rescinded the sale. But a long and difficult struggle lies ahead.

As martial law was declared in Bolivia, a press report from southern Colombia described the spreading fears that fumigation planes were coming to "drop their poison on the coca fields, which would also kill the farmers' subsistence crops, cause massive social disruption, and stir up the ever-present threat of violence." The pervasive fear and anger reflect "the level of dread and confusion in this part of Colombia" as the U.S. carries out chemical and biological warfare to destroy coca production.

Another question lurks not too far in the background. Just what right does the U.S. have to carry out military operations and chemical-biological warfare in other countries to destroy a crop it doesn't like? We can put aside the cynical response that the governments requested this "assistance"; or else. We therefore must ask whether others have the same extraterritorial right to violence and destruction that the U.S. demands.

The number of Colombians who die from U.S.-produced lethal drugs exceeds the number of North Americans who die from cocaine, and is far greater relative to population. In East Asia, U.S.-produced lethal drugs contribute to millions of deaths. These countries are compelled not only to accept the products but also advertising for them, under threat of trade sanctions. The effects of "aggressive marketing and advertising by American firms is, in a good measure, responsible for...a sizeable increase in smoking rates for women and youth in Asian countries where doors were forced open by threat of severe U.S. trade sanctions," public health researchers conclude. The Colombian cartels, in contrast, are not permitted to run huge advertising campaigns in which a Joe Camel-counterpart extols the wonders of cocaine.

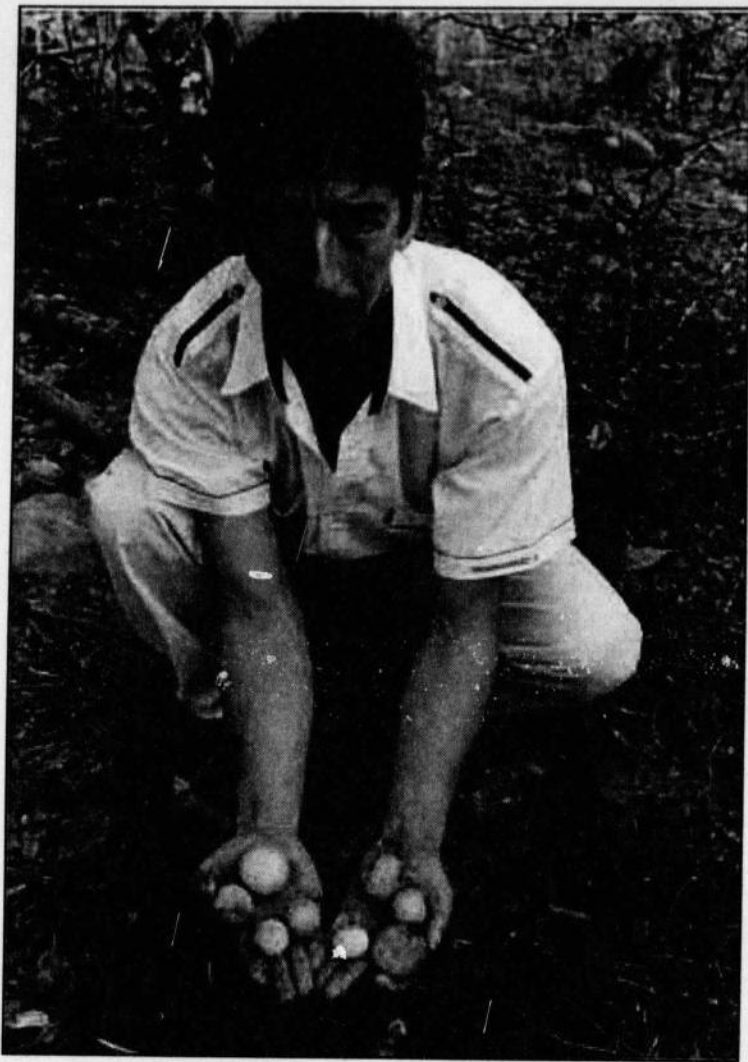
We are therefore entitled, indeed morally obligated, to ask whether Colombia, Thailand, China, and other targets of U.S. trade policies and lethal-export promotion have the right to conduct military, chemical and

biological warfare in North Carolina. And if not, why not?

We might also ask why there are no Delta Force raids on U.S. banks and chemical corporations, though it is no secret that they too are engaged in the narco-trafficking business. And why the Pentagon is not gearing up to attack Canada, now replacing Colombia and Mexico with high potency marijuana that has already become British Columbia's most valuable agricultural product and one of the most important sectors of the economy, joined by Quebec and closely followed by Manitoba, with a tenfold increase in just the past two years. Or to attack the United States, a major producer of marijuana with production rapidly expanding, including hydroponic groweries, and long the center of illicit manufacture of high-tech illicit drugs (ATS, amphetamine-type stimulants), the fastest growing sector of drug abuse, with 30 million users worldwide, probably surpassing heroin and cocaine.

There is no need to review in detail the lethal effects of U.S. drugs. The Supreme Court recently concluded that it has been "amply demonstrated" that tobacco use is "perhaps the single most significant threat to public health in the United States," responsible for more than 400,000 deaths a year, more than AIDS, car accidents, alcohol, homicides, illegal drugs, suicides, and fires combined; the Court virtually called on Congress to legislate regulation. As use of this lethal substance has declined in the U.S., and producers have been compelled to pay substantial indemnities to victims, they have shifted to markets abroad, another standard practice. The death toll is incalculable. Oxford University epidemiologist Richard Peto estimated that in China alone, among children under 20 today 50 million will die of cigarette-related diseases, a substantial number because of highly selective U.S. "free trade" doctrine.

In comparison to the 400,000 deaths caused by tobacco every year in the United States, drug-related deaths reached a record 16,000 in 1997. Furthermore, only 4 out of 10 addicts who needed treatment received it, according to a White House report. These facts raise further questions about the motives for the drug war. The seriousness of concern over use of drugs was illustrated again when a House Committee was considering the Clinton Colombia Plan. It rejected an amendment proposed by California Democrat Nancy Pelosi calling for funding of drug demand reduction services. It is well known that these are far more effective than forceful measures. A widely-cited Rand corporation study funded by the U.S. Army and Office of National Drug Control Policy found that funds spent on domestic drug treatment were 23 times as effective as "source country control" (Clinton's Colombia Plan), 11 times as effective as interdiction, and 7 times as effective as domestic



Peasants and indigenous people are now hungry because food crops, including this citrus fruit, are being destroyed by aerial fumigation, intended to eradicate coca

law enforcement. But the inexpensive and effective path will not be followed. Rather, the drug war targets poor peasants abroad and poor people at home; by the use of force, not constructive measures to alleviate problems at a fraction of the cost.

While Clinton's Colombia Plan was being formulated, senior administration officials discussed a proposal by the Office of Budget and Management to take \$100 million from the \$1.3 billion then planned for Colombia, to be used for treatment of U.S. addicts. There was near-unanimous opposition, particularly from "drug czar" Barry McCaffrey, and the proposal was dropped. In contrast, when Richard Nixon—in many respects the last liberal president—declared a drug war in 1971, two-thirds of the funding went to treatment, which reached record numbers of addicts; there was a sharp drop in drug-related arrests and number of federal prison inmates, as well as crime rates. Since 1980, however, "the war on drugs has shifted to punishing offenders, border surveillance, and fighting production at the source countries," John Donnelly reports in the Boston Globe. One consequence is the enormous increase in drug-related (often victimless) crimes and an explosion in the prison population, reaching levels far beyond any industrial country and possibly a world record, with no detectable effect on availability or price of drugs.

Such observations, hardly obscure, raise the question of what the drug war is all about. It is recognized widely that it fails to achieve its stated ends, and the failed methods are then pursued more vigorously while effective ways to reach the stated goals are rejected. It is therefore natural to conclude that the drug war, cast in the harshly punitive form implemented since 1980,

is achieving its goals, not failing. What are these goals? A plausible answer is implicit in a comment by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the few senators to pay close attention to social statistics. By adopting these measures, he observed, "we are choosing to have an intense crime problem concentrated among minorities." Criminologist Michael Tonry concludes that "the war's planners knew exactly what they were doing." What they were doing is, first, getting rid of the "superfluous population," the "disposable people" ("desecratable"), as they are called in Colombia, where they are eliminated by "social cleansing"; and second, frightening everyone else, not an unimportant task in a period when a domestic form of "structural adjustment" is being imposed, with significant costs for the majority of the population.

"While the War on Drugs only occasionally serves and more often degrades public health and safety," a well-informed and insightful review by Partners in Health researchers concludes, "it regularly serves the interests of private wealth: interests revealed by the pattern of winners and losers, targets and non-targets, well-funded and underfunded," in accord with "the main interests of U.S. foreign and domestic policy generally" and the private sector that "has overriding influence on policy."

One may debate the motivations, but the consequences in the U.S. and abroad seem reasonably clear.

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ation, and undermines our ability to govern ourselves, we are required to move in swiftly and accountably to cut this cancer out of the body politic.

With such deeds do we honor the millions of people who struggled before us to wrest power from tyrants, to define themselves in the face of terror and violence. And we make all struggles for justice and democracy easier by weakening the ability of corporations to make the rules, and to rule over us.

Some might say this is not a practical way to think and act. Why? Because corporations will take away our jobs? Our food? Our toilet paper? Our hospitals? Because we don't know how to run our towns and cities and nations without global corporations? Because they will run away to another state, to another country? Because the Supreme Court has spoken? Because philanthropic corporations won't give us money? Because it's scary? Because it's too late to learn to act as sovereign people?

Because in 1997 it is not realistic for people across the nation and around the world to take away the civil and political rights of all corporations, to take the property rights and real property corporations have seized from human beings and from the Earth?

Yeah, and it is realistic to keep conceding sovereign powers to corporations, to keep fighting industrial corporations and banking corporations and teledata corporations and resource extraction corporations and public relations corporations and transportation corporations and educational corporations and insurance corporations and agribusiness corporations and energy corporations and stock market corporations, one at a time forever and ever?

On January 10, 1997, President William Jefferson Clinton sent a letter to the mayor of Toledo, Ohio. The mayor had asked the president for help in getting the Chrysler Corporation to build a new Jeep factory within Toledo city limits to replace the ancient one which Chrysler Corporation was closing. The President of the United States, leader of the most powerful nation the world has ever known, elected head of a government always eager to celebrate the uniqueness of its democracy to the point of forcing it upon other nations, wrote:

"...As I am sure you know, my Administration cannot endorse any potential location for the new production site. My Intergovernmental Affairs staff will be happy to work with you once the Chrysler Board of Directors has made its decision..."¹

Our President may not have a clue, but We the People did not grant away our sovereignty when we made Chrysler into a corporation. When we gave the

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Chrysler Corporation authority to manufacture automobiles, we made the people of Toledo not its subjects, nor Chrysler Corporation their supreme authority.

How long shall We the People, the sovereign people, stand hat in hand outside corporate boardrooms waiting to be told our fate? How long until we instruct our representatives to do their constitutional duty? How long until we become responsible...until we become accountable, to our forebears, to ourselves, to our children, to other peoples and species and to the Earth?

[1] Neil Berman, "A Short History of Corporations in Massachusetts," written for POCLAD, October 1995, p. 2.
[2] Carter Goodrich, ed., *The Government and the Economy*, 1783-1861, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967, p. 44

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competition and compelling taxpayers to provide massive subsidies to private corporations is unacceptable to point out. But the fact is every industry that is competitive on the international level has benefited from some form of protectionism.

The reason this is so unacceptable for mainstream economic discourse is because it can not be reconciled with the fact that the United States imposes on the Third World structural adjustments that are the exact opposite of how the United States developed. Economic Historian Paul Bairoch states, "It is difficult to find another case where the facts so contradict a dominant theory than the one concerning the negative impact of protectionism; at least as far as nineteenth-century world economic history is concerned. In all cases protectionism led to, or at least was concomitant with, industrialization and economic development. There is no doubt that the Third World's compulsory economic liberalism in the nineteenth century is a major element in explaining the delay in its industrialization." [xii]

Galbraith was right when he said that mainstream economics is "intellectually bankrupt." But it is intellectually bankrupt for a reason. And that reason is to protect the interests of the state-corporate nexus that is at the top of the university structure. Furthermore, it would be wrong to say that economics "might as well not exist" because economics does exist. And its existence provides justification for such horrific policies as the structural adjustments that are imposed on the Third World. With the disgraceful realities faced by much of the world's population; with over half of its people facing malnourishment, countless millions starving, and most of the population of the planet without access to minimal health care; humanity can not afford silence.

Knowing my critical views

- [3] Excerpts from the "California Constitution of 1879," selected by the author, March 1996 (POCLAD memo).
- [4] Thomas Linzey, et al., Brief in Support of Motion for Peremptory Judgment, Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund v. Thomas Corbett, Attorney General of PA et al., Civ. No. 1074 M. D. 1996, p.4, citing Wilmington City Railway Co. v. People's Railway Co., 47A, 245, 248 (Del. Ch. 1900).
- [5] People v. North River Sugar Refining Corp., 24 N. E. 834 (1890).
- [6] Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, New York: Viking Penguin, 1977.
- [7] Richardson v. Buhl, 43 N. W. Rep. 1102.
- [8] Railroad v. Collins, 40 GA 582.
- [9] First National Bank of Boston v. Belotti 435 US 765 (1978).
- [10] The same source as Note 2, above.
- [11] Letter from Bill Clinton to the Honorable Carleton S. Finkbeiner, January 10, 1997, printed in the Toledo Blade, 25 January 1997.
- [1] This has been carefully shown, by Economic Historian, Douglas Dowd in his book, *Capitalism and its Economics*. In the preface, he also notes that "economists now celebrate capitalism in ways that make it reasonable to classify them as ideologues - and to put them in their place." (Pluto Press, 2000, page xiii).
- [ii] For example: Edgar Olsen, *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 80, Issue 6, Nov. 1972.
- [iii] Visit JSTOR.org and type in "rent control."
- [iv] John Milne, BG, Nov. 9, 1994; Nancy Folber and the Center for Popular Economics, *The New Field Guide to the U.S. Economy* (New Press, 1995); Wines, NYT, Nov. 20, 1994.
- [v] John Milne, BG, Nov. 9, 1994; Nancy Folber and the Center for Popular Economics, *The New Field Guide to the U.S. Economy* (New Press, 1995); Wines, NYT, Nov. 20, 1994.
- [vi] Panic Rules, Robin Hahnel, South End Press, 1999.
- [vii] Panic Rules, Robin Hahnel, South End Press, 1999, page 16.
- [viii] Edward S. Herman, "The Institutionalization of Bias in Economics", *Media, Culture & Society*, 1982, pp. 275-291.
- [ix] *The Cold War and the University*, The New Press, 1997, page 5.
- [x] *The Cold War and the University*, The New Press, 1997, page 2-3.
- [xi] A Look at the Regents of the University of California, 1991, Charles Schwartz, available on line: <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~schwartz/regents.html>.
- [xii] Paul Bairoch, *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*, University of Chicago Press, 1993, p.53-54.

THE GRINCH REVISITED

(with thanks to Dr. Seuss)

The Whos down in Whoville liked this country a lot, But the Grinch in the White House most certainly did not. He didn't arrive there by the will of the Whos, But stole the election that he really did lose.

Vowed to "rule from the middle," then installed his regime. (Did this really happen or is it just a bad dream?) He didn't listen to voters, just his friends he was pleasur' Now, please don't ask why, no one quite knows the reason.

It could be his heart wasn't working just right, It could be, perhaps, that he wasn't too bright. But I think that the most likely reason of all, Is that both brain and heart were two sizes too small.

In times of great turmoil, this was bad news, To have a government that ignores its Whos. But the Whos shrugged their shoulders, went on with their work, Their duties as citizens so casually did shirk.

They shopped at the mall and watched their T.V. They drove their gas guzzling big S.U.V. Oblivious to what was going on in D.C. Ignoring the threats to democracy.

They read the same papers that ran the same leads, Reporting what only served corporate needs. (For the policies affecting the lives of all nations Were made by the giant U.S. Corporations.)

Big business grew fatter, fed by its own greed, And by people who shopped for things they didn't need. But amidst all the apathy came signs of unrest, The Whos came to see we were fouling our nest.

And the people who cared for the ideals of this nation Began to discuss and exchange information. The things they couldn't read in the corporate-owned news Of FTAA meetings and CIA coups.

Of drilling for oil and restricting rights. They published some books, created Websites Began to write letters and use their e-mail (Though Homeland Security might send them to jail!)

What began as a whisper soon grew to a roar, These things going on they could no longer ignore. They started to rise up and fight City Hall Let their voices be heard, they rose to the call.

To vote, to petition, to gather, dissent, To question the policies of the "President." As greed gained in power and power knew no shame The Whos came together, sang "Not in our name!"

One by one from their sleep and their slumber they woke The old and the young, all kinds of folk, The black, brown and white, the gay, bi- and straight, All united to sing, "Feed our hope, not our hotel"

Stop stockpiling weapons and aiming for war! Stop feeding the rich, start feeding the poor! Stop storming the deserts to fuel SUV's! Stop telling us lies on the mainstream T.V.'s!

Stop treating our children as a market to sack! Stop feeding them Barney, Barbie and Big Mac! Stop trying to addict them to lifelong consuming, In a time when severe global warming is looming!

Stop sanctions that are killing the kids in Iraq! Start dealing with ours that are strung out on crack! A mighty sound started to rise and to grow, "The old way of thinking simply must go!"

Enough of God versus Allah, Muslim vs. Jew With what lies ahead, it simply won't do. No American dream that cares only for wealth Ignoring the need for community health.

The rivers and forests are demanding their pay, If we're to survive, we must walk a new way. No more excessive and mindless consumption Let's sharpen our minds and garner our gumption.

For the ideas are simple, but the practice is hard, And not to be won by a poem on a card. It needs the ideas and the acts of each Who, So let's get together and plan what to do!

And so they all gathered from all 'round the Earth And from it all came a miraculous birth. The hearts and the minds of the Whos they did grow, Three sizes to fit what they felt and they know.

While the Grinches they shrunk from their hate and their greed, Bearing the weight of their every foul deed. From that day onward the standard of wealth, Was whatever fed the Whos' spiritual health.

They gathered together to revel and feast, And thanked all who worked to conquer their beast. For although our story pits Grinches 'gainst Whos, The true battle lies in what we daily choose.

For inside each Grinch is a tiny small Who, And inside each Who is a tiny Grinch too. One thrives on love and one thrives on greed. Who will win out? It depends who you feed!

What We've Become

By J. Everett H.

I look back and remember how it all happened. Dizzy swirling lightheadedness lingered; anger and sorrow held hands marching towards retaliation! Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!

A call ignited from the memory of the puffy white and gray clouds of rubble and ash, which rained down on the people of dust. Blood dripped in a swirl of melted skin, around the echoing screams of horror, from the deformed gaping mouths of shock. From sea to shining sea, all I heard was fear. All I felt was danger, for the heart of America was smashed, Mother liberty slashed.

Where shall I go? Where shall I hide? Where will the next attack be? To where shall I flee? Yes, a stain upon our flag, But do not worry. "We shall spend billions more on our military!" "America is united in the new crusade!" "God Bless America!"

American flag stickers, flag pins, flag buttons, flag shirts, flag checks, flag hats, flag underwear, and flag toilet paper. I pledge allegiance to the United States of America! Let's hand over our personal liberties for our protection.

FBI wiretaps, Internet surveillance, library record searches, and let's hold people in jail without a charged crime. Attack! Attack! Attack!!!!

"America at War." Flock of featherless fortresses in formation bombing beautifully! A few stray smart bombs accidentally kill the innocent,

But we have won! Hurray! Hurray! Hurray! Salty drops jump from the eye cracks again, and again they run down her cold copper green cheeks.

"We've been attacked again!" INS has barred Arabs from entering the US, FBI and CIA are granted all possible means of preventing terrorist acts, and the DRAFT has been activated.

For your protection, all people who are at least 7 Arab will be contained in our "America United internment camps". Congress has declared war, so do not criticize the government,

For criticism is now treason. Missile hailstorm slams into Baghdad, gray armada hurls full force assault in Operation Desert Spear.

Hurray! Hurray! Hurray! Our tanks, helicopters, bombs, napalm, Agent Orange, and nuclear missiles have wiped out the Iraqi people.

"God Bless America" Oh, not again! Not again! Not again!

We've been attacked again! "I have declared Marshall Law, there will be a curfew starting Friday, October 13th."

"Democratic senators Tom Daschle, Bob Kerry, and Joe Lieberman have been jailed for their acts against America."

"There will be no election for the executive office this year because of the war." "We will take over all Arab countries and wipe out the rat race."

"America is united" "God Bless America!" "God Bless America!" "God Bless America!"

ECONOMIC REVIEW

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Externalities and Objectivity

By Arash Kolahi

The distinguished Harvard University economist, John Kenneth Galbraith has said, "On the largest and most important questions facing the governments of the industrial countries the economics profession - I choose my words with care - is intellectually bankrupt. It might as well not exist." Such harsh criticism begs two questions: First, is the economics profession "intellectually bankrupt" as Galbraith claims? And second, what structural mechanisms exist that maintain the intellectual bankruptcy of economic discourse?

As far as the question of whether or not mainstream economic discourse is "intellectually bankrupt", I first need to further define this term. By "intellectually bankrupt," I mean that mainstream economic theory lacks objectivity and that mainstream economists are more ideologues than social "scientists" [i]. That this is the case is precisely what we will be showing in this monthly column. For now, let's start with a simple example: rent control.

As any undergraduate Economics student could tell you, rent control is a topic that economists love to talk about. If you've taken one economics class at UCSD, chances are you've been told about the wild market violations caused by rent control.

According to economists, rent control is estimated to be somewhere between \$250 million and 514 million dollars nation-wide. [ii] Let's take the higher end figure of 514 million.

In effect, the 514 million dollars is a housing subsidy by landlords to tenants, who are mostly low income families. With the one million families who rely on rent control, this has the net effect of a very slight income redistribution downwards. This drastic market violation requires the most stringent of scrutiny from economists. Volumes of "respectable" economic journals [iii] and hours of classroom time are devoted to make sure we all understand how bad these housing subsidies are.

The interesting thing is that the *main* forms of housing subsidies that exist in this country are rarely even part of economic discourse. Property owners, like the landlords, receive much higher levels of housing subsidies than do the mostly poor families who rely on rent control. For example, interest payment deductions on mortgages cost taxpayers about \$50 billion a year [iv]. Almost all of this goes to families with incomes over \$50,000 and is skewed radically upwards for the obvious reason that wealthier people

tend to have property that is more expensive; thus, they make higher mortgage payments. [v] This particular type of housing subsidy has a much more dramatic effect of redistributing income upwards. Does this \$50 billion dollar housing subsidy to the wealthy receive the same scrutiny as the \$514 million housing subsidy to the poor? Do mainstream economists generally scrutinize the gross market violations caused by mortgage subsidies? Not at all. In fact, the treatment of housing subsidies through tax deductions on mortgage payments by mainstream economists is quite revealing.

If a mainstream economist or a college economics textbook even mentions mortgage subsidies, it's to inform you of the "positive externalities" associated with these important welfare payments. The logic works like this: mortgage subsidies promote home ownership; home ownership promotes the maintenance of property; well-maintained property such as a well-kept lawn is a "positive externality" that benefits us all, thus we should subsidize housing for the wealthy so that we could all have nice lawns to look at. As to not overly embarrass mainstream economists, I won't even bother to analyze this logic. It's more important to note that the choice of "externalities" taken into consideration is highly ideological. The fact that economists choose well-kept lawns for the wealthy as a "positive externality" and ignore the "negative externalities" of a poor family on the street is hardly an objective decision. Rather, one could just as easily consider the "negative externalities" of increasing the wealth gap, and the "positive externalities" of decreased homelessness and poverty.

Let's look at another example where the externalities taken into consideration by mainstream economists are highly ideological. In his book, *Panic Rules*, American University political economist Robin Hahnel shows that there are social costs associated with international trade that are often overlooked by mainstream economists [vi]. While it certainly is theoretically possible for two countries to trade in such a way as to benefit both countries, if the price of trade does not reflect the true social cost or capture the "externalities" associated with that trade then in actuality one country could potentially capture most or all of the efficiency gains of trade and another could actually lose from trade. In other words, even if trade based on "correct" prices could theoretically be beneficial to a country, trade based on "wrong" prices could

cause a country to suffer efficiency losses. As an example, Hahnel states, "What if life in traditional Mexican villages has significant advantages vis-à-vis disease prevention and effective community social safety nets compared with life in Mexican urban slums - as many social workers testify? In this case it is quite possible that trading Mexican shoes for U.S. grain based on comparative private advantage, which moves Mexican peasants from rural agriculture to shoe factories in Mexico City... may lower, not raise, economic efficiency." [vii]

Mainstream economic discourse ignores such "negative externalities" associated with international trade. Thus, while the mathematical calculations and theories such as "comparative advantage" might be logically sound, the failure to incorporate such factors into our calculations would produce grossly inaccurate results. This fact is agreeable with empirical evidence that increased "liberalization" of trade has caused the third world to fall further into poverty.

An interesting point that should be made is that while mainstream economists have completely radicalized democracy within economic discourse, an increase of democratic control over economic policy would *increase* economic efficiency because those who most feel the impact of such externalities are in a much better position to judge the severity of externalities and the true social cost of trade not captured in the price of trade. You don't have to convince a Mexican maquiladora worker of the negative social costs of the destruction of traditional social structures.

If the choices of "positive externalities" and "negative externalities" by mainstream economics were arbitrary then I might concur with Galbraith that the Economics profession "might as well not exist" and leave it at that. But the fact is externalities are *not* chosen arbitrarily. They are chosen systematically, such that policies that redistribute income upwards are praised for their "positive externalities" and as soon as some crumbs fall to the floor, mainstream economists assume their proper role and cry out about market violations. One could see this very clearly by looking at how mainstream economists treat social welfare programs for the poor, which is a pea compared to the mountain of corporate welfare payments to the wealthy.

The systematic, ideological picking and choosing of "externalities" by mainstream economists brings me to the second question I posed: What structural mechanisms exist that

maintain the intellectual bankruptcy of economic discourse? Specifically, what forces exist that make the mention of certain externalities unacceptable, while promoting the incorporation of other externalities?

Professor Emeritus of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania, Edward S. Herman has noted, "The responses of important economic professionals and the publicity given economic findings are correlated with the increased market demand for specific conclusions and a particular ideology." [viii] The obvious question we should ask is where is this "demand" coming from?

To answer this question we must look at the institutions in which economic discourse takes place. While there are many inter-related institutions, the one that is perhaps the most important is the university.

Since the Great Depression, the American university has come to play an increasingly important role in the economy. But it wasn't until after World War II when the massive state purchasing power necessary for the war began to decline that the university became vital to the sustainability of the economy. It is important to remember that state purchases accounted for about 45% of Gross National Product during the war [ix]. With the war over, how could the economy maintain such a high level of activity? Harvard University professor R.C. Lowentini explains:

"The Cold War was a solution to a major dilemma of American economic development. It has been obvious to all makers of national policy in Europe, North America, and Asia since the end of World War II, and even to most economists, that the prosperity of modern capitalism is critically dependent on massive state intervention in the economy. That intervention is not simply in the form of control of the supply of money and in the redistribution of wage goods through taxation and welfare programs. It involves, as well, a vital role of the state as a provider of subsidies to production and employment by three routes. The primary one is for the state to become a major purchaser of goods and services. A second is to provide capital directly to undercapitalized sectors, enabling them to modernize at public expense, as for example, by temporarily nationalizing railroads, rebuilding their material infrastructure, and then reselling them on the market. The third is to assume the cost, unbearable by even the largest individual enterprises, of creating new technologies and the trained cadre required both for the implementation of technology that already exists

In this regular column Economic Review at UCSD will be exploring issues concerning mainstream economic discourse. Each month, we will be presenting our case that rather than economics being the self-described, "most scientific of the social sciences" it is instead perhaps the most ideological of the social sciences. By examining what economists do and do not talk about, what "externalities" they do and do not take into consideration and what assumptions they do and do not make, we will show that contemporary mainstream economics is far from objective.

and for creating further innovations." [x]

To one degree or another, the university has taken on these roles since the Cold War with various consequences. From the perspective of elites, this has been quite successful for maintaining economic stability for the wealthy. For academic scholarship, it has been detrimental. For much of the world's population, it has been deadly. Let me explain.

The university plays a role in what Noam Chomsky calls "the socialization of costs and privatization of profits." In other words, taxpayers foot the bill for the costs of research and development, and as soon as something is discovered or developed that is marketable, it is more or less handed over to the private sector. The consequence of this is the development of a state-corporate nexus at the top of the university structure. At the University of California this is not only obviously clear by looking at the Regent roster (the average U.C. Regent is at the head of more than 4 companies [xi]), but it is actually openly talked about with euphemism among the architects of the University of California.

In an institution like the University of California, which is a bureaucratic top-down institution with the state-corporate nexus at the top, the most obvious hypothesis would be that scholarship would be skewed toward the interests of those at the top. A corollary would be that the ideas and thoughts that are most detrimental to those at the top would be actively marginalized or weeded out through various mechanisms.

The extraordinary extent to which this hypothesis holds can be seen in contemporary economic discourse. The most fundamental truisms must be blurred in order to protect the state-corporate interests at the top of the university structure. For example, the fact that the United States developed economically by protecting its various industries from foreign

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