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Contents

Everything That
Makes Us Human
Demands:
U.S. and All
Foreign Troops
Out of Iraq!

U.S. Hopes U.N.
Can
"Legitimize"
Colonialism

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imperialist.org](http://www.anti-imperialist.org)

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Reference
Material,
Archives, and
Pamphlets

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P.O. Box 61870,
Chicago, IL 60680
Phone:
(312) 409-1127

Everything That Makes Us Human Demands: U. S. and All Foreign Troops Out of Iraq!

The following article is reprinted from "The Worker" newspaper (May 10, 2004).

The barbaric methods of the U.S. occupying army in Iraq have aroused the conscience of humanity. The immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and foreign troops from Iraq is ever more urgent.

Most recently the world has seen photos of U.S. soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners. Such torture is systematic and ongoing. On May 6, the International Committee of the Red Cross made public a report, based on visits from March to November 2003, to detention centers in Iraq. The Red Cross said that serious violations of the Geneva Conventions, including the killing of unarmed prisoners, and abuse that is "tantamount to torture . . . Went beyond exceptional cases and might be considered a practice tolerated" by occupation forces. A spokesman for the Red Cross said that the abuse of Iraqis revealed in the photos from the Abu Ghraib prison were not "isolated acts of individual members of coalition forces" but part of "a pattern and a broad system." Further exposing the lies of the Bush administration, which continues to conceal information and deny prior knowledge of prisoner abuse, the Red Cross reported that it had repeatedly urged the U.S. government to take "corrective action." Similarly, Abd Al-Basit Turki, the former human rights minister in the U. S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council, said that he had told Paul Bremer, chief U.S. administrator in Iraq, last November that U.S. soldiers were abusing Iraqi prisoners from the very beginning of the occupation and at every jail and detention center. In an interview with a French newspaper, Turki also said that he had direct reports of continuing prisoner abuse.

Conservative estimates put the number of Iraqis detained by the U.S. at more than 40,000, mainly civilians and including large numbers of

women and teenagers.

And the torture of prisoners is only one example of the inhuman methods used by U.S. imperialism in its war against the Iraqi people.

U. S. imperialism launched its war against Iraq with a "shock and awe" campaign that included dropping 1,300 bombs on the people of Baghdad in one day. It has repeatedly used warplanes, helicopters gunships, missiles and tanks against heavily populated civilian areas. It has besieged cities, denying water, electricity, food, medical care and other necessities to the people in Fallujah and cities throughout Iraq. It has dropped 2,200 tons of depleted uranium shells on Iraq, poisoning the people and contaminating the country with nuclear radiation which will last for millions of years. It has relied on the Hitlerite method of collective reprisals, arresting entire families and retaliating against entire towns in an attempt to suppress any resistance to its occupation.

These barbaric methods come from the very character of the war as an aggressive, colonial war. U.S. imperialism launched its war against Iraq in order to plunder its wealth, enslave its people and use the country as a base for recolonizing the entire Middle East. Thus, the Pentagon knows that its enemy is the people of Iraq and the Pentagon's methods aim at terrorizing the population in order to force them to submit to colonial rule.

And, despite the ever growing resistance of the Iraqi people, despite the worldwide condemnation of the war, the U.S. government is escalating its aggression.

Right now, U.S. troops are tightening their siege of the cities of Fallujah, Najaf and Karbala. On May 6 and 7, U.S. tanks and troops launched new attacks in Najaf and Karbala, killing 50 Iraqis.

The Pentagon has announced that 135,000

Continued on page 2

U. S. Hopes U.N. Can "Legitimize" Colonialism

The following article is reprinted from "The Worker" newspaper.

Every day, the Iraqi resistance grows and the U.S. war of aggression is condemned by wider sections of world public opinion. Facing this situation, the U.S. government is trying to overcome its political isolation by turning more towards the U.N., hoping to find a way to put a "more legitimate face" on its colonial occupation and war.

Special U.N. envoy Lakhdar Brahimi has been shuttling back and forth between Bush and various political figures in Iraq trying to find a formula for a "transitional government." Brahimi himself says his mission is "to find a way of making the process viable and credible" (NYT 4/28/04). For its part, the Bush administration says: "We're in synch with Brahimi" (State Department spokesman quoted in NYT, 4/28/04). And why not. The "transitional government" will have no real authority; the power will remain 100% in the hands of the U.S. Paul Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, has already issued an edict declaring that U.S. troops will remain in Iraq indefinitely and that any Iraqi troops will be directly under the command of the U.S. On May 4, General Abizaid, the U.S. commander for the Middle East, announced that troop levels would remain at 135,000 until at least the end of 2005 and that, at any time, the number could be increased. Secretary of State Powell has publicly admitted that the sovereignty of Iraq will be "limited." In other words, the U.N. is being used as a cover, a way to deflect public opinion, even while the U.S. occupation and war continues.

John Kerry and the Democratic Party hope that by intoning the words "United Nations" even louder than Bush, they can deceive public opinion and divert the anti-war movement better than Bush. For months, the Democrats have been calling on Bush to bring more U.N. and NATO troops into Iraq even while insisting that "primary responsibility for security must remain with the U.S. military" (from Op-Ed article by Kerry published in the Washington Post).

The U.S. government is more than willing to use the U.N. if it dances to the U.S. war drum (last year, the U.N. Security Council gave its official sanction to the U.S. occupation). At the same time, the U.S. has repeatedly underlined that it will never cede any authority to

U. N. policies which run counter to U.S. imperialism's interests. What is more, it must be kept in mind that only the U.N. Security Council has the authority to deploy troops and that the Security Council is dominated by five big powers — including the U.S., Britain, France, Russia and China — each of which have the power to veto any action not its liking.

In other words, either the U.N. will be used as a tool of

U.S. aggression or the U.S. will continue its aggression alone.

When one scratches the surface of the calls for U.N. intervention, one frequently hears the argument that "there will be chaos if the

U. S. just pulls out completely. The Iraqis aren't ready yet; they need to be taught the ways of democracy." This is simply another variant of the chauvinism of George Bush, a replay of the tune which the colonizers and slavemasters have always sung to the colonial peoples: "you are not yet ready for freedom; we are enslaving you in order to civilize you," etc., etc. The struggle in Iraq is not about creating a "kinder and gentler" occupation. It is not about the relative role of the various imperialist powers in the colonization of Iraq. It is a struggle of the Iraqi people against U.S. imperialist aggression and occupation. It is a struggle for independence, sovereignty and freedom.

U.S. and All Foreign Troops Out of Iraq! (from page 1)

U.S. troops will remain at war in Iraq at least through the end of 2005 and that this number may be increased at any time. Bush is again appropriating \$25 billion more for the war and both Bush and Kerry have repeatedly said that the U.S. government "will stay the course" in Iraq and send as many troops and weapons as are needed.

Yet more. The aggressive, colonial war against Iraq and the inhuman methods used by the U.S. army are already being spread all over the world. Within the last 2 and 1/2 years, U.S. imperialism has invaded and occupied Afghanistan and Haiti; it has directed the Israeli army in a genocidal war against the Palestinian nation; it has dispatched more troops to Colombia and the Philippines. The U.S. government is also actively preparing new wars against Syria, Korea, Iran and other countries. U.S. imperialism's so-called "war on terrorism" is nothing but the battle plan of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class to dominate the world through force of arms.

Thus the conscience of humanity calls us to the struggle for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and foreign troops from Iraq.

The future of the peoples of the whole world calls us to further organize ourselves so as to defeat the war program of U.S. imperialism and bring to power a genuine anti-war, anti-imperialist government.