



[NO US BASES]

CLOSE ALL MILITARY BASES WORLDWIDE

PICTURES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-US BASES CONFERENCE

Word Social Forum 2004 | Mumbai, India

17 & 20 January 2004

By many accounts and according to the feedback from many participants, the international anti-US bases conference during the World Social Forum 2004 in Mumbai was highly successful and very promising. It brought together 125 participants, including many long-time and new anti-bases campaigners, from as many as 34 countries. It provided a space for people to share their experiences living with US military presence and present their own local struggles to confront it. More importantly, the conference gave them an opportunity to put their heads together and begin thinking about a joint and collectively coordinated global campaign against US bases. Held during the WSF, an annual gathering against corporate-driven globalization and war, the conference allowed the activists to contextualize the anti-bases movement as part of a broader global movement against neo-liberal globalization and imperialism. With this conference as the first step, the potential from bringing together anti-bases activists around the world is now being realized.

>> HIGHLIGHTS

The conference is a continuation of the process of initiating and launching an international campaign against US foreign bases.

It gathered 125 participants from 34 countries, with many community-based anti-bases campaigners as well as representatives from other movements and campaigns such as environmental and human rights groups, anti-IMF-WB and anti-debt campaigners, as well as from the women's movement.

The conference had two sessions: The first cast the issue of US foreign military presence and the campaigns against as part of the larger process of corporate-driven globalization and the resistance to it. In this session, the US' motives for stationing troops and military hardware abroad was assessed. Twenty panelists from around the world shared their experiences struggling against US bases over the years.

In the second session, the group began discussing what the objectives of the network should be, what specific projects need to be undertaken, and how best to work together.

As priorities, it was suggested that the group refine the meaning of "US military presence," continue to monitor US bases around the world, as well as map the growing resistance to them. For the network to mobilize more people, a website was deemed necessary and the list-serve must be expanded. Participation in the March 20 Global Day of Action was highly encouraged. The best date for an International Day of Action against US Bases is still being debated.

Certain political and operational questions began to emerge: To what extent should the campaign focus exclusively on US bases? Should the perspective be anti-imperialist or anti-militarist? Would it be strategic to focus on key sites of struggle? What would be the value-added of an international network?

To thresh out these issues and to plan further, a larger and longer gathering was proposed to continue the process of launching an international campaign.

(This report was prepared by Andres Conteris, Ben Moxham, Herbert Docena, and Wilbert van der Zeijden. For more information, please contact herbert@focusweb.org.)

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>> BACKGROUND

The “war on terror” and the invasion of Iraq has highlighted the role of the US’ global network of military bases in protecting and advancing the US’ interests to the detriment of peoples around the world, among them the hundreds of local communities directly affected by US military presence in its 702 bases worldwide. With the emergence of the global anti-war movement came the growing realization that in order to prevent the US from waging its illegal wars, its network of bases must be targeted.

An international community of anti-bases activists, it was felt, could be a powerful campaigning force against empire. In Jakarta last May 2003, at an international gathering of anti-war coalitions, NGOs, and social movements plotting the next moves of the global anti-war movement after the invasion of Iraq, the idea of launching an international campaign against US bases was proposed as priority plan of action, as affirmed in the “Jakarta Peace Consensus.” An open international working group (*see list below*) was constituted in the succeeding months to prepare for the anti-US bases conference during the WSF.

>> PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The conference took the form of two seminars/workshops among the 1,200 self-organized events during the 5-day WSF. The first, held January 17, 9 AM to 12 NN, at tent A12, was an educational and speak-out session. The second, held January 20, 1 PM to 4 PM, at tent, C88, was a planning and strategy session for discussing how the group should move forward.

The conference attracted a total of 125 participants who attended one or both of the two sessions. (*See complete list below.*) There was a sizeable presence of anti-bases activists who have been campaigning against US bases in their own communities and countries for years. That many delegates came from various backgrounds – from the anti-debt and anti-IMF-WB campaigns, to environmental and human rights groups to women’s movements – helped situate the bases issue in the bigger picture.

The delegates came from the following 34 countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Mauritius, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Seychelles, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, UK, US.

>> A MORNING OF SHARING: THE “SPEAK-OUT” SESSION

The first session was for analyzing the roles of the US’ foreign military presence in its strategic and economic objectives. It was also a morning for sharing how different people from around the world have experience living with and struggling against US bases in their own localities.

Joseph Gerson of the American Friends Service Committee and editor of the book “The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign US Military Bases” outlined the historic link between the US’ need to expand markets and the role of US military bases and how this nexus operates today. He briefly discussed the impact of US bases, including on hosting communities and governments, highlighting the problems of civilian harassment, social and economic problems and the loss of sovereignty.

The geopolitical purpose of US bases is to strategically control resources; to act as staging posts for future interventions and to project power over base host countries and the region. The Bush/Rumsfeld proposed realignment of US bases aims to diversify their facilities, particularly in Asia and the Global South. This policy emphasizes flexibility, political influence and speed for pre-emptive attack. (*See complete text of his presentation below.*)

Beverley Keene of Jubilee South and Campaign for the Demilitarization of the Americas (CADA) discussed how the U.S. is using debt relief and trade negotiations to leverage governments of Latin America to host military facilities. Andres Conteris (Nonviolence International) pointed out the important victories for the movement in Vieques, Philippines and Panama as inspiring examples that this conference can draw on.

During the speak-out session, twenty speakers from fifteen countries gave a rich snapshot of their experience and struggles with U.S. bases:

- In Vieques, Puerto Rico, the military base has dominated their lives, leading to a serious decline in the community's standard of living. They occupied their base for more than one year as part of a campaign which eventually removed the military from their soil.

- The Latin America perspective showed the creeping influence of the U.S. military in regional affairs especially in the 'war on drugs' and the political moves taken by the U.S. to expand military facilities.

- The European experience was one of bases being used for the recent war against Iraq and the secret housing of U.S. weapons of mass destruction on their soil.

Representatives from Diego Garcia, in Mauritius shared their experiences of forcible eviction from their homelands and the social and economic problems that now affect their communities.

- In Kyrgystan, the U.S. rapidly entered the country with little public debate. The human rights situation there has deteriorated - contrary to U.S. rhetoric - as the U.S. military is effectively propping up a repressive regime.

- For the Philippines, the speaker touched upon how the no bases movement famously evicted the U.S. but also the many military access agreements now in place and the current pressures to reestablish facilities there.

- Both the speakers from Korea and Japan detailed the long history of a large and damaging U.S. military presence in their countries. There, military abuse of civilian populations has gone largely unpunished; Land has been confiscated and contaminated. The history of local resistance was also shared.

(See notes below for more details. Parts of the session were recorded and available for downloading from <http://india.indymedia.org/en/2004/01/208751.shtml>)

>> MOVING FORWARD: THE STRATEGY SESSION

The second session was devoted more for discussions on how to proceed from the conference, what concrete and feasible projects should be undertaken given the constraints of the emerging network, and how best to eventually implement these projects.

PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES

Most of the proposals fell under 1) Research / Education, 2) Communication / Outreach, or 3) Actions / Campaigns / Solidarity Building

Research/Education

- **Sharpening our Definitions** – what constitutes bases, installations, other kinds of major and minor US military presence? Official records on these subjects are misleading, although instructive. According to the Defense Department's annual "Base Structure Report" for fiscal year 2003, which itemizes foreign and domestic US military real estate, the Pentagon currently owns or rents 702 overseas bases in about 130 countries. Of these, some 120 are prominent US bases in about 40 countries. The US has another 6,000 bases in the United States and its territories.

- **Monitoring the impact of US military bases** – in terms sexual oppression, prostitution, sexual harassment and violence, trafficking; environmental impact on the biosphere — flora, fauna, land, air, water; health impact on humans; role of municipalities and host governments, violating national sovereignty, and bases as tools for empire building and as a tool for colonialism; follow-up to the closure of bases with campaigns on decontamination and social economic development

- **Monitoring the US role in the militarization of space**

- **Success Stories** – what factors bring about the closure of bases? What are the best practices in the struggles that empower people's movements to close bases? What strategies worked and

didn't? How do we use model campaigns in other struggles? How can we offer campaign materials on website and elsewhere to socialize ideas for strategies.

■ **Linking US bases to other issues** in the wider movement for global peace with justice – the anti-corporate led globalization movement, demilitarization, disarmament, arms trafficking, use of bases in drug trafficking.

■ **Why our own governments agree to host US bases** – how does the US use economic pressure to force countries to host the US military presence? (*Wilbert van der Zeijden is already pursuing research along these lines.*)

■ **Mapping the Resistance** – Ben Moxham of Focus on the Global South is the point person for mapping US military bases/installations as well as mapping the resistance to this imperial presence.

Communication/Outreach

■ **Website:** It was proposed that the group immediately launches a website to provide information on US bases as well as on this emerging campaign. The website should be in different languages and should have good visual and exciting content. The website should seek to publicize the existence of this effort to the outside world – especially to the anti-war and anti-globalization movement – in order to mobilize support and participation. Each base-affected community should prepare concise history to be placed on the website. Links to other struggles as well as a calendar of events should be listed. The victims of US bases should be given prominence. Content of website can include the US launching bases which create terror. Bibliographic and other educational resources should also be put on the site. Another suggestion was to have an updated tracker to monitor movement of US troops or ships around the world. (*Scott Ludlum of the Freemantle Nuclear Group volunteered to coordinate this.*)

■ **List-serve** – The e-mail network was thought to be one of the most effective means for building the network. It should be maintained and expanded. (*Herbert Docena will continue to act as moderator while everyone else is requested to send out the invitation to their networks. Cora Fabros volunteered to be the point-person for reaching out to anti-bases communities worldwide.*)

Actions/ Campaigns/ Solidarity Building

■ **International Day of Action against US Bases** – July 4th was the date proposed by many participants as a date to focus on as an international day of action to close US bases. This was because it was felt that it is important to highlight at the anti-bases language in the US Declaration of Independence and to use it against the US government. Some reservations were expressed, however, and it was agreed that the question be opened to all the members of the e-mail network, with the second week of February set as the deadline for comments. (*Everyone is asked to comment on this question. Nikki Hardwick of Globalise Resistance volunteered to coordinate the international day of action.*)

■ **Participation in the March 20 Global Day of Action Against War** – It was agreed that the group should support the March 20 global day of action against US war and occupation. Some countries will have actions at US bases. Some said the network should not want to divert attention from the main demonstrations that might be taking place elsewhere. Others said calls to close the US bases should be prominent during marches. It was suggested that the date of the international day of action against US bases be announced on that day. (*Everyone is strongly urged to mobilize on March 20 and to highlight the connections between the occupation of Iraq and the US' network of bases.*)

■ **Peace Flotilla to Diego Garcia** – To expose the plight of the Chagossians who were evicted from Diego Garcia to make way for US bases three decades ago, it was proposed that a fleet of ship proceed to dock and protest in Diego Garcia. (*Martini Gotje of the Chagos Support Group agreed to be the coordinator of this direct action.*)

ISSUES REQUIRING MORE DISCUSSIONS

During the course of planning, several important issues came to the surface.

■ **Should we only target US bases? How do we relate with the foreign bases of other countries?** This was the most recurring question during the strategy session. There was a strong consensus that the US should be the primary focus of the campaign but there were also questions as to how exclusively this focus should be. On the one hand, it was thought that targeting the US would give the campaign a sharper concentration. On the other, it was felt that the campaign could not, for example, ignore the presence of French foreign military bases. At least one participant said his organization would be forced to withdraw from the network if it will eventually be decided that only US bases should be targeted. In the end, the body agreed to add the subtext to the provisional name of the network so that it now reads “No US Bases: Close all Military Bases Worldwide.”

■ **What should be the perspective of the campaign, anti-imperialist or anti-militarist?** In a way, this question is related to the previous one. An anti-imperialist campaign, it was pointed out, would only call for the closure of bases of imperialist countries. An anti-militarist campaign, on the other hand, would support the closure of all military bases – even the non-foreign military bases of one’s own country.

■ **Campaign-wise, would it be effective to select a few key bases as strategic sites of struggle? If yes, which ones should be chosen and what should the criteria be?** Among those suggested so far were the bases in Diego Garcia, Okinawa, Seoul, Vieques, Iraq, and a base in Latin America. A base in the North such as Thule, Flyingdale, or Pine Gap was also proposed. Targeting the School of the Americas as another form of military presences was also raised.

■ **What structure would best serve the objectives of the network? What are the next steps in the process of forming this network?** What kind of entity are we forming? A coalition? A loose network? What should be our ways of working? What are the requirements for forming this structure?

■ **What value-added can an international network provide for local anti-bases activists?** If getting involved in the network is to be worthwhile for its members, it should provide them with much more than what they already have and do more than what they are already doing. How can this network ensure that it compliments and supports rather than compete with the efforts of community-based activists?

A LARGER, LONGER MEETING

Having identified a priority a set of projects and having begun to confront certain political questions, it was felt that it would be very crucial to hold a bigger and longer meeting in the future. This gathering is envisioned to have more participants – especially those who have yet to join the network – and to last for 2-3 days. In this meeting, the participants should have more time to discuss further the group’s bases of unity and possibly come up with a founding document that would be used to articulate the group’s positions and reach out to more members. It should also be an occasion for more extensive networking, sharing of strategies, further brainstorming, more in-depth planning.

In choosing the occasion and the venue of this meeting, the objective is to maximize political and symbolic impact, on the one hand, and to minimize costs, on the other. Thus, it would be best to hold the meeting in a place and at a time where we can extract maximum political mileage and/or when there will also be another related meeting to be attended by many prospective participants.

So far, the following have been suggested:

- G-8 Counter-Summit: Georgia, US, June 2004

- International Network on Military Activities and Environmental Justice meeting: Seoul, Korea, July 2004
- Boston Social Forum/ meeting of the European Network for Peace and Human Rights: Boston, US, 23-25 July 2004
- Americas Social Forum: Quito, Ecuador, 25-30 July 2004
- Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Summit: Mauritius, 30 Aug – 3 Sept, 2004
- East Asia-US-Puerto Rico Women's Network Conference: Manila, Philippines, 23-27 November 2004
- European Social Forum: London(?), November
- Vieques, Puerto Rico, anytime
- Greece, anytime (?)

(Everyone is encouraged to make suggestions or comment on existing ones. Herbert was volunteered to explore the possibilities further. Since the only obstacle to holding this necessary meeting is funding, everyone is urged to also help share contacts of possible interested funders or, better yet, approach them with this idea.)

OTHER WSF EVENTS

In an attempt to make connections with the larger movement, participants to the conference also attended and made strong and well-received interventions at other events during the WSF. Lindsey Collen spoke at both the General Assembly of the Anti-War Movement and the Activists' Assembly to appeal for support to the international campaign. She argued that the campaign against bases will provide continuity to the anti-war movement beyond the US' chosen wars. Lindsey, Andres Conteris and other sympathetic friends strived to ensure that the issue of US bases was given prominence in "Call of the Social Movements," an important document that comes out during the WSF every year. *(See copy below.)*

INTERIM COORDINATION

It was suggested that the working group which organized the WSF conference act as interim coordinators of the network. E-mail discussions will proceed and conference calls will be scheduled as the need arises – subject to availability of funds. Anyone else who wishes to be part of this open coordinating group should contact Herbert at herbert@focusweb.org.

ANNEX: PARTICIPANTS

Ajay Prasad | Jawaharlal Nehru University | India
 Alain Ah-Vee | LALIT | Mauritius
 Alfred Marder | US Peace Council | US
 Andres Thomas Conteris | Nonviolence International | US
 Anil Kumar | ATPS - Kochi, Keralam | India
 Anjani Abella | Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives/ APA | Hong Kong
 Anna Paskal | Inter Pares | Canada
 Anne Lunenburg | AMC | Hong Kong
 Ansee Jaffar | Chagos Refugees Group | Mauritius
 Anthony Das | CASA | India
 Asako Kageyama | Hokkaido Asia Africa Latin American Solidarity Committee | Japan
 Ava Boulumpas | Greek Social Forum | Greece
 Ayse Berktaay | Peace Initiative of Turkey | Turkey
 Bala Krishnam | India
 Barbara Fuchs | Germany
 Ben Moxham | Focus on the Global South | Australia
 Bepu M. Raut | Institute of Human Rights | India
 Bernadette Dugasse | Chagos Refugees Group | Seychelles
 Beverlyly Keene | Jubileo Sur | Argentina
 Corazon Valdez Fabros | Asian Peace Alliance/ Pacific Concerns Resource Center | Fiji
 D. Lazarrai | Vidivelli Social Service Society | India
 Denise Davis | American Friends Service Committee | US
 Dominic Kisay | CUPCI | India
 Ellen Woodsworth | City Council of Vancouver | Canada
 Eleonora Nucciarelli | COBAS | Italy
 Fabio Alberti | Un Ponte Per | Italy
 Florian Rochat | CETIM | Switzerland
 G. James | Stop the War Brigade | Germany/USA
 Gerard Rajesh | MAMA | India
 Gerd Weigh | BBCF | Canada
 Gillian Gilhool | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom | US
 Gwyn Kirk | East Asia - US - Puerto Rico Women's Network against Militarism | US
 H. Yamaguchi | Asian African Solidarity | Japan
 Hans-Peter Richter | German Peace Council | Germany
 Haris Goulemis | Greek Social Forum | Greece
 Herbert Docena | Focus on the Global South | Philippines
 Hikaru Kasahara | Asian Peace Alliance - Japan | Japan
 Hiroshi Gunji | Japan Asia Africa Latin America Solidarity Committee | Japan
 Hyejeong Choi | The Hankyoreh 21 | South Korea
 Ibrahim Ramey | Fellowship of Reconciliation | US
 Ingrid Fiskaa | Socialist Youth League | Norway
 Jacinta D'Souza | School of Social Work | India
 Jessica Pupovac | US
 Joel Suarez | Centro de Martin Luther King Jr | Cuba
 John Gershman | Foreign Policy in Focus | US
 Jon Lamb | Democratic Socialist Party | Australia
 Jose Miguel Hernandez | CC-ASC | Cuba
 Joseph Purugganan | Focus on the Global South | Philippines
 Judy Pasimio | Asia Pacific Women for Law and Development | Thailand
 K. Gapalakrishnajah | Janavisnanavedika- AIPSN | India
 K.P. Francis
 Kaori Sunagawa | Okinawa Environmental Network | Japan
 Kate Hudson | Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament UK | UK
 Kathy Newnam | Democratic Socialist Party | Australia
 Kawada Ryuhei | Human Rights Activists with RK | Japan
 Kenkichi Takahashi | Body and Soul | Japan
 Khajan Singh | Bhartiya Samanwa Sangtram | India
 Khaliopi Alexodoulou | Greek Social Forum | Greece
 Kim Joo Yeon | KFHR | South Korea
 Kim Park Tae-sik | Nonviolent Peaceforce | South Korea
 Kylie Witt | peace activist | Australia

Lee So Hyoung | PSSP | South Korea
 Lee So-hee | National Campaign for Eradication of Crimes by US | Korea
 Lina Cahuasoui | American Friends Service Committee - Andean Region | Ecuador
 Lindsey Collen | LALIT | Mauritius
 Loulena Miles | Tri-Valley Communities against Radioactive Environment | US
 Lourdes Cervantes | OSPAAAL
 Lynn Surgalla | Green Party | US
 M. Menanteaux | Stop the War Brigade | Chile/UK
 Mamiko Inomata | Japan
 Marinella Corregia | Bastagueria | Italy
 Martini Gotje | Chagossian Support Group | New Zealand
 Mary Lou Malig | Focus on the Global South | Philippines
 Meistra Budiasa | One Voice | Indonesia
 Melanie Alfonso | NGO Workers against War | UK
 Midori Nakagawa | Himawari Noujou | Japan
 Monica Martins | Social Network for Justice and Human Rights | Brazil
 Mun Jeong Hyeon | People's Action for the Revision of the Unjust SOFA | South Korea
 Muslidhar | Gram Sabha Sewa Santhan | India
 Muto Ichiyo | Asian Peace Alliance - Japan | Japan
 Myrna Pagan | Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques | Puerto Rico
 Nami Yamamoto | Peace Boat | Japan
 Naomi Toyoda | Photographer | Japan
 Natalia Ablova | Bureau for Human Rights | Kyrgyz Republic
 Nicola Delussu | COBAS | Italy
 Nicolas Dejenne | France
 Nikki Hardwick | Globalize Resistance | UK
 O. Bancoult | Chagos Refugees Group | Mauritius
 Oliver Maxwell | UK
 P. Anandaraj | Purnia Parasocial Service Society | India
 P.S.N. Rjn | JUV (AIPSN) | India
 Paladini Bruno | Confederacion COBAS | Italy
 Pol D'Huyvetter | For Mother Earth | Belgium
 Pranim Po Jambheelkas | Sakar | India
 Preetam Bulkunde | Sinhanada Nagpur | India
 Prince Momin | CASA | India
 R. Hono | CASA | India
 R. Tenby | CSE
 R.K. Murugan | CODE | India
 Rae Street | Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament UK/ International Peace Bureau | UK
 Rajan Lalnema | Gram Vikas Foundation | India
 Rajashri Dasgupta | Journalist | India
 Ram Seegobin | LALIT | Mauritius
 Ranjt Datta | BUP | India
 Rev Muyn | South Korea
 Rien Achterberg | Chagossian Support Group | New Zealand
 Rizwan Atta | Labor Party Pakistan Education Foundation | Pakistan
 Santhanam | SAPI | India
 Scott Ludlam | Freemantle Anti-Nuclear Group | Australia
 Senaga Misao | Japan Asia Africa Latin American Solidarity Committee - Okinawa | Japan
 Sharon Jacquin | LALIT | Mauritius
 Shoaib Khan | Student Journalist | India
 Sissy Vovou | Greek Social Forum Assembly of Chania | Greece
 Soren Ambrose | 50 Years is Enough Network | US
 Suehila Din | Human Development Center | India
 Sumitra Chandel | SEEARC | India
 Sunanda Ghosh | American Friends Service Committee | US
 Suzuyo Takazato | Okinawa Women Act Against Violence | Japan
 Takeshi Hirayama | Japan Peace Committee | Japan
 Theresa Wolfwood | Women in Black | Canada
 Tolekan Ismailova | Civil Society Against Corruption | Kyrgyz Republic
 Tono Haruhi | Japan
 Wilbert van der Zeijden | Transnational Institute | Netherlands
 Yujin Lee | Green Korea United | South Korea

ANNEX: LIST OF SPEAKERS OF THE SPEAK-OUT SESSION**Moderators:**

Herbert Docena (Philippines)

Corazon Fabros (Philippines)

An Overview of the Economic and Geo-political Interests served by US Bases:

Joseph Gerson (US)

Beverly Keene (Argentina)

Americas:

Andres Thomas Conteris (US)

Lina Cahuasqui (Ecuador)

Monica Martins (Brazil)

Myrna Pagan (Puerto Rico)

Europe:

Hans Peter Richter (Germany)

Marinella Coreggia (Italy)

Eleonora Nucciarelli (Italy)

Rae Street (UK)

Pol D'Huyvetter (Belgium)

South Asia/Africa:

Lindsey Collen (Mauritius)

Olivier Bancoult (Diego Garcia)

Ansie Jaffar (Diego Garcia)

East Asia:

Cora Fabros (Philippines)

Yujin Lee (South Korea)

Reverend Muyn (South Korea)

Suzuyo Takasato (Okinawa)

Takeshi Hirayama (Japan)

Central Asia:

Natasha Ablova (Kyrgyz Republic)

Tolekan Ismailova (Kyrgyz Republic)

Oceania:

Scott Ludlam (Australia)

Martini Gotje (New Zealand)

ANNEX: NOTES FROM THE SPEAK-OUT SESSION

JOSEPH GERSON, UNITED STATES

Link between US need to expand markets and expansion of military basing. Highlights the example of China. Importance of expanding market into china. Need for US industry to expand, pressure on unemployment in the States etc.

Impact of US bases:

1. Sexual harassment
2. Deadly military accidents
3. Stalled social and economic development
4. Shame of complicity with US military actions
5. Loss of national sovereignty

US war of independence, the war was an anti-occupation struggle.

Each case has its own unique set of calamities

Lack of US knowledge of this infrastructure and its impact

Rice felt that there was a lack of US forward presence

Role of US bases

1. Control Oil
2. Encircle Enemies
3. Supply points for the navy
4. train US forces
5. staging points for US military interventions
6. command control communication and intelligence
7. control government's of host nations
8. militarization of space

Discusses US' 21st Century Agenda Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld

Re-alignment

1. Increase diversification of bases
2. New role of Guam, Australia, Thailand and Philippines
3. Need for new control of Asian Global South
4. Intimidated, Pakistan, Uzbekistan

New policy emphasizes: Flexibility, political influence e.g. Korean foreign policy and Speed, (lily pad theory) strike before opponents can prepare resistance

BEVERLY KEENE, ARGENTINA

Working on Demilitarization of the Americas

Latin America has the strategic resources of energy, water, biodiversity, US seeks to control. Overt warfare is just one option. The military can control through other ways e.g. sending dentists to Honduras. U.S. Marines came to Argentina to 'kill mosquitoes' at the border of Argentina, Paraguay to begin the slow introduction of US troops.

Burden of debt in Latin America, illegitimate debt is being used to blackmail governments to let in US troops e.g. Powell's visit to Nicaragua, waiting for IMF approval, US would be willing to assist with this in return

Spoke of the history of the Ecuador, 'Manta' base.

For non-payment of foreign debt, the U.S. demanded that Ecuador vote against Cuba. Similar story with Argentina, also within the ALCA negotiations. Reciprocal military agreements.

There have been actions to prevent installations. E.g. in Puerto Rico, facilities moved to the Dominican Republic.

Also stress the importance of police training. Shifting US aid into military training. Joint deployment – preparing this agreement with Colombia.

ANDRES CONTERIS, UNITED STATES

Stresses the importance of learning from success, e.g. 1991 Philippines, Panama was also the result from pressure from the movements and also in Vieques.

In San Francisco, there were many bases 15 years ago that are now removed.

School of the Americas was at least forced to change their name.

Brazil didn't allow an installation to be set up.

There are police training programs around the globe

The US is trying to establish an International Law Enforcement Academy in Latin America

Importance of two other victories: the struggle to prevent a U.S. base in Alcantara
Brazil and the halting of joint training exercises with the U.S. military in Argentina.

Speak Out

MYRNA PAGAN, VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

Gandhian civil disobedience helped in ousting the navy in Vieques

Since 1940, the base has dominated their lives. No health, no development 27% more cancer than P.R. 80% more contract disease etc. Complete dependency on the base.

Young guard killed by bombing run and the community said, 'no'. They occupied the base for more than a year, occupied the bombing range. The navy came to oust them and 400 were arrested.

After May 4th, the real movement began. The Quakers came into help, complete international solidarity. They destroyed a guard house. Two people served 6 months in jail. They continue to struggle for the decontamination of their lands. Heavy metals are prevalent.

MONICA MARTINS, BRAZIL

In North East Brazil, threw out dictatorship, gave Africans land rights.

The then president Cardoso signed an agreement to lease this area as a base in April 2000.

There was a huge popular mobilization. 10 million voted no to a US base.

Important for the US because they can utilize the fuel economy there and it is an entry point into the Amazon.

Lula stopped the lease but it is still being discussed with Russia

LINA CAHUASQUI, ECUADOR

Espionage base. Used in the 2nd phase of plan Colombia, attack on the FARC.

Air base of pacific at Manta.

Security provider by Pentagon private contractor ('di corp')

There are three backup bases.

In 2000, U.S commenced the F.O.L.S. (Forward Operating Locations) policy.

HANS PETER RICHTER, GERMANY

60% of US troops in Germany are in Ramstein. Used for Iraq war. Only very few troops will be withdrawn. Other bases have been enlarged. Can attack Iraq from Germany.

POL D'HUYVETTER, BELGIUM

US is the only country with Weapons of Mass Destruction deployed abroad. There are secret deployments. Parliament remains ignorant about these despite requests for information. In 1997 started a campaign of citizens weapons inspections.

MARINELLA CORREGIA, ITALY

Italian bases used for Gulf War also house nuclear weapons and there have been training accidents. We need an economic resistance to this.

Camp Darby Base was a present to the US government. 1,200 US military personal. It is used for training exercises. Community resistance to it since the 1970s.

RAE STREET, UK

Many bases in Britain. Sea Nukes and Trident Submarines. Forward base in Scotland and NATO bases also. Heavy involvement in the war against Iraq.

SISSY VOVOU, GREECE

Four bases in Greece. Proposal to have a day of action at the upcoming Olympics in Athens. 6th of August in Hiroshima day.

ANSIE JAFFAR, DIEGO GARCIA

Was pregnant and there were poor health services so had to go to Mauritius. Then they wouldn't let her return. It was very difficult for many women like her in Mauritius. Very pleased to be here at the conference.

OLIVIER BANCOULT, DIEGO GARCIA

Life in Chago was previously wonderful. They were forced to be refugees. Struggle to return. Huge unemployment and poverty. In 1997 he appealed to return to his homeland. He made an appeal to the UK government. They plan to return to Diego Garcia to send a flotilla. It is part of Mauritius' territory.
They send B52 bombers from DG.

LINDSEY COLLEN:

Asked for secular blessing for the planned ship to Diego Garcia to take the people back to the place they were forcibly removed from.
The idea of going to Diego Garcia by ship had soon become the idea of a flotilla.
Diego Garcia is part of Mauritius illegally removed by Britain and rented to US armed forces.
Linked struggles to close the base, for re-unification of Mauritius and for the right to return.
A possible date for the next meeting is 30th August at time of UN Small Islands Developing States conference in Mauritius.
The need to sow the seeds of desertion amongst those working on the bases.

MARTINI GOTJE, NEW ZEALAND

Chagossian support group. Previously was a Greenpeace shipman. Worked on the Marshall Islands issue. This is a very important US base. It is totally dependent on the economy of the base.
Spoke about 'sea basing' and the proposed Diego Garcia flotilla.

SCOTT LUDLAM, AUSTRALIA

There are a number of spybases in Australia.
The US navy frequently visits Western Australia. Using 'seaswap', lily pads to use facilities under the new lean and mean strategy.

N ATASHA ABLOVA AND TOLEKAN ISMAILOVA, KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

There were two days of deliberations as to whether a US base would be built. Now, Russia also wants to establish a base.
There are problems of contamination, crop damage, low fly overs. Only civilian airport was invaded. The US promised that 'Human Rights records will be better' if they are around' but after the US base it became worse.
There were six peasant protests but the police shot them dead. US embassy played a role here – weren't bothered by this and helped the police. There is a high level of corruption in the government and the US base will reinforce this.

SUZUYO TAKASATO, OKINAWA

Okinawa houses 75% of US military installations in Japan
Land issues – one third of private land taken by force. Strong movement by landholders in response
military accidents – tremendous problems here
Violence against women – still going on.
In 1995, a 12 year old girl was raped.

TAKESHI HIRAYAMA, JAPAN

Gave a broad overview of their work and the situation in Japan.

KAORI SUNIGAWA, JAPAN

Examined the environmental impact of the U.S. military.

CORA FABROS, PHILIPPINES

Briefly discussed the ouster of US forces from Clark and Subic naval bases.

Since 1992 onwards there has been a rise of access arrangements. 22 ports have been chosen.

Now has visiting forces agreements and exemptions from criminal prosecutions.

Has a CD with many documents on this issue on it.

REVEREND MUYN, KOREA

The US military has access agreements to land and water.

We have had 324 demonstrations against the US military presence.

YUJIN LEE, KOREA

Korea is a hot spot in the Asia Pacific

95 US bases, since 1945

37,000 soldiers

Most serious social problems, about 52,000 offences. Only in 1200 cases did the government exercise jurisdiction. In 2002, 2 school girls hit by US tank. Man hit by an electric shock

US bases to be condensed down to 23

Health rights in Korea:

Noise induced hearing difficulties, 130 Dbs.

High history of abortion

Psychological stress

100,000 gathered to demand US troops out of Korea

ANNEX: COMPLETE TEXT OF JOSEPH GERSON'S PRESENTATION

U.S. Foreign Military Bases & Military Colonialism:
Personal and Analytical Perspectives

Dr. Joseph Gerson*

International Anti-Bases Conference

World Social Forum
Mumbai, India, January 17, 2004

It is a privilege to be here at the World Social Forum, and I am more than a little aware of the irony of a U.S. American giving the keynote speech for this conference. It is all the more humbling, as there are a number of very courageous people here in the office who have led important struggles: Rev. Muyn of Korea, Takazato Suzuyo of Okinawa, Cora Fabros of the Philippines, Myrna Pagan of Vieques, and many others.

Some of us spend a lot of our time doing political and geo-strategic analysis, what people sometimes call "big picture" analysis.. We don't do it because we particularly like to think in abstract or strategic terms, or out of fascination with military hardware and technology. Most of us do what we do because of militarism's impacts on people: the shattering of human lives, its repression and terrorism, and the ways in which it truncates – cuts off and severely limits – our lives and ambitions. Systems of physical coercion and dominance wound, diminish, demean, and too often destroy, people like ourselves.

Before reporting on the Bush Administration's initial steps and massive plans for re-configuration of the global infrastructure of U.S. military bases and installations I want to begin by speaking personally. I have a sharp memory of a few moments from a lecture by one of my professors in the early spring of 1968. It was during a course on U.S. political and diplomatic history taught by Professor Jules Davids, a fine historian and wonderful teacher who we did not then know had been the primary ghost writer of President John Kennedy's book Profiles in Courage. Bill Clinton might have been in class that. Gloria Macapagal, whose father was then client president of the Philippines and who is now president herself, was almost certainly there * <http://www.afsc.org/newengland/pesp/1> , and in recent years I have found myself wondering how she experienced what Professor Davids shared with us.

As he prepared the way to teach about the Spanish American War of 1898 and the U.S. conquests of the Philippines, Guam, Cuba and Puerto Rico, Professor Davids was careful to stress that the China Market was then seen as the holy grail of capitalism, the near-infinite market that could absorb the surplus production of U.S. factories and farms. By quite literally conquering Chinese markets, not only would U.S. industries reap enormous profits, but it could bring an end to a great economic depression that had left millions of workers unemployed, and which was the cause of politically destabilizing turmoil. Professor Davids also explained to us that in the 1890s the warships needed to conquer markets and the merchant ships which would follow in their wake, were steam ships, powered by coal. They could not traverse the Pacific Ocean without stopping from time to time at what were called "coaling stations" to take on more fuel. Colonial powers liked to have exclusive control over their coaling stations. That way they could deny access and essential fuel to the ships of rival colonial powers. The U.S. as a still rising power. It did not have such bases of its own.

Professor Davids then described Subic Bay in the Philippines as one of the world's most perfect ports. It was strategically located just to the east of the Chinese coast, a fine jumping off point for U.S. warships. Its harbor was (and is) deep, round, and wonderfully blue. When I first saw it years later, I struck by how perfect Professor David's description had been. It was to conquer this geostrategically important port, and thus to gain privileged access to the China market, that the U.S. ousted Spain from the Philippines and then went on to kill hundreds of thousands of Filipinos in order to have exclusive control over Subic Bay, the Philippines as a whole, and the ability to

take and sell from China on unequal and demeaning terms. . Of course, the U.S. won other geostrategically important military bases when it ousted Spain as the colonial ruler of Cuba (where the U.S. still has the notorious base at Guantanamo ,) Puerto Rico , and Guam . As they years went by, I found myself wondering what Gloria Macapagal must have thought when she was first exposed Professor Davids' unerring description of why her nation had been colonized, and why the U.S. supported her father. Gloria's recent embrace of George Bush has a long history.

And, of course, today's network of U.S. foreign military bases has served as a foundation of U.S. global economic dominance – assuring it privileged access to markets and to critical resources like oil and natural gas. In an inversion of the old model, the U.S. is now using third world debt as a way to pressure recalcitrant governments to establish new military bases and installations in their countries.

My awakening to the meanings and impacts of U.S. bases, their missions and roles in maintaining dominance, now Full Spectrum Dominance, had come in the early 1980s when I first went to Japan for an anti-nuclear conference. Although I knew far more than most U.S. Americans and U.S. peace activists, I was nonetheless amazed to learn that the U.S. still had (and has) more than 100 military bases and installations across Japan, but concentrated in Okinawa. I was shocked as I listened to Okinawans and other Japanese describe what it meant to live in communities routinely terrorized by the shattering sounds of low altitude & night landing exercises, by crimes committed by GIs that regularly went unpunished just as happened here with the killings of Shin Hyo-soon and Shim Mi-sun and many other times before that. I learned about how people's land had been seized to make way for bases and how these bases blocked economic and social development. I was upset by descriptions of the pervasiveness of prostitution near U.S. bases and by the seemingly endless sexual harassment and violence. People shared their painful memories of deadly military accidents: planes and helicopters falling into people's homes and schools, drunken military drivers who caused sometimes deadly accidents, and the destruction of people's homes and property during military exercises. People spoke of their shame of being complicit in wars and aggressions, like the savaging of Vietnam , because their communities hosted bases deeply involved in killing people and destroying communities and nations. And they taught us about the political context: the unequal U.S.-Japan Military Alliance that was forced on the Japanese people as the price for ending the U.S. military occupation in 1952, and the resulting loss of national sovereignty.

If you think about it, a system of unequal treaties, similar to those that were the foundation of European colonialism across East Asia, continues today, providing the foundation for the U.S. military presence in Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Guam, and elsewhere.

The words and pain anti-bases activists brought back a memories from elementary school: my fourth grade teacher who taught us that the U.S. Declaration of Independence had a section which informed the world that it was necessary to fight the war of Independence against Britain because King George III had "kept among us in times of peace" "Standing Armies" which committed intolerable "abuses and usurpations." They also reminded me of television images from 1960 when Japanese militants – including Muto Ichiyo - snake danced through Tokyo in militant demonstrations to express their rage against the United States and the unequal treaty that forced their communities to host U.S. military bases.

At that meeting in Tokyo and Hiroshima , there were also representatives of the Guam Landowners Association. They had two maps with them. One showed the locations of the island's best fishing grounds, its best agricultural land, and its best drinking water. The other map showed the locations of the U.S. military bases, installations, and military exercises. The two maps were identical. And there were Filipinos who urged us to do all that we could to help them free themselves from U.S. military colonialism and the deadly Marcos dictatorship.

Since then, it has been my painful, humbling, and sometimes inspiring privilege to meet and to learn from people who have been victimized by U.S. military bases in Korea , Okinawa , the Philippines , in Britain , Germany , Belgium , Italy , Iceland , Spain , Turkey , Puerto Rico , Honduras and other countries. Each case is different. Yet, each base brings calamitous “abuses and usurpations.”

I will never forget the face of an Okinawan woman who shared the memory of how, when she was a child, her entire generation of girls – now middle aged women – were terrorized by the brutal G.I. rape and killing of a young girl. Or the sight of older Okinawan farmers – each wearing a headband declaring that “Life is Sacred” - conducting a sit-in outside the courthouse in Naha, demanding the return of their land. Or the agonized testimony of a young Korean about the Maehangri practice range, and how people living there have suffered U.S. bombings for the past fifty years. There was the passion with which a young Korean anti-bases activist insisted that I look at a C.D. that his organization had made about the killings of two girls, Shin Hyo-soon and Shim Mi-sun, by a tank within weeks of that atrocity and his insistence that I do something about it. And a good friend in Iceland once told how demonstrators there had once placed horse’s head on a pole as a way of invoking the old Norse Gods to rid their island of the abominable airbase at Keflavik . They were joking, but they were also a serious and committed as people can be.

Bases bring insecurity; the loss of self-determination, human rights, and sovereignty. They degrade the culture, values, health and the environments of host nations – and of the United States .. And, if you allow yourself to be touched by another’s pain, it becomes yours. The imperative becomes to end the other’s suffering

That is why we are here.

Let me add one last note to these extended introductory comments : With the exception of those who have served in the U.S. military, U.S. Americans are almost entirely ignorant of the existence of this infrastructure of coercion and death. If they are dimly aware that the U.S. has some foreign military bases, they have little idea of how many or for what purposes they exist for purposes other than defending the people of the “host” nations. With the rare exception of the temporary illumination and horror that came with the kidnapping and rape of the Okinawan school girl in 1995, there is no intimation of the suffering, of the “abuses and usurpations,” that come with U.S. bases and “forward deployed” troops. Few were paying attention when, upon President Bush’s return from Asia in October, Condoleezza Rice said “The centerpiece of the President’s strategy is our strong forward presence...”

Missions of Bases :

Let me briefly explain some of the strategic rationales and missions, of the estimated 702 U.S. foreign military bases and installations that are currently located in at least 40 nations ** <<http://www.afsc.org/newengland/pesp/foreignbases.htm#2#2>> . At root, the entire system serves as an integrated global infrastructure for imperial domination. Not even Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar or Benjamin Disraeli had such a host of mighty fortresses. These bases exist to:

- To reinforce the status quo: for example the deterrent role of U.S. bases in South Korea, and the intimidating role of many of the U.S. bases in Middle East which are designed to ensure continued U.S. privileged access to, and control of, the region’s oil
- To encircle enemies: as was the case with the Soviet Union and China during Cold War and China to this day. This is a role played by U.S. bases in Korea , Japan , Philippines , Australia , Pakistan , Diego Garcia, and in many of the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia
- To serve & reinforce the aircraft carriers, destroyers, nuclear armed submarines and other warships of the U.S. Navy. This includes bases in Okinawa, Yokuska outside Tokyo, and “visiting

forces” and “access” agreements in the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and many other countries.

- To train U.S. forces, as was long the case for bombardiers in Vieques and with the jungle war fighting and other training which continues in Okinawa.

- The serve as jumping off points for U.S. foreign military interventions as: the cases of Okinawa, the Philippines, now Korea with the changing missions of U.S. forces here, Spain, Italy, Honduras, Germany and the new bases in Eastern Europe, Kuwait and likely in Iraq.

- They facilitate C3I: command, control, communications and intelligence, including essential roles in nuclear war fighting, and the use of space for intelligence and warfare as we saw in Afghanistan and Iraq . U.S. bases in Okinawa , Qatar , Australia and even China serve these functions.

- They serve to control the governments of host nations. Japan , Korea (where U.S. military forces were deeply involved in military coups,) Germany , Saudi Arabia , and today's Iraq begin the list.

- In a limited number of countries there are U.S. nuclear weapons bases, for example Belgium, Italy, and quite possibly Okinawa.

- And, while it is too soon to call them military bases, as U.S. military power has moved to dominate on land, at sea, in the air, the U.S. is moving to monopolize the weaponization of space with so-called “missile defenses” and Vision 2020 which calls for controlling space to dominate the earth. Today “Rover” is on the moon; tomorrow there may well be a U.S. moon base for war fighting on earth and for the colonization of the solar system.

The Current Context:

Donald Rumsfeld’s unprecedented campaign to restructure and revitalize U.S. forward military deployments and its global military infrastructure is best understood within the context of the Administration’s megalomaniacal ambitions. The campaign is one of the more ambitious U.S. tactics of U.S. efforts to expand and to consolidate its global empire into and through the power vacuums left in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire.

Some of you will remember the slogans the elder President Bush used to frame the “Desert Storm” Gulf War in 1991. It was fought to create a “New World Order” in which “What we say, goes.” It was a reaffirmation of what Noam Chomsky has called “Political Axiom #1” that the U.S. will never permit its enemies, nor its allies, to gain independent access to Middle East oil —the “jugular vein” of global capitalism since World War I, when Winston Churchill termed it “The Prize.”

The “Desert Storm” war was also fought to discipline and restructure the world (dis)order in those dizzying first years of the Post Cold War-era. In the months that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall, most of the world’s the military alliances military budgets, military bases, and military production facilities were bereft of their legitimizing rationale, and their futures were uncertain. With “Desert Storm,” NATO was turned toward “out of area” operations, with bases in Britain and Germany used as staging areas and jumping off points. Even placid Shannon Airport in Dublin was unnecessarily forced to accommodate U.S. warplanes to remind the Irish that they live in what Zbigniew Brzezinski calls a “vassal state.” The U.S. did its best to traumatize Japanese political culture, insisting that \$13 billion and the use of U.S. bases from Okinawa to Hokkaido were certainly not sufficient. In 1991 Bush I prepared the way for Bush II to let the Koizumi Government know that it was expected to “show the flag,” to join the U.S. war against the Taliban by sending warships to the Indian Ocean. Those 1991 demands were part of the longer-term U.S. campaign to completely remilitarize Japan and its political culture. We see this again today in the

U.S. demands that Japan and Korea contribute to the illusion of legitimacy of the U.S. neo-colonial occupation of Iraq by sending in their troops. Your societies are to pay the price of “burden sharing” – in blood if necessary.

In 1991 The people of Vieques suffered new rounds of practice bombing runs, and the naval and air bases in Diego Garcia were shown to be fundamentally important to U.S. Middle East hegemony. Across North Africa and the Middle East, the war was used to exercise formal and informal alliances, to re-legitimate the presence and use of U.S. military bases in Egypt and the Persian Gulf, and to build new military bases in strategically important Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Qatar and Kuwait. With the nuclear threats made by President Bush, Vice President Quayle, Secretary of War Cheney, and British Prime Minister Major during the “Desert Shield” phase of the war. And, with, the encirclement of Iraq with as many as 700 nuclear weapons to back up those threats, the first Bush Administration. Attempted to re-legitimate the existence of its nuclear arsenal and the practice of nuclear blackmail — at least in elite U.S. circles —for the Post-Cold War period. You can be sure that an essential pillar of those threats were the military bases where U.S. nuclear weapons are stored, where U.S. nuclear-capable ships are based or make port calls, and where there are C3I functions.

In the early days of the Clinton Administration, when I joined protest marches in Japan and the Philippines, I was struck at the rage people expressed as they shouted condemnations of “Clinton.” I knew that, at heart, he was actually a little man, caught up in what Hannah Arendt first called “the banality of evil.” To enjoy the privileges and power of being the U.S. president, he had to pay the price in terms of tolerating and affirming deadly policies, institutions, and actions.

With the exception of his reckless sexual behavior, Bill Clinton’s political career was marked by caution and conservatism. He is not what most of us would think of as a courageous man. Since his student days, he has not been one to challenge illegitimate power and authority. Instead, he bent himself to its demands, integrating its power into his own and rising with it. Among his first commitments upon assuming the presidency was to promise not to cut the military’s gargantuan budget, thereby squelching dreams of a post-Cold War peace dividend. I doubt that he was personally committed to the economic sanctions that took the lives of an estimated one million Iraqis – most of them children and old people – during his presidency. I think he was simply afraid to pay the political price required to end one of the worst mass murders of the last century.

As his history with Saddam Hussein’s Iraq reflects, Clinton was not so much a warrior as a classical politician who knew that his career depended on keeping the economy vital, people employed, and income gap widening profits flowing to his patrons. Here in Asia, after Clinton almost stumbled into what would have been a cataclysmic second Korean war in 1994, he essentially handed the re-formulation of U.S. Asia policy to Joe Nye at the Pentagon. Thus we had the recommitment to maintain 100,000 forward deployed troops in bases across East Asia, the deepening and expansion of the U.S.-Japanese alliance through the Clinton-Hashimoto agreement, the SACO smoke and mirrors campaign to pacify the Okinawan people by ostensibly “reducing the size of the U.S. footprint” on that tortured land without making any substantial changes. And Nye led Clinton back to “engagement” with China.

In Europe, Assistant Secretary of State, Strobe Talbot and the U.S. military were busy re-dividing and containing that continent. They pressed for the inclusion of nearly all of Eastern Europe into an enlarged NATO to counter French and Germany ambitions. They renewed the 19th century game of playing Russia off against Western Europe. And, in the aftermath of the illegal “Kosovo” war against Serbia, the U.S. emerged with a massive new military base, Camp Bondsteel. Bondsteel was the first of what Washington hopes will become a new system of U.S. military bases contributing to the encirclement of Western Europe and Russia and, as we saw last year, as jumping off points for U.S. wars in the Middle East.

Which brings us to the second catastrophic Bush presidency. The Bush Administration came to power with the commitment to impose what Vice President Cheney called, “the arrangement for

the 21 st century” to ensure that “the United States will continue to be the dominant political, economic, and military power in the world.”: As they came to power, Cheney, Rumsfeld and their neo-con allies let it be known that they modeled themselves after Teddy Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge and Admiral Mahan, the men who – in the 1880s and 1890s – envisioned the possibility of the U.S. replacing Britain as the world’s dominant power, and then built the military needed to do it. Well before 9-11 and the publication of its unilateralist, first-strike, “National Strategy Statement,” Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld were clear that they were committed to the so-called “Revolution in Military Affairs” – the further integration of information technologies into U.S. war fighting doctrines; its air, land, sea and space based weapons systems; and in the military’s infrastructure – including its global network of foreign military bases.

As the pre-inaugural reports prepared under the direction of (now) Assistant Secretary of State Armitage and (now) Ambassador Khalilzad recommended, in the Asia Pacific this meant reaffirming the commitment to U.S. military bases and forward deployed troops across the region. Yes, some bases will be close in Rumsfeld’s re-configuration, and some will be merged. But, this will be done in the context of augmenting U.S. military power through “diversification”– moving their center of gravity of U.S. forward deployed troops and bases from Northeast Asia further south. The goals are to better encircle China, to fight the so-called “War on Terrorism” across Southeast Asia, and to more completely control the sea lanes over which Persian Gulf oil – the life blood of East Asia’s economies – must travel. Guam will again become a hub for U.S. Asia-Pacific forces. So much for its people and natural resources! U.S. bases in Australia will be augmented. The agenda is to build on the “Visiting Forces” and access agreements with the Philippines , and Singapore , and to open the way for U.S. forces in Thailand . In fact, as the Philippine press reports, U.S. military officials are privately exploring the possibility of reestablishing its bases in the former colony.

With the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the way was opened to expand and to redesign the U.S. network of bases. Using the Bush Administration’s intimidating tactic of insisting that “for us or against us” (in the latter case being targeted for possible invasion,) dictatorships in Pakistan , Uzbekistan , Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan were forced to surrender sovereignty and to invite the Pentagon to establish what will likely become permanent U.S. military bases.

A year later, with Germany balking at joining in the invasion of Iraq and limiting the roles that U.S. bases there could play, Washington began “diversifying” its European military infrastructure . Threats to punish Germany by withdrawing all U.S. bases from Germany were made, although Germany will continue to “host” the most U.S. bases and troops in Europe for years to come. New bases were established in those bastions of democracy and human rights Romania and Bulgaria. To the south, under cover of preparations for the war, Bush and company removed one of the precipitating causes of the 9-11 attacks: the majority of U.S. troops and bases in Saudi Arabia . Many Moslems experienced those bases as sullyng Islam’s holiest land. These troops, bases and functions were transferred to Qatar and Kuwait. Bases in Djibouti and Bahrain were expanded. And now, in addition to plans for Iraq to serve the U.S. as a source of oil that can be used to leverage Saudi Arabia and OPEC, U.S. military planners look forward to Iraq serving as a bastion of U.S. military power in the Middle East for decades to come.

Africa, too, is to have an augmented role in the U.S. global military network. On the eve of President Bush’s trip to the continent last Spring, the U.S. was in the process of negotiating the creation of a “family” of military bases across the continent. As General Jones of the European Command explained, this “family” is to include major bases for up to 5,000 strong brigades “that could be robustly used.” There will also be “lightly equipped bases available in crises to special forces or Marines.” “Hosts” for this new family are to include Algeria , Mali, Guinea (which has also been targeted as a source of oil), and Zaire, with Senegal and Uganda providing refueling installations for the Air Force. And, Washington hasn’t forgotten its own “backyard,” Latin America. Although the Puerto Rican people’s fifty year struggle to close the base at Vieques has prevailed, new bases are now sprouting across the Andean nations, the largest being Manta in Ecuador, and the U.S. is increasingly militarizing the Caribbean.

This “diversified” and unprecedented infrastructure of global military power is being built on several conceptual pillars.

First is flexibility. Cheney, Rumsfeld, and their associates want total freedom of action. On the one hand, if, Germany, or another vassal state are reluctant to permit U.S. military bases and installations to be used for a particular purpose, including war, the Pentagon wants to be sure that it will be able to use bases in other countries as quickly as possible. Similarly, as in the case of South Korea which is bearing the greatest brunt of the reconfiguration in Asia, Washington wants its military infrastructure to be flexible, able to serve multiple bellicose functions: to deter Pyongyang while also being available for “regime change” war, to influence Korean foreign and domestic policy, and to assist U.S. military interventions across East Asia – perhaps, like U.S. bases in Japan – as far away as the Persian Gulf.

Second is speed. With forward deployed troops and munitions, and with new “lily pad” bases that can be used as jumping off points for military interventions and aggression, the goal is to be able to strike before the target of U.S. attack can prepare its defenses or, as in the case of Iraq, even a long term strategy of resistance.

Building on both current and new bases and military installations, U.S. forward deployed forces are to be organized along a three-tiered integrated structure: 1) major hub bases like those in Japan, Okinawa, Guam, Britain, Qatar, and Honduras; 2) smaller centers or “Forward Operating bases” like those in South Korea, Diego Garcia, Kuwait, Bulgaria, Uzbekistan, and Australia; and 3) “Lilly pads” that will serve as jumping off points in countries ranging from Lithuania to Tajikistan, and Djibouti to the Andean nations in South America.

As an “island power,” the U.S. is also planning to create bases at sea for the forward deployment of munitions and even floating runways to accommodate U.S. war planes.

The purpose of this “reconfiguration” of U.S. military power is, of course, not to keep the Pentagon and “national security state” occupied or preoccupied with conceptual exercises. Like bases, weapons and troops themselves, the reorganization is being done to better terrorize, coerce, and if deemed necessary to kill other humans. And, as the people of South Korea, Japan, Okinawa, and other nations that already “host” U.S. military bases know, these bases will come with intolerable and terrorizing “abuses and usurpations” which must be resisted and overcome.

Solidarity

I won’t pretend that there are easy solutions to liberating ourselves from the abuses, usurpations, and dangers war that attend the presence of all military bases. The inspiring struggles of the Filipino and Okinawan people, and the international solidarity campaigns that have supported them provide models from which we can all take hope and important lessons.

There are several other new dynamics and initiatives that we should bear in mind. The first is that there has been a worldwide explosion of anti-bases education and organizing over the past six months. In Europe, a new network of anti-bases activists met at the European Network for Peace and Human Rights conference in Brussels last June. They are already well along the way to editing a book, written by people from “host” nations around the world, that should be an important tool in anti-bases work. More dramatically, Europeans are again protesting at U.S. bases, including the nuclear weapons base in Belgium. Here in Asia, as many of you know, Focus on Global South has initiated a new anti-bases list serve network that provides an important forum for people across the globe to exchange information, share histories, and to explore common actions. In November, an International Consultation of U.S. Bases was held in Seoul, and it prepared a series of recommendations that we hope will be considered during this conference.

My privilege now is to listen and to learn from you. I wish I could say that I think it possible that campaigning to repatriate U.S. troops and bases from across Asia and the world will soon become a primary focus of the U.S. peace movement. Unhappily, between the Bush wars, the increasing focus on regime change at home in next year's U.S. presidential election, and growing concern about the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld efforts to build new nuclear weapons and to resume nuclear weapons testing, our contributions to the liberation of Korea, Okinawa, Japan, the Philippines, and other nations with U.S. bases will be less than we would like.

There have significant openings in the past:, speaking tours and joint-publications to educate people and to boost movement building in the U.S., statements of remorse and solidarity signed by hundreds of U.S. people after the 1995 kidnapping and rape of the Okinawan school girl by three GIs, and the signature advertisement that we placed in the Okinawa Times on the opening day of the G-8 summit held in that still occupied military colony.

In closing, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to be here with you. I look forward to exploring with you ways that the U.S. peace movement can make at least some contributions to your struggles for freedom, peace, and security.

* As an undergraduate, I attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. Bill Clinton and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo were two of my 250 classmates between 1964 and 1968. What it was like to be a middle class Jew in this elite Catholic and international institution is quite another story.

** Calculating the numbers of bases, installations and the nations they are in, is an imprecise art. The figures cited here are conservative and do not take into account military warehouses, which are sometimes counted as installations. Similarly, some use the figure of 100 nations. This includes military attachés in U.S. embassies. And, with President Bush having promised that the U.S. would be fighting an overt and covert war in between forty and eighty countries, at this time only senior figures in the Pentagon and CIA and White House have access to the complete list.

**Dr. Joseph Gerson is the Director of Programs of the American Friends Service Committee in New England. He is deeply involved in the U.S. peace and anti-war movement and participated in the founding conferences of United for Peace and Justice, The Asia Peace Assembly, and the European Network for Peace and Human Rights. His books include: *The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, *With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination*, and *The Deadly Connection: Nuclear War and U.S. Intervention*.

ANNEX: AN INVITATION TO JOIN AN INTERNATIONAL ANTI-US BASES E-MAIL NETWORK

The United States maintains military bases and other forms of military presence in over 100 countries. This network of bases is crucial for the US to project power around the world — in pursuit of its economic and strategic interests. In order to prevent the US from waging its illegitimate wars, the global peace and justice movement must campaign for the shutting down of these bases or ending other forms of military presence in each of the countries hosting them.

With this in mind, various parallel proposals have been raised around the world for launching an international campaign against US bases. A global network composed of communities affected by as well as organizations working on these bases could be a powerful platform for pushing this campaign.

This important project, along with other global anti-war campaigns, was endorsed in the Jakarta Peace Consensus (JPC) of the Global Peace Movements' Conference last May 2003, and has since gained the support of various other organizations and forums. (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, and Arabic versions of the JPC in PDF format can be downloaded from www.focusweb.org).

The challenge now is for these otherwise separate and isolated initiatives to come together so that a common campaign plan could be discussed, planned, and forged.

The first step is to bring together people working on US bases in an e-mail network or list-serve that will facilitate communication and coordination among its members.

The network is open to:

- * representatives from communities affected by US bases/ military presence
- * representatives from local, national, or international organizations and social movements working or intending to work on US bases/ military presence
- * academics or researchers studying US bases/ military presence
- * any other individual or organization that could contribute to this campaign

If you fall under any of these categories, just send an e-mail to herbert@focusweb.org with a short background of your community/organization and/or of your work.

If you know of others who should be included in this network, please forward this invitation to them and encourage them to join.

CURRENT SUBSCRIBERS AS OF JAN 28, 2004 INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE FOLLOWING:

Alliance of Progressive Labor (Philippines)
 American Friends Service Committee (US)
 Anti US Bases Expansion in Pyongtaek Task Force (South Korea)
 Anti-Bases Campaign (New Zealand)
 ARENA (Hong Kong)
 Asia Pacific Women for Law and Development (Thailand)
 Asian Pacific Center on Education of International Understanding (South Korea)
 Asian Peace Alliance
 Asian Peace Alliance - Japan
 ASR Resource Center (Pakistan)
 Ateneo Human Rights Center (Philippines)
 ATTAC Ivory Coast
 ATTAC Portugal
 Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labour Federation (BAFLF)
 Bangladesh Krishok Federation
 Bastaguerra (Italy)

Body and Soul (Japan)
 Campaign Against the Military Bases (Iceland)
 Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament UK
 Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (UK)
 Campaña por la desmilitarización de las Américas (CADA)
 Catholic Center for Environment (South Korea)
 Centro Memorial Dr Martin Luther King Jr (Cuba)
 CETIM Geneva
 Chagos Refugees Group
 Chagossian Support Group (New Zealand)
 Citizens' Peace Committee of Islamabad
 Civil Network for a Peaceful Korea
 Civil Society Against Corruption
 Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques (Puerto Rico)
 Communist Party USA
 Confederacion COBAS (Italy)
 Cornell University - Shimin Gaikou Center (US)
 Daegu Civil Movement to Retaking of USFK Bases & Facilities (South Korea)
 DAWN - Southeast Asia
 Democratic Socialist Party (Australia)
 DMZ-Hawai'i Aloha 'Aina and AFSC Hawai'i
 Documentation for Action Groups in Asia (Hong Kong)
 Documentation, Research and Training Center (India)
 East Asia - US - Puerto Rico Women's Network against Militarism
 Fellowship of Reconciliation (US)
 Focus on the Global South
 For Mother Earth (Belgium)
 For Participation and Autonomy Chun Cheon People's Solidarity (South Korea)
 Foreign Policy in Focus (US)
 Forum Asia (Thailand)
 Fremantle Anti-Nuclear Group (Australia)
 Friends of the Earth Australia
 Gathering for Peace (Philippines)
 German Peace Council
 Globalize Resistance
 Greek Social Forum
 Greek Social Forum Assembly of Chania
 Green Korea United
 Green Party (US)
 Greenpeace
 Greenpeace Australia Pacific
 Hawai'i Institute for Human Rights
 Himawari Noujou
 Hokkaido Asia Africa Latin American Solidarity Committee
 Human Development Center
 Human Rights Activists with RK
 Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation
 Indonesian Students Christian Movement
 Institute of Human Rights
 Institute of Regional Study - Okinawa University/ Okinawa Environmental Network
 Inter Pares (Canada)
 International Peace Bureau
 International South Group Network
 JANANEETHI
 Janavisnanavedika- AIPSN
 Japan Asia Africa Latin America Solidarity Committee

Japan Peace Committee
Jawaharlal Nehru University (India)
Jubilee South Africa
Jubileo Sur
KAISAKA (Philippines)
Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (Philippines)
Korea Anabaptist Center
Korea Coalition for the Retaking of US
Korean Women's Environmental Network
Labor Party Pakistan Education Foundation
Lalit (Mauritius)
Lancelin and Nilgen communities (Australia)
Ledikasyon pu Travayer, LPT (Mauritius)
Marseille Anti-War Committee
Military Toxics Project (US)
Nasion Chamoru (Guam)
National Campaign for Eradication of Crimes by US Troops in Korea
NGO Workers against War (UK)
Nijera Kori ("We will do it Ourselves") (Bangladesh)
No War on Iraq Coordination of Turkey
Nomorebases collective
Nonviolence International
Nonviolent Peaceforce
Not in Our Name - Hawai'i
OCLAE (Cuba)
offthegrid (US)
One Voice (Indonesia)
Pacific Concerns Resource Center (Fiji)
Paju Citizen's Forum (South Korea)
Peace and Culture Foundation (Thailand)
Peace Boat (Japan)
Peace Initiative of Turkey
People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (Korea)
People's Action for the Revision of the Unjust SOFA between ROK and USA
Peoples' Peace Alliance (Pakistan)
People's Plan Study Group (Japan)
People's Task Force for Bases Clean-up (Philippines)
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement
Proyecto Caribeno de Justicia y Paz (Puerto Rico)
Resource Center for People's Development (Philippines)
School of Social Work
Sinhanada Nagpur (Social Cultural Organization)
Social Action Center of Catholic Osaka Archdiocese (Japan)
Social Movements' Network
Social Network for Justice and Human Rights
South Asian Women for Peace
Stop the War Brigade
Stop the War Coalition - Greece
Stop the War Initiative (Poland)
Stop.USA (Stop United States of Aggression)
Student Environmental Action Coalition
Sumpay Mindanao, Inc. (Philippines)
Swedish Peace Council
Thamassat University - Peace Information Center (Thailand)
The Hankyoren 21 (Japan)
The Institute for Islamic and Social Studies (Indonesia)

The Peace Museum Construction Committee (South Korea)
Transnational Institute (Netherlands)
Uijeonbu Citizen's Solidarity for Peace Without USA Bases (South Korea)
Un Ponte Per (Italy)
Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco (Mexico)
US Peace Council
Women in Black
Women Making Peace (Korea)
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, US Section
Workers' Democracy (Thailand)
World March of Women

ANNEX: WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA)
Asian Peace Alliance (APA)
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (UK)
Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases (UK)
Campaign for the Demilitarization of the Americas (CADA)
Centro Memorial Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Cuba)
CETIM
Chagossian Support Group Waiheke Island
Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques (Puerto Rico)
Confederacion COBAS (Italy)
Focus on the Global South
For Mother Earth
German Peace Council
LALIT (Diego Garcia)
Nasion Chamoru-Fuetsan Famalao'an' (Chamoru Nation-The Woman's
Power/Strength)
Peace Boat (Japan)
OCLAE (Cuba)
Stop - USA (Belgium)
Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women (TW-MAE-W)
Transnational Institute
US Peace Council
World Peace Council

ANNEX: WSF 2004: CALL OF THE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND MASS ORGANISATIONS

Mumbai, India, January 2004

We the social movements united in Assembly in the city of Mumbai, India, share the struggles of the people of India and all Asians. We reiterate our opposition to the neoliberal system which generates economic, social and environmental crises and produces war. Our mobilisation against war and deep social and economic injustices has served to reveal the true face of neoliberalism.

We are united here to organise the resistance against capitalism and to find alternatives. Our resistance began in Chiapas, Seattle and Genoa, and led to a massive world-wide mobilisation against the war in Iraq on 15th February 2003 which condemned the strategy of global, on-going war implemented by the United States government and its Allies. It is this resistance that led to the victory over the WTO in Cancun.

The occupation of Iraq showed the whole world the existing links between militarism and the economic domination of the multinational corporations. Moreover, it also justified the reasons for our mobilisation.

As social movements and mass organisations, we reaffirm our commitment to fight neoliberal globalisation, imperialism, war, racism, the caste system, cultural imperialism, poverty, patriarchy, and all forms of discrimination - economic social, political, ethnic, gender, sexual - including that of sexual orientation and gender identity. We are also against all kinds of discrimination to persons with different capacities and fatal illnesses such as AIDS.

We struggle for social justice, access to natural resources - land, water and seeds- human and citizens' rights, participative democracy, the rights of workers of both genders as guaranteed in international treaties, womens' rights, and also the people's right to self-determination. We are partisans of peace, international cooperation and we promote sustainable societies that are able to guarantee access to public services and basic goods. At the same time, we reject social and patriarchal violence against women.

We call for a mass mobilisation on 8th March, International Women's Day.

We fight all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism. At the same time we are opposed to the use of terrorism which criminalises popular movements and restricts civil activists. The so-called law against terrorism restricts civil rights and democratic freedom all over the world.

We vindicate the struggle of peasants, workers, popular urban movements and all people under threat of losing their homes, jobs, land or their rights. We also vindicate the struggle to reverse privatisation in order to protect common, public goods, as is happening with pensions and Social Security in Europe. The victory of the massive mobilisation of the Bolivian people in defense of their natural resources, democracy and sovereignty testifies to the strength and potential of our movements. Simultaneously, peasants across the globe are struggling against multinationals and neoliberal corporate agricultural policies, demanding sovereignty over food and democratic land reform.

We call for unity with all peasants on 17th April, International Day of Peasants Struggles.

We identify with the struggle of the mass movements and popular organisations in India, and together with them, we condemn the political and ideological forces which promote violence, sectarianism, exclusion and nationalism based on religion and ethnicity. We condemn the threats, arrests, torture and assassinations of social activists who organised communities in order to struggle for global justice. We also denounce discrimination based on caste, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity. We condemn the perpetuation of violence and oppression against women through cultural, religious and traditional discriminatory practices.

We support the efforts of mass movements and popular organisations in India and Asia which promote the struggle for justice, equality and human rights, especially that of the Dalits, Adivasis, and the most oppressed and repressed sectors of society. The neoliberal policy of the Indian government aggravated the marginalisation and social oppression which the Dalits have suffered historically.

For all these reasons we support the struggle of all the marginalised throughout the world, and urge everyone worldwide to join the call of the Dalits for a day of mobilisation for social inclusion.

As an escape from its crisis of legitimacy, global capitalism is using force and war in order to maintain an anti-popular order. We demand that the governments put a stop to militarism, war, and military spending, and demand the closure of US military bases because they are a risk and threat to humanity and life on earth. We have to follow the example of the people of Puerto Rico who forced the US to close its base in Vieques. The opposition to global warfare remains our main object of mobilisation around the world.

We call on all citizens of the world to mobilise simultaneously on 20th March in an international day of protest against war and the occupation of Iraq imposed by the United States, Great Britain and the Allied Forces.

In each country, the anti-war movements are developing their own consensus and tactics in order to guarantee as wide a participation and mobilisation as possible. We demand the immediate withdrawal of all occupying troops and support the right of the Iraqi to self-determination and sovereignty, as well as their right to reparation for all the damages caused by the embargo and war.

The struggle against terrorism not only acts as a pretext for continuing the war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, but it is also being used to threaten and attack the global community. At the same time, the US is maintaining a criminal embargo against Cuba, and destabilising Venezuela.

We call upon all people to give maximum support this year to the mobilisation for the Palestinian people, especially on 30th March, Palestinian Land Day, against the building of the wall of apartheid.

We denounce imperialist forces that are generating religious, ethnic, racial and tribal conflicts in order to further their own interests, increasing the suffering of the people and multiplying the hate and violence between them. More than 80 per cent of the ongoing conflicts in the world are internal and especially affect African and Asian communities.

We denounce the unsustainable situation of debt in poor countries of the world, and the coercive use by governments, multinational corporations and international financial institutions. We strongly demand the total and unconditional cancellation and rejection of the illegitimate debts of the Third World. As a preliminary condition for the satisfaction of the fundamental economic, social, cultural and political rights, we also demand the restitution of the longstanding plunder of the Third World. We especially support the struggle of the African peoples and their social movements.

Once again we raise our voices against the G8 Summit and the meetings of the IMF and World Bank, who bear the greatest responsibility for the plunder of entire communities.

We reject the imposition of regional and bilateral free-trade agreements such as FTAA, NAFTA, CAFTA, AGOA, NEPAD, Euro-Med, AFTA and ASEAN.

We are millions of persons united in the struggle against our common enemy: the WTO. The indigenous people are struggling against patents on all kinds of life-forms and the theft of

biodiversity, water, land. We are united in fighting the privatisation of public services and common goods.

We call upon everybody to mobilise for the right to water as a source of life that cannot be privatised. We are endeavouring to recover control over public, common goods and natural resources, previously privatised and given to transnational enterprises and the private sector.

In the victory at Cancun, the death of Lee symbolised the suffering of millions of peasants and poor people all over the world that are excluded by the "free market". His immolation is a symbol for our struggle against the WTO. This proves our determination to oppose any attempt to revive the WTO.

WTO out of agriculture, food, health, water, education, natural resources and common goods!

With this determination in mind, we call upon all the social movement and mass organisations of the world to join the mobilisation in Hong Kong or in any other place where the WTO ministerial will be held. Let us join our efforts to struggle against privatisation, in defense of common goods, environment, agriculture, water, health, public services and education.

In order to achieve our objectives, we reiterate our strong desire to reinforce the network of social movements and our capacity for struggle.

GLOBALISE THE STRUGGLE! GLOBALISE THE HOPE!

ANNEX: RELATED PRESS CLIPPINGS

Global Peace Movement Revival

By Tom Hayden

AlterNet January 20, 2004

MUMBAI, INDIA — Natalia Ablova faces a tough challenge in her campaign against the US occupation of Iraq. Ablova, who looks like any friendly middle-American in her plain dress, shoulder-length hair and reading glasses, is opposing the Iraq occupation on the streets of Kyrgistan, the only Central Asian country where such protest is permitted.

"There is no chance for participatory democracy in our region," she laments. But last year, she led 30 human rights groups to the US Embassy to denounce the invasion.

Far from being alone, Natalia Ablova is complicating the Bush administration's war planning and its status as the sole superpower. On this March 20, the first anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq, when the White House expected throngs of cheering Iraqis in the streets, there will be masses of jeering protestors like Natalia Ablova around the world instead. Last year, four to five million people protested in over 600 cities globally. This year the numbers are unpredictable, but opposition to the war has increased among the general public, affecting the American presidential campaign and keeping the United Nations at a distance.

This week Natalia Ablova is attending a "General Assembly of the Global Anti-War Movement," one of the many planning sessions provided space for the tens of thousands attending the World Social Forum.

Instead of weakening or fragmenting the global justice movement, the war in Iraq has prompted a peace movement heavily influenced by the anti-globalization analysis of the forum.

BREMER AND KISSINGER

The growing demand is not simply to end the military intervention in Iraq but the US takeover of the Iraq economy and its natural resources as well. The protest is not only against the contracting favoritism shown to Halliburton and Bechtel, but the very idea that the Iraqi economy should be contracted out to private foreign corporations in the first place. Seen this way, the Iraq occupation is a perfect real-time example of the Bush administration's doctrine of right-wing market fundamentalism that is being offered as an alternative to religious fundamentalism in the region.

In this context, Paul Bremer is understood not only as point man for the US government, but as managing director of Kissinger & Associates, which represents a secret list of US multinational corporations with long-term stakes in the region. Bremer already has imposed a maximum flat tax of only 15 percent on corporate profits, privatized hundreds of Iraqi businesses and natural resources, and carried free market fundamentalism so far that he faces legal challenges to the US authority based on the traditional international rules governing occupations. In addition, a Bremer order dictates that all non-governmental organizations in the "new Iraq" must be registered and provide detailed membership lists to the American authorities in Baghdad.

Except for Dennis Kucinich, Democratic presidential candidates have been hesitant to criticize the sweeping right-wing agenda in Iraq except for "excesses" like Halliburton's overcharging on petroleum.

But all that will change if the global peace movement succeeds in reframing the debate.

A NEW MOVEMENT

The reframing has already begun among countless activists on the ground. After returning from Iraq last year, Medea Benjamin of Global Exchange raised concerns about the US economic designs on Iraqi wealth. Anti-globalization writer Naomi Klein has published research in *The Nation* on the attempted sale of Iraq to corporate bidders. This week here, the novelist-turned-activist Arundhati Roy has urged crowds to go home and shut down the corporate offices of firms profiting from the Iraq occupation. Such ideas, which were implemented by effective direct action in San Francisco last year, are circulating rapidly in the thousands of nooks and crannies where movements germinate in a kind of “pre-history” before being recognized in the media.

At a lengthy meeting on the forum grounds today, peace activists known only to each other through phone calls and emails met for the first time, shared their reflections on last year’s February demonstrations and their plans for March 20. The discussion revealed a high level of unity and concern for proper messaging, despite the exceptional diversity of cultures, languages, and nationalities in the mix.

Iraqi women, for example, urged the international activists to support the struggles of Baghdad-based NGOs to protect Iraqi businesses and emerging women’s groups hard hit by Bremer’s recent agreement to waive existing civil laws for religious codes concerning marriage and divorce.

An Indian woman spoke of being “very nervous” about March 20 because over 80 percent of the 100,000 who protested last February were Muslim. “What are we working for, just numbers in the street?” she asked. Or are we trying to build a “broader, non-religious, secular movement emphasizing the questions of Iraq’s natural resources and development?”

The World Social Forum, she said, provides an opportunity to build a larger anti-Iraq movement across the deep religious divides of India.

Many speakers impressed the audience with their resistance in remote and difficult circumstances. A Turkish woman recounted how 100,000 people marched last year at just the moment the Parliament was weighing whether to send troops to Iraq. An individual from Montreal described how 200,000 people gathered in 20° below weather for an all-day vigil. A British woman living in the US client state of Qatar spoke of how nervous she was taking her first anti-war stand while the country was “overrun with American soldiers.”

An Egyptian peace activist explained the relative absence of mass demonstrations last year. “All of us in the Arab countries are under some sort of military rule. Our governments fear that even a small, permitted peace demonstration will grow into a larger one against our miserable life.” He is working nonetheless on a social forum linking peace and democracy.

LESS SLOGANEERING, MORE OUTREACH

Several speakers emphasized the need to reach a wider audience, and to conduct the protests in ways supportive of the peace movement in the United States. A Costa Rican delegate stressed that “we must coordinate with the American movements, not let ourselves be seen as anti-American, and not be seen as violent.” Another from the Middle East called for “less sloganeering, and more reaching out.”

The few Americans present, mostly from branches of United for Peace and Justice and ANSWER, welcomed the international dialogue and support.

An American student reminded the audience that young people had never before been involved on the scale of the February 2003 protests. “Don’t say it’s not going to be as big this time. The thing is, more people in the US are doubting Bush today than during the protests before the war. The peace sentiment is growing. March 20 should not be measured just as a mobilization but by the base-building and education we do on the corporate takeover of Iraq.”

Last year's large-scale protests were the first in memory before a war began, revealing a crucial lack of public consensus as Bush commenced the conflict. With the occupation bogged down, casualty levels rising, and the administration's false claims revealed almost daily, anti-war sentiment has spread to middle America and influenced the tone of presidential debate. Organizing a larger protest is made more difficult in some ways by the peace movement's success, but the need to reframe the message and keep the heat on the presidential candidates will be a major challenge in 2004.

But if Natalia Ablova is marching to the US Embassy once again, anything is possible in this unpredictable movement against war.

Tom Hayden is a progressive activist, author and former California elected official. He is in Mumbai, India, covering the World Social Forum for AlterNet. (c) 2004 Independent Media Institute. All rights reserved.

Anniversary of U.S. invasion of Iraq magnet for anti-war ferment :

March 20: Day of Protest

By Marwaan Macan-Markar, Inter-Press Service

IF OSAMA bin Laden's name has acquired notoriety with Sep.11, then activists gathered here are determined to link another man with another date. The chosen candidate is U.S. President George W Bush, and the date, Mar. 20.

This gift of sorts to the world's most powerful man from a broad spectrum of the world's citizens is hardly shrouded in mystery. For it was on this day last year that the Bush ordered U.S-led troops to invade Iraq.

And after three days of high octane political debate and demonstrations, it appears that the World Social Forum (WSF) has evolved into a dress rehearsal of the anti-Bush and anti-war energy that is set to burst on the streets of the world's towns and cities in eight weeks.

It is an anniversary that cannot be ignored, said speaker after speaker during discussions since Saturday on war, imperialism and occupation. The banners with striking messages against Washington's military ambitions added to this mood of protest gathering momentum.

Typical of these new foot soldiers on a mission to wage peace is Gulbadan Azam, a 42- year-old female activist from Pakistan. For two days, she joined other members of Aurat Foundation, a group that lobby's for women's rights, to convey a silent, yet stark message to the throngs of people milling through the WSF's venue.

Azam stood on the sidelines of the many marches, at times walking with the crowds, carrying a large poster with a six-word message printed in bold text: "When Bush Comes to Shove – Resist!."

"The planned demonstrations on March 20 are very important for peace. We have to challenge the U.S. agenda in as many ways, through dance, art and powerful protests," said Azam, a mother of two.

It is a cause that excites a European politician, too. "I will be out there demonstrating in Paris, because we don't accept the way Bush is acting," said Daneille Auroi, a member of the Green Party in the European parliament.. "His actions reveal that he hates the South."

A South African activist who took a lead role in the anti-war demonstrations in his country last year, has already set his sights on a larger outpouring of protests when the global citizenry mark the international day that people are increasingly choosing to protest against war and occupation.

"We need to go beyond our efforts last year to oppose the imperial designs of George Bush," said Trevor Ngwane, of the South African Antiprivatisation Forum. "Trade unions in arms producing companies have to increase their pressure, too, by refusing to help in the war effort."

This storm of protest is a welcome development in the political atmosphere for U.S. activists at the WSF. Not only can they identify with the rage against the Bush administration seen displayed here, but they recognize it as a show of strength to boost their anti-war sentiments at home.

"I have never experienced anything this big and I think it is good for those of us struggling for the peace, justice and social agenda," said Joseph Gerson, founder of the Union for Justice and Peace, a movement that has been in the vanguard of the U.S. anti-war movement.

"I am not surprised by the anti-Bush sentiments here," he added. "If anything, people have been very kind to Bush."

"But these people are our allies," he affirmed. "And the plans underway for March 20 will add to the pressure Bush is under since Iraq was invaded. What we are seeing now in Iraq is the White House being forced to manipulate reality."

For Gerson, it confirms that the huge anti-war rallies held in the United States and across the world before the Iraqi invasion drove home a significant political message – the legitimate right to criticize Bush and expose the illegitimate nature of the U.S.-led conquest.

"You cannot let this first anniversary of the war go unmarked," he said. "It will demonstrate that there is a moral and political force opposed to the government." *

THE WSF GROUNDS



PICTURES



THE STRATEGY SESSION

*Inside the tent.**Corazon Fabros with Herbert Docena.**Beverly Keene**Marinella Corregia, Eleonora Nucciarelli, and Rae Street.**Sharon Jacquin, Bernadette Dugasse, Lindsey Collen,
and Olivier Banseult**Sissy Vovou, Hans Peter-Richter, Eleonora Nucciarelli,
and Rae Street.*



Marinella Corregia, Hans Peter Richter and Pol D'Huyvetter.



Scott Ludlam and Martini Gotje.



Joseph Gerson.



Suzuyo Takasato, Takeshi Hirayama, and Corazon Fabros.



Rae Street.



Lina Cahuasqui, Monica Martins, and Myrna Pagan.

THE STRATEGY SESSION



(Thanks to Andres Conteris, Joseph Purugganan, and Cora Fabros for these pictures.)