

# ***The Peace Press – August/September 2007***

## **Focus on the Effect of War, Economy and Global Warming on Migration**

### **Getting Centered Becoming 'Change Agents'**

by Elizabeth Stinson, Director

The last three months have resulted in the highest death tolls for US forces in Iraq Occupation history with 331 deaths and 2,029 wounded. The quagmire of the occupation is deepening and the elected have no solutions. Those who offer humane solutions are not being heard. Those who offer inhumane solutions continue to be given more funding.

This we know.

Our efforts to make a difference, one soldier at a time, are continuing with our demilitarization project. The reality is that we need to reach them earlier, across the nation, long before the recruiters access them in the high schools. We need to reach them with alternative ways to problem solve. Non-violent conflict resolution needs to be modeled daily in our work, our homes, and our reactions to each other.

This is a daily struggle.

The pain of living under the cloud of a violent model is being felt on every level. When we undermine someone's efforts because we need to control them, that is repression. When we get in the way of something shifting or evolving into something more positive and more universally beneficial it is because our ego is threatened by change that is detrimental to the possibility of being a "change agent." We may not be knocking something down, or breaking or slapping someone, but we are supporting violence when we prevent growth and change, and discourage capacity building because something is working for a small "entitled" number. That too is destructive. We need to evolve to the realization that if every member of the village cannot thrive, everyone is hurting. The whole village is not thriving. The "village" lacks adequate health care, education, positive role models, environmentally safe options and a future for its children and with that, control of its destiny. We need to take this reality to our homes, our relationships with our neighbors, our attitudes about ourselves and stimulate the ability to self-generate positive change.

If we block someone or something from happening because it would mean we would feel uncomfortable, maybe we need to learn to embrace the discomfort. Radically accept that things have to get very uncomfortable, shaky and hop on one foot for awhile in order to see ourselves through to the most necessary "other side." Locally this can manifest in the desire to work for police accountability, nationally in the movement to end the occupation of Iraq, internationally in the movement to address the genocide of world hunger. The issues are interrelated, as are we. If we are sedentary, caught in a false power and discouraging the sometimes 'radical positive risk' that has to come with living in respect with our place on the tree of life, we must scoot over, make room on the limb for all.

A critical time and responsibility are at hand. We must support the progression from one failed model to the next developmental level of our societal options. If we do this consciously, we have the potential of impacting regional, national and global change and creating a new model, ground in non-violent problem solving with regard for all life.

# Global Migration Patterns

by Jack Wikse

*There is no greater sorrow on earth than the loss of one's native land.* (Euripides)

Today, it is estimated that 3% of the world's population (@200 million people) live outside the country of their birth (cf. [www.pstalker.com/migration/index.htm](http://www.pstalker.com/migration/index.htm)). The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 44 million people are living displaced from their native lands through violence or persecution. The number of officially designated refugees increased last year by 14% to nearly 10 million people. The number of "irregular" (undocumented) migrants globally is impossible to judge. The UN estimates there are 33 million "persons of concern," returnees, stateless or internally displaced individuals. It is estimated that 14 million Muslims live in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza.

What we hear in the dominant media is how many people want to live the American dream. But really, people want simply to live. Behind the movement of global migration is war, persecution, economic inequality, human trafficking and genocide. Estimates of mass mortality due to these factors are staggering. In the Muslim world, many writers are speaking of the "Muslim Holocaust" (cf., Gideon Polya, "Global Mortality, Iraq and the Muslim Holocaust," [www.unjustmedia.com](http://www.unjustmedia.com)). UNHCR estimates that last January, in the US proxy war supporting Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia, 8,000 Muslims were killed. Islamic society itself begins with the forced migration (hijra) of Mohammed and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622.

Since the 16th Century, migration has been central to the expansion of modern capitalism of the movement of slaves, indentured servants, "free" labor and capital. It is impossible to generalize about types of migrants. International migrants are a diverse group of people, varying by class, gender, age, citizenship, national and ethnic background and profession. Trends in migration shift quickly. In 2005, Mexico, Morocco, Turkey and the Philippines were leading emigration countries. But today, emigration from Morocco and Mexico has decreased sharply. Last year, 100, 000 emigrants came from Romania to Spain.

In order to understand global patterns of human migration we need to follow the complex relations between demographics, political-economy, and state military and security policies. Demographic factors (characteristics of populations) play a significant role in migration. In 1980 the median age of the oldest country in the industrialized world (Sweden) was 36. By 2040 it is projected that the median age of the entire developed world will be 45 years. Falling fertility rates in these countries (from 5. To 2.7 children) contrast with increasing fertility rates in the periphery or global South (cf., "Global Aging," [www.csis.org](http://www.csis.org)). In the US, the rising average age of voters (more conservative) correlates with increasingly reactionary attitudes toward immigrants and social security, and the exploitation of cheap, young unorganized immigrant labor.

The Fernand Braudel Center ([www.binghamton.edu/fbc/imresearchlines.htm](http://www.binghamton.edu/fbc/imresearchlines.htm)) is studying long-term patterns of global migration. Here are some of the questions they are asking: What does it mean for the world system that more than 50% (in some cases 70%) of the economically active population of certain countries of the periphery work abroad? What does it mean that in many areas of the world (including Mexico) remittances sent home by migrants are a major source of "hard currency" nationally and the main source for thousands of households? What does this say about the inaccuracy of indicators such as gross national product? How have ecological disasters and famines that forced migration been shaped by military involvement, religious confrontations and forms of violence? How have racist ideologies shaped migration in the context of global designs and state policies? How have state policies specifically designed to

attract "human capital" from abroad (aka "the brain drain"--part of the recent failed Senate immigration bill) shaped global economic inequalities? What is the role of women in global commodity labor chains and in sustaining migrant communities-e.g. in the maquiladoras, as caregivers, entrepreneurs and political activists?

We are increasingly a transborder people. We are just beginning to understand the systematic forces, the state designs and the translocal strategies shaping economic globalization from the top down. The more we understand these strategies, the more we will be able to resist and transform them.

## **Economic Development and Migration**

by Susan Lamont

Military conflicts and environmental disasters are widely understood to be causes of the displacement of human beings from their homes. Less recognized is economic development. Because this development is so often defined as progress, it is easy for many to fail to see the dire consequences for local populations affected by this "progress."

The World Bank forecasts that at least 10 million people will be displaced each year by economic development. In fact, development projects account for more displacement than political causes, such as war. Dams and mining operations are two of the most visible types of projects resulting in the loss of homes and livelihood for many people. Despite internal reports, which suggest ways to reduce the impact on indigenous populations, and the recommendation that development actually benefit these populations, World Bank policy has been written to benefit developers, not the displaced. The failure of displaced groups to thrive has been found to be structural, not accidental.

Most of the scientific literature regarding displacement confirms that impoverishment is the primary result for those with the misfortune to find themselves in "the path of progress." The usual solution is some form of compensation that is linked to the costs of the project. This results in the underfunding of that compensation because of the desire to keep costs down and profits up.

Displacement results not only in the disruption of the financial well-being of the people involved, but also a cultural disruption. Because both the economic base and social fabric of a culture are mutually dependent, rending one causes the rending of the other. The result is a downward spiral for the displaced group. A World Bank study (which was highly critical of the Bank's own policies) found that "starving resettlement of resources is clearly the first step towards resettlement failure." (World Bank, 1996) The study found that 8 of the 10 most successful relocations had occurred in China where compensation was higher than projects which received World Bank funding. The 8 least successful were in India. As a result of the study, the World Bank has increased its funding.

There are multiple sources for this increased funding. Countries, with the political will to make it happen, have found the money from the revenues generated by the projects (such as sold power), as well as from higher "economic rent" for the resources (such as water) used in the project. China has done such a good job with these methods that the poverty of displaced people has decreased even as the numbers have increased. China has even found the money to compensate groups they failed to protect in the past. In Canada the developing entities are required to partner with the local indigenous group for the purposes of equity sharing. In Japan,

the land is leased from indigenous groups, with payments in the form of an upfront lump sum followed by ongoing lease payments.

In many countries (both industrialized and developing), these policies have succeeded because of the political will of their legislatures. Not only are laws enacted which dictate specific compensation, but those laws are enforced. And as projects following the guidelines are successful, the laws are strengthened. It's a good example of "Where there's a will, there's a way." A change of mindset seems to be the most important ingredient.

The United Nations "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement" could represent an even greater change. Largely ignored at this point, they represent a step in the direction of rights for those in the path of development. Principle 6 (2c) states that, "in cases of large-scale development projects that are not justified by compelling and overriding public interests," displacement is prohibited. In part, the implementation depends upon the definition of an Internally Displaced Person, which does not always include those displaced by economic development and the people find themselves prohibited from even organizing in protest.

Unfortunately, so far, the World Bank wields greater power than the United Nations, and when it gives with one hand, it takes away with the other. Despite initial steps towards improvement, little risk assessment is done, indigenous people are denied the right to "informed consent," and development-induced poverty goes largely unaddressed in many countries of the world.

For more information on this problem, you can visit the website of the International Network on Displacement and Resettlement (INDR), an organization dedicated to "avoiding the creation of new poverty" at [www.displacement.net](http://www.displacement.net) or 'Financing for Development' by Michael Cernea in the March 24, 2007 issue of Economic and Political Weekly.

## **Campaign for a County of Refuge**

by Richard Coshnear

In San Francisco, Oakland and Richmond, the Sheriffs and local police do not turn immigrants over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement [I.C.E.], except as required by state or federal law. In Costa Mesa, California, and other communities around the country, the local police go out of their way to facilitate deportations, and some communities have had their police receive special training about the detention and interrogation of suspected immigrants ["aliens"]. Here in Sonoma County, our Sheriff has deputies who ride in the same patrol cars with I.C.E. agents, or go out on joint operations with I.C.E. agents, or call I.C.E. to the scene of a detention, or sometimes even arrest immigrants on suspicion of illegal presence with-out I.C.E. authority. The Sheriff keeps suspected immigrants in jail on I.C.E. holds where there are no criminal charges at all.

This raises a question of identity for residents of Sonoma County: what kind of community are we going to be? Neither state nor federal law mandate the kinds of collaboration between Sheriff's deputies and I.C.E. seen here in Sonoma County. Our Sheriff has decided, unilaterally, that Sonoma County will be more like the xenophobic Costa Mesa than like the immigrant-appreciative San Francisco.

Sonoma County has what is called the Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Team ["MAGNET"], and the Sheriff's Department is one member; the California Highway Patrol and the County Probation Department are also members. Most of the collaborations between local law enforcement officers and I.C.E. are initiated by MAGNET officers, and if you call the

Sheriff's Office to raise questions about this practice, you will be put through to Captain Matt McCaffrey, who will tell you that his deputies are permitted to go outside of the written policy concerning local enforcement of immigration violations only in cases of known or suspected gang members. In conversation with Davin Cardenas, organizer for the Graton Day Laborers' Center, Capt. McCaffrey likened the gangs to Al Qaeda; and in conversation with this author, the Captain said that his department perceives that residents of Sonoma County want gang members deported, that the deputies are simply ridding the community of an unwanted element.

The fact is that MAGNET-ICE collaborations have resulted in the arrests and the initiations of deportation proceedings against numerous young, Latino men and boys who are not (and some have never been) gang members. MAGNET operates with a racist assumption that any young, Latino male standing on a corner is a gang member, and this assumption has led to egregious violations of the Fourth Amendment (right to be free from unreasonable search and/or seizure) of the Latinos. Please see the declarations of three such young men in this edition. In addition to these three, MAGNET officers detained U.S. citizen Omar Malfavon, who was working as a counselor at the Valley of the Moon Teen Center at the moment, along with three of the youths he was supervising. The officers just jumped out of their patrol cars and grabbed and frisked the four, then started to do deeper searches when Omar objected. The officers put him in a patrol car when he called out to others to come and observe, and now, for exercising his First and Fourth Amendment rights, he is charged with resisting arrest. Another young man, Jorge, had been charged with battery on a member of the anti-immigrant group "Save Our State" at the Fulton Day Laborers' site, and the District Attorney had withheld evidence which should have been provided to the defense. The judge, angered by this violation of criminal procedure, dismissed the misdemeanor charge. As Jorge was standing in the hallway outside of the courtroom after the dismissal, Deputy Salkin of MAGNET grabbed and detained him for 2 ½ hours for I.C.E. to come and arrest him. There are serious legal doubts about the authority of local deputies and police to detain persons for such time periods on suspicion of illegal presence, and local attorneys are investigating the possibility of a lawsuit to enjoin some of the dubious practices, including the ICE holds at jail where there are no criminal charges. Meanwhile, affected young, Latino men and their families have begun a campaign, with the Committee for Immigrant Rights [CIRSC], to have our County Supervisors follow the lead of San Francisco, Oakland and Richmond, and declare Sonoma County a County of Refuge.

Included as an insert in this edition of the Peace Press is a letter to the Sheriff which you can sign, to urge him to stop the anti-immigrant collaborations with ICE. CIRSC will copy your letter and send a copy to the County Supervisors, as well as sending the original to the Sheriff. Please send your signed letter to CIRSC, c/o Law Office of Richard Coshnear, 719 Orchard Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

*Richard Coshnear is an immigration attorney and a member of Committee for Immigrant Rights in Sonoma County.*

## **The Dynamics of Migration**

by Douglas S. Massey

In today's encore excerpt--writing in 1998, Douglas Massey writes of the historically inevitable result of any government's attempts to curb immigration:

"International migration is a natural consequence of capitalist market formation in the developing world, (and) the international flow of labor follows international flows of goods and

capital, but in the opposite direction. ... "Once international migration has begun, private institutions and voluntary organizations also tend to arise to satisfy the demand created by a growing imbalance between the large number of people who seek entry into a capital-rich country and the limited number of immigrant visas these countries typically offer. This imbalance, and the barriers that core countries erect to keep people out, create a lucrative economic niche for entrepreneurs and institutions dedicated to promoting international movement for profit, yielding a black market in migration. As this underground market creates conditions conducive to exploitation and victimization, voluntary humanitarian organizations arise in developed countries to enforce the rights and improve the treatment of legal and undocumented migrants."

*Douglas S. Massey, et.al., Worlds in Motion, Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium, Oxford, 1998, pp. 41-44. Specific reference is made in this excerpt to works by Jacqueline Maria Hagan, Deciding to be Legal: A Maya Community in Houston (1994), and Susan Gonzales Baker, 'Implementing the US Legalization Program', International Migration Review, (1993).*

### **Declarations from Three Immigrants**

*The following are declarations of 3 young men illegally detained by Sheriff's deputies and ICE*

#### **Declaration of Francisco**

\_\_\_\_\_, Francisco \_\_\_\_\_, declare that the facts set out below are true of my own personal knowledge, and that I could competently testify thereto if called upon to do so:

1. On Thursday, September 28, 2006, I was a passenger in a car driven by my friend, Daniel \_\_\_\_\_, and we had just picked up my girlfriend, Yvette \_\_\_\_\_, at her home to go see a show, when we saw several patrol cars at the exit of the apartment complex. One of the officers waved the car over to stop and be investigated.

2. Daniel stopped the car and one officer approached the driver's side while another approached my side of the car (I was in the front, passenger seat.).

3. The officer who approached my side of the car had the words "Gang Force" or something similar on his vest. Right away, he asked me for ID and then asked me if I was on probation or parole. I felt like he was investigating me and I did not feel like I could just leave.

4. I answered that I did not have ID on me, and that I was on probation (for driving without a license). The officer did not ask me anything more about the kind of probation I was on, and I did not see or hear him check that on his radio.

5. The officer ordered me out of the vehicle and asked me if I was a gangster, a Sureño, and then if I had any tattoos. I told him no about the gangs – I said "I don't do that". And I told him yes about tattoos, and I showed him the tattoo on my shoulder which says "Rest in Peace". That refers to a time in my relationship with my girlfriend.

6. The officer then patted me down and found a wallet in my back pocket. He put the wallet on the hood of the patrol car and directed me to go over to where another officer was standing, about 15 feet away. That other officer had "ICE" on his vest.

7. I did what he told me, and then the ICE officer asked me several questions. I knew I didn't want to talk to that ICE officer or answer his questions, but they kept us there and it didn't

look like they'd let us leave until I answered his questions. So I did answer them.

8. They arrested me and put me in the patrol car and took me to the Santa Rosa jail, but they didn't put any criminal charges on me, just the immigration hold.

### **Declaration of Javier**

I, Javier \_\_\_\_\_, declare that the facts set out below are true of my own personal knowledge, and that I could competently testify thereto if called upon to do so:

1. On Friday, February 23, 2007, at approximately 8:00 p.m., I went to Apple Valley Lane (near the intersection with W. Steele Lane) in Santa Rosa, California, to meet with friends. I had been there about 40 minutes when I went back to my father's car to take out the stereo in order to play music there. A friend named Juan V. was sleeping in the back seat of the car while I worked on the stereo. Another friend, Eddy G., was leaning on the car where the passenger door was open, talking to me as I worked. A third friend, Edgar N., was standing on the curb or sidewalk near the front of the car, chatting with his girlfriend. There were a couple of other guys and a couple of other girls nearby. We were waiting for some others to arrive, then we were all to go to a party together.

2. Four unmarked patrol cars, two black and two white, pulled up in front of my father's car, and I heard someone shout "Gang Force". There were no sirens or flashing lights. One friend ran and two of the patrol cars went after him. Two patrol cars with four officers remained with us near my father's car. They shined a bright spotlight on us, so I was not able to see at first.

3. One of the officers said "Put your hands up". I was confused about what was going on and why, because I had not done anything wrong, but I obeyed and put my hands up.

4. The officers got me out of the car. They immediately pat-searched me, then asked me about drugs and weapons, and I said "No."

5. The four officers were all dressed in black uniforms and had no name tags or badges, except one had the word "ICE" on his uniform. He was the only one who spoke Spanish with us, the others spoke only English.

6. The officers pat-searched all of the males, all of whom were Latino. They told us all to sit down on the curb with our hands up. The officers took each one of us away separately to question us apart from the group, then brought us back and took another one. The ICE officer questioned each of us during this detention.

7. They told the girls to step away, and did not search or question them. One girl was white, another was half-African-American and half something else, I do not remember what.

8. While some of the officers were questioning us, other officers searched my father's car twice. Then the other two patrol cars returned and one of those officers searched the car a third time. My friends and I remained detained through this whole time.

9. The officers never showed us or spoke of a warrant. They never requested our permission to search us or to search the car.

10. During the time that we Latino males were detained on the curb, the mother of one of the girls, who lived in the apartment right there, came out and told the police that they had no right to detain us and search us. She also told us we had rights. The police told her to go back in the apartment and to keep away.

11. When I was taken apart from the group sitting on the curb and questioned, the ICE officer questioned me about my immigration status, and I answered his questions truthfully. When they took me to jail, they immediately put an "INS hold" on me and told me that I was not able to get bail, because of what I'd told the ICE officer.

12. At the time when the Gang Force officers pulled up and shined the spotlight on us and yelled for us to raise our hands, none of us were doing anything related to gangs. One of us used to be a member of a gang, when he lived in Sonoma, but he had moved to Santa Rosa to get away from his gang buddies and separate himself from the gang. To my knowledge, none of the others were in a gang.

### **Declaration of Luis**

I, Luis \_\_\_\_\_, declare that the facts set out below are true of my own personal knowledge, and that I could competently testify thereto if called upon to do so:

1. On Thursday, September 28, 2006, I was driving a car in Santa Rosa, California when I was pulled over to a stop by a Sonoma County Sheriff's Deputy in a marked patrol car.

2. The deputy came up to me, told me to get out of my car, and – as he put his hand over his gun in the holster-- told me he wanted to see my driver's license. I told him I did not have one and he asked for another form of ID.

3. I pulled out my wallet to look for my school ID and he grabbed the wallet from my hands, saying "Let me help you with that" or something similar. He started to look through my wallet and asked me questions about my probation status and criminal record. Then he found some cards in the wallet and said "These are fake, right?"

4. After I answered him, the deputy handcuffed me to the patrol car, searched me and then turned me over to another officer who had the word "ICE" on his uniform. That officer came from the same patrol car. Another Sheriff's patrol car pulled up and another deputy and another ICE officer got out.

5. The ICE officer looked at the cards from my wallet and asked me a few questions, which I answered. Then he arrested me and the deputy took me to the county jail.

6. I was booked into the county jail on the immigration hold only. There were no criminal charges brought against me, not even a traffic infraction. In the room where I was held that first day, there were 15-20 other young, Latino men who had been arrested the same day and were being held on immigration holds only.

7. A few days later, an ICE officer came and took me and about 12-15 other young, Latino men to San Francisco, where I was told about Immigration Court and given some papers. I was later taken to San Jose jail and allowed to post bond and be released.

# JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS

*a journey of hope*

Myths:

## IMMIGRANTS DON'T PAY TAXES

Immigrants pay taxes, in the form of income, property, sales, and taxes at the federal and state level. As far as income tax payments go, sources vary in their accounts, but a range of studies find that immigrants pay between \$90 and \$140 billion a year in federal, state, and local taxes.

Undocumented immigrants pay income taxes as well, as evidenced by the Social Security Administration's "suspense file" (taxes that cannot be matched to workers' names and social security numbers), which grew by \$20 billion between 1990 and 1998

(Source: [http://www.immigrationforum.org/about/articles/tax\\_study.htm](http://www.immigrationforum.org/about/articles/tax_study.htm))

## IMMIGRANTS COME HERE TO TAKE WELFARE

Immigrants come to work and reunite with family members.

Immigrant labor force participation is consistently higher than nativeborn, and immigrant workers make up a larger share of the U.S. labor force (12.4%) than they do the U.S. population (11.5%). Moreover, the ratio between immigrant use of public benefits and the amount of taxes they pay is consistently favorable to the U.S. In one estimate, immigrants earn about \$240 billion a year, pay about \$90 billion a year in taxes, and use about \$5 billion in public benefits. In another cut of the data, immigrant tax payments total \$20 to \$30 billion more than the amount of government services they use.

(Source: "Questioning Immigration Policy – Can We Afford to Open Our Arms?", *Friends Committee on National Legislation Document #G-606-DOM, January 25, 1996.*

<http://www.fas.org/pub/gen/fcnl/immigra.html>)

## IMMIGRANTS SEND ALL THEIR MONEY BACK TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

In addition to the consumer spending of immigrant households, immigrants and their businesses contribute \$162 billion in tax revenue to U.S. federal, state, and local governments. While it is true that immigrants remit billions of dollars a year to their home countries, this is one of the most targeted and effective forms of direct foreign investment.

(Source: <http://www.cato.org/research/articles/griswold-020218.html>.)

## IMMIGRANTS TAKE JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY AWAY FROM AMERICANS

The largest wave of immigration to the U.S. since the early 1900s coincided with our lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth. Immigrant entrepreneurs create jobs for U.S. and foreign workers, and foreign-born students allow many U.S. graduate programs to keep their doors open. While there has been no comprehensive study done of immigrant-owned businesses, we have countless examples: in Silicon Valley, companies begun by Chinese and

Indian immigrants generated more than \$19.5 billion in sales and nearly 73,000 jobs in 2000. (Source: Richard Vedder, Lowell Gallaway, and Stephen Moore, *Immigration and Unemployment: New Evidence*, Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, Arlington, VA (Mar. 1994), p. 13.

#### IMMIGRANTS ARE A DRAIN ON THE U.S. ECONOMY

During the 1990s, half of all new workers were foreign-born, filling gaps left by native-born workers in both the high- and low-skill ends of the spectrum. Immigrants fill jobs in key sectors, start their own businesses, and contribute to a thriving economy. The net benefit of immigration to the U.S. is nearly \$10 billion annually. As Alan Greenspan points out, 70% of immigrants arrive in prime working age.

That means we haven't spent a penny on their education, yet they are transplanted into our workforce and will contribute \$500 billion toward our social security system over the next 20 years.

(Source: Andrew Sum, Mykhaylo Trubskyy, Ishwar Khatiwada, et al., *Immigrant Workers in the New England Labor Market: Implications for Workforce Development Policy*, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, Prepared for the New England Regional Office, the Employment and Training Administration, and the U.S. Department of Labor, Boston, Massachusetts, October 2002.

#### IMMIGRANTS DON'T WANT TO LEARN ENGLISH OR BECOME AMERICANS

Within ten years of arrival, more than 75% of immigrants speak English well; moreover, demand for English classes at the adult level far exceeds supply. Greater than 33% of immigrants are naturalized citizens; given increased immigration in the 1990s, this figure will rise as more legal permanent residents become eligible for naturalization in the coming years. The number of immigrants naturalizing spiked sharply after two events: enactment of immigration and welfare reform laws in 1996, and the terrorist attacks in 2001.

(Source: American Immigration Lawyers Association, "Myths & Facts in the Immigration Debate", 8/14/03. <http://www.aila.org/contentViewer.aspx?bc=17,142#section4>) (Source: Simon Romero and Janet Elder, "Hispanics in the US Report Optimism" *New York Times*, (Aug. 6, 2003).

#### TODAY'S IMMIGRANTS ARE DIFFERENT THAN THOSE OF 100 YEARS AGO

The percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign-born now stands at 11.5%; in the early 20th century it was approximately 15%. Similar to accusations about today's immigrants, those of 100 years ago initially often settled in mono-ethnic neighborhoods, spoke their native languages, and built up newspapers and businesses that catered to their fellow émigrés.

They also experienced the same types of discrimination that today's immigrants face, and integrated within American culture at a similar rate. If we view history objectively, we remember that every new wave of immigrants has been met with suspicion and doubt and yet, ultimately,

every past wave of immigrants has been vindicated and saluted.

(Source: Census Data: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kprof00-us.pdf>, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf> )

### MOST IMMIGRANTS CROSS THE BORDER ILLEGALLY

Around 75% of today's immigrants have legal permanent (immigrant) visas; of the 25% that are undocumented, 40% overstayed temporary (non-immigrant) visas.

(Source: Department of Homeland Security  
(<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/index.htm>)

### WEAK US BORDER ENFORCEMENT HAS LEAD TO HIGH UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRATION

From 1986 to 1998, the Border Patrol's budget increased six-fold and the number of agents stationed on our southwest border doubled to 8,500. The Border Patrol also toughened its enforcement strategy, heavily fortifying typical urban entry points and pushing migrants into dangerous desert areas, in hopes of deterring crossings. Instead, the undocumented immigrant population doubled in that timeframe, to 8 million—despite the legalization of nearly 3 million immigrants after the enactment of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986.

Insufficient legal avenues for immigrants to enter the U.S., compared with the number of jobs in need of workers, has significantly contributed to this current conundrum.

(Source: Immigration and Naturalization website:  
[http://www.ncjrs.org/ondcppubs/publications/enforce/border/ins\\_3.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/ondcppubs/publications/enforce/border/ins_3.html))

### THE WAR ON TERRORISM CAN BE WON THROUGH IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS

No security expert since September 11th, 2001 has said that restrictive immigration measures would have prevented the terrorist attacks—instead, the key is effective use of good intelligence. Most of the 9/11 hijackers were here on legal visas. Since 9/11, the myriad of measures targeting immigrants in the name of national security have netted no terrorism prosecutions. In fact, several of these measures could have the opposite effect and actually make us less safe, as targeted communities of immigrants are afraid to come forward with information.

(Source: Associated Press/Dow Jones Newswires, "US Senate Subcommittee Hears Immigration Testimony", Oct. 17, 2001.) (Source: Cato Institute: "Don't Blame Immigrants for Terrorism", Daniel Griswold, Assoc. Director of Cato Institute's Center for Trade Policy Studies (see: <http://www.cato.org/dailys/10-23-01.html>)

## **Our Representatives' Position's on Immigration Policy**

### **Representative Lynn Woolsey:**

Immigration is a complicated and emotional issue, however we can no longer ignore the need for immigration reform in this country. We need orderly, legal avenues for immigration, pathways to citizenship, and a better approach to knowing who is coming in and out of our country. It is also vital that we offer workers a fair wage, which will help all entry-level employees and boost their impact on the economy. Equally important is providing worker protections and an education system that helps bring all families into our communities. As we address immigration reform we must look beyond ineffective enforcement-only responses to the nearly 12 million undocumented workers here already. One recent example of an enforcement-only response that has failed our community is the ICE (U. S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement) sweeps in our neighborhoods. I am deeply concerned about these sweeps –both the manner in which they were conducted and their effects on our community. No one, especially our children, should have to live in fear. Nor should they have to live in ignorance of their basic rights in this country. Local organizations and officials, with whom I have been in close contact, can assist with many of these issues and are an important resource for our immigrant communities. On the Federal level, however, I have been working with other California Members of the House and the Senate to demand full and comprehensive answers from ICE regarding their policies and procedures in these actions. I have also received a personal briefing from ICE officials and am working with them to ensure that they are more responsive to local concerns. It is important to realize that none of this would be happening if we had a sound and meaningful immigration policy. Immigration continues to be an asset to this country and to California, and I will continue fighting to develop a policy that is fair and humane and offers a pathway to permanency. (updated April 2007)

### **Senator Barbara Boxer:**

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) today made the following statement:

"While reserving final judgement on an immigration bill that has not yet been introduced, my initial reaction is as follows:

"This immigration reform proposal appears to have many features I strongly support, such as AgJobs, the DREAM Act, strong border enforcement, and a legal path for those currently living in the shadows.

"I have always had problems with a guestworker program because I believe it will lead to more illegal immigration and downward pressure on wages. Therefore, I will be supporting amendments that deal with the guestworker program and other aspects of the bill that need improvement."

### **Book Review (by Jack Wikse)**

#### **SOFAs and All That Jazz: Nemesis and Hope in the Dark**

Nemesis (Henry Holt, 2006) is the third volume of Chalmers Johnson's trilogy on "the last days of the American Republic." This volume holds the US masters of war up to ethical and historical judgment. Johnson locates our current "imperial presidency" within a comparative history of the "imperial pathologies" of the Roman and British empires. Johnson's first volume (Blowback) documented the costs and consequences of the American Empire "blowback" being a CIA term for the karma of secret dirty tricks returning upon the trickster-e.g., September 11.

His second volume (*The Sorrows of Empire*) focused on US militarism and the empire of military bases created since World War II. *Nemesis* presents a critique of the CIA, arguing that covert US imperialism is destroying constitutional government. "Nemesis" was the Greek Goddess of retribution--who punishes human transgression of the natural order of things, and of the arrogance that causes it. Johnson gives a detailed account of how a US status of force agreement (SOFA) with Japan places US personnel there beyond criminal accountability ( *How American Imperialism Actually Works*.) He also documents Donald Rumsfeld's central role in militarizing (and perhaps already weaponizing) outer space.

But Johnson's bad news can be paralyzing without an alternative vision of struggle and transformation. Rebecca Solnit's *Hope in the Dark* (Nation Books, 2004, 2006) tells of "untold histories and wild possibilities." Solnit counterbalances Johnson's prophetic heaviness with a Zapatista jazziness. Jazz, (she quotes Cornel West) is not so much a musical art form as a mode of being in the world, an improvisational mode of protean, fluid, and flexible disposition toward reality, suspicious of "either/or" viewpoints. When we are asked how we are going to build a new world, Solnit says "our answer is, "we don't know, but let's build it together."

## **Iraqi Refugees – Within and Without**

by Susan Lamont

As a result of the ongoing violence in Iraq, two million Iraqis have been displaced within their own country and two million have fled to other countries. Many believe the numbers are even higher. At a minimum, 15% of Iraq's population has been displaced because of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Those who are refugees have the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol on their side when they flee their war torn nation. Unfortunately, Iraq's neighbors are refusing to abide by the Convention and Protocols. Some countries refuse to take refugees. Saudi Arabia is building a high-tech barrier. Kuwait is turning them away and Egypt is making it very difficult to enter the country. Syria does admit refugees.

Jordan, one of the most open countries for refugees in the world, has begun to tighten its rules. It no longer allows refugee male Iraqis between the ages of 17 and 35. In the past, Jordan has classified many refugees as "guests" or "temporary visitors." It is now classifying many of them as "illegal aliens" and therefore subject to deportation. This is in part because of the violence so close to its borders and because of fear of violence on the part of the refugees themselves. But it's important to note that Jordan is bursting at its seams, with more refugees per capita than any country in the world. One immediate solution to Jordan's problem would be assistance, in the form of monetary aid and aid workers, from the world at large and from the cause of the problem, the United States, in particular. Such aid has not been forthcoming.

The countries which are sheltering the refugees did not cause the problem. And the countries which did, the United States and Britain, have ignored it. The Bush Administration has not even acknowledged that there is a problem. In 2005, the U.S. admitted 202 Iraqi refugees. The State Department has agreed to admit 7,000 this year, but so far has admitted fewer than 100. Like so many Bush promises in the past, the actions never match the words. And if it's even possible, the British response has been even worse than the U.S. one.

As for those who are displaced within Iraq, there is very little information available and even fewer services. Many NGOs (non-governmental organizations), which were providing assistance at the beginning of the war, have left the country because of safety issues. These

are the same safety issues which make it so difficult for the Iraqis themselves. Obviously, any aid which comes from the United States or through military channels is not trusted. And U.S. soldiers, with candy in hand for the children, will never be the proper conduit for assistance.

The Iraqi government has a system of aid through its Ministry of Displacement and Migration and its Public Distribution System. But there are requirements regarding registration in their home communities which can't be followed by those who fear returning to their homes. Iraq has built camps for internal refugees, but most people refuse to live in them. The United Nations is asking the Iraqi government to waive its rules so that aid can reach those who need it most.

Given the chaos that is present day Iraq, the delivery of aid is particularly difficult. But many recommendations and suggestions have been forthcoming from the United Nations and organizations such as Human Rights Watch. The right to asylum is granted by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The 1951 Refugee Convention recognizes that countries providing asylum might need help and that therefore "international cooperation" is needed in helping refugees. The international community and the United States and Britain have fallen sadly short, unnecessarily worsening the crisis for innocent Iraqis.

## **Darfur: Diaspora in the 21st Century**

by Debra Birkinshaw

Diaspora. It is defined as a "scattering of language, culture, or people: a dispersion of a people, language, or culture that was formerly concentrated in one place." It has come to mean much more than that; in its most present and powerful form, it is an exile imposed upon a culture due to severe oppression, violence, famine, and enslavement.

Nowhere is this "scattering of a people" more shattering than in Darfur. Tension has mounted in Darfur, in western Sudan, since the 1970s. Coerced by drought and scarce resources, the nomadic cattle herders in the north migrated into lands populated by the more settled communities in the south. Darfur's tribes then rebelled against the government, accusing the Sudan government of failing to develop the area. The rebels, aware of a proposed peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, have perpetuated the conflict in order to force more favorable terms of agreement for themselves.

There are horrendous reports of atrocity which go unpunished in Darfur, as reported by the organization, Human Rights Watch. Just one example reported is as follows: Two members of Military Intelligence who had been convicted for the murder of a 13-year-old boy, who had been tortured to death while in their custody, were granted amnesty last June by the government. (1). Now, more than 30,000 have died, and it is thought that a million more are homeless, fleeing their homeland in search of refuge.

The UN Security Council has ordered Khartoum to disband its militias in Darfur. The U.S. Congress, humanitarian groups, America's Christian religious right and others who oppose Sudan's military regime are demanding armed action. This is most alarming, as the wrong element of "intervention" will only increase the turmoil in Darfur.

All the Darfur rebel groups have declared their support for UN peacekeepers. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement has also declared itself in favor of a UN force in Darfur, as have most Sudanese political parties. Yet the government of Sudan refuses to allow deployment of UN peacekeepers to Darfur, despite a UN Security Council resolution urging this deployment.(2).

One may well wonder if there is not some (not-very-well) hidden agenda beneath the frail veneer of U.S. “intervention” in Darfur. Southern Darfur is rich in oil. The government of Sudan has been charged with the overwhelming task of mitigating this multifaceted conflict. Under the guise of “helping to bring peace to the region,” the U.S. stands ready to send arms and troops in. In fact, there is already documented evidence of U.S. intervention/interference in that region. In 1996, the U.S. sent nearly \$20 million in surplus U.S. military equipment to Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda to topple the government of Sudan (The Washington Post, November 10, 1996)

Does that scenario sound somehow familiar?

Yes, Darfur desperately needs humanitarian aid, but not “avarice masquerading as altruism.”(3). If we want to see real humanitarian efforts take place in Darfur, we should be supporting Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and especially, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees, UNHCR. This agency is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. UNHCR was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and 1981.(4)

Sources: 1. <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/06/11/sudan16110.htm> 2. <http://www.commondreams.org/news2006/0911-05.htm>3. <http://www.twf.org/News/Y2004/0807-Darfur.html>4. <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

## **Iraqi's Plight in Jordan**

by David Smith-Ferri

I spent most of December, 2006, with Kathy Kelly in Jordan, living among some of the estimated 800,000 Iraqis who have fled to its capital city, Amman. In Jordan, Iraqis live a shadowy existence, outside the law, and in fear of police raids. Upon entering the country, they receive temporary visas. In order to renew their visas, Iraqis must leave the country and apply for re-entry, an expensive and dicey proposition considering the lawlessness at the borders and the increasing difficulties getting through customs. If caught with an expired visa, they are fined and subject to imprisonment and deportation.

Iraqis in Jordan are forbidden to work. If caught working, they can be (and are) returned to Iraq. Women and children are especially vulnerable. Desperate economic circumstances force Iraqi women into prostitution and children into risky, illegal jobs. Iraqi children in Jordan are not guaranteed public education. Youths, including young teenagers, work full-time for low wages in an underground economy where they are easily exploited. Thus parents, who have lost their livelihoods and their life's earnings to this war, also see it robbing their children of their future.

Since returning from Amman, I have raised funds for Iraqi families I met, through the sale of my book, *Battlefield without Borders*, (online purchases at [www.battlefieldwithoutborders.org](http://www.battlefieldwithoutborders.org) or contact me in Ukiah at 707-467-0468 or [smithferri@pacific.net](mailto:smithferri@pacific.net)). All but \$2 of the purchase price goes directly to Iraqi families in Jordan. Through this fund, we can do a great deal for specific families. If you want to make a simple donation to the fund or for more information about the families we are assisting or how the fund works, contact me. The following poem (which appears in the new edition of the book) is an introduction to three of the families we are supporting.

## Blood at the Wrist

by David Smith-Ferri

*It's a miracle we're still alive. There were body parts all over the street. There are more ghosts in this city than people.*

—Amal Alwan, after a bomb exploded on a Baghdad minibus, February, 2007

I

In Amman, alone and unable to sleep,  
Leila lies awake in a darkness that provides no cover, no protection.  
From a crack in the black clay urn of her mind,  
out of ash and dust,  
images of her one-year old child emerge.  
She remembers his enormous hunger as an infant,  
astonishing intensity when he ate.  
She remembers the promise his eyes held,  
bright, brown lamps burning there  
before a US. missile eclipsed them in the first days of this war,  
consuming, in one terrifying convulsion,  
her child, her parents, and her four brothers.  
More than anything, she remembers the feel of his body,  
its ripe, round plumpness,  
its unsupported weight in her arms  
trusting her to hold him, to hold him,  
O! what she wouldn't give to hold him . . .

II

In Baghdad, Hamid's mother sends him down the street for candy.  
A few pennies for a few moments' pleasure,  
a fair trade in this bleak city.  
What parent wouldn't make it?  
Those dreamland colors, the fantastic swirls and sweetness, a balm  
for an eight-year old's eyes, hands, tongue.  
Hamid is only a short walk from home when gunfire erupts  
and the bullet that enters his left eye is itself blind,  
fired from an insurgent's gun, intended for another target.  
The blind making the blind,  
it exits behind his right eye.  
Hamid's fingers can still close around candy.  
Small, hard treats lay like eyes in his palm,  
and all that they see and have seen  
he takes into his mouth and swallows.

III

On a main drag in Karrada,  
under a weak, wintry sun that provides no warmth, no protection,  
Amal steps off a bus, six-year-old Anoush beside her.  
Only seconds later, a hundred yards down the road,  
the bus explodes,  
shredding people on board,  
orange flames and black smoke pouring from its wreckage.  
Amal feels the street shake.  
Her heart hammers.

Trembling, she looks down to see Anoush.  
His eyes, still in his head, illuminate her.  
His hand, attached to his young body,  
is still in her hand,  
blood at its wrist still pulsing in sync with hers.

## **New Orleans and Katrina – an Internal Migration**

by Susan Lamont

In late August of 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the United States, flooding 80% of New Orleans, leaving a known 1,836 people dead, 700 people still missing, and causing at least \$81 billion in damage. Whether it was just a freak occurrence or something we will continue to experience as a result of global warming, it caused the greatest internal migration in the United States since the Great Depression-Dust Bowl.

While white and more affluent residents stayed in motels and hotels or went to stay with relatives and friends, a large percentage of the displaced black population was sent to other states. In the meantime, public housing was demolished with no promise that it would be replaced with other low-income housing. Those who owned their homes have been unable to repair or replace them. The result has been that many poor and black residents of New Orleans will stay in Florida, Georgia, and Texas.

Besides the personal tragedies for those involved, the relocation of black and poor residents of New Orleans has wide ranging implications and there is considerable speculation that politicians are manipulating the situation in order to gentrify New Orleans for the tourist trade. While poor neighborhoods remain empty and unrestored almost two years later, the tourist areas were up and ready for Mardi Gras.

Politicians have also taken this opportunity to privatize public services. Almost every school in New Orleans (115 of them) has been turned into charter schools – publicly funded, but controlled by private groups. Because attendance is down, school districts are receiving less money, while at the same time, the federal government began a special program to send extra money to the privately run schools. Also, collective bargaining has been taken away from the teachers union.

Residents still live in FEMA trailers. The levees remain unrepaired. The city water system is so broken that it leaks more water than is used. Hospitals remain closed. The mental health system is in a shambles. With a tripled suicide rate, only half the usual mental health professionals remain in the city. The poor with mental health problems have a choice of jail or the streets.

At the time of the last mayoral election, because there were fewer black voters in the city, it was thought that New Orleans might be electing its first white mayor in 30 years. That did not happen, but the number of black voters dropped 6 percentage points from 2002 to 2006. 15% fewer votes were cast than in the 2002 mayoral election. In the poorest neighborhoods, turnout fell by 40%. In the wealthiest white neighborhoods, turnout was up.

The U.S. Census department had projected that Louisiana would be one of a few states to become a majority-minority state with 20 years. That change is now expected to happen more slowly. The migration from the state may also cause Louisiana to lose a vote in the Electoral College after the 2010 census. And, despite Ray Nagin's re-election in 2006, it is felt that blacks

have lost political power in the city and the state and that the political landscape will become more conservative over the next few years.

For those who continue to be displaced and unheard, the biggest tragedy is that the situation in New Orleans has fallen off the political agenda. Out of sight, out of mind quickly became the policy in Washington, D.C. The disgust about this neglect that is felt in the peace and justice community was voiced by none other than some conservative country-western singers, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw, when they said, "When you have people dying because they're poor and black or poor and white, or because of whatever they are – if that's a number on a political scale – then that is the most wrong thing. That erases everything that's great about our country."