

Exposé of black slavery in Kuwait fuels opposition to war drive

by Kathleen Klenetsky

Explosive revelations about the existence of black chattel slavery in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are giving additional ammunition to those mobilizing to stop George Bush's war drive in the Mideast. The President's claim that the purpose of the United States' intervention in the Persian Gulf is to defend "democracy" and "human rights," is fast losing credibility in the face of reports that thousands of human beings, many from the poorest regions of Africa, are literally enslaved by the Saudi and Kuwaiti oligarchy.

EIR, which has been among the first to cast a spotlight on the violations of human dignity that are the reality of every-day life in Kuwait and other British-created entities in the Persian Gulf, held a press conference in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 15 to force the issue further into the open.

More than 30 representatives of the international media and foreign embassies—among them Sudan, Algeria, Nigeria, Germany, Venezuela, and Brunei—attended the press conference, at which a new *EIR* report, "Bush's Gulf Crisis: The Beginning of World War III?" was released. *EIR* contributing editor Webster Tarpley and Asia-Mideast editor Linda de Hoyos presented detailed, documented evidence about the existence of slavery in the countries which the Bush administration is ready to sacrifice the lives of American soldiers to defend.

Tarpley called for an emergency investigation by the U.S. Congress into the situation, a call first raised by the Schiller Institute, an international policy organization headed by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who is also the lead candidate on the Patriots for Germany slate in the upcoming German elections, and wife of political prisoner Lyndon H. LaRouche.

Civil rights leaders forge anti-war coalition

These revelations have had a strong impact in the black and other minority communities. That is hardly a surprise, since the U.S. Armed Forces comprise a disproportionate number of blacks and Hispanics, who are being called upon to fight and die so that a bunch of slave-holders can continue their degenerate existence. "We fought a bloody Civil War more than 100 years ago to end slavery in the United States.

Now Bush wants the descendants of former slaves to give their lives to protect slavery in the Mideast? The man has got to be on some other planet, if he thinks he can get away with this hypocrisy," observed one black leader.

On the same day as the *EIR* event, a coalition of civil rights activists held a packed press conference in Philadelphia, to demand the resignation of Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the most prominent black member of the Bush administration.

Sam Evans, a key leader of Philadelphia's black community, issued an open letter to General Powell, pointing to the hope and pride which Powell's appointment as head of the Joint Chiefs had created among Afro-Americans, and urging him to resign in protest against the overtly racist policies which Bush's Gulf intervention represents.

Signed by a broad coalition of the city's civil rights activists, the letter expressed dismay that "President Bush moved this Nation quickly and precisely into a racist/religious 'Third World' confrontation that is leading the world almost to the precipice of Armageddon." The letter called on Powell to investigate the barbaric aspects of Bush's Mideast adventure, including the existence of slavery in the region, and his overall foreign policy orientation.

"According to the CBS television program '60 Minutes,' over 4,000 Panamanian civilians, the majority being Black, were killed during the U.S. invasion last December, which you should investigate," the letter stated. It continued: "Reliable sources in the United Nations, which you should investigate and verify before sustaining, report that the 'ruling family' of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia exploits Black slavery." The letter also urged General Powell to investigate charges that 60% of the troops deployed to the Gulf are "African-Americans, Hispanics and other minorities . . . with the remainder being poor . . . Whites."

Evans released another statement from the same group addressed to President Bush, urging him to bring U.S. troops home as early as possible. "Your threatening words and seemingly impelling desire to engage hundreds of thousands of our young people in a war thousands of miles away, involving our country in a potential holocaust without pro-

viding the Congress and the people of the United States with a clear and precise justification, raises grave questions," the letter asserted. "The Committee members named herewith find it difficult to understand the use of American Armed Forces as 'World Policemen' and as a 'Prime Dictator' of other peoples' land or property. . . . It is our belief that the sending of thousands of young people, thousands of miles away, risking their lives, to police other peoples' property, is in violation of the . . . basic culture which forms our civilization."

Black media focus on slavery scandal

The *EIR* exposé of the Kuwaiti and Saudi regimes' slave trading is spreading through the black media. The Nov. 15 issue of the Los Angeles *Sentinel*, one of the oldest black newspapers in the U.S., carried a prominent article entitled "Probe of Slavery in Gulf States Called For," which detailed *EIR*'s charges. The *Sentinel* reported that it had made repeated attempts to contact officials at the Saudi Arabian consulate, but that officials remained unavailable for comment.

The same day, the Norfolk, Virginia *Journal and Guide*, which circulates widely in the black community in the area dominated by the Navy shipyards, ran an article headlined, "Slavery Still Exists in Saudi Arabia," which covered *EIR*'s call for a congressional investigation.

On Nov. 17, the Chicago *Metro News*, the largest black-oriented newspaper in the Chicago metropolitan area, carried a story on its front page entitled, "Black American Soldiers and the Question of Slavery in the Gulf States." The article, and a complementary editorial, were based on the information released by *EIR*.

"The continuing practice of slavery in the Middle East Gulf States was well-documented this week in a 53-page report released at a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. by an organization known as the *Executive Intelligence Review*. The group's report was compiled mainly from U.S. documents," said the editorial, written by Nate Clay.

"With Black American soldiers sitting in the desert of Saudi Arabia, waiting to be called on any moment to risk their lives to restore Kuwait's deposed Emir, Jaber el Sabah, to the throne, and protect the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, the American government, and the Congressional Black Caucus, in particular, should demand some answers. . . . I for one," Clay continued, "do not intend to let this issue rest until it is resolved. Just the idea that one Black American would be forced to shed one drop of blood to defend slavery and racism in the Arab world is extremely nauseating."

Reports on the slavery scandal have made their way into non-black media as well. Germaine Greer, who wrote a series of articles exposing the issue in Europe, wrote a commentary for the Nov. 14 *New York Times*. And nationally-syndicated columnist Richard Reeves had a column in the New Jersey *Bergen Record* headlined, "Fighting for Slavery In Arabia."

The activation in the black community is one aspect of a burgeoning anti-war movement in the United States and abroad. Although Congress is out of session until January, fears are rising that Bush will ignore the Constitution and commit U.S. forces to battle without obtaining a declaration of war.

On Nov. 20, Rep. Ronald Dellums (D-Calif.), a member of the Black Congressional Caucus, and 44 other congressmen filed suit in federal court in Washington, D.C., seeking to prevent Bush from launching an attack against Iraq without prior congressional approval. The suit argues that Bush would be violating the Constitution if he ordered "an offensive" against Iraq without a declaration of war.

Church groups are becoming increasingly vocal in their opposition to Bush's war drive. Just days after the Roman Catholic bishops of the United States endorsed a statement telling the administration that resorting to violence in the Gulf could not meet the Augustinian definition of a "just war," the National Council of Churches (NCC) unanimously approved a harsh rebuke of Bush's handling of the Gulf situation. Accusing the administration of "reckless rhetoric," "imprudent behavior," and a precipitous military buildup, the NCC called for the immediate removal of most U.S. forces from the region. "As Christians in the U.S., we must witness against weak resignation to the illogical logic of militarism and war."

Establishment sounds alarm

From the bowels of the U.S. Establishment, warnings are being heard that Bush may be going too far, too fast, although these warnings stem not from any concern about the welfare of the people of the Mideast—nor those of the U.S. and Europe, for that matter—but out of concern that Bush's Frankenstein-like antics may not only bring him down, but the entire elite as well.

McGeorge Bundy, the self-styled doge of the American branch of the Anglo-American elite, went on ABC-TV's "Nightline" Nov. 16, to caution the President to be more "patient," and allow the economic sanctions to work.

Former State Department bigwig George Ball took a similar line in a televised face-off against pro-war Henry Kissinger Nov. 13. Terming Bush's policy in the Gulf one of the "stupidest things" he had ever seen, Ball insisted that the U.S. cannot use military force without destroying all support for U.S. policy in the region. Instead of immediately deploying troops, Bush should have pursued sanctions, which would have led to a U.N.-imposed regional reorganization of the Mideast.

Former President Jimmy Carter gave voice to the same general concerns in a speech at Hofstra University in New York in mid-November, warning that Arabs will never forgive the U.S. if American weapons were used against Arabs, and that oil prices could hit \$80 a barrel if a Gulf war knocks out the region's oil facilities.