

Calendar of national anti-war activities

Jan. 11, Friday, Washington, D.C.: Campaign for Peace in the Middle East will place banners against the war on the viaducts leading into Washington.

Jan. 12, Saturday: International day of demonstrations against the war, announced by Dr. Mohammad Said at Dec. 15 Chicago Anti-War Teach-In.

Jan. 12, Saturday, Washington, D.C.: National Campaign for Peace will deliver petitions against the war to the White House. They expect to present 1 million signatures.

Jan. 15 and 21, numerous states: Schiller Institute spon-

soring citywide vigils and actions to oppose the war and commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jan. 15, Tuesday, Washington, D.C.: Students of Howard University intend to shut down the university with a student strike. Rally at Metropolitan AME Church in the District of Columbia.

Jan. 19, Saturday, Washington, D.C.: Lafayette Park, 11 a.m. The Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East will hold a march on the White House. Speakers will include Ramsey Clark and Dick Gregory.

Jan. 26, Saturday, Washington, D.C.: March on the White House, sponsored by the National Campaign for Peace in the Mideast. Assemble 11 a.m., Lafayette Park. Buses expected from other parts of the East Coast. Cost of New York-Washington bus is \$25 round trip.

substantial pressure against Iraq (as confirmed by members of your administration and other knowledgeable observers), we believe that the initiation of offensive military action by the United States unwisely risks massive loss of life, the expenditure of billions of dollars, the possibility of severe domestic economic dislocation, and the further political and military destabilization of the region.”

Opposition from the churches

Church leaders on both sides of the Atlantic are mobilizing their people against the immorality of Bush's policy. Christians must oppose a war in the Gulf, which would lead to “scorched earth, scorched human bodies,” declared Bishop Franz Kamphaus, a senior spokesman of the German Catholic Church, in his Christmas Eve sermon. To plan such a war is incompatible with the notion of love on which Christianity is built, and would betray the hopes created by the peaceful transformation of the East bloc last year, he said.

On Dec. 20, a group of 18 U.S. religious leaders, representing the Methodist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, and other denominations, returned from a fact-finding tour to the Mideast. “War is not the answer,” they announced at a Washington press conference to report on their findings.

A member of the group, the Most Rev. Edward L. Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church—and Bush's own bishop in Washington—met with the President and Secretary of State James Baker to brief them on their conclusions. “In no way is the war option going to serve our national interest, because I believe the wrath of the Arab nations following such a catastrophe will be with us for years and years and years to come,” Browning said he told Bush. “The Middle East will be scorched beyond belief, and the recovery of such destruction would be almost impossible.”

Navy fireman won't defend slavery in Gulf

A new flank in the anti-war movement was opened on Jan. 4, when U.S. Navy Fireman Donald Alexander, Jr. issued the following statement at a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington:

“Speaking on behalf of all the black soldiers in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf and all people of African descent, I am refusing to take part in the military of a government that is risking the lives of its citizens while pretending to protect freedom. As an American, I am committed to uphold the Constitution of our nation and defend my nation when its borders or citizens are endangered. However, I am not committed, nor am I willing, to support any political system that condones and practices chattel slavery.

“It is contradictory to me that President George Bush would recommend to Nelson Mandela non-violence as a solution to his problems in South Africa, yet threaten to engage in a war to re-establish the slave-holding country of Kuwait.

“I cannot fight in a war to uphold chattel slavery and I will do my best to educate every soldier and potential soldier about the facts of slavery.

“I know that you would like to ask me what proof I have that there is slavery in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. I call upon President Bush and the United States Congress to prove to the American people that slavery does not exist in these countries. I feel that the United States government *will not* prove that slavery exists, and *cannot* prove that it does not.

“I would like to say more, but this is now in negotiation between my attorney and the United States Navy.

“Yet, I will leave you with this thought:

“Fighting in this war in the Persian Gulf would be for me equivalent to fighting for General Lee against Abraham Lincoln.”