

The SEVENTH GENERATION

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."
 - From the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy

WAR, CITIES AND URBAN PLANNING

by Tom Angotti

Before the US invasion of Iraq, the PN Steering Committee issued a statement opposing the war that circulated on *pn-net* and other internet lists. We received many responses, mostly in support of the statement. The statement and representative excerpts from some of the responses follow. We reprint them so as to share with PNers the extent and depth of discontent among planners and community activists with the Bush Administration's preemptive war, and so that readers can appreciate the diverse reactions to the statement.

Our statement was, unfortunately, prescient, and is still valid. The bombing and invasion of Iraqi cities destroyed significant infrastructure—hospitals, schools, water supplies, airports—which added to the devastation left by an eleven-year US-led siege. Large numbers of civilians died and many suffer hunger and homelessness. The Pentagon, which brags about its "precision" bombing, throws up its hands and says they can't even guess how many Iraqis they killed. Like the body count mania started during the Vietnam War, it's only US bodies that count. The looting of Iraq's National Museum and other treasures while US troops marched off to defend the oil fields demonstrated that our concerns about preserving the relics of Iraq's rich urban history were not misguided.

As PN goes to press, the US military is securing its occupation of Iraq and sending the message to Iraqis that only the US and its coterie of retired generals recruited to master the rebuilding process—not Shiite leaders, Kurdish leaders, or any other indigenous leaders—will define "democracy" in Iraq. "Participation" in rebuilding by Iraqis will be under the thumb of the US military, the US Agency for International Development, and the transnational US-based firms like Bechtel and Halliburton who will get the lucrative contracts. Of course, the US won't

waste its time micro-managing Iraq but will select and train loyal subjects to handle the day-to-day matters of urban administration. They will pass over the many highly-educated Iraqi leaders who won't bow to the emperor, just as British colonialists put together formidable bureaucracies in their territories made up of humble servants obedient to Western culture and values. Right-wing faith-based organizations are moving in to bring Christian values along with food and clothing. Participatory planning? Only if the generals can pick the participants.

The US military is already foreclosing the use of public space by Iraqis to express opposition to the occupation. The US press gleefully repeats shots of the scattered expressions of joy by Iraqis that welcomed US troops, but when the troops shoot at Iraqi civilians freely expressing their political views it's barely noted. Operation Iraqi Freedom means freedom of expression only for those who worship the imperial rulers and almighty dollars. The future of freedom in Iraq could very well be forecast by what's happening in Israel, where a gigantic wall is going up to divide Israeli settlements and Palestinian cities (see page 2). Heavily bankrolled by US aid, Israel imprisons the outcast population that stubbornly resists the illegal occupation of their land. All urban planners should condemn this blatant segregation as pure metropolitan apartheid.

Our PN statement didn't mention perhaps one of the main impulses driving the US war—securing a strategic hold on Mideast oil. As *Michael Dudley* mentions in his article for this issue, many urbanists make the connection between our chronic problems of sprawl and auto dependency and the aggressive US overseas campaigns. However, even if the US had to pay more for its gas guzzling because it lost control over cheap oil, I believe the auto monopolies, which are now global monopolies, will find alternatives that will keep this instrument of private transportation at the center of global city-building. Even George W. Bush recognizes the importance of developing alternative fuels in the long-range future. Thus, it's important to [Cont. on page 7]

PLANNERS NETWORK

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Statement of Principles
 The Planners Network is an association of professionals, activists, academics, and students involved in physical, social, economic, and environmental planning in urban and rural areas, who promote fundamental change in our political and economic systems. We believe that planning should be a tool for allocating resources and developing the environment to eliminate the great inequalities of wealth and power in our society, rather than to maintain and justify the status quo. We are committed to opposing racial, economic, and environmental injustice, and discrimination by gender and sexual orientation. We believe that planning should be used to assure adequate food, clothing, housing, medical care, jobs, safe working conditions, and a healthful environment. We advocate public responsibility for meeting these needs, because the private market has proven incapable of doing so.

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GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Planners Network seeks articles that describe and analyze progressive physical, social, economic and environmental planning in urban and rural areas. Articles may be up to 2,000 words. They should be addressed to PN's broad audience of professionals, activists, students and academics, and be straightforward and jargon-free. Following a journalistic style, the first paragraph should summarize the main ideas in the article. A few suggested readings may be mentioned in the text, but do not submit footnotes or a bibliography. The editors may make minor style changes, but any substantial rewriting or changes will be checked with the author. A photograph or illustration may be included. Submissions on disk or by email are greatly appreciated. Send to the Editor at tangotti@hunter.cuny.edu or Planners Network, c/o Hunter College Dept of Urban Planning, 695 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021. Fax: 212-772-5593. Deadlines are January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

UPCOMING SPECIAL ISSUES [Articles welcome]:

- The Active City: Changing Urban Form, Promoting Physical Activity
- Marxism, Socialism and Progressive Urban Planning
- Planning, Food Production and Consumption

democratic expression embodied in the Cities for Peace movement continues. This is more of an issue for the Democrats than Republicans. At anti-war demonstrations in New York protesters carried signs chiding the state's two Democratic senators, Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer, for voting to back the President's position on Iraq. The same holds true in other cities and states, where national Democratic officeholders have been seen as failing to speak out aggressively enough, if at all, against the war. While these protestors are not likely to become a bumper crop of potential turncoat votes for Republican candidates in upcoming elections, a third party or independent candidate could split the Democratic vote in many local races for national office. Or, local voters could display their disenchantment with Democrats by staying away from the polls entirely.

On the other hand, both local Democratic and Republican officeholders in cities that have passed peace resolutions are keeping their ears close to the ground and are heeding what their constituents are telling them. Yvette D. Clark, a councilwoman from New York who voted for the resolution, knows it is not war per se the voters in her Brooklyn district are against. The issue is, What type of war are people willing to get embroiled in? To that question she's heard the answer from her constituents loud and clear: "If we're going to be looking for a fight," Clark says, "let's fight poverty and let's fight firehouse closures."

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Cities for Peace website: www.citiesforpeace.org

Cities Back Civil Liberties

Concerned that the Bush administration's war against terrorism is potentially threatening the rights of American citizens and residents, nearly eighty cities have passed resolutions that call for the protection of civil liberties.

Last year Northampton, Massachusetts became the first city to declare itself a "Civil Liberties Safe Zone" after residents concluded that provisions of the US Patriot Act of 2001 were a threat to rights guaranteed by the US Constitution's Bill of Rights. Working with the local chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, Northampton activists formed a Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC). The resolution they drafted and successfully lobbied the City Council to adopt calls upon local law enforcement and the judiciary to: "Preserve residents' freedom of speech, religion, assembly and privacy; rights to counsel and due process in judicial proceedings; and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures even if requested or authorized to infringe upon these rights by federal law enforcement acting under new powers granted by the US Patriot Act or orders of the Executive Branch."

Other cities that passed similar resolutions with the help of the BORDC include Denver, New Haven, Flagstaff, Detroit and even rural Alachua County, Florida. As in many of the resolutions, that of Alachua County takes aim at the federal government's roll-back of *habeas corpus* rights and asks "the United States Attorney's Office, the Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Florida Department of Law Enforcement and local law enforcement authorities to publicly disclose the names of any federal detainees suspected of terrorism held in Alachua County." As of now there have been no court cases examining whether local authorities can selectively refuse to comply with provisions of the Patriot Act and executive orders. Yet the establishment of these Civil Liberties Safe Zones is a direct challenge to US Attorney General John Ashcroft and his paternalistic view that the federal government knows what is best for local communities when it comes to matters of security. That, says Flagstaff Councilwoman Kara Kelty, is just not true. "I'm proud of my community. Civil liberties, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence are dear to us. I didn't want to do anything to alter that."

For more information on the Bill of Rights Defense Committee and Civil Liberties Safe Zones, visit www.bordc.org.

Eugene J. Patron

7th Generation [Cont. from page 2]

plunge more deeply into the matter and understand the complex links between urban sprawl, auto culture, consumerism, global inequalities, and global US hegemony.

In this issue, we discuss some other stories of war, its devastation of cities, and the problems of rebuilding. *Katja Simons* tells the story of the destruction and rebuilding of Beirut. Perhaps there are some important lessons here about the profound, long-term wounds of the kind of urban warfare that may be just starting in Iraqi cities. The remaining war ruins in Beirut suggest that rebuilding isn't just a matter of repairing some roads and pipes. This issue also includes excerpts from an excellent technical report provided to us by Lilianna Cotto of the University of Puerto Rico about the bombing by the US Navy of the tiny island of Vieques. The report highlights the impact of bombing on the local economy, health and welfare. As a result of an extensive popular struggle in Puerto Rico, the US ceased its bombing this month, but refuses to acknowledge the extent of environmental contamination it leaves behind. The depleted uranium used in munitions fired on Vieques is scattered all over Iraq.

On the domestic front, *Eugene Patron* reports on *Tom Angotti*

Urban Planners Oppose the War in Iraq

(The following letter is reprinted from the *pn-net* listserv. Responses to the statement follow on the next four pages.)

By The Planners Network Steering Committee: Tom Angotti, Ann Forsyth, Fernando Marti, Richard Milgrom, Barbara Rahder, Ken Reardon, Gwen Urey, Ayse Yonder

We are urban planners and professionals in the fields of community preservation and development. We oppose the U.S. war in Iraq as a politically unacceptable means of resolving the problem of disarmament and dealing with the despotic regime in Iraq. The Bush administration has turned its back on the United Nations and proceeded despite overwhelming opposition throughout the world. The invasion of Iraq increases instability and heightens the dangers of terrorism throughout the world.

Urban planners and professionals in community development have special reasons for opposing this war.

the unprecedented opposition to the US war that took the form of resolutions by local governments throughout the country. State and local governments throughout the country are suffering the budget cuts brought on by the recession, tax cuts for the rich, and the costs of military expansion. They are also in the middle of the Administration's assault on civil liberties, which entails the use of local law enforcement, racial profiling, and suspension of basic constitutional rights.

With Iraq on our minds, this is very much an international issue of PN. *Theresa Williamson* and *Penelope Duda* report on the World Social Forum meetings in Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Hyderabad (India). Progressive planners everywhere can relate to this newly emerging forum for dialogue among professionals, activists, and progressive institutions. Along with the unprecedented global opposition to the war, the Social Forum is a ray of hope for a humane alternative to global capitalism. *Wendy Call* reports on Plan Puebla Panama, a giant plan for Central America, and the popular resistance to the plan. *Alejandro Rofman* writes about worker cooperatives emerging in response to Argentina's deep economic crisis. And *Larissa Larsen* writes about the global imbalances in water supply.

1. Urban planners are dedicated to the preservation and development of cities. We cannot support a war that destroys the physical and social infrastructure of cities. Baghdad is a city of 4.5 million people and large numbers of civilians will die as the result of U.S. bombing.

2. Urban planning is concerned with human welfare and improvement in the quality of life. We cannot support a war that will bring widespread hunger, homelessness and extensive human suffering.

3. The earliest cities were founded in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, in what is now Iraq. The numerous ancient historic treasures in Iraq are threatened by the extensive U.S. bombing campaign.

4. Urban planning in America is based on principles of participation and equity. We cannot support a war that imposes the will of the mightiest nation in the world on a population that is helpless before a foreign military force. U.S. occupation of Iraq will only expand inequalities and facilitate the plunder by the U.S. of Iraqi ⇒