Anti-War, Social Justice and Human Rights Advocates Oppose Repression in Cuba

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, strongly protest the current wave of repression in Cuba.

We condemn the arrests of scores of opponents of the Cuban government for their nonviolent political activities, and the shockingly long prison sentences — some as high as 28 years — imposed after unfair trials. According to Amnesty International, the arrestees include journalists, owners of private libraries and members of illegal opposition parties. We condemn as well the trial and execution of three alleged hijackers in a week's time, both for the lack of due process and because we oppose capital punishment on principle.

As anti-war, social justice and human rights advocates, we condemned the brutal Saddam Hussein regime, and we oppose the United States occupation of Iraq. We support civil liberties and democratic rights everywhere, regardless of the country's economic, political or social system. We believe it is imperative to be consistent in opposing repression wherever it takes place, whether in Iraq or Saudi Arabia, Israel or Cuba, Turkey or the United States. Democratic change in Cuba needs to be achieved by the Cuban people themselves. The Cuban government's violations of democratic rights do not justify sanctions or any other form of intervention by the United States in Cuba. The government of the United States — which employs the rhetoric of human rights when doing so promotes its imperial goals, but maintains a discreet silence or makes only token protests when U.S. allies are involved, and which fully supports the barbaric practice of capital punishment, routinely inflicted in the U.S. — is hardly in a position to preach democracy and human rights.

And we recall too the long, criminal record of U.S. interventions in Latin America. This record has included six decades of exploitation and imperial control of Cuba, followed by an attempted invasion and a campaign of international terrorism and economic warfare, that is by now well-documented. Only a government that repudiated this record, renounced any intention of restoring its economic or political domination over Cuba, either directly or through rightwing Cuban-American proxies, and promised to respect the democratic will of the Cuban people themselves would have the moral legitimacy to call for democratic change in Cuba.

As the Bush administration, further emboldened by its military victory in Iraq, threatens to wage "preemptive" wars around the globe we reaffirm our support for the right of self-determination in Cuba and our strong opposition to the U.S. policy of economic sanctions that has brought such suffering to the Cuban people.

At the same time, we support democracy in Cuba. The imprisonment of people for attempting to exercise their rights of free expression is outrageous and unacceptable. We call on the Castro government to release all political prisoners and let the Cuban people speak, write and organize freely.

Michael Albert, Stanley Aronowitz, Eileen Boris, Robert Brenner, Noam Chomsky, Joshua Cohen, Mike Davis, Richard Deats, Haroldo Dilla, Manuela Dobos, Ariel Dorfman, Barbara Ehrenreich, Samuel Farber, Janeane Garofalo, Barbara Garson, Susan Griffin, Thomas Harrison, Adam Hochschild, Doug Ireland, Naomi Klein, Joanne Landy, Jesse Lemisch, John Leonard, Sue Leonard, Rabbi Michael Lerner, Nelson Lichtenstein, Michael Lowy, Grace Paley, Katha Pollitt, Matthew Rothschild, Edward Said, Jennifer Scarlott, Carl Schorske, Juliet Schor, Ellen Schrecker, Stephen Shalom, Adam Shatz, Alan Sokal, Chris Toensing, Immanuel Wallerstein, James Weinstein, Naomi Weisstein, Cora Weiss, Peter Weiss, Cornel West, Reginald Wilson, Howard Zinn, *plus more than 900 others.*

Our website *www.cpdweb.org* lists all the signers to date of the above statement. *Progressive* readers may also be interested in reading a more extensive CPD comment on the Cuban trials, and the CPD statement on the most recent U.S. threats against Cuba, which are available on the website. In addition, the CPD statement "We Oppose Both Saddam Hussein and the U.S. War on Iraq: A call for a new, democratic U.S. foreign policy" is posted at *www.cpdweb.org*

To: Joanne Landy, Thomas Harrison, Jennifer Scarlott, Co-Directors, CPD

☐ Add my name to the list of signers to the CPD *Anti-War, Social Justice and Human Rights Advocates Oppose Repression in Cuba.* You may use my name when the statement is published.

☐ I am sending a donation of $_____ to help disseminate and publish the statement.

I am sending my gift __ by mail __ on line (see below.)

Your name .....

Organizational/institutional affiliation or city *(for identification only)* .....

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Address .....

Only name and affiliation or city will be made public.

For further information, to sign on-line, and to see evolving full list of signers go to **www.cpdweb.org**

Make checks payable to "Campaign for Peace and Democracy" or donate on line by going to our website *www.cpdweb.org* Mail to Campaign for Peace and Democracy, 2790 Broadway, #12, NY, NY 10025

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