

Cheneyacs Militarize U.S.-Mexican Border

by Valerie Rush

The Bush/Cheney Administration has plans to set up concentration camps right inside the United States, and in a grotesque parallel to the Krupp/IG Farben-sponsored “work camps” in Hitler’s Germany. The contract to build and run the U.S. camps has already been granted to Cheney’s old firm Halliburton, already made infamous for its corrupt looting practices in war-ravaged Iraq. And plans are already afoot to provoke precisely the kind of border chaos that will supply the inmates for those camps.

According to the Associated Press of Jan. 30, Halliburton subsidiary KBR has been awarded an open-ended \$385 million contract to build large immigration detention centers, in the event of an “immigration emergency.” Said an official of the Department of Homeland Security’s ICE division (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), “If, for example, there were some sort of upheaval in another country that would cause mass migration, that’s the type of situation that this contract would address.”

Halliburton has the experience. From 2000 to 2005, it held a government contract to set up temporary processing, detention, and deportation facilities for illegal immigrants. It was paid \$6 million, and not surprisingly, was the only company to bid. That contract has now been extended, at a time of heightened tensions on the U.S.-Mexico border, aggravated especially in the last few weeks by a growing number of shooting incidents and drug-related hot pursuits. Last year’s emergence of “vigilante” teams along the U.S. border to hunt down illegal immigrants, had already raised tensions. And then, on Dec. 17, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Republican legislation authorizing construction of a 700-mile wall between Mexico and four American border states, at a cost of several billion dollars. The “border security” bill, now awaiting passage by the Senate, was sponsored by House Judiciary Committee chair James Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc.) and Homeland Security Committee chair Peter King (R-N.Y.).

Wall proposals are nothing new. In 1975, then-State Department consultant William Paddock—a rabid advocate of population reduction often cited by the racist Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)—told an interviewer that the answer to Mexican so-called overpopulation and spillover into the U.S. was to “shut the border and watch them scream.” Starvation, disease, and war would take care of the rest, he suggested.

The Mexican government has organized support from

Central and South American countries to oppose the de facto “closed door” policy. When Mexican President Vincente Fox denounced the concept of the wall as “a disgrace” and another “Berlin Wall,” U.S. Ambassador to Mexico and Bush intimate Tony Garza called Fox’s remarks “disingenuous and intellectually dishonest.” Garza defended the wall, insisting that the United States has the “right to take any security measures deemed appropriate.” In a Jan. 25 “diplomatic note,” Garza went further, charging that “efforts by Mexico to promote regional opposition to measures under consideration in the U.S. Congress,” are “polarizing the debate” and “bolstering” backers of a wall.

Following a Jan. 23 border shootout between Texas police and drug traffickers allegedly dressed in Mexican military garb, incendiary cries about a “Mexican invasion” began to echo down the political and media highways and byways of the neo-conservative right wing. California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has called the border a “high-risk zone,” while Colorado Republican Rep. Tom Tancredo, a zealous supporter of Sensenbrenner’s wall, called for U.S. troops to be immediately deployed to the border. The Jan. 27 *Washington Times* published a column by senior *Times* editor Robert Stacy McCain, which drew parallels with President Woodrow Wilson’s 1917 war on Mexico, supposedly triggered by Pancho Villa’s raids across the border. The *Times* columnist pointed to President Wilson’s justification for the invasion of Mexico—that German saboteurs could be crossing from Mexico into the U.S.—and made an explicit comparison to an alleged al-Qaeda threat from south of the border.

Border Patrol Memo: ‘Deadly Force’

On Jan. 31, the Mexican daily *La Jornada* revealed that an internal memo being circulated by U.S. Border Patrol director David Aguilar, declared the Patrol ready and willing to use “deadly force” against any future excursions by “armed comandos.” The memo reports that attacks on U.S. law enforcement on the border went from 396 in 2004, to 778 in 2005, with 153 attacks reported in January 2006. What the memo does not say is that the dramatic increase in drug-related violence on both sides of the border is a direct consequence of Washington’s free-trade policies, which have decimated the Mexican economy, giving free rein to the drug trade, and its violence.

As Lyndon LaRouche told a Mexican university audience in November 2005, the only solution to the border crisis is cooperative development: “You see a situation on the border, poor people who can’t get employment, become ‘mules’ carrying drugs across the border out of desperation. . . . The United States has never taken effective action on this. It’s in our interest, and Mexico’s interest, . . . to develop Mexico, to develop its agriculture, to develop new cities, new communities. It’s in the interest of the United States to have security, and U.S. security depends upon the security of Mexico. If Mexico is more secure, then we are more secure.”