

January 11

Worldwide Protests Demand: "SHUT DOWN Guantánamo!"

The U.S. military prison at Guantánamo has become notorious worldwide as a torture center where hundreds, including teenagers, have been held without any rights. Millions of people recognize the image of Guantánamo prisoners in orange jumpsuits and black hoods. And Guantánamo has come to symbolize the whole brutal regime of torture, secret prisons, "renditions," fascistic laws, and unjust wars of the U.S.

On January 11, 2008, six years after the opening of Guantánamo, people around the U.S. and in many other countries rallied, marched, and wore the color orange to demand the closing of the Guantánamo torture camp. Witness Against Torture and Amnesty International led a march of protesters in orange jumpsuits and black hoods to the Supreme Court in Washington, DC. The American Civil Liberties Union called on people everywhere to wear orange that day. World Can't Wait—Drive Out the Bush Regime, National Religious Campaign Against Torture, Center for Constitutional Rights and other groups joined the actions in DC as well as rallies and various forms of displaying orange in many

other places across the U.S., in large cities as well as smaller cities and towns including New York; Chicago; San Francisco; Los Angeles; Fresno, CA; San Diego; Seattle; Honolulu; Minneapolis; Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Vegas; Greensboro, North Carolina; Doral, FL (at the headquarters of the U.S. military's Southern Command).

According to Amnesty International, there were 83 actions in 30 countries (many of them at U.S. embassies) on this International Day of Action, including: Sydney and Adelaide, Australia; Manila, Philippines; Istanbul, Turkey; Rome, Italy; Athens, Greece; Stockholm, Sweden; Madrid, Spain; Nourakchott, Mauritania; Rabat, Morocco; Dublin, Ireland; London, UK; Edinburgh, Scotland.

The January 11 protests showed the potential for the mass wearing of orange to spread throughout society as a very visible and broad social wave of opposition taken up by all kinds of people. And that could be coupled with, and help spark and reinforce, growing outbreaks of political resistance to torture and other crimes of the U.S. rulers.



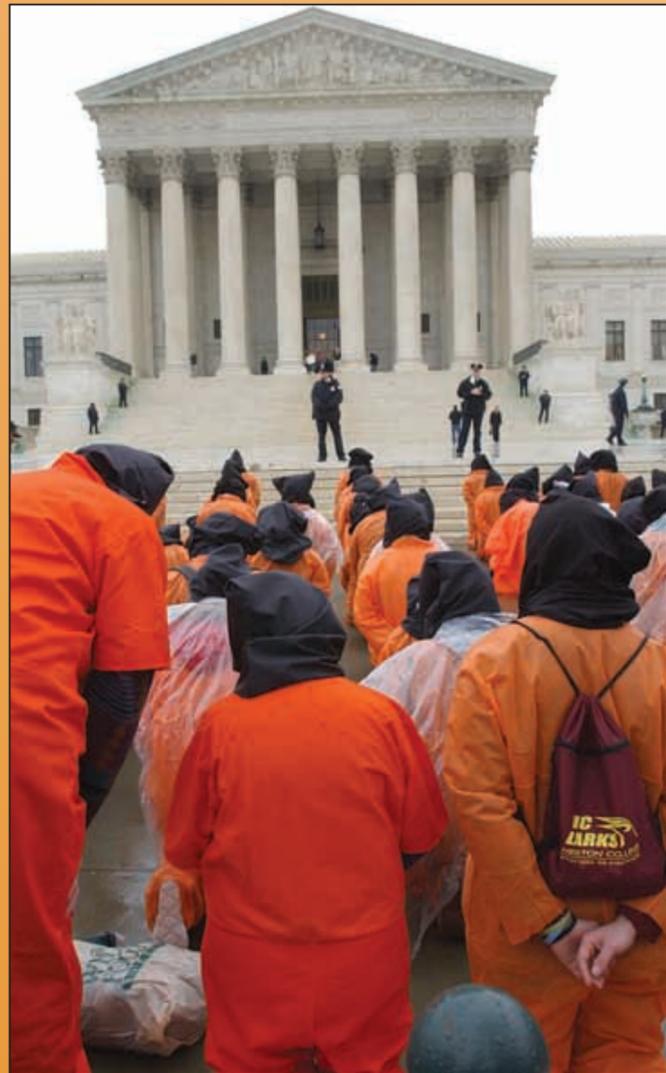
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Seattle—Among those speaking at the downtown rally was James Yee, a former U.S. Army Muslim Chaplain at Guantánamo. After protesting the treatment of detainees there, Yee was hounded out of the military. At the rally, Yee described the torture he saw at Guantánamo and said, "When will the American people say enough is enough, when the rest of the world has already said so?...I'm wearing an orange shirt because Guantánamo is a place that needs to be shut down."



Photo: Simon Freeman/Amnesty Australia

Australia—In Sydney, hundreds of people dressed in orange jumpsuits and white face masks marched through the central business district. An Amnesty International spokeswoman pointed out that the treatment of detainees violates international laws on torture, and added, "Let's not forget the ones who are held in secret detention, victims of practices of rendition, people who are illegally abducted and transferred to secret detention facilities." In Adelaide, among the protesters was Terry Hicks, whose son David had been a Guantánamo prisoner.

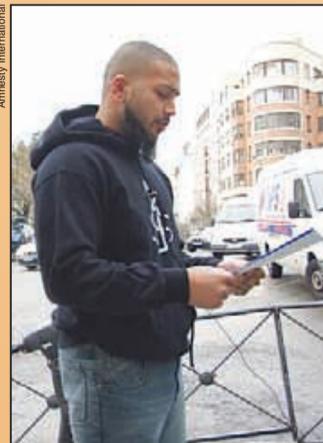


AP photo



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Honolulu, Hawaii—Protesters gathered on January 11 in Waikiki, Honolulu's tourist area.



Amnesty International

Madrid, Spain—Ruhai Ahmed, left, is one of three British citizens of Pakistani descent who were caged and tortured at Guantánamo for over 2 years and later released when the U.S. had to admit there was no evidence against them. Their story is told in the docu-drama *The Road to Guantánamo*. Ahmed read from a recently published book of poems written by Guantánamo detainees.



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San Francisco—Among those marching through downtown were students from Leadership High School, where 50 of the 200 students wore orange armbands. At several points, the marchers sat down in the street, blocking traffic along Market Street, the main downtown thoroughfare.

The following call appears on the website of World Can't Wait—Drive Out the Bush Regime (worldcantwait.org).

January 31 Call to Action: Challenge the "Politics of the Possible" with Mass Resistance—Drive OUT the Bush Regime!

We will make the future.
We pledge to stop endless war for empire.
We refuse consent to a torture state.
We won't swallow a hateful culture of bigotry & intolerance.
We will not go silently into a fascist nightmare.
We will engage in an act of civil resistance to make a better world.
We are what we've been waiting for.

Your government does not want what you want! You want: an end to illegal wars, torture and indefinite detention, raids on immigrants, assaults on women's rights, the moves towards theocracy, the fostering of a climate of greed and bigotry, and non-action in the face of a global climate crisis.

But leading Republican presidential candidates want more of the Bush program, and no leading Democratic presidential candidate will reverse what's been set in place by the Bush regime. Leading Democrats knew—and said nothing for years—about the CIA's torture tapes and waterboarding.

All of us who want the Bush program brought to a halt must, through our actions, create a political situation where the Bush regime is driven from power and its program is so thoroughly repudiated that whoever becomes the next president knows they cannot get away with continuing these crimes.

In times such as these, people living in this country must speak up and make their sentiments known, acting independently as THE PEOPLE. Let us not go down in history infamously for standing silent in the face of grave crimes the way the "Good Germans" allowed the Nazis to carry out their atrocities. In solidarity with those being tortured in our name and as the color of resistance, **wear and display orange everywhere, daily.**

On January 31, make a splash: Hang orange signs in store windows; drop orange banners with messages resisting the Bush program from overpasses and on school campuses. Create the atmosphere of resistance by spreading orange far and wide.

On Thursday January 31: "No business as usual" outside military recruiting centers, FEMA offices, immigrant detention centers, federal buildings and court houses, with creative action that may involve mass non-violent civil disobedience, speaking up for those who are disappeared and violated, tortured and left without hope.

Washington, DC—82 activists were arrested as they delivered a message to the U.S. Supreme Court demanding the shut-down of Guantánamo. Inside the court building, a member of Witness Against Torture tried to deliver a letter to the justices about the two cases involving Guantánamo detainees, along with a writ of habeas corpus for each of the current 275 prisoners at Guantánamo. Outside, other protesters in orange jumpsuits and black hoods knelt on the steps and unfurled a banner. The arrests followed a march of 400 people, including 150 in orange jumpsuits and black hoods leading the procession, across the mall near the White House and around the U.S. Capitol.



AP photo

London, UK—In front of the U.S. Embassy, protesters organized by Amnesty International dramatized the mass herding of detainees into Guantánamo torture center. Uniformed guards and dogs were also part of the powerful street theater.