

## Summary of Human Rights Record of the US in 2002

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April 2003, Beijing

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### Foreword

The U.S. State Department released the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2002 on March 31, when the United States is facing condemnation from people of various countries in the world for unilaterally launching a war against Iraq.

With the United States pretending to be "the world's judge of human rights," the reports once again assessed the human rights situations in over 190 countries and regions in the world.

The reports carry distorted pictures and accusations of human rights conditions in China and other countries, but they mention not even a word of the human rights problems in the United States itself.

Therefore, it is necessary to make known to the world the human rights violations in the United States in 2002.

### I. Ineffective Protection of Life and Security of Person

In American society, excessive violence has resulted in ineffective protection of life and security of the person.

According to a report released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on Oct. 28, 2002, the United States recorded 11.8 million crime offenses in 2001, a 2.1 percent increase over 2000.

The offenses included four violent crimes (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), and three property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft). Firearms were involved in 26.2 percent of violent crime cases, and murder cases increased by 2.5 percent.

There was an offense in every 2.7 seconds, and there were 44 murders, 248 rapes and 26 hate crimes each day. Among the crime offences were 15,980 murders and 90,491 forcible rapes.

Crime in many major American cities went up in 2002. In Washington D.C., drug abuse, gang violence and prostitution ran rampant, and crime went up by 36 percent from 2001; in Boston the crime rates increased by 67 percent, and in Los Angeles, by 27 percent.

The murder rate in the United States was five to seven times higher than most industrial nations.

During January-November 2002, New York City reported 489 murder cases; Chicago registered 485 homicide cases, in which 515 people were killed; and Detroit reported 346 murders.

During the same period Los Angeles reported 595 murder cases with 614 people killed, up 11.3 percent and 20.5 percent compared to the same period in 2001 and 2000, respectively (Los Angeles, Nov. 21, 2002, AFP).

The Constitution of the United States provides that the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed, and the constitutions of 44 states in the nation include provisions safeguarding citizens' right to possess guns.

In the United States, guns owned by private individuals exceed 200 million, averaging nearly one for every citizen. In 2002, the numbers of gun buyers across the United States went up by 13 percent to twice over previous years, and the number of rifle owners increased even faster.

The National Rifle Association of the United States has over 2.8 million members. Excessive gun ownership has led to frequent shootings, and victims of firearms-related crime number more than 30,000 a year.

On March 26, a retired sheriff's deputy in Merced County, California, shot and killed his 5-year-old daughter and his three stepchildren while his estranged wife was out for a walk, then committed suicide with the body of one of the youngsters in his arms.

On May 30, a gunman opened fire inside a grocery store at a Top Valu Market near the downtown marina in Long Beach, California, killing a woman and a 7-year-old girl and wounding four others before he was fatally shot by police (Long Beach, California, May 31, 2002, AFP).

From October 2 to October 22, serial gun shooting cases occurred in Washington D.C. and neighboring Maryland and Virginia states, in which ten people were killed and three others were seriously wounded.

The number of gun shootings went up by 40 percent in Los Angeles in 2002 over 2001. Between the evening of November 19 and the early morning of November 20, five separate cases of gun shooting took place in downtown Los Angeles, leaving two people dead and seven others wounded.

Crime rates among juveniles in the United States have remained high, with youngsters accounting for 20 percent of violent crime.

Drug abuse among youngsters has kept increasing. Drug abuse among tenth-grade high school students in the United States went up from 11.6 percent in 1991 to 22.7 percent in 2001, and 34.4 percent of senior high school students in New York City have at least taken marijuana once.

In 2001, there were 638,000 narcotics-related cases, and drug abuse accounted for 25 percent of violent crime in the United States.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks, crime in schools decreased as most schools have installed metal detectors and videocameras, but it was reported that 6 percent of the students still carried guns to school.

Violence in schools such as bullying rose by 12 percent, and at least 10,000 students in the United States choose to stay at home once in a month for fear of being bullied ("School Crime Decreasing, US Says, But Students Still Fear Bullying, Reports Show", Dec. 10, 2002, Sun).

Violence in nursing homes for the aged in the United States is worrisome. In March 2002, a report submitted to the U.S. Congress said that inmates in some of such homes had suffered splash of cold water, battery and sexual assault.

However, such acts had never been regarded as crime, and most of them had not been prosecuted. Statistics show that there are 17,000 homes for the aged and similar institutions in the United States, housing 1.6 million aged Americans.

Violations of law have been found in about 26 percent of them, and two percent of which have caused physical injuries.

## **II. Serious Human Rights Violation by Law Enforcement Officials**

The rights of ordinary Americans have met with challenge after the September 11 terrorist attacks. The anti-terrorism law USA Patriot Act, which took effect on October 26, 2001, provides law enforcement agencies with greater powers for investigation, including wiretapping of phone calls and Internet E-mail communications by suspect terrorists.

A Federal Court of Appeals on November 18 ruled that the Department of Justice asking for expanding its investigative powers is constitutional, and therefore should not be restricted. It aroused great concern among the American public that the DOJ would encroach upon their right of privacy in its work.

Commenting on the court ruling, U.S. House Judiciary Committee Representative John Conyers said in a statement the same day, "Piece by piece, this Administration is dismantling the basic rights afforded to every American under the Constitution." Some civil rights and electronic information organizations worried that there would have no effective protection of civil rights after the ruling.

Police brutality is a chronic malady in American society. On July 6, 2002, a bystander videotaped a scene in which several white police officers at Inglewood, Los Angeles, slammed the head of a handcuffed 16-year-old black, named Donovan Jackson, on a squad car and punched him in his eyes, neck and hands. Afterwards, one police officer involved was ordered a paid leave. In contrast, the man who filmed the videotape was detained on July 10.

In another incident, on July 8, Oklahoma City police officers repeatedly beat a black suspect on the ground with their batons. The suspect was pepper-sprayed twice. On September 16, police in Boston shot at a suspect car hijacker in the downtown area and wounded him seriously. The incident led to a mass demonstration against police brutality.

Indiscriminate arrests are another serious problem in the United States. According to an investigation by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), prosecutors declined to bring charges in 15,798 arrests in 2001, or 26 percent of the 60,412 cases they reviewed that year, the vast majority brought by Baltimore police.

In 2002 the number of monthly arrests increased by 15 percent over the previous year to 7,832. Prosecutors declined to charge in 24 percent of the cases. Two-thirds of the cases they dropped were dropped on the day of arrest because they could not be proved in court (May 9, 2002, Sun).

Within half a year after the September 11 terrorist attacks, the FBI detained for security reasons more than 1,200 non-US nationals, mainly men from Muslim or Middle Eastern countries (Washington, Dec.10, 2002, EFE). Most of them were detained for overstaying their visas, and according to rules the detention should last for no more than 48 hours. However, many were actually held in custody for a month or more, or even up to 50 days.

While in custody, they were deprived of their basic rights -- making phone calls, access to a lawyer, family visits, being informed of the reasons for the detention, or challenging the lawfulness of the detention.

They were let out for exercise and air less than an hour a day. Many were handcuffed, and some were even bundled. Those falling ill could not get timely medical treatment.

In many cases torture was used to extract confessions, and unjust charges were often reported in the United States. According to a Reuters report on February 11, 2002, U.S. authorities confirmed that over

200 inmates had been wrongly convicted since 1973; among them 99 inmates on death row had been proved innocent, but most of them had not got compensations (Washington, Feb.11, 2002, Reuters).

Ray Krone walked out an Arizona courtroom a free man in April 2002 after spending 10 years and three months in prison, with more than two years in the death cell (USA Today, June 18, 2002). Yet, he could hardly obtain any compensation from the state government in accordance with state laws.

A black man in Detroit, named Eddie Joe Lloyd, served a term of 17 years, three months and five days in jail on a charge of raping and murdering a teenage girl before he was freed in August 2002 (New York Times, Aug. 27, 2002).

The wrong verdicts are closely related to confessions from innocent people extracted by police. According to an ABC (American Broadcasting Company) news report on March 15, 2002, every year thousands of criminals are convicted on the basis of confessions obtained from police interrogations.

Also according to the ABC news report, in 1993, Gary Gauger, a man in Illinois, was forced to confess he had killed his parents, a crime he did not commit, when he broke down after 21 hours of police interrogation. He was then sentenced to death for double murder. Two years later, the real killers confessed to the crime in an unrelated federal investigation. Gauger was freed in 1996, after spending three years behind bars.

The United States is one of the few countries to impose capital punishment on child offenders and mentally ill people in the world. Twenty-three U.S. states permit the execution of child offenders (under 18 at the time of the crime). Two thirds of the executions of child offenders over the past decade worldwide were carried out in the United States.

Since 1985, 18 child offenders had been executed, half of them in Texas State (May 9, 2002, EFE). The executions in 2002 also included three child offenders and one mentally ill man. There were 80 child offenders on death row, and the figure in the case of the mentally retarded was estimated to be around 200 to 300. (The Amnesty International)

Prisons in the United States are jam-packed with inmates. According to a report of the Bureau of Justice Statistics under the Department of Justice released on August 25, 2002, the adult U.S. correctional population reached a record of almost 6.6 million at the end of 2001, or fourfold of the 1980 figure. About 3.1 percent of the nation's adult population, or 1 in every 32 adult residents, were on probation or parole or were held in a prison or jail. Roughly two million Americans are currently behind bars.

In a report titled "A stigma that never fades", the British business magazine Economist said that America is "the world's most aggressive jailer", and "when local jails are included in the American tally, the United States locks up nearly 700 people per 100,000". (The Economist, August 10, 2002)

Poor management of prisons leads to lack of protection of inmates' legitimate rights. Extortion, abuse, violence and sexual assault are serious in prisons of the United States.

An Amnesty International report released on May 14, 2002 said inmate Frank Valdes at the Florida State Prison was beaten to death by guards in July 1999. Autopsy reports proved massive injuries, including 22 broken ribs and a fractured sternum, nose and jaw, and there were boot marks on his face, neck, abdomen and back.

The three guards involved were charged of second-degree murder in 1999. But the Florida State prosecutors decided in February 2002 to drop the charges.

According to reports of U.S. human rights organizations, brutalities targeted at inmates number about 100,000 a year in American prisons. A former chief law officer of Virginia State estimated the number of such brutalities to be at least 250,000 or as many as 600,000 a year.

Sexual assaults between male inmates are prominent in the prisons. Most of such assaults are coupled with the use of force, causing spread of HIV virus and physical and mental injuries on victims. The prison and judicial departments remain indifferent towards such complaints and take no punishment measures.

The Sun newspaper reported on August 31, 2002, the Baltimore City Detention Center has a poorly run system of health care and suicide prevention. In some cases, the problems resulted in jail suicides, heart attack deaths and fatal asthma spasms that federal authorities deemed preventable if the inmates had been properly treated.

In another case, a fire killed eight inmates locked in cells in Mitchell County jail in North Carolina and injured 13 others. The prison authority blamed lack of water sprinklers for the tragedy.

### **III. Money-driven Democracy**

Boasting itself to be the "model of democracy", the United States has been trying hard to sell to the world its mode of democracy.

In fact, American "democracy" has always been democracy of the rich, a small number of the population. Just as an article in the International Herald Tribune of the January 24, 2002 issue says, "The American problem is domination of politics by money."

The dominant role of money in American politics has been very obvious, and elections have in fact been turned into races of money.

During the midterm elections in 2002, spending on campaigning TV advertising amounted to 900 million US dollars, surpassing that for the presidential election in 2000.

According to an analysis made by the Associated Press based of data from the Federal Election Commission, in the 2002 midterm elections 95 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives and 75 percent of the seats in the Senate went to candidates who had spent the most in campaigning.

In a report filed on August 30, 2002, AP said President George W. Bush, in order to win control of the House and the Senate, cashed in on his cachet to raise donations for midterm elections of his Republicans, and collected 110 million US dollars for three GOP candidates in Oklahoma and Arkansas, setting records in campaign cash raising ("Bush raises nearly \$110 million for Republicans, setting record", Aug. 30, 2002, Sun).

Election of judges in the United States is also like a race of money. In the year of 2000, judge candidates in only two states bought TV advertising, whereas during the midterm elections in 2002, chief justice candidates in nine states bought TV commercials.

"Money politics" has made more and more American people lose interest in political participation.

Statistics show the United States has experienced declining voter turnout in presidential election years for about four decades.

Measured against the voting age population, turnout in presidential election years fell from its high of 62.8 percent in 1960 to an estimated 51.2 percent in 2000.

In contrast, 60 percent of eligible voters shunned the midterm elections in 2002, leaving the voter turnout at 40 percent.

A survey of minority voters in three cities of California showed almost all the surveyed were fed up with the fact that money can buy over politics and were not interested in political participation.

Asian American voters reckon money had too much influence over politics, which is unfair; African Americans and Hispanics felt being shut out of the door of politics and had become its victims.

The United States has been flaunting its "freedom of the press," but it met with criticism from many sides in 2002 in this respect.

In an annual report published on Feb. 21, 2002, the International Press Institute accused the United States of violating freedom of the press and said it is the most astonishing event of 2001 that the way the Bush administration treated the work of the media during the Afghan war and the practices of the Bush administration attempting to suppress freedom of speech by independent media (Vienna, Feb. 21, 2002, AFP).

Two senior journalists with the Washington Post wrote in their book entitled "The News About The News: American Journalism In Peril" that practices of pursuing profits have destroyed the sense of mission of the journalistic community of the United States, and believed an overwhelming majority of media owners and publishing businessmen forced newspaper editors and TV news executives to concentrate on profits as opposed to quality of coverage (New York, March 29, 2002, AP).

In its annual report published on May 2, 2002, Reporters Without Borders exposed since September 11 attacks, the United States has exerted pressure on the journalistic community in the war against terrorism, which has restricted freedom of the press (Paris, May 2, 2002, EFE).

On August 6, 2002, a major news organ in the United States published a survey showing the public wanting the media to "shut up".

The survey found among the respondents, 69 percent believe the media is biased, and over two thirds of them read news reports with disbelief.

#### **IV. Poverty, Hunger and Homelessness**

The United States is the only superpower in the world, however, the poor, hungry and homeless have formed a "Third World" in this most developed nation, owing to the widening gap in wealth between the rich and the poor and social injustice.

In the last two years, a series of scandals of major corporate fraud were exposed in the United States, resulting in a credibility crisis and financial losses, which has deprived ordinary Americans of a sense of economic security due to the serious losses they suffered. The Labor Department of the United States reported on January 10, 2003 that between 2001 and 2002, the United States lost 1.6 million jobs. In December 2002, the country's unemployment rate was six percent; the number of jobless people stood at 8.6 million; and employers slashed payrolls by 101,000 workers (Jan. 11, 2003, Sun).

In the United States, 60 percent of households own stock shares. As corporate fraud scandals brought down the stock market, its capitalization was slashed by 2.5 trillion US dollars, with the employees of the affected big firms and their shareholders suffering great losses. Since energy giant Enron filed for bankruptcy protection, its stock price plunged from 85 US dollars a share to less than one US dollar a share. Millions of Enron stockholders have suffered enormous losses. A large number of Enron employees lost all their pension funds, while teachers, firefighters and some government workers lost one billion US dollars in pensions.

WorldCom's filing for bankruptcy also plunged its stock share price to a few cents from 62 US dollars; 17,000 of its employees became jobless, while investors had their interests severely damaged (June 26, 2003, Sun).

The gap in wealth between rich and poor has become even wider. The U.S. Federal Reserve reported on January 22, 2003 that between 1992 and 1998, the gap in wealth between the 10 percent of families with the highest incomes and the 20 percent of families with the lowest incomes increased by 9 percent, but between 1998 and 2001, the gap jumped by 70 percent.

The Washington Post reported on September 24, 2002 that the top 20 percent residents with highest income in the United States accounted for 50 percent of the total income of the country, while the share of the richest 5 percent (with an annual income of 150,000 US dollars and above) in the national total went up from 22.1 percent in 2000 to 22.4 percent in 2001.



Poverty and hunger have kept increasing. According to the Census Bureau of the United States, in 2001, another 1.3 million people fell below the poverty line; in 2002, the poor population continued growing.

According to the American organization Bread for the World,, 33million Americans lived in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger in 2002. The newspaper USA Today reported that the nation's estimated 3 million homeless had harder times in 2002,as authorities reduced assistance to them and tough laws were passed against them (USA Today, Dec. 27, 2002).

A survey report published by the U.S. Conference of Mayors indicates that the year 2002 witnessed an average of 19 percent increase in requests for emergency food assistance in 25 large cities in the country, and also an average of 19 percent increase in requests for emergency shelter assistance in 18 major cities, the steepest rise in a decade.

And all the cities in the survey expect that requests for both emergency food assistance and shelter assistance would increase again in 2003. Boston Mayor and President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Thomas M. Menino commented, "The world's richest and most powerful nation must find a way to meet the basic needs of all its residents."

The Associate Press reported on November 3, 2002 that 777,000 people in Los Angeles, or 33 percent of its population, were food insecure and could not always afford to put food on the table. By July 2002, homelessness in New York grew by 66 percent compared with four years ago (Aug. 20, 2002, AP). In 2002, Los Angeles County alone had 84,000 homeless people, and every night, 43 percent of 9,000-15,000 vagrants could not find shelters and had to sleep on downtown sidewalks.

According to statistics by relevant American organizations, the current homelessness situation in the United States has become nearly as severe as at the end of World War II. Most vulnerable to poverty and hunger are pregnant women, the aged, people without ID, and single-parent families. The report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors indicates that among those requesting for emergency food assistance, 48 percent were members of families with children; 38 percent of the adults requesting such assistance were employed; of the homeless, 39 percent were from families with children, 22 percent were employed, and 73 percent were from single-parent families.

## **V. Women and Children are in Worrisome Situation**

Discrimination against women is common in the United States. USA Today reported on January 6, 2003 that women hold merely 14 percent of seats in Congress. According to a survey report released by researchers at Rutgers university, discrimination against ethnic minorities was found in one third of business firms in the United States, and discrimination against women was reported in one fourth of 200,000 firms. In hospitals, shops, restaurants and bars, women of African, Latin American and Asian descent made up 70 percent of those who have been hurt.

American women are likely to become victims of crimes and violence. A study report published by the Harvard School of Public Health on April 17, 2002 said that American females are at the highest risk of

murder, and the US female homicide victimization rate is 5 times that of all the other high income countries combined. The United States accounts for 70 percent of all female homicides in the 25 high income countries, and 4,400 American females are murdered each year, with about half by firearms.

American women are also likely to become victims of sexual assaults. In 2002, several scandals of sexual assaults on women by clergies were exposed. According to reports, over the past five years, in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Texas, and Wisconsin, a number of faith healing-related sexual assaults were exposed, with some faith healers found to have raped women during the therapy.

Police and public prosecutors believe that hundreds of women in Los Angeles and other places were sexually abused when they sought help from faith healers (March 13, 2002, L.A. Times). Agence France Presse (AFP) reported that a survey conducted by researchers at St. Louis University in 1996 but kept under wraps after completion shows that about 40 percent of American Catholic nuns (nearly 35,000) have been sexually abused, often at the hands of a priest or another nun. (Jan. 5, 2003, Washington, AFP).

American children often fall victim to domestic violence, social crimes, their parents' divorces, and abandonment. According to a study published by researchers at Harvard University in 2002, in American states and regions with high gun ownership, children have more chances to be murdered, to commit suicide or to meet accidental death. Between 1988 and 1997, a total of 6,817 children, aged 5-14, were shot to death in the 50 states of the United States (Boston, Feb. 28, 2002, Reuters).

Young girls missing and the kidnapping of children are frequent. Statistics show that in the United States, 58,000 children were kidnapped by people other than their families each year, and 40 percent of them were slain in the end. Another 200,000 children were kidnapped by their family members, mostly for the right of custody (Washington, Aug. 6, 2002, Xinhua News Agency).

In 2002, a series of scandals of sexual assaults on children by Catholic clergies were exposed. An article titled "Sins of the Fathers" published by the Newsweek magazine on March 4, 2002 reported that the child-sexual-abuse settlements may have cost the American church one billion U.S. dollars during the 1986-1996 period. Some 80 priests have been accused of sexually abusing children, with one said to have assaulted more than 100 children over the past 40 years.

The Sun newspaper reported on April 29, 2002 that there were 46,000 priests in the United States, and in the past 18 years at least 1,500 had been charged (Sun, Apr. 29, 2002). According to the newspaper Christian Science Monitor, the targets of sex-related crimes committed by American clergies were mostly children, and since 1985 over 70 clergies and priests were imprisoned for molestation of children (Christian Science Monitor, March 21, 2002).

Many children have encountered serious difficulties in their life, medical treatment and education, and many of them have not received parental love and care. According to a report published by the Public Policy Institute of California in November 2002, 20 percent of Californian children aged under 5 years live in poverty, compared with the national average of 15 percent. The New York Times reported last July

that the proportion of American children who grow up in parentless families is increasing, from the previous 7.5 percent to the present 16.1 percent.

The non-governmental Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children says in its 2002 report that nearly 5,000 children were detained every year by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service for entering the United States illegally. Their average age is 15 years, with the youngest only one and a half years.

Most of these children did not have other criminal records except illegal entry. However, over 30 percent of these children were commingled with young offenders, handcuffed and shackled, sent to prisons or detained in warehouses with very poor safety conditions.

## **VI. Deep-rooted Racial Discrimination**

Racial discrimination is deep-rooted in the United States. Senate Republican leader Trent Lott had repeatedly made remarks supporting racial segregation during his political life. He had tried by every means to prevent the Congress from passing a bill on establishing the birthday of Martin Luther King, a murdered civil rights leader of the blacks, as a national holiday.

On December 5, 2002, when attending a 100th birthday party for Sen. Strom Thurmond from South Carolina, who ran for the presidency in 1948 as a segregationist candidate, Lott said that the United States would be better off if Strom Thurmond had won the presidency that year. Lott's remarks triggered strong reaction of the Congressional Black Caucus.

In the end, Lott quitted his post as Senate Republican leader under the pressure of public opinion ("Black Caucus unforgiving after Lott's apology" by William M. Welch, Dec. 11 2002, USA Today).

For more than 100 years between 1862 and 1965, the United States had enforced a law restricting immigrants from Asia and forbidding marriage between immigrants of Asian descent and white people. Many states nullified the law in the 1940s-1960s, but it is still in effect in the states of New Mexico and Florida.

Racial discrimination is serious in law enforcement. According to a study by the Justice Policy Institute of the United States, blacks constitute only 12.9 percent of America's total population, but black prisoners account for 46 percent of the total in jail in the nation; approximately one in every five blacks is jailed for some time during his or her life.

The number of blacks in jail is greater than that of blacks at college. In 2000, about 800,000 blacks were in jail, compared with only 600,000 blacks registered in institutions of higher learning. Among the new inmates put in prison since 1980, people of African and Latin American descent have accounted for 70 percent.

The Sun newspaper reported on Jan. 8, 2003 that defendants who kill white people are significantly more likely to be charged with capital murder and sentenced to death than are killers of non-whites, and a black offender accused of killing a white victim is most likely to be put on death row.

The paper quoted a study as saying that the probability that someone accused of killing a white person will be charged with capital murder is 1.6 times higher than the probability for a black-victim homicide. Blacks who kill whites are two and one-half times more likely to be sentenced to death than are whites who kill whites, and three and one-half times more likely than are blacks who kill blacks. Though a majority of Maryland's homicide victims were black, of the 12 inmates on Maryland's death row awaiting execution, eight were black, and all were convicted of killing white people.

Minorities are among the poorest groups in the United States. A Federal Reserve report issued on January 22, 2003 said that the gap in wealth between American whites and ethnic minorities widened by 21 percent between 1998 and 2001. The US Census Bureau reported in its 2002 annual report on income and poverty that in 2001, the poverty rate in the United States rose to 11.7 percent; the poverty rate was 22.7 percent among African Americans, and 21.4 percent among Hispanics, both nearly double the rate for other ethnic groups.

African American and Hispanic homeowners paid higher interest rates for housing loans than white people did. In the metropolitan area of Washington D.C., among households that made at least 120 percent of the typical income in the area, 32 percent of blacks held high-interest loans while only 11 percent of whites did; among households that made 80 percent or less of the typical income, 56 percent of blacks had high-interest loans and 25 percent of whites did.

Minorities also suffer from unfair treatment in schooling. Racial segregation in public schools has got even worse than decades ago. Only four of all 185 school districts across the United States witnessed increase in black-white exposure (exposure of black students to white students) between 1986 and 2000. The 24 school districts with the worst racial segregation were found in Texas and Georgia states.

The newspaper Christian Science Monitor reported on Jan. 21, 2003 that in the state of Georgia 32 percent of white elementary school teachers left their posts at predominantly black schools in 2001. The situation was the same in Texas, California and North Carolina. Lots of classes had to be taught by substitute teachers who didn't have degrees and weren't licensed to teach, and "black students aren't getting an equal shot at good schooling".

Among the third graders in elementary schools in California, 70 percent of white children met the required educational attainment standard, compared with 37 percent of black children and 27 percent of Hispanic children. The enrollment rate of minority students in schools of higher learning was declining.

A 2002 report by researchers of Harvard University pointed out that America's pervasive legacy of slavery, racism, and substandard, segregated health care for many of the nation's minorities has left a deep chasm between the health status of most minorities and whites. Blacks have enjoyed much poorer medical treatment than whites ever since they came to America from Africa.

African Americans have much higher rates of heart diseases, diabetes, AIDS and some cancers. Blacks have a cancer death rate about 35 percent higher than that of whites, the AIDS cases among black women and children are 75 percent higher than among white people, and African-American children also have much higher rates of asthma and juvenile diabetes than white children. There is a life expectancy gap of about seven years between whites and African Americans. ("Blacks suffer most from managed care, by Julianne Malveaux, Nov. 29, 2002, USA Today).

Racial discrimination has been on the rise in the United States since the September 11 terrorist attacks. The U.S. authorities have intensified restrictions on new immigrants and slowed down its procedure for approving entry of immigrants. Tougher regulations have been adopted, requiring new immigrants to register their residences at Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) offices, or otherwise face imprisonment, fines or even deportation. In August 2002, in airport safety inspections the FBI arrested a large number of immigrant airport workers, mostly Latinos.

Discrimination against Muslims and Arabs is the most serious. According to statistics from the Islamic Society of North America, 48 percent of Muslims living in the United States said their lives have changed for the worse since Sept. 11. By the first anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, approximately 60 percent of Muslims had experienced in person or witnessed acts of discrimination against Muslims including public harassment, physical assault and property damage. There had been nearly 2,000 vicious criminal cases against Muslims, including 11 murders and 56 death threats.

In Los Angeles, assaults on Islamic institutions rose by 16 times from 28 in 2000 to 481 in 2001. In Toledo City, Ohio, more than 10,000 residents of Arab descent were monitored and wiretapped by judicial departments after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and they were not allowed to talk to lawyers. Moreover, judicial departments can have house search at any time.

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service announced in August 2002 that males from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Sudan are to be fingerprinted on entering the United States. In November the same year, a new federal regulation added another 13 countries including Afghanistan to the list. Males from these 18 countries, who are 16 years and older and on temporary visas to the United States are subject to "special registration", to report to relevant departments and be fingerprinted and photographed before the designated deadline.

On December 16, 2002, more than 1,000 Muslims from Iran, Iraq and other Middle East nations went to the immigration offices in California for the "special registration" procedures. However, most of them were detained by immigration officers right away, under accusations of holding invalid visas, overstaying their visas or other wrongdoing. The U.S. Department of Justice later admitted that about 500 immigrants of Mideast descent were arrested.

While statistics from local Islamic institutions showed that at least 700 people were arrested, some even put it at about 1,000. News reports said that as the immigration detention center was overcrowded, some of the detainees were moved to prison. The detainees complained that they were stripped, searched, and given prison suits after their clothes were taken away. Many people were locked in one cell, with no bed or quilt, and had to sleep on the icy cement floor.

## **VII. Blunt Violations of Human Rights in Other Countries**

The United States is following unilateralism in international affairs and has frequently committed blunt violations of human rights in other countries.

Regardless of the strong call for no war from the international community, the United States, together with a few other countries, launched a war against Iraq on March 20, 2003. The war, which has openly violated the purpose and principles of the UN Charter, has caused casualties of innocent Iraqi civilians and serious humanitarian disasters.

During its air attacks against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2002, the U.S. troops dropped nearly a quarter-million cluster bomblets and raided a number of non-military targets, causing heavy civilian casualties. The Time newsweekly disclosed civilians killed in the Afghan war had exceeded 3,000.

The cluster bombs also left an estimated 12,400 explosive duds that continue to take civilian lives to this day (Fatally Flawed: Cluster Bombs and Their Use By the United States in Afghanistan, Human Rights Watch, Dec. 18, 2002). In 2001 the U.S. bombing of Mudoh village reduced the local population to 100 from 250 and leveled all buildings in the village to the ground. A similar attack on Kakrakai village in central Afghanistan on July 1, 2002 left at least 54 civilians dead and more than 100 others injured (Newsweek, July 22, 2002).

The rights and interests of prisoners of war (POWs) were also violated. According to CNN (Cable News Network), a total of 12,000 Taliban fighters were reported to have been captured since the U.S. launched its military action in Afghanistan, but only 3,500 to 4,000 of them survived. It was found that these POWs were locked into unventilated steel shipping containers after their capture, and many of them died of sweltering heat, suffocation or extreme thirst en route to the prison. Numerous mass graves in which the bodies of the dead POWs were dumped have been found in Afghanistan.

There are also evidence of U.S. troops' involvement in the shipping of the POWs. In November 2001, some 1,000 Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighters who had surrendered in the northern Afghan city of Konduz died on their way to the prison after they were packed tightly into unventilated container trucks (Washington, Aug. 18, 2002, AFP).

According to media reports, in 2002 the United States was holding more than 600 detainees from 42 countries, mostly captured during the Afghan war, in its military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. However, the detainees were denied "prisoner of war" status by the U.S. government and therefore faced uncertainty of their futures.

It was unclear for how long they would remain in custody or what kind of treatment they would receive. These detainees were allegedly confined for 24 hours a day to small cells and were not allowed to meet their families or lawyers. Former Al-Qaeda members were also subject to torture or other forms of maltreatment.

Hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops are stationed overseas, and such troops have committed crimes and human rights abuses wherever they stay. Each year U.S. troops stationed in the Republic of Korea (ROK) are caught responsible for more than 400 traffic accidents, but only less than 10 cases would go for trial in ROK courts.

On June 13, 2002, two U.S. soldiers driving an armored vehicle crushed two 14-year-old South Korean girls to death, but both offenders were acquitted by a U.S. military tribunal in November. On Sept. 2, three other U.S. soldiers in Kyonggi-do, ROK, started a tussle on a road, and they deliberately smashed a taxi car parked on the roadside and beat up its Korean driver.

Earlier reports said six American soldiers stationed in the ROK were charged with sexual harassment, assault and scuffle after drinking.

The U.S. troops in Okinawa, Japan has long been notorious for its constant involvement in criminal cases such as arson and rape. Investigation shows that after World War II U.S. soldiers have committed more than 300 sex crimes in Okinawa, with over 130 rape cases reported since 1972.

In the wee hours of Jan. 7, 2002, Frederick Thompson, a U.S. Navy marine stationed in Okinawa, was arrested by local police on charges of trespassing on private property after he broke into the apartment of a 24-year-old woman. On Dec. 3 the same year, the police department of Okinawa prefecture issued an arrest warrant against Major Michael Brown of the U.S. Marine Corps, who was accused of attempted rape and damaging of private articles, but the U.S. side refused to hand him over to the police department. (Asahi Shimbun, Dec. 15, 2002)

According to a news report in the Spanish newspaper El Mundo of April 1, 2002, there are more than 52,000 illegitimate children in the Philippines fathered by U.S. marines stationed in this Southeast Asian country before 1991. Recently tens of Filipino teenage girls, some of them not yet 13, were sent to Mindanao in southern Philippines, to entertain U.S. marines stationed there.

### **VIII. Double Standards in International Field of Human Rights**

The United States, taking a negative attitude toward the international human rights conventions, is one of the only two countries in the world that have not ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. To date, it hasn't ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which have got ratification from or accession of most countries in the world.

In 2002, the United States shrank remarkably from its previous stance on international human rights affairs. It used to ask for the removal of any text in UN draft resolutions that involved human rights conventions which all countries were expected to observe or the U.S. government had not yet ratified, on the pretext of the U.S. being not a state party to these conventions. When its request was rejected, the United States would ask for a separate voting on the text, or even cast the only dissenting vote. In July 2002, the United States withdrew a 34-million-dollar contribution it had promised to the United

Nations Population Fund(UNFPA), forcing the UNFPA to cancel its projects of assistance to women in countries like Burundi, Algeria, Haiti and India.

The United States has been releasing annually Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, censuring other countries for their human rights situations, but it has turned a blind eye to serious violations of human rights on its own soil. This double standard on human rights issues cannot but meet with strong rejection and opposition worldwide, leaving the United States more and more isolated in the international community.