THE IMPACT OF WAR ON ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

An Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition Against War Factsheet

- **Hate crime against Asian Pacific Islander and other communities has increased in the wake of September 11 and the war in Afghanistan**. As racial hatred, encouraged by the war grows, these communities have become the targets and victims of racial and anti-immigrant violence. A recent report documented over 645 hate incidents against Arabs, South Asians, Muslims, and Sikhs *within the first two weeks* after the September 11 attack. This compares to a reported 486 cases of anti-Asian violence in the *entire year* of 1999. [1]

- **Asian Pacific Islander immigrants, particularly non-citizens, are now more vulnerable to harassment, abuse, intimidation, and detention by immigration authorities and enforcement than ever before.** According to the US Census Bureau, one in four immigrants residing in the United States is from Asia.[2] The passage of legislation such as the USA PATRIOT Act endangers API and other vulnerable immigrant communities.

- **The USA PATRIOT Act has greatly expanded the power of authorities to detain and deport immigrants**. Since September 11, the FBI, CIA, and INS have detained and denied legal counsel to more than 1200 South Asian, West Asian, Arab and Muslim individuals. At least one person has died while in detention. New legislation allows the government to hold any non-citizen in the United States "under suspicion of terrorism" for at least a week without charge. Despite a Supreme Court ruling, the INS continues to hold some 300 immigrants, many of whom are Southeast Asian, in indefinite detention. The US government does not guarantee the right to an attorney for non-citizens in immigration cases.[3]

- **The US government spends seven times as much on the military as it does on health and human services.** US military spending for fiscal year 2002 increased by approximately $30 billion from last year to $317.5 billion this year. The budget provides for a 50 percent increase for missile defense programs above 2001 levels. Total US military spending is more than six times larger than that of Russia, the second largest spender in the world. In comparison, the US government plans on spending a total of $43.4 billion on health and human services in the same year. Government health and welfare services to immigrants were drastically cut in 1996.[4]

- **US militarism continues to devastate Asian Pacific Islander communities in the United States and around the world**. US militarism has attacked API communities from the internment of over 110,000 Japanese Americans during World War II to wars, military conflicts, and the establishment of military bases in Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Guam, Japan, Okinawa, and the Pacific Rim during the last century.

www.apicaw.com for more information

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[1] South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow, "American Backlash," September 2001 and National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, "1999 Audit of Violence Against Asian Pacific Americans," January 2000.
[2] L. Lollock, Foreign Born Population in the United States, US Census Bureau, March 2000.
[3] N. Chang, "The USA Patriot Act: What's So Patriotic About Trampling on the Bill of Rights?" Center for Constitutional Rights, 2001; D. Kesselbrenner and S. Lin, "An Immigrant's Worst Nightmare," From the Borderline to the Colorline, NNIRR, 2001; and Associated Press, "US More Tightlipped Since Sept. 11," November 15, 2001.
[4] Council for a Livable World, "Analysis of FY02 House Defense Appropriations Bill," October 25, 2001, and Center for Defense Information, "World Military Expenditures," www.cdi.org.
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