



## Might doesn't make right U.S. out of the Persian Gulf!

Bush has won his war against Iraq. This was an unjust war on both sides. A squabble between a would-be local bully and a global bully. A squabble between Saddam Hussein, who would occupy Kuwait, and George Bush, who would occupy the whole Persian Gulf.

Was it a war to liberate the Kuwaiti people? But the monarchy is restored.

Was it a war to help the Iraqi people, who Bush proclaims as his friends? But the country lies shattered.

Was it a war to ensure the free flow of oil to the world? But that was never threatened.

It was a war to ensure Bush's "new world order," the American century finally come true.

It was a war to show that the U.S. remains "top gun", the sole surviving world superpower.

### What about the anti-war movement?

Did this victory show that the anti-war movement was wrong? After all, where was the huge number of American casualties?

The Democratic Party's "critics of war" only worried about the cost of war. So they are in disgrace. They are running to join the militarist bandwagon. They

will remind everyone that they are as responsible for building up the military machine as the Republicans.

But for those who opposed the war because it was unjust, they have already been proven right.

This war has been a disaster for the working people of both Iraq and the United States.

It is a disaster because it opens a new round of U.S. interventions. Having warmed up on Grenada and Panama and Nicaragua, the Pentagon has now regained its confidence on Iraq. And a "new world order" requires a world policeman, and repeated uses of the baton.

It is a disaster because it gives the green light to repression and racism in this country. A country that oppresses others forges the chains of its own slavery. Stomping on dissenters. Forcing Arabs and other people to put out flags and ribbons so that they may be left in peace. Organizing networks at places of work, post offices and elsewhere to watch for suspicious characters. FBI harassment of Arabs. The ugly features revealed in this war won't go away. For example, although authorities admit that not one act of war-related terrorism was committed in the U.S., the FBI has vowed to

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**More coverage of the Persian Gulf war and the movement against Imperialism -- see pages 6-11**

## Bush's war at home NO MORE CUTBACKS!

Now that Bush has finished massacring Iraqis, he can turn to the business of starving the U.S. working people. With a vengeance.

Bush is calling for another \$46.6 billion in cuts in vital subsistence programs for the workers and poor. This includes cutting \$25 billion from Medicare, and this after Congress slashed \$45 billion from Medicare just last year. It also includes slashing \$2.5 billion from veterans' benefits. And it involves a whole slew of smaller cuts ranging from home heating assistance to housing to health care for pregnant women.

And just as in the Gulf war, Bush is getting every assistance from the Democrats in his domestic war on the working people. Although the Democrats squabble with Bush over which particular programs to cut and by how much, they already agreed to the basic rules to slash social programs in last year's budget agreement.

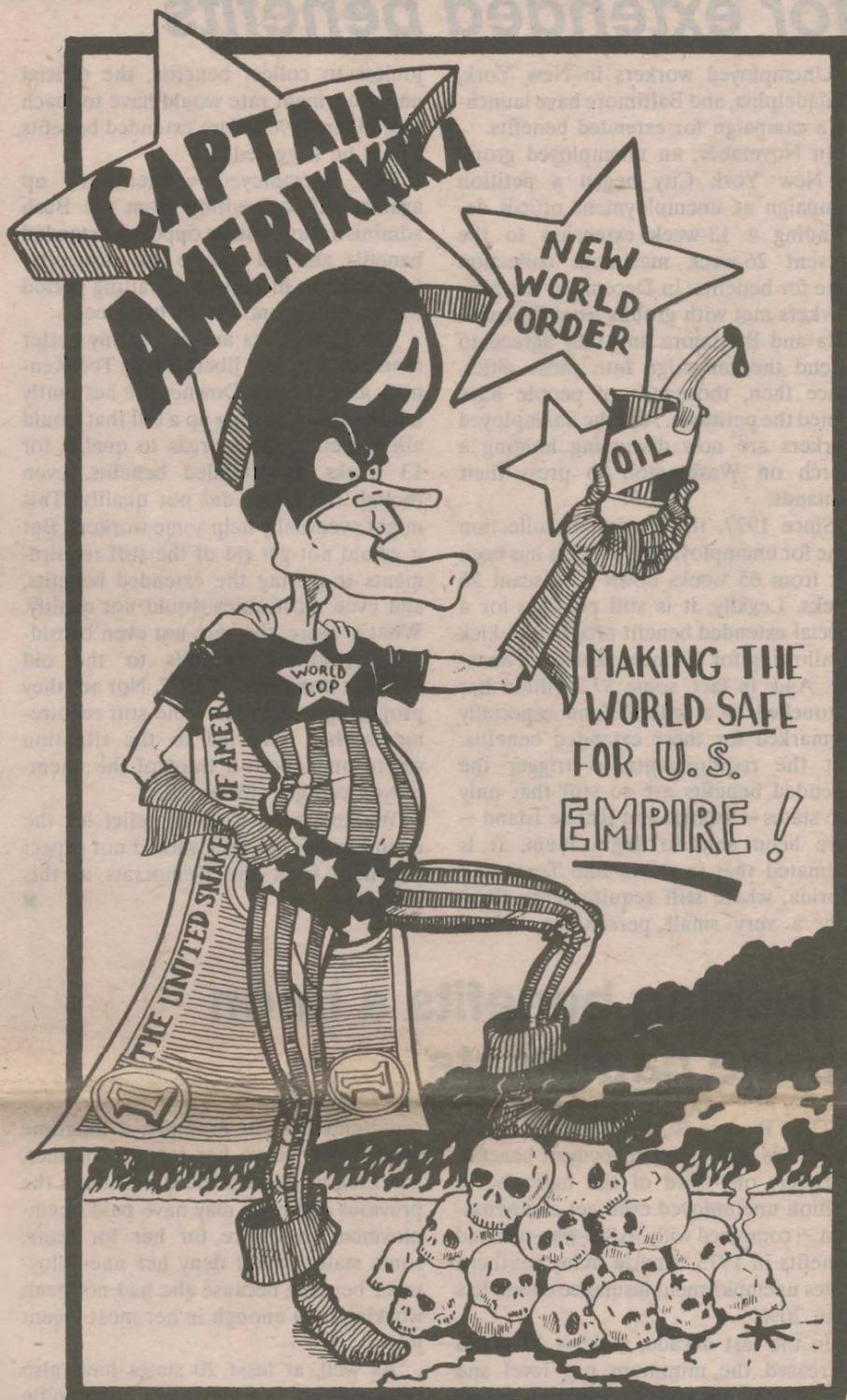
For example, Congress agreed to split "discretionary spending" into three categories — military, international, and domestic — and to put spending caps on each. Under this arrangement it is illegal to increase spending by raising taxes. And it is also illegal to increase spending in one category by making cuts in another

category. So, for example, the Pentagon budget cannot be cut in order to expand domestic programs. And to get more money for the homeless, for example, requires cutting money from other housing programs, or from safety inspections, or road repair or other domestic programs.

On top of this, Congress established a "pay as you go" rule covering "mandatory spending" — that is for entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, food stamps, etc. The PAYGO rule means that to expand a program or to create new one, the cost must be offset by cuts in other entitlements or by a tax increase.

And so it goes. The Democrats and Bush have agreed to cut the federal deficit by robbing from Peter to pay Paul — as long as both of them are poor. Under this program the unemployed, the homeless, the sick and aged are all supposed to compete over who will get some inadequate crumbs. To hell with it! Let all the working people link arms to fight Bush and Congress! Let's make the capitalists pay for the crisis!

**More articles on the fight against budget cuts -- page 3**



## Kuwait: Behind the cheers, monarchy and repression

Bush cries, "Kuwait is liberated." TV and newspapers are awash with pictures of cheering Kuwaitis, and hugs and kisses for the U.S. troops.

The Iraqi occupation has been ended, but it would have been more truthful for Bush to cry, "One tyrant's occupation is over; long live the restoration of the original tyrant!" Behind all the cheering, a grim drama is unfolding.

In the name of hunting collaborators with the Iraqi occupation, supporters of the emir of Kuwait have unleashed death squads. Many revenge-killings have already been taking place. The death squads, which are promoted in the media as the valiant "Kuwaiti resistance," are especially focusing on Palestinians, who are a large part of the residents of this country. They are denounced for such "collaborationist" crimes as sending their children to school under the occupation.

These attacks are only a small part of the ugly reality behind the hoopla about liberation. What does the restoration of the emir of Kuwait mean? Is it anything to cheer about? Judge for yourself.

### Martial law plans

Forget any thought of democracy. The

emir of Kuwait plans to rule in the coming months through martial law.

Months ago, when the U.S. was preparing for war, the American media tried time and again to get a commitment from the emir that he would set up some kind of democratic structure if he were restored to the throne. The emir refused to make a commitment but promised to respect the 1962 constitution, which at least talked about Kuwait as a "democracy."

Even under this constitution there was little in the way of democracy. Out of a population of about two million, only 40% were citizens. And of these only around 50,000 met the property qualifications necessary to vote. (And gender qualification — women were excluded.) Of course, since 1986 there hasn't been anyone to vote for anyway: the emir suspended the parliament when some of its deputies made speeches he didn't approve of.

But now the emir has reneged even on commitment to his own 1962 constitution. Instead he has formed a special committee of military and police officials

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# DEFEND THE UNEMPLOYED!

## Unemployed campaign for extended benefits

Unemployed workers in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore have launched a campaign for extended benefits.

In November, an unemployed group in New York City began a petition campaign at unemployment offices demanding a 13-week extension to the present 26-week maximum collection time for benefits. In December, the New Yorkers met with groups from Philadelphia and Baltimore and they agreed to extend the campaign into those cities. Since then, thousands of people have signed the petitions. And the unemployed workers are now discussing holding a march on Washington to press their demands.

Since 1977, the maximum collection time for unemployment benefits has been cut from 65 weeks down to a scant 26 weeks. Legally, it is still possible for a special extended benefit program to kick in allowing for 13 more weeks of benefits. And, in fact, some \$7.2 billion lies untouched in a federal fund especially earmarked for these extended benefits. But the requirements to trigger the extended benefits are so stiff that only two states — Alaska and Rhode Island — have been able to begin them. It is estimated that in states like Texas and Florida, where stiff requirements allow only a very small percentage of the

jobless to collect benefits, the official unemployment rate would have to reach more than 15% before extended benefits would be triggered.

The unemployed workers are up against stiff opposition from the Bush administration. Bush opposes extended benefits, and last year he also unsuccessfully tried to increase the waiting period for benefits from one to two weeks.

The Democrats are hardly any better than Bush. A few liberals like Ted Kennedy and Thomas Downey are hesitantly talking about putting up a bill that would allow metropolitan areas to qualify for 13 weeks of extended benefits, even though the states did not qualify. This might eventually help some workers. But it would not get rid of the stiff requirements triggering the extended benefits, and even most cities would not qualify. What is more, they are not even considering restoring benefits to the old 65-week maximum of 1977. Nor are they proposing to eliminate the stiff requirements that have led to the situation where only about a third of the unemployed can get any benefits.

Workers must demand relief for the unemployed. But they should not expect any help from the Democrats in this struggle.

## Slashing benefits a boon to the capitalists

The Reagan-Bush era has meant enormous cuts in unemployment benefits.

Barely one-third of the nation's 7.6 million unemployed even get compensation — compared with 76.8% who received benefits in 1975. And in many southern states unemployment insurance covers less than 20%.

In the last decade, at least 31 states increased the minimum pay level and length of employment needed to qualify for unemployment benefits. In Michigan, for instance, candidates for unemployment compensation must have earned at least \$100 a week for 20 weeks. A decade ago the minimum was \$25 for 14 weeks.

States have also put in other tough

requirements. For example, a longtime worker may leave her job for another, and then be quickly laid off. Though the previous company may have paid unemployment insurance for her for years, some states would deny her unemployment benefits because she had not been working long enough in her most recent job.

As well, at least 20 states have also changed the formulas used to compute weekly unemployment benefits to yield lower payouts. Last year, benefits averaged a poverty-level \$159 per week. And still more cuts are being called for. The newly elected Governor of Massachusetts, William Weld, has just suggested further

scaling back the benefits there to cope with the 7.4% unemployment rate, the highest among the industrial states.

While these cutbacks are killing the working people, it is money in the bank for the capitalists. In many states, the money from cutbacks in benefits for the unemployed were directly handed over to the capitalists in the form of cuts in the amount they are required to pay into the unemployment fund.

But more than this, keeping the unemployed insecure acts as a pressure for driving down the wages and conditions

of the workers who still have jobs. Recently the conservative club of businessmen known as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce stated the matter clearly. It opposed any increase in benefits by declaring that the unemployment insurance system should "provide incentives to return to work, not to lengthen the duration of...benefits or unemployment." In other words, keep unemployment benefits so low that workers are desperate to take any job — no matter how low-paying or dangerous.

## Up to nine weeks wait

As unemployment soars, workers in many states are being forced to wait for up to nine weeks before receiving their first unemployment check. The average waiting time has doubled to five weeks since the recession burst out.

While people are losing cars and homes waiting for their checks to arrive, the government is sitting on the funds needed to remedy the situation.

Indeed, this year the Bush administration shortchanged the states by more than \$200 million of the money they were supposed to receive to cover the increased workload at the unemployment offices. Even after protests from the National Governors' Association, Bush's budget calls for only \$100 million to go

to the states.

This and other money for the cost of administering the unemployment system is collected from employers and put into a special account of the Unemployment Trust Fund. But Bush is holding back the money as part of his budget-cutting offensive against the masses. It also appears that Bush is using this and other money that has been set aside in a series of trust funds for social programs to make the colossal federal deficit look a bit smaller. Why should Bush care about the suffering of the unemployed? He has a comfortable job — helping the rich to balance the budget on the backs of the working people.

## KUWAIT Continued from front page

to rule through martial law for an indefinite period of time. Even before entering Kuwait, on February 25, the emir declared martial law. The Kuwaiti rulers plan to use martial law to weed out all "undesirable" elements and screen all foreigners living in Kuwait. And the reprisals against Palestinians have already begun.

The emir doesn't even want to deal with his meek and mild "opposition." These politicians, representing the merchants and other capitalists, have fully backed the U.S. war to restore the emir. But they have beseeched the emir to restore the talkshop parliament. However, the royal family's response has been insults, and many of the opposition politicians are reported to be under house arrest.

However, given the big shake-up that Kuwaiti society has gone through, the emir will have trouble just returning to the old ways. Many of the bourgeois citizenry are clamoring for a greater share in the government. It is quite possible that the emir will be forced to concede to their pressures, at least with a return to the old days of the talkshop parliament. This would still leave Kuwait a tyranny of the rich handful, only with consultation among them on how to suppress the majority.

## Capitalist sharks compete for reconstruction profits

Meanwhile the capitalists in the U.S. and elsewhere are licking their chops at the prospects of big profits to be made from the reconstruction in Kuwait.

Last week the U.S. imperialist generals were bombing Kuwait's roads, bridges, and airports. This week their brothers in the corporate offices of Bechtel, Fluor, Caterpillar and other companies are putting in bids to rebuild. Of the first

\$800 million in contracts awarded, some 70% went to U.S. firms. Starry-eyed construction capitalists are predicting that it may take \$100 billion to rebuild Kuwait. American auto magnates are gushing that this may be a market in which they can beat the Japanese; as the Kuwaiti wealthy replace their lost autos, they will no doubt be reminded of whose troops are there, on the ground.

But already, there is grumbling among the different powers that were part of Bush's coalition. Britain publicly complained that it didn't get enough contracts. France is upset too. And Egyptian contractors are saying, "The cake is big, we should get a small part of it too."

## The parasites restored to grandeur

The reconstruction will also require the return of the Kuwaiti ruling class, to supervise the workers and keep them in line. But the emir may find it difficult to entice his relatives away from the gaming tables and nightclubs of Egypt and the Riviera. About twice as many Kuwaiti citizens fled the country as stayed behind. Since the Iraqi invasion Cairo nightspots have been filled to capacity with Kuwaiti millionaire "refugees." Even the emir himself has been slow to return; after all, with his palaces trashed, where can he enjoy the company of his 71 wives?

Kuwait's "liberation" means liberation for the wealthy sheikhs to reclaim their "legitimate" position, but it only means more drudgery for the working people of Kuwait — who are drawn from the poor of Arab and Asian lands. Just as the war enriched imperialist weapons makers and oil corporations, the peace will be a bonanza for the imperialist construction corporations. The emir has his country and oil wells restored to him, the rich will make money hand over fist, while the workers will be kept down, even more fiercely than before.

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Cuba, Costa Rica and Singapore has a better chance of surviving than does one born in Washington, D.C. or Harlem.

Obviously something must be done. But Bush and Congress are too concerned about bailing out the S&Ls and banks than to launch a program that would really help the working people.

# Make the rich pay for the budget crises!

## High school students protest New York cutbacks

About 40 mostly black and Hispanic high school students protested the budget cuts in the New York City schools on February 28. Chanting "Money for education, not for war!" and other slogans, the students paraded around City Hall and into the mall under the Trade Center. At one point they attempted to move into the streets. When police pushed them back onto the sidewalk, students shouted "Educate the city, don't police it!"

Mayor Dinkins' billion dollar budget cutting is hitting education hard. Thousands of teachers are being laid off, classes are being eliminated, class-size is growing, half the funding for extracurricular activities has been axed, and so

forth. But while crying that there is no money for education or for health care or for other social programs, Dinkins has decided to increase taxes to pay for more police.

On February 7, Dinkins announced he had reached agreement with state legislators for a new \$1.8 billion "anti-crime" program. It would add another 3,500 cops to the city's police force over six years — expanding the active force to almost 32,000 cops, its largest size ever. While the lives of the working people and poor are being devastated, Dinkins is making sure that there is no shortage of billy clubs to beat them. ■

## New York state workers up in arms

New York state workers are up in arms against Governor Mario Cuomo's budget cutting. On February 6, mental health workers in New York City walked off the job. They joined other workers for a rally of 2,000 people in downtown Manhattan to protest a proposed pay freeze and higher premiums on health insurance. A week later, thousands of angry state workers marched on the Capitol denouncing layoffs and other cuts.

Cuomo has proposed cutting \$4.5 billion from the state budget. He wants to freeze the wages of state workers;

eliminate 18,000 jobs — 7,200 of them through layoffs; cut 10% of the budget for education; and slash other social benefit programs.

Workers are particularly angry because the liberal Democrat Cuomo has refused to touch the rich. He has ruled out increasing taxes on corporations and the personal income of top earners. That, he claimed, would be "cutting your own throat." Apparently the Democrats share the Reaganite view that what's good for the capitalist businessmen is good for the workers and poor, even if it kills them. ■

## Michigan foster parents protest



Over 100 foster parents picketed offices of the Department of Social Services in Detroit, Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on February 11. In Detroit the picket continued for most of the day.

The protesters lambasted state budget

cuts for foster child care. The 9.2% cut in the Department of Social Services budget has translated into a 22% cut in the allotments for the 10,215 children in foster care in the state. As well, Medicaid and transportation payments for the children have been slashed. ■

## Democrats no help in fight against Michigan cuts

Hundreds of homeless people, welfare recipients and state workers from Michigan turned out to protest at a legislative hearing on Governor Engler's proposed budget cuts in early February. People heckled Engler's spokesmen and cheered when homeless people took the microphones to denounce the proposed spending cuts.

Democrats also got into the act, posturing as if they also opposed the cuts. But the Democrats themselves had already agreed to a 9.2% across-the-board cut in all programs.

But under their own plan the already desperation-level payments to a total of 725,245 welfare recipients have been cut by 17%. ■

This deal was cooked up last fall after the Democratic Governor Blanchard had lost the election but was still in office. It established the policy that if no new budget agreement could be worked out between the Democrats and Engler then the across-the-board cuts would go into effect. They wouldn't consider making the capitalists pay to fund programs for the working people and poor by, for example, cutting the billions in tax breaks that General Motors has received over the years from Michigan. Instead, the question became only which particular social benefits to cut.

For example, Engler proposed eliminating General Assistance welfare altogether, kicking over 100,000 people off the rolls. The Democrats blocked this.

## No end to military spending

Remember the talk about a "peace dividend"? Remember how Gramm-Rudman was supposed to hold down military spending and reduce the gargantuan federal deficit? Remember how last year's budget deal between Bush and Congress was supposed to put a "spending cap" on the Pentagon's budget that could not be raised no matter what?

Well, forget about all that. It was just another hoax. Last year's agreement between the Democrats and Bush also included an escape clause. While the military budget was supposedly capped, the cost for using the military in war was

not. Operation Desert Shield/Storm was put outside of the military's spending caps.

Bush asked Congress February 23 for an immediate \$15 billion for the war, the authority to spend another \$53.5 billion (that has been pledged by U.S. allies), and said more might be needed such as \$5.2 billion to bring U.S. troops back from the Gulf. This has helped to swell the federal deficit to record highs.

And who will pay? The masses — through even greater cuts in social programs, which have no such escape clause, and higher taxes. ■

## Bush's sham infant mortality program

Typical of Bush's "kinder and gentler" social spending cuts is the program to reduce the outrageously high infant mortality rate in ten cities.

Under the budget rules worked out by Bush and the liberal Democrats, any new spending for social programs can only be obtained by cutting other social programs. And so it is with Bush's program on infant mortality.

The president has proposed spending \$171 million to increase access to health care and other services for high-risk pregnant women in 10 cities with "exceptionally high rates of infant mortality." Such spending, and more, is of course needed. But Bush plans to get \$58 million of that from cutting existing health programs for pregnant women and young

children. \$24 million would be cut from community health centers and another \$34 million from current Maternal and Child Care Service Block Grants. Bush has not yet specified what he plans to cut to get the other \$113 million.

But the outrage doesn't stop here. Bush also plans to cut \$2.8 billion from Medicare. And \$1 billion of that is from teaching hospitals — the only place many of the poor can get any help.

The high rate of infant deaths in the U.S. is double that of Japan and has surpassed 20 other countries. The rate is higher in the big U.S. cities. For African-American babies it is twice as high as the rate for white babies. And a baby in

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# Strikes and workplace news

## GM workers reject local contract

Sixty-eight percent of the workers at General Motors' Lake Orion, Michigan assembly plant rejected a proposed local contract in early February. They were furious at provisions allowing GM more leeway to speed up the lines, violate seniority rights, and fire workers for absenteeism.

The shameful contract was recommended by the local United Auto Workers

(UAW) union leaders, including a supporter of New Directions. Workers have been learning through struggle — like last-year's walkout against unsafe conditions — that neither faction of the UAW bureaucrats can be trusted. Now they have to learn how to organize mass action independently from the union hacks.

## Cafeteria workers fight givebacks at GM plant

Cafeteria workers went on strike at the GM Truck and Bus plant in Pontiac Michigan at the end of January. The 53 mostly women workers are employed by the Canteen Co. which is trying to eliminate their medical coverage and cost-of-living raises. One worker pointed out that 20 years ago the workers struck to

get medical coverage, and now they are having to strike to defend it.

Although the cafeteria workers are represented by the UAW, the auto workers at the plant have not been mobilized to join their daily picket lines. The UAW leaders are leaving the cafeteria workers to fight alone.

## Harley-Davidson workers strike to restore COLA

Over 1,400 workers walked out February 4 at Harley-Davidson's motorcycle assembly plant in York, Pennsylvania. This is the first strike at the plant in 22 years. The workers are trying to turn around seven years of givebacks. They are

demanding the restoration of cost-of-living raises and the right to refuse mandatory overtime. They organized large picket lines in front of the plant and are preparing for a long fight.

## The statistics of betrayal

Recently released statistics give a picture of the dirty sellout role of the union bureaucracy.

For the last decade the union hacks have opposed virtually any mass struggle in the name of "labor-management cooperation" and being "realistic" about the economy. As a result, the level of strike activity plunged. It has now reached the lowest level in the 43 years in which the government began keeping the statistics.

In the absence of mass struggle, the capitalists have driven the workers to the wall. According to a recent Commerce

Department report, between 1979 and 1989 industrial production rose by more than 30%, but the actual work force fell by 10%. The loss of jobs and the brutal speedup produced an increase in manufacturing productivity in the 1980's three times greater than what had occurred in the 1970's. Meanwhile wages, after adjustment for inflation, have fallen through the floor.

Being "realistic" and "cooperating with management" is killing the workers. To hell with the union bureaucrats. It's time to fight back.

## Newark nurses strike against rollbacks

Some 400 nurses walked out at the United Hospitals Medical Center in Newark, New Jersey February 17. They are fighting management's attempts to loot the pension fund to pay for a wage increase and a rollback of their health

benefits and pay for weekend work.

The strike has forced the hospital to cut its patient load by more than half. Management is trying to bring in nurses from temporary agencies to scab on the strike.

## Against short staffing at California hospital

At the same time the Bush government is spending a billion dollars a day on the Gulf war, it is announcing that it wants to cut Medicare by \$25 billion. The war the capitalists are waging against the workers and poor in this country threatens as many lives as the one in the Gulf.

The cutbacks at Highland Hospital are a part of this war at home. While the new director of Highland arrived boasting that she had \$5 million to spend on paint and polish for the hospital, it turned out that she had nothing to deliver the workers and patients but

cutbacks. Days after a state inspection was completed, dozens of workers who had been hired to create the impression that Highland was well-staffed were laid off. As the rent-a-flowers lining the entrance died, so did the administration's claim that "Highland is Healing." Severe staffing cuts were planned or begun throughout the hospital.

After temporary housekeepers and clerks disappeared and it was announced that dietary was overstaffed, the nurses became the next target. Many per-diem nurses have lost their jobs. Patients lives

have been jeopardized as a result. Highland Hospital is in Alameda county which has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country, yet in the ninth floor nursery nurses who previously cared for four or five babies are now caring for eight.

The nurses and other workers at Highland have not taken these attacks lying down. They have organized meet-

ings, pickets and rallies to oppose the cutbacks. They have put up resistance to unsafe assignments and conditions. It is the workers who have been on the front-line defending the patients and community who use Highland. (Excerpted from the February 1 issue of the *Bay Area Workers Voice*, paper of the MLP-San Francisco Bay Area Branch.)

## New York trackworkers protest no weekend days off

Up to 150 trackworkers picketed outside the New York Transit Authority's Jay St. headquarters on January 30. They loudly protested the worsening conditions imposed by TA management every time the annual job pick comes around.

Of most concern is the move underway to eliminate the long-standing practice of trackworkers' receiving at least one day off on the weekend. Jay St. has been moving to a system whereby the majority, if not all, trackworkers would be locked into weekdays off, with ever-worsening

tours of duty.

The picket was held under short notice. Despite this, track and other transit workers came out and protested vigorously. Unfortunately, the union bureaucrats almost stymied the militancy by saturating the protest with whistles, drowning out slogans and making it difficult for people to learn why workers are protesting. (Based on a February issue of the *New York Workers' Voice*, paper of the MLP-New York.)

## Get prepared for NY transit contract battle

As May approaches, the 1991 contract is quickly becoming the #1 point on NYC transit workers' agenda.

The city and state governments are crying broke. They are using the threat of layoffs as blackmail. Workers, we are told, are the ones who naturally must pay for the economic crisis. Corporate profits are sacred and must not be touched.

Various schemes are afloat whereby city workers are being made to pay for their own "wage increases" through wage deferral and the reduction of employer pension payments. Some union bosses are even doling out loans to the city. They may call this being "creative." But it is clear that the takeback offensive by the rich and their politicians continues. The union officials are going along.

NYC transit workers have to be on guard. The union bureaucrats have shown

they have no intention whatever of staging a real fight over the contract or of using the union machinery to encourage, spread, and coordinate division and transit-wide activity.

But drawing out the rank and file is our only hope. Transit workers, of all city workers, are perhaps best positioned to fight and beat back the capitalists' giveback offensive. We can shut down the city. We proved this in the 1966 strike victory and again in 1980, before the union misleaders betrayed us at the critical moment. We don't raise this as an idle threat, or as something we could do tomorrow. But it is something we must work towards if we are to win our legitimate demands. (Taken from a Feb. issue of the *New York Workers' Voice*, paper of the MLP-New York.)

## Minn. ammo plants struck

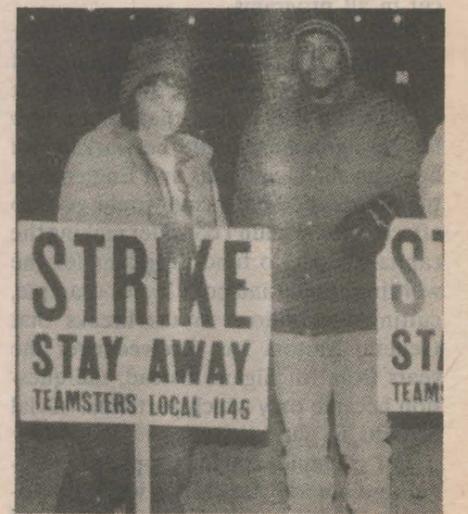
1,284 workers defied the pro-war mania to wage a week-long strike for higher wages at ten ammunition plants in the Minneapolis area.

The plants, owned by Alliant Techsystems, produce 25-millimeter shells and cluster bombs used in the Persian Gulf war. The company, which was raking in millions off the imperialist war-drive, demanded that the workers make a "patriotic sacrifice" for America. And the media jumped in to whip up hysteria against the strike as a "stab in the back" of the U.S. troops. But the workers defied them, kept up their strike, and won broad support from other workers.

The strike began February 10, after workers rejected a company proposal to extend the contract for eight months with only a lump-sum bonus and no wage increase. The company apparently hoped to extend the contract until after the war was over and then demand concessions. The Teamster union leaders, in the spirit of a war-time "truce" between labor and management, recommended that the workers accept. But the rank-and-file, seeing Alliant raking in fourth-quarter profits of \$17.1 million off the blood and death in the Persian Gulf, voted to

strike.

After a week, the company caved in and granted the workers a 32-month contract with four percent wage increases in the second and third years and a lump-sum payment of \$800-1600 for the first eight months. A three percent pension increase was also won. But the company forced through a \$5-10 increase in monthly premiums for medical benefits.



# Step up the defense of women's rights!

## Police help anti-abortion fanatics violate women's rights

For the week of January 28 to February 2, anti-abortion fanatics descended on health clinics in the town of Dobbs Ferry, New York. The ones from New York call themselves "Operation Goliath," thus comparing themselves with the Biblical bully. And they were reinforced by the national "Operation Rescue." These sanctimonious crusaders present their harassment of women at abortion clinics as a defense of the "right-to-life." Yet they see nothing wrong with the war in the Persian Gulf, and the devastation of Iraqi neighborhoods and cities, water supplies, and food warehouses. No, war was fine with them, as with their namesake Goliath. It's those darn women's clinics that worry them.

Local activists, including students and youth, came out to defend the clinics and escort women patients. But Women's Health Action and Mobilization (WHAM) goes along with the views put forward by the National Organization for Women and the Washington Area Clinic Defense Task Force (WACDTF) at a conference in October last year. This means relying on the police and trying to avoid confrontation with the anti-abortion bullies who at Dobbs Ferry surrounded and harassed patients. So the pro-choice forces at Dobbs Ferry would arrive early at the clinics and inform the

police that the anti-abortion bullies were coming.

But what did the police do? They allowed OR to block access to clinics for hours and only removed anti-abortion blockaders at a snail's pace. In the case of the Planned Parenthood office in Greensburgh, the police let the blockade go on for over seven hours. Meanwhile, at the clinics, the cops often closed off local roads used by patients to reach the clinics by car, causing them to walk long distances. In one case, they threatened some pro-choice activists with arrest when they helped some patients into a clinic through an open window.

Clinic defenders, including some from NOW and WACDTF, expressed shock at the behavior of the police. They pointed to the apparent deal between the police and OR.

But police collusion with OR has taken place right from the start. And no matter how badly the police behave, bourgeois-led groups like NOW keep telling the pro-choice activists to rely on them. This is a dead-end path. If OR's harassment of women at abortion clinics is to be defeated, activists must confront OR with militancy and slogans and action. The activists must consider not how best to bring out the police, but how best to bring out the large masses

of people who wish to defend women's rights. (See the December issue of the *Workers' Advocate Supplement* about this

conference which gave NOW's views on confrontations at abortion clinics.) ■

## Maryland law protects abortion rights – unless you're poor and disadvantaged

In 1973 Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision struck down state anti-abortion laws. If the Supreme Court takes back its 1973 decision, new state anti-abortion laws may go into effect. In some states, the courts may rule that old anti-abortion laws can go back into effect. In the state of Maryland, however, a bill was signed into law on February 18 guaranteeing some abortion rights. Its supporters claim that when it goes into effect, on July 1, it will protect Maryland women no matter what the Supreme Court does. They say that this is one of the most liberal laws in the country.

However, the law also has some restrictive clauses. For example, it requires parental notification when an underage woman seeks an abortion. In other states, such measures have been sought as a step towards banning all abortions, yet here it is in a Maryland law that is supposedly pro-choice.

Parental notification clauses are designed to harass young women seeking abortions. The advocates of such measures talk about family solidarity. But good family relations can't be guaranteed by law. And when a girl doesn't feel she

can consult her parents, whether because of family abuse, or the absence of parents, or personal humiliation, such notification laws create the potential for tragedies. They channel girls towards dangerous back-alley abortions.

In the case of Maryland's law, the restrictions on abortion rights appear to be relatively mild. For example, doctors are given the right to override the parental notification provision. Nevertheless, such provisions provide obstacles to abortion rights. These obstacles can bear quite heavily on poor and disadvantaged women, who, for example, may not have a sympathetic personal physician they can rely on. Such restrictions show that working people cannot rely on the legislatures to protect women's rights. Even in the name of protecting women, the pro-capitalist politicians are chipping away at women's rights.

Women must stand up for their own rights, and the working class as a whole must stand behind women's rights. Otherwise the politicians will at most leave some rights for wealthy women, who have the time and money to shop around from state to state for a health clinic. ■

## OIL Continued from page 8

doesn't tell the full story. The majors (Exxon, Mobil, Texaco, Shell, BP, and Chevron, which was formed by Socal buying out Gulf) still dominate a great deal of world crude oil, especially the oil that is traded internationally. In 1982, out of a total world oil production of 38 million barrels a day, the majors accounted for 16 million, over 40%. It used to be 60% a decade earlier. The 1982 figure includes both oil the majors directly own, as well as oil they buy under "buy-back" arrangements with local oil producers. It is through cozy arrangements like this that the oil majors maintain their dominant role.

There's still more to the story. The Anglo-American majors also dominate world refining, distribution, and transport. And Western oil interests also dominate technology in oil production, refining, etc. The control of technology is a vital means by which the local bourgeois regimes remain dependent on the U.S. lords of oil. This ensures that they are just junior partners in the world oil setup.

This advantage in technology is also ensuring that the Soviet Union, which has the world's largest oil reserves after the Persian Gulf, will become dependent on the Western oil corporations. While the Soviet Union sits on a sea of oil, their technology is several decades old, and it is falling apart. U.S. oil monop-

lies are hungrily streaming into the Soviet Union to sink their claws into the oil industry there.

It may also be remembered that the big oil price increases did not simply mean more money for the OPEC regimes, they meant even bigger profits for the oil majors (because they dominated so much of the market). The majors' profits quadrupled between 1972 and 1983. These corporations used these big profits to extend their control over other energy resources (they own 55% of U.S. coal and 35% of uranium), and to carry out buyouts and mergers.

### So why the war with Iraq?

The U.S. imperialists have long made it clear that they will not tolerate any major changes in the Persian Gulf. Social revolution is of course their greatest fear. And at one time they would not even tolerate bourgeois nationalist regimes to emerge which may nationalize local oil; for example, the CIA overthrew such a regime in Iran in the early 1950's, installing the Shah. Since then, imperialism, while not preferring such regimes, has been willing to work with them. What they are especially worried about now is local regimes which threaten to upset regional stability.

Saddam Hussein's regime came to represent this kind of threat. The Iraqi regime is just another capitalist regime with which the Western oil companies have long been working. However, Saddam wanted a re-division of the oil profits in the region and this is why he carried out his invasion of Kuwait. Saddam did not want confrontation with U.S. imperialism, and there is ample evidence to suggest he thought Washington would allow him to get a bigger share of the pie.

But that was a wrong calculation on his part. By taking over Kuwait, not only did he grab a somewhat bigger share of

the Gulf's oil profits, but he threatened to upset the fragile regional stability which is based on regimes of local kings and sheikhs who only hang on with repression and imperialist military support. And this is what imperialism was not willing to tolerate at all.

The war against Iraq was just as much a war over defense of the U.S. empire as it was over control of oil profits per se. The U.S. establishment may crow about this victory, but the days of empire are numbered. The workers and toilers of the Middle East are not about to forever remain slaves to oil companies, oil kings, or the imperialists of London, Washington, and Paris. Sooner or later, the toilers will emerge with a revolutionary alternative that is really in the interests of the people, that will be able to stand up to imperialism, and that will finally use the oil wealth for the common good. ■

## Mailhandlers union hacks settle contract

The leaders of the Mailhandlers' union just reached a tentative contract agreement with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). And it is rotten. There are no basic wage increases, only lump sum payments. And the USPS bosses got their longstanding wish of creating a new category of low wage employees, who

start at a pay rate 20% lower than at present.

This agreement threatens to become the "pattern" for the arbitrators who are now drawing up new contracts for clerks and letter carriers. All postal workers must denounce it and prepare to fight back. ■

## Injured postal workers picket APWU meeting

Members of the Injured and Handicapped Postal Workers United (IHPWU) picketed a local meeting of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) on February 10. The IHPWU demanded that the APWU provide last resort financial assistance to the injured clerks who have been laid off. Some of them are on the verge of losing their homes, cars and

utilities for lack of income.

While expressing their "concern" for the injured, the APWU hacks refused the demand. They claimed the union lacks the necessary funds. But the local has a budget of several hundred thousand dollars a year and frequently spends money for perks for the officials. ■

**STRUGGLE**  
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According to the capitalist newspapers and TV, the anti-war movement is no more than an insignificant fringe. Why, just everyone enthusiastically supported the oil war. At least 84% of the people. And to "prove" it, the media dutifully reported every yellow ribbon, and presents each one as a heart-felt political statement, while all but ignoring the anti-war sentiment.

But when we leave the world of polls and TV screens for the streets of cities and towns, we see a different picture. Right alongside the profusion of yellow ribbons, February was another month of non-stop protest against the war.

To be sure, there weren't the giant demonstrations of January. The opening of the air war in January had led to a passionate outpouring, including repeated, gigantic demonstrations of hundreds of thousands in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. This capped months of mass concern and unease since the war drums began half a year earlier.

In February there was a certain pause to consider what to do next. Nevertheless marches, rallies and teach-ins sprang up everywhere, and there were sit-ins and street takeovers as well. February 21 was a national day of youth and student action against the war, and high school students too continued to enter the movement.

Hundreds of actions of varying types took place right in the teeth of the chauvinist flag-waving of the establishment. In the last two months, well over a million people have taken part in

anti-war actions. Meanwhile the armed forces were so uneasy about the public attitude that they prevented the TV from showing the coffins returning from the Persian Gulf.

Today, with their rapid victory in the ground war, the imperialist rulers are ecstatic. "We're number one" — in bombing and killing and ruthlessness — they shout. As usual, easy victory and the massacre of thousands of helpless and fleeing opponents feeds the flames of chauvinist pride and boasting. And flush with such a victory, the imperialists imply that the anti-war protests were useless or proven wrong.

Not at all. The struggle against imperialist war is a protracted one. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken the first steps to renew the traditions of anti-war struggle. Thousands began to think about the methods and forms of organizations. A new generation of activists and youth has appeared on the scene. And debates about imperialism and the nature of the system made their appearance among the actions.

The coming weeks will undoubtedly bring an avalanche of flag-waving hoopla. But when the victory orgies subside, it will be found that the mass protests of the last seven months have laid the foundations for further struggle against the medal-bedecked masters of war. Yes, it may not be the Vietnam movement any more. It is a new movement, the movement of the 90s, against Bush's "new world order." ■

Below we give a sample of the anti-war protests of the last month. Only a few cities are covered, and not even all the actions in those cities.

#### New York City

**February 6:** Bush came to speak at the Hilton Hotel, and was greeted by 3,000 protesters. There was a massive police presence. About a hundred high school activists attempted to march on Sixth Avenue but were turned back by the cops. There were attempts to build barricades in the street, and Bush was burned in effigy.

**February 9:** Three days later there was a mainly black march through Harlem. At this action, liberal politicians were booed when they dwelled on "supporting our troops." Meanwhile militants marched to recruiting stations in the predominantly Latino community of Washington Heights, and 150 marched through the South Bronx to Hostos College.

**February 17:** Protesters took to the streets 5,000 strong in Times Square.

**Youth and student day:** High school activists in New York City prepared for the national day of youth protest with leafletting and posterage at many schools. On the day itself students walked out from a number of high schools and filtered into a demonstration of 2,000 at the Federal Plaza. For example, 300 walked out of LaGuardia High School with 200 attending the demonstration.

There was a defiant mood among the demonstrators as the bulk of them marched to the offices of New York governor Mario Cuomo, a liberal Democratic supporter of the war. They then continued on to Wall Street.

Early on a group of several hundred activists, including some high school students, had split off from the main demonstration. They marched on Broadway, blocking the street with blockades. Then they rejoined the main march. Some activists held a sit-in in the street, and the cops moved in to arrest four of them. Demonstrators then marched on the precinct to demand the release of the four activists.

By now the main group had dwindled in size. Some activists attempted to link up with another action they heard about, but cops hemmed them in on all sides and arrested six, at least four of whom were high school students.

#### Chicago

**February 16:** 500 demonstrators marched to the Israeli consulate where slogans rang out in support of the Palestinian struggle. The protesters also denounced the media and picketed at the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper building, a nearby radio station, and an NBC television station. The radio station showed its non-partisan and objective standpoint by trying to drown out slogans by blaring the national anthem.

# Gulf war co from coast

The march then continued up Michigan Avenue. The police tried to keep it out of the streets, but protesters foiled this by heading onto a side street and taking it over. The march continued eastward along the side street toward Lake Michigan. Again activists outfoxed

the cops by feinting a turn north. When police moved to block them, the demonstration continued east toward Lakeshore Drive, which was blockaded by 300 people. Traffic was halted, but many motorists expressed sympathy and flashed  
*Continued on next page*

## Unrest in the military

### Black GIs decry racism in the military

Black people are not only being sent to the front lines of war in huge numbers. Once there, they are confronting a starkly racist atmosphere and harassment.

The military has unleashed savage racism against Arabs to hype up the U.S. troops for massacre. Signs abound with sayings like "Kill 'em all and let God sort 'em out" and "We came thousands of miles to smoke a camel jockey." Iraqis, and even Arab allies of the U.S., are often referred to as "sand niggers."

This anti-Arab racism also gets turned inward against the black GIs in the army. Commanders tolerate open race-baiting and "nigger"-calling against blacks. Meanwhile, they try to suppress any signs of black pride or militancy. Commanders discourage, and in some units have banned outright, the playing of music by groups with anti-racist messages such as Public Enemy and X-Clan. Similarly, commanders are suppressing the wearing of black nationalist insignia like flags and medallions of red, black and green.

But resistance among black GIs continues to grow. Many became upset with the hypocrisy of the talk about a war for "freedom" when Bush vetoed the civil rights bill at home. And anger at the racism inside the military has grown. Confrontations against racists have

broken out. Numbers of black GIs have tried to get free of the military by applying for conscientious objector status and some have refused orders to the Middle East. Meanwhile, in the Gulf itself, anti-racist and anti-war discussion groups have emerged from the ranks.

A black army mechanic, Lance Walters, who returned to the U.S. in December from four months of duty in Saudi Arabia, discussed the racism. He says that he went into the army to get vocational training and to change direction from what looked to him like a dead-end future. He also points out, "I really believed all that hype about America being the beacon of freedom and justice. I've become a lot more aware since then."

Walters reports that in Saudi Arabia, "Just about every night, a bunch of us would get together and talk about the hypocrisy of this country that had sent us over to fight to restore democracy in the rich kingdom of Kuwait while we didn't even enjoy full democratic rights at home... We talked about how much the Arabs of that region looked like people we knew in black communities back home, and how the U.S. was using us to fight other black people for the benefit of white people... We had some hot discussions going." ■

### Puerto Rican soldiers resist

In mid-February a member of the Puerto Rican National Guard, Oscar Colon Mayasonet, refused orders to the Persian Gulf. He was put on a truck from Fort Buchanan to go to the Roosevelt Roads base in Ceiba for shipment to Saudi Arabia. On the way, he jumped from the truck. He was chased, handcuffed, and pushed back into the truck. Once at Ceiba, he refused to get on the plane. But MPs carried him on in handcuffs.

Oscar had applied for conscientious objector status. But the military said it would take 180 days to consider, and in the meantime he would be forced to serve in the Gulf. Oscar said he joined the National Guard in 1989, following the island's devastation by Hurricane Hugo, "motivated by the possibility of helping the Puerto Rican community in cases of disaster and necessity." But he decided against military service during

basic training "when I realized that I was being prepared to be a killing machine."

Oscar was the second soldier in Puerto Rico during the week to refuse orders to the Gulf. Dr. Jorge Rodriques Wilson was arrested and sent to Fort Knox as a "deserter" after his appeal for CO status was turned down. Meanwhile, the first Puerto Rican woman soldier to come back injured declared from a San Juan hospital that she would refuse to go back if the National Guard sent her.

Some 20,000 Puerto Ricans have been sent to the front lines in the Gulf. But there is growing resentment that they are being sent to war for the U.S. when they themselves are oppressed by U.S. imperialism at home. While the oil giants get rich, unemployment stands at 19.5% in Puerto Rico, and some 60% of the population lives under the official poverty line and receives food stamps. ■

### Marines refuse to attend pro-war rally in Tennessee

In early February, Marine corporals and other low-level NCOs stationed at the naval air station near Memphis, Tennessee were ordered to attend a weekend "support the troops" rally. They were supposed to carry flags and wear yellow ribbons at the rally being held in the nearby base town of Millington.

But the Marines refused. They argued

that working as soldiers did not require them to attend political rallies. The Staff NCO supervising them tried to write them up and get them disciplined for refusing to obey an order. But by standing firm, the corporals were able to get the order rescinded and the disciplinary action thrown out. ■



5,000 protesters converge on Times Square in New York, Feb. 17

# Condemned not to coast

Continued from prev. page

peace signs.

A beefed-up police force eventually shoved protesters off the road, arresting 20 in the process. But the march regrouped and continued on to an armory for a rally.

**February 21:** About 1,000 students and other activists marched. At the Israeli consulate supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party led anti-zionist slogans. The march went on to the *Tribune* building and back to the Israeli embassy. There were sporadic attempts to take the streets, which were blocked by a massive police presence as well as by organizers from the tame wing of the movement, who directed marshals to link arms to keep people on the sidewalk.

**The day after:** The launching of the ground war led to an immediate protest of 200 on February 24 to mark "the day after." 1,000 people came back on Monday the 25th for an even bigger demonstration.

But on the 25th the leaders of the

"Emergency Coalition" leading the rally actually called off an accompanying march, preferring to just sing pleasant songs about giving peace a chance. (It also seems that many of these leaders supported the Democratic Party and thought that an action might hurt the chances of their favorite candidate, Danny Davis, in the Democratic mayoral primary scheduled for the next day.) The protesters were annoyed, to say the least, and half of them marched off anyway. They took to the streets, and then returned to the plaza to pick up more strength. But coalition speakers from the podium denounced the march (and also blamed the activists, not the notorious Chicago police, for the repression at anti-war events). This angered their listeners, most of whom pushed through the coalition's marshals and joined the march.

The march then wound its way through downtown Chicago shouting slogans. It was harassed and provoked all along the way by the Chicago police, who ran their horses into the march repeated-

ly. The police tried to break off sections of the march, and they picked out people here and there for arrest.

## Detroit

**Student action:** High school activists played a big role in protests in the Detroit area. In suburban Berkley High, 40 students held a sit-in in the hallway on February 1. Eight were suspended when they refused administrators' orders to return to class.

Berkley and other high school activists organized a 100-strong picket at a recruiting station in the Detroit suburb of Royal Oak on February 6. About 15 militarists, including some new recruits, shouted "Burn hippies, not the flag" and other mindless abuse at the demonstrators. But the young protesters were not intimidated and confronted them. An anti-war protester who was an ex-Marine denounced the harassment and explained that his service in Beirut, Lebanon led him to question U.S. policy.

On February 21, a number of young people participated in a march of 150 to the campus of Wayne State University in Detroit. Another action was scheduled for Ann Arbor, Michigan that day.

**No to racism!:** On the 24th, there was a boisterous three-hour-long march against anti-Arab racism and the war which wound its way through an Arab-American neighborhood. Many local Arabs joined in the march, giving it a lively character. (See the article on anti-Arab racism elsewhere in this paper.)

**Against the ground war:** The next day about 400 people gathered at the Federal building in downtown Detroit to picket against the war. The sectarian warfare between certain groups, in which both sides are concerned only with official positions in coalitions rather than patient work among the masses, reached the point where one group called in the police against another. The official organizers of the demonstration had actually taken a decision the day before to call in the police, if necessary, to get their way. But supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party led the slogan "Cops Out", which was taken up widely and forced the police to back off.

Also that day, in East Lansing, Michigan, an anti-war protest was attacked with rocks and bottles by some pro-war thugs.

## Los Angeles

2,000 people marched against the war during the first week of February. Then on February 9 there was a march to the RAND corporation headquarters in Santa Monica (RAND is a notorious imperialist think tank concerned with

nuclear war, American world domination, and other subjects.)

The massacre of civilians in a civilian bunker in Baghdad on February 13 shocked people here as elsewhere. There were protests on February 14 at the University of California campus at Los Angeles (UCLA), the UC campus at Irvine, and in Santa Monica. Then on the 15th, about 120 people picketed against media lies at the CBS television station.

On February 16th, 1,500 picketed at the Westwood Federal Building. Supporters of the MLP blanketed the action with several leaflets, each on a key issue facing the movement. One leaflet opposed the movement taking up the slogan "support our troops". Some demonstrators from the left fringe of the Democratic Party felt provoked by this, but in the resulting discussions rank-and-file activists joined MLP supporters in opposing the "support our troops" slogan.

## A tragedy

There was a tragic incident in Amherst, Massachusetts where a man burned himself to death in a desperate effort to protest the war. There have been at least three incidents of this kind since troops were sent to the Gulf. They show the deep outrage against the war. But they also presumably show that these people didn't realize the extent of mass opposition, and felt isolated. So instead of organizing, these individuals took their own lives.

The establishment press sought to hush up these suicides, but it turned out that the man in Amherst was the stepson of syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman.

## Elsewhere

In Seattle, some 5,000 people marched on February 2 through a black community to a downtown rally. In Olympia, Washington 14 people were arrested for digging symbolic graves on the lawn of the state capital.

In a February 2 action in Rochester, NY, 150 people picketed at a plant which makes body bags. Even in Kennebunkport, Maine, Bush's retreat, a church service attended by Bush was interrupted by a protester who denounced the war.

On a more musical note, in the latter part of February seventeen members of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra in Tennessee refused to take their place in performances until the playing of the national anthem was finished. They held that playing the anthem during the war was a political gesture, and they apparently did not wish to be part of the campaign of patriotic flag-waving. ■



Anti-war march through Wayne State University, Detroit, Feb. 21

## Unrest in the military

### AWOL protest at Fort Hood, Texas

Some 68 black and white soldiers in a unit training at Fort Hood, Texas for the Gulf war went AWOL the first week of February to protest bad treatment.

The soldiers were from a Louisiana National Guard unit that had been activated for the oil war. They complained that although they were training 24 hours a day and seven days a week in freezing temperatures, there was not enough cold weather equipment. They also said there was a shortage of food

and inadequate medical care. One soldier complained that he thought he had frostbite but could get no one to look at it. Another said that while they were spending their day in the mud, the commanding officer would go off deer hunting. The soldiers also charged that promises for leave were repeatedly broken.

Some of the soldiers also protested against the war. One said he had no intention of fighting to get Iraq out of Kuwait. ■

### Army instructor handcuffed for anti-war stickers

Alexander Holodiloff is a Viet Nam war veteran and an instructor at the army's Defense Language Institute in the Presidio of Monterey, California. On February 13 he posted several anti-war slogans in the windows of his van — like "Suppose Kuwait's main product was broccoli" and "Just say no to war."

When he drove to work, army commanders from Fort Ord (which runs the Presidio) ordered him to get permission to display the signs. He refused. And in the resulting confrontation, Holodiloff

was handcuffed and detained in the back of a police car while federal police towed away his van.

While pro-war stickers, yellow ribbons and the like are sold at the Fort Ord commissary and cover the base, anti-war sentiment is being suppressed. Holodiloff protested the treatment and eventually reached a compromise with the army. He agreed to move the signs from the windows to the bumper of his van. But he expects continued harassment. ■

## Anti-war protest in Egypt



Egyptians defy bans to protest Mubarak's support for Bush's war

# Why the quick collapse of Saddam's military?

The establishment is crowing about how the U.S. has won a great military victory. They've broken out the champagne and declared, we are now on the eve of the second American century. Their cry for the future has become: let no one ignore our dictates.

Wait a minute. Whatever happened to right or wrong? This was an unjust war for oil and empire, and Bush lied in every argument he gave to take the U.S. into this war. We're supposed to forget all that. Military victory is supposed to be enough to make us stand tall.

But even putting aside the issue of the unjust reasons behind this war, what in the conduct of this war is there to cheer about? This was hardly a war — it was more like a six-week long massacre of Iraqi soldiers and civilians.

## War is too mild a word to describe this tragedy

For weeks, the U.S. and British warplanes dropped more than a million tons of bombs on Iraqis, over both military and civilian areas. We may never know the full number of casualties, but the toll of dead and wounded Iraqis was horrendous. Estimates talk of 25,000 to 100,000 soldiers dead, thousands of civilians dead, and many, many more injured. A large part of Iraq's industry, buildings, and roads were smashed into rubble.

And when Saddam Hussein showed readiness to give in under this assault by agreeing to the Soviet peace plan, that wasn't enough for Bush and his allies. They were out for even more blood. So the "ground war" was launched, and this too, like the air war, was not a war but yet another terrible massacre. Most of the Iraqi soldiers were blown to bits without firing a shot. Why, the U.S. military wouldn't even let Iraqi troops

flee from Kuwait. Thousands died fleeing in cars, buses and trucks towards the Iraqi border.

Since when does shooting fleeing soldiers in the back amount to a great military victory? Bush and the Rambos of America may feel tall at this, but this is a tragic time for all humanity.

Bush says that his war was not with the Iraqi people, only with Saddam. But who died in this war? Most of the soldiers killed were draftees, forced into the military from their farms, fields, schools and work places by Saddam Hussein. It is the poor of Iraq who paid the biggest price in this war.

## No justice on Saddam's side either

The responsibility for the deaths of the Iraqi soldiers and civilians also falls on Saddam Hussein's regime. The war on Saddam's side was also unjust. This was not a war in the interests of the Iraqi people, it was a military adventure they were forced into so that the regime could gain a bigger share of the oil wealth and Iraq could become a stronger regional power.

Saddam tried to paint his side in anti-imperialist colors. He claimed this war was really for the oppressed Arab masses, such as the Palestinians brutally oppressed by Israel. But this was all just a show. Many Arab people came to support Saddam during the war, but this was less a liking for his regime and more a wish on their part that someone was finally standing up to Western imperialism.

In the end, Saddam's military collapsed. Why did this happen?

## Overwhelming might and imperialist unity

The result of this war does not prove anything at all about right being on the side of the U.S. Instead it proves that if a big power is willing to use overwhelming might, it can militarily prevail under certain conditions.

The massive and indiscriminate bombing campaign against Iraq was the biggest factor behind the collapse of the Iraqi military. Here you had the world's biggest military power — with the backing of all the big powers — throwing everything it could into the bombing campaign. The other side was no match. Yes, Iraq had one of the bigger Third World militaries, but it was still a relatively weak military power in comparison with the West.

The bombing not only put out of commission Iraq's air force and air defenses, but it terrorized the troops and broke whatever morale they had.



Bombed shops and homes in Baghdad



The reality behind Bush's "clean war" -- Iraqi bodies are pulled from bombed air raid shelter in Baghdad

## The hollowness of the Iraqi regime

Of course, it does not follow that simply because Bush used overwhelming might, the other side had to collapse this way. Many armies have fought hard against big odds. And Third World armies have defeated mighty superpowers — remember Viet Nam. Why was this war different?

The answer lies in the character of the Iraqi regime. Saddam Hussein did not lead any type of people's government. His was a fascist regime which ruled by terror, demagoguery, and bribery. The Iraqi army was a conscript army, thrown into a military adventure they really did not have much stomach for. It was nothing like a people's army such as the Vietnamese, for example. In addition, this army had already gone through a ruinous 8-year war with Iran.

Saddam's invasion of Kuwait was a disaster. While few in Iraq or the Arab world, except the oil sheikhs, mourned

the collapse of the emir of Kuwait, few people supported the Kuwait takeover. It was not seen as an act of liberation. The troops in Saddam's military could hardly be expected to be enthusiastic for a bloody war to defend Saddam's adventure.

Before the ground war began, it was already clear that Saddam Hussein was defeated. That was why he accepted the Soviet peace initiative. Given withdrawal was in the cards, there was hardly any reason for front line troops in Kuwait to resist the U.S. invasion. They thought they could save their lives that way at least, but it turned out Bush wasn't willing to allow even that for many of them.

The result of this war will be much bitterness among the Iraqi masses for both the sides in this war. And they will be right. Both Saddam and Bush are responsible for the terrible tragedy. It was a war for the rich, and the poor of Iraq paid the big price. ■

# No blood for oil!

You may not have noticed this in your daily newspaper, but the oil companies had a field day during the last quarter of 1990.

The nine largest U.S. oil companies reportedly tallied over seven billion dollars in profits, up 69% from \$4.3 billion in 1989. Look at some examples:

- Exxon made \$1.56 billion, up 121%.
- Texaco made \$473 million, up 69%.
- Amoco made \$538 million, up 69%.
- Mobil made \$651 million, up 46%.
- Chevron made \$700 million.

British-owned BP and British-Dutch Shell also made off like bandits.

It is of course no secret to anyone that these humongous profits were the result of the Persian Gulf crisis. It wasn't because oil cost any more to produce. And it wasn't because of any shortage of oil — in fact, the world remains swimming in a glut of oil.

To put it bluntly, the huge profits are the direct outcome of price gouging by the world oil monopolies.

## Who profits, who pays for the oil war?

The oil company profits dramatize who makes out from and who sacrifices for the war in the Persian Gulf. A great deal of hysteria was created that Saddam was going to force up oil prices, but it turns out that the U.S. lords of oil did quite well without Saddam ever getting his chance. Remember, the oil prices went up in the fall because with the U.S.-backed embargo against Iraq, the oil companies decided to raise prices in the world market. Meanwhile, the Saudi royal family and the Gulf sheikhs have also been drawing in the loot.

## How are oil profits split up?

The anti-war movement around the world raised the slogan NO BLOOD FOR OIL. There has been a widespread recognition that this war had nothing to do with any morality or principles, but with naked imperialist interests. This was a war over who controls the oil-rich Persian Gulf region.

Many decades ago, European and U.S. oil companies went into this region and grabbed up huge oil concessions — through Western military might, pressure, and some bribery of the local elite. After World War II, it was the big U.S. oil companies which dominated the oil from the Gulf. This situation remained unchanged until the early 1970's. The dominant monopolies were the American-owned Exxon, Mobil, Texaco, Gulf and Standard Oil of California,

along with British Petroleum and Royal-Dutch Shell (these are known as the "majors.")

In the 1960's and 70's, many of the local regimes began to take over part of oil production through national oil companies. In 1973, many of the Third World oil-producing countries used their cartel (OPEC) to raise oil prices. There was a great deal of hysteria about this in the U.S. and Europe, and since then the impression has been created that the U.S. and Europe have suffered while the local oil-producing countries have made off with the lion's share of the oil loot.

The truth is more complicated, especially if you look at the matter from the angle of which classes benefit and not just which regions.

It is true that the local regimes — like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Iraq, etc. — have vastly increased their share of oil profits from the days of old when the local governments were just robbed by the Western oil monopolies. But by and large they did not put their new gains into general economic development. Some money was put into buying social peace with welfare measures and importing consumer goods, in order to stave off social changes. At the same time, the biggest share of profits drawn by the local regimes has gone into the coffers of Western banks, real estate, arms merchants, etc.

In addition, although the share of the local producers increased, it did not change the fact that the world oil industry is still dominated by the U.S. and Western European imperialists.

Thus when all is said and done, imperialism as a whole has largely benefited, while the exploited masses of the Third World have continued to suffer.

## How the Western oil majors still dominate

The big U.S. and British oil companies, the majors, still dominate world oil. At one time they ruled the roost, owning most of the world's crude oil as well as transport, refining, and distribution. But the local capitalists of the oil countries succeeded in gaining control of much of the crude oil production in most countries. For example, in some places like Libya and Iraq they nationalized foreign oil companies. Elsewhere the local rulers bought out Western interests. For example, ARAMCO is now owned by the Saudi royal family.

But ownership of local production  
Continued on page 5  
See OIL

# Liberals wrap themselves in yellow ribbons

The bombs that fell on Iraq also decimated the Democratic and liberal "opposition" to the war. Before the devastation of Iraq began, some of the Democrats were worried about the details of Bush's plans. But since then, they have wrapped themselves in yellow ribbons and cheered on the slaughter.

The Senate voted 98-0 on January 17 to support the "leadership of the President" in launching the Gulf war. In February, when the ground war was launched, the Democrats united with the Pentagon in a patriotic embrace. Democratic Senators who formerly had a reservation or two, from Nunn and Mitchell to liberal Senator Kennedy, united in praise of the war. Meanwhile in the House, alleged stalwarts of peace such as Representative Bonior (D-Mich.) declared that "This phase of the war will require an extra measure of courage.... Now we must continue to stand behind our troops."

## Why?

Why did the Democratic criticism of Bush go up in smoke? What type of "smart bomb" did Bush send their way?

It was because the Democrats share with Bush the aim of a global world empire. They embrace the idea that the Middle East is an American sphere of influence. It is not for the Middle Eastern people to control their own oil, to say nothing of their own destinies, but for American politicians and generals to make the law and reap the profits.

The Democrats have no quarrel in principle with playing power politics with dictators and tyrants. It doesn't offend them to first arm Saddam Hussein to kill Iranians, and then to devastate Iraq in order to overthrow Hussein.

No, they didn't oppose the imperialist whip. They just were concerned about the success of different methods. Should Iraq be strangled by prolonged sanctions or by bombing, and then, should the bombing be continued or the ground war launched?

## Seeking to take credit for the slaughter

This is why the success of the bombing and then the ground war embarrassed them. If they had fundamental differences with Bush's aims, then the success of Bush's war wouldn't change their minds. Indeed, the killing of tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians would have revolted them. But since they agree with Bush's aims, they feel humiliated in front of the whole capitalist class for being nervous nellys.

However, the Democrats can pride themselves on being just as responsible for the arms buildup as the Republicans. Indeed, wasn't the huge Reaganite arms buildup actually started during the presidential term of the Democrat Jimmy Carter? And haven't the Democrats

always sought to get "more bang for the buck"? In February, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee put forward "talking points" on the Democrats' "major role in insuring that we purchase the right weapons and weapons that work."

## The case of Ron Dellums

Even the few liberal Democrats that still pose as concerned with peace have stayed in the imperialist framework.

Take the case of Ron Dellums, the congressman from California who has been about the most outspoken Congressional critic of Bush's Gulf policy.

Dellums says he "oppose(s) the war now started." (See his column "Shedding the Mentality of War" in the *Los Angeles Times* of Feb. 14.) He goes on and on about the evils of war, about the horrible "fascination with the technology of war," and so on. Yet it turns out that he is simply boasting about his "effort to continue economic sanctions in the place of a military offensive."

Dellums did not and does not advocate support for the Iraqi and other Middle Eastern toilers. He did not discuss how to build up their confidence and their organization against local bullies like Saddam Hussein and global imperialist bullies like Bush. He didn't call on the Middle Eastern masses to oppose King Fahd of Saudi Arabia or the medieval Kuwaiti monarchy.

No, Dellums supported sanctions. Never mind that supporting sanctions meant giving one's blessing to the sending of hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers to enforce them. Never mind that it meant giving credence to Bush's lies about the troops being there for defensive purposes. Never mind that supporting sanctions means supporting Bush's policy, the policy of starving the entire Iraqi nation.

Moreover, Dellums himself admits that supporting sanctions meant contemplating an eventual war. As he puts it: "I believe that negotiations and sanctions needed to be exhausted before we resorted to force." (*Ibid.*)

That's why on January 17, when he was faced with the resolution to endorse not only the mentality of war but war itself, Dellums could not bring himself to oppose it. He voted "present" with the excuse that he could not vote "against the troops."

And what about the ground war? His difference with Bush ended up reduced to 48 hours. He stated: "It will cost the U.S. and its allies nothing to pause, if only for 48 hours, to see if the Iraqi government is willing...to establish a definite timetable for withdrawal." (*Michigan Chronicle*, Feb. 20-26, p.1)

And why should there be any greater difference? Dellums doesn't call on the workers in this country to overthrow American imperialism, but instead accepts Bush's "new world order." He only

wants Bush to be more careful. He tells the workers that Bush and the Pentagon and the State Department can become leaders in the search for peace. As Dellums put it, "I agree with President Bush that America has a special role and a special responsibility in what he refers to as the 'new world order.' However, I believe that the United States should lead by example in searching for alternatives to war." (*Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 14) And remember, Bush's brutal sanctions are one example of what Dellums regards as such an alternative.

## The ex-radical Tom Hayden

Or take the case of Tom Hayden, who poses as the experienced and wise old man of 60's radicalism. These days he still goes to peace rallies, but he tells activists to work within the system. He says that "there are many more opportunities for representation within the system" as compared to the Viet Nam war days. (*Los Angeles Daily News*, Feb. 11) After all, isn't he a state assemblyman in California and respectable member of the left wing of the Democratic Party?

Hayden had introduced a resolution opposing a ground war in favor of negotiations. But when the state assembly voted on a resolution endorsing Bush's warmongering, Hayden did not oppose it but merely abstained. Like Dellums, he was concerned with "expressing solidarity with the troops." (*Ibid.*)

Indeed, Hayden had solidarity with the generals, right on up to the Pentagon. He claims that "the United States has a right to be there" with its armed forces in the Persian Gulf. (*Ibid.*) Of course, Hayden hastens to add, he preferred using U.S. troops to enforce sanctions and encourage negotiations. So it seems that his resolution in favor of negotiations did not contradict solidarity with the generals, but was simply offering advice over timing and methods.

## The pro-capitalist trade union leaders salute the war effort

The bombing of Iraq also ended the criticism of the war from the top trade union leaders. Previously the labor chiefs had divided, with some fervently backing war against Iraq and leaders of 11 major unions issuing a statement of criticism. True, they didn't lift a finger to mobilize any worker opposition to the war, but they issued their statement.

But what happened after the air war began?

The next morning AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland jumped in with full support for the war effort. He declared the previous differences between union leaders over and done with. "Whatever the differences over the best way to end Iraq's brutal occupation of Kuwait, these differences must be set aside. The American labor movement stands in full support of our country and of the men and women in our armed forces and their courageous efforts to bring this conflict to an early and decisive conclusion."

Make no mistake: this was support for Bush's imperialist war. Kirkland may feign interest in the common soldier, but he is offering full support to Bush, the generals, and other enemies of the common people.

And what about the labor leaders who formerly were skeptical of a war? It seems they have been silenced.

On February 21 there was a full-page ad in the name of "Labor for Peace" on page seven of the *New York Times*. It asked for an immediate cease-fire. This time no leader of a major union was represented. Only lower-level officials. Kirkland had indeed expressed the common stand of all the top union heads.

But it can be noted that the union presidents who had formerly been critics had stood for continuing the brutal sanctions rather than an immediate recourse to war. They had thus, like the liberal Democrats, stood squarely for imperialist intervention in the Middle East. So when the bombs began to fall, they too fell into line.

And the ad itself of February 17 still talked in terms of "America's national interests" and had implored the United Nations to act. As if the war wasn't being carried out in the name of the UN with the full backing of the Security Council. As if Bush and Congress simply misunderstood the proper "national interests" rather than pursuing a brutal policy of imperialist dictate.

The only alternative to relying on Bush and Congress, the UN and the American establishment, is to rely on the working masses. But who speaks for the working masses? Should the anti-war movement look towards the pro-capitalist trade union bureaucracy, or should it look towards the rank-and-file worker and seek to find ways to encourage their initiative?

To develop the consciousness of the working class, to help it stand up for the interests of all the exploited, it is essential not to gloss over the treachery of the trade union leaders. When we talk of building up a working class press, it is not the sold-out AFL-CIO papers we are talking about, but a press that speaks for the discontented worker searching for a way out from exploitation, racism, and militarism.

## Against imperialism!

The Democrats and the labor union leaders didn't stand against the war hysteria because they back the imperialist system. The liberals represent the capitalist class just as much as the conservatives do, only they advocate different timing and methods to achieve common aims. Even the most liberal Democrats stayed within the framework of advising imperialism how best to accomplish their aims. They didn't look to independent action by the toilers, but better timing from Bush and the State Department.

This is why the military victory against Iraq has silenced their criticism of the resort to force. They don't oppose unjust wars, only unjust, losing wars. ■



Marxist-Leninist Party in a march in Oakland, Ca. Feb 16. While liberal politicians embraced the war, activists built anti-war struggle.

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## Behind American intervention abroad

# Why one war after another?

There they went again. Yet another bloody war in a far-off land. Once again, American warplanes rained death and destruction on an entire people. Once again, the establishment spread the narrow-minded culture of "America, right or wrong" — a culture which shows no concern for the lives of Iraqis, only for "ours" (and "our friends"). Once again, the American government earns the hatred of people around the globe.

Korea. Viet Nam. Grenada. Nicaragua. Panama. What type of system is this that goes to war overseas every few years? Now that the hostilities of this war have come to a close, it is more urgent than ever to think about the big picture.

Last year as the Cold War crumbled, there was a lot of talk about the "peace dividend." We were told, now the military budget could be cut back, and some attention finally paid to the acute needs of the people. Many hopes were raised. But the peace dividend went up in smoke.

### Why is there money for war, but not for life?

Why do we face such a contradiction? The government can spend billions each day to bomb Iraqi buildings, but it has no money to house the homeless. It can build "smart bombs" to destroy, but it cannot improve the education of our children. It can drop cluster bombs to turn human bodies into gruesome pieces, but it cannot provide decent health care for all. The establishment can shout about being "No. 1" but infant mortality rates in our inner cities go up to the level of some of the poorest countries in the Third World.

Why is it that there is always money to arm dictators and tyrants abroad, while the conditions of the poor people across the globe worsen more and more? Why is the system we live in driven to build bombs and warships, to maraud the world as the global cop, while the working people's conditions here and abroad steadily decline?

George Bush and his supporters will say, because evil tyrants are lurking around every corner of the globe. We have to keep armed to the teeth to put them down.

Others will say because we have leaders who are prone to make mistakes. Presumably, some other leader, a Democrat, would be different.

It just isn't so.

The drive to foreign wars does not arise because of foreign tyrants like Saddam Hussein. After all, the U.S. government has been one of the biggest backers of the most infamous tyrants and dictators of recent history — from the Shah of Iran to Marcos of the Philippines to Chile's Pinochet. Why, it even built up Saddam not long ago, just as it is today propping up despots like the king of Saudi Arabia and the emir of Kuwait.

Interventionist wars do not take place because the present resident of the White House is making an unfortunate mistake either. Imperialist war every so many years for the whole last century can't be chalked up as a few accidents. And some other politician wouldn't be different. Do not forget that the wars waged by Washington are waged with bipartisan support, as the Persian Gulf war has been. Democrats and Republicans alike have backed up American interventions.

### The problem is in the system

No, a huge war machine and the drive to control far-off lands are a basic problem with the system. They are the product of a system of economics and politics:

a system best described as imperialism.

Modern imperialism (as opposed to the empires of olden days like Rome and Greece) is based on monopoly capitalism. The U.S. economy is dominated by a small number of giant monopolies who exploit both the labor and resources of the U.S. as well as peoples throughout the world. These monopolies are known today as multinational or transnational corporations. Like GM, Exxon, IBM. They are all global corporations, with their profits coming from the sweat of laboring people worldwide. They exploit both the U.S. workers and the workers of other countries.

### Imperialism requires a permanent war machine

In the last century, the U.S. military was mainly used for domestic aims — like massacring and oppressing the Indians and putting down striking workers. But as the 1800's came to a close, capitalism in the U.S. embarked on large-scale overseas expansion. The hunt for imperial profits abroad meant a new role for the military. The free flow of such profits — and they are big profits when they are drawn abroad from low-wage labor in the Third World — requires greater military power.

This is where the huge Pentagon war machine comes in. Such a war machine is the necessary support for imperialism. You cannot exploit the Philippines, Central America, etc. without the military means to put down local rebellions. After all, the workers and peasants abroad don't approve of being squeezed for the greater glory of corporate America. You cannot exploit Persian Gulf oil without the military means to preserve that exploitation. The war machine is needed both to put down revolutions by the local peoples, as well as to keep other capitalist rivals at bay — whether they be rivals like the Soviet imperialists, or aspiring regional powers like Saddam.

It was after World War II that U.S. imperialism became the world's pre-eminent imperialist power. The military-industrial complex grew accordingly. At the core of this complex is a caste of professional militarists. An imperialist army breeds a modern caste of warriors devoted to the glories of military adventure. It also creates a whole section of capitalists and their hangers-on who are devoted to fueling and propping up the war machine — a whole series of corporations come up who make money out of blood and death. Today these weapons makers exist in the U.S. economy on a larger scale than ever before in history. And the military-industrial complex spreads its ideas and culture into every pore of society, poisoning the minds of the young with GI Joe and Rambo mentality.

Corporate America is the real ruling class in the U.S. And they are tied with the government, Congress and military with a thousand threads. Generals in the Pentagon, politicians in Congress, corporate executives all go through a system of revolving doors between government and military, and corporate America.

Thus so long as imperialism exists, so long as the military-industrial complex exists, there will continue to be a huge war machine and the drive towards new imperialist wars abroad.

### The end of the Cold War has not changed this situation

For the last several decades, the U.S. ruling class kept expanding the military-industrial complex in the name of the Cold War — the fight against the Soviet Union. But the Cold War has unraveled,

and the Soviet Union, beset by massive internal crisis, has been forced to retreat in its international ambitions.

There has thus been a lot of talk about a "peace dividend." But it was always an illusion and talk of it has disappeared. After all, the Pentagon and the corporations of the war machine never wanted a cutback in the war economy. And the Persian Gulf crisis was greeted by them with cries of "hallelujah!"

### To beat back militarism, we need struggle against imperialism

The anti-war movement put up a courageous fight against the Persian Gulf war. It brought to the surface what is best and most honorable among the people of the U.S. But we could not stop this war. This doesn't mean that the fight is over. The fight against the oil war poses a bigger issue: what kind of society do we want to live in?

We must build an anti-militarist movement that points out the need for radical change. How do we put an end to the military-industrial complex which rules America? How do we end the culture of jingoism and war fascination that it breeds?

It is vital to raise outcries against every military adventure the generals and politicians plan for. It is important to fight the spread of the lies and stupidity

It may seem unfashionable today to believe in this alternative, given that the establishment has been gloating over the "collapse of socialism" in the ex-Soviet bloc. They pretend there is no alternative to this society decaying around us. But what has collapsed in Eastern Europe was not socialism but state-run capitalism. In the false socialist countries, the workers do not rule, but a class of privileged bureaucrats who speak in their name but otherwise carry on along capitalist lines.

Workers' socialism is something else entirely. It can only come through making the working class the ruling class and suppressing the exploiters. The workers will create a new system of political rule through their mass organizations, drawing in the masses — ordinary laboring people — into the running of society. The great economic task of socialism is to wipe out the profit motive as the driving force in the economy. Socialism will show that cooperation among the many — for the common good of all — can be an even greater engine of progress than dog-eat-dog competition ever was.

Workers' rule and socialism will end U.S. imperialist wars of conquest. This it will do by putting an end to U.S. corporations making superprofits from global exploitation, and by doing away with the entire special military caste — from the bourgeois military to the corporate merchants of death.

Not having to exploit peoples overseas,



Women activists in Innsbruck, Austria block train carrying U.S. tanks on their way to the Gulf, Feb. 13

with which the establishment backs up its interventions abroad. It is necessary to wage campaigns against all the threads that capitalist militarism spread among the working class and the youth.

But the day-to-day battles against militarism cannot be waged with pie-in-the-sky talk about a new era of peace to be ushered in by making our leaders see reason. The fight against militarism is a hard fight, and there are no shortcuts. There are no saviors to be found among the establishment. Let us not forget what we learned about the establishment in this latest war.

We need to challenge the problem at its very foundations; in short, we need revolutionary change. Since the drive to foreign wars is based on capitalism and its drive for expansion and profit, the anti-war struggle must, in the final analysis, take on capitalism itself. This calls for the need for an alternative to a profit-based society. The Marxist-Leninist Party believes that the alternative to capitalist militarism is workers' socialism and eventually, communism.

fight capitalist rivals abroad, or keep down the exploited majority at home, workers' rule will not need a global military machine or even a standing army. It will replace that with the armed people — to keep the overthrown exploiters from regaining power. However, this too will eventually be done away with, with progress towards full communism — where there are no more class divisions and the state itself is no longer needed, because humanity will have reached the point where conscious, thinking people can arrange their economic and social affairs in full freedom. ■

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# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## Protests decry racism against Arab-Americans

The U.S. government has fostered a surge of racism against Arab-Americans as part of its war drive in the Middle East. But in various cities people are organizing to fight back.

At the end of January, over 450 people came out to protest the racism at a town meeting held in San Francisco. Black, Native American, and Palestinian speakers denounced the harassment of Arab-Americans by the U.S. government.

The FBI's alleged concern over anti-Arab violence simply turned out to be a fraud, as their agents invaded homes and interrogated over 200 Arab-American leaders about their political beliefs in mid-January. Similarly, the local police in Chicago, Detroit, and other cities raided homes in Arab neighborhoods claiming to be searching for guns, bombs, and terrorists. While no terrorists were found, the police have used the raids to arrest people on minor charges like possessing stolen property.

This government terror campaign, and the media hysteria accompanying it, has helped unleash a rash of beatings, vandalism, bombings, hate mail and death threats in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, Detroit, New Jersey and other places. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee reported February 6 that it had cataloged 48 incidents against Arab-Americans just since the air war began.

At the San Francisco meeting, many people strode to the microphones to condemn the anti-Arab violence that has

burst out. The meeting unanimously passed a resolution against anti-Arab racism. It also denounced anti-Semitism, demanded that Israel withdraw from the occupied territories, and called for the U.S. to withdraw from the Middle East.

Meanwhile, a march called against anti-Arab racism in Detroit swelled to over 200 people on February 24, as the ground war was unfolding. The march was held in an Iraqi neighborhood. At first people hesitated to join it because of the anti-Arab terror that has been mounting. It is reported that since January 16 more than 100 complaints about threats of violence against Arab-Americans in Detroit have been filed with the police.

Despite the intimidation, protesters vigorously denounced Bush's bombings, calling him the "butcher of Baghdad." And various Arab people took the microphone to call out their neighbors, shouting things like "don't leave it to the Americans to protest." Eventually, people began to pour into the march, grabbing up picket signs and helping to carry a banner that denounced Bush. The demonstration continued to circle through the neighborhood for three and a half hours. Some people supported Saddam Hussein. Others opposed him. But all agreed that the Bush administration should stop its bloody murder of the Iraqi people, get the hell out of the Middle East, and leave it to the Iraqi and other Arab people to settle their own affairs.



Detroit march against anti-Arab racism and Bush's war, Feb. 24

## Jail or war — what choice is this for the black youth

Blacks are 12.3% of the U.S. population. Yet they comprise 21% of the armed forces and 29% of those in the Gulf. An even higher percentage of the ground forces are black. And another large section is made up of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and other oppressed nationalities. Once again, minority youth are being sent to the front lines in a war for the rich, white elite.

There is an obvious relationship between the large number of black volunteers in the armed forces and the oppression of American racism.

Economic developments in the 1980's have boxed young blacks into a corner. Such things as the decay of urban schools, soaring college tuition, the decline of manufacturing jobs, the trans-

fer of service jobs to the suburbs, the frozen minimum wage, two-tier labor contracts, growth in part-time and temporary jobs, and inflation, to name a few factors, have hit the working class youth hard and blacks even harder.

As economic opportunity has shriveled, the jail population has exploded. There are far more black people in jail in the U.S. than in racist South Africa.

And so in walks the army. Preaching "Be all you can be, join the army," and promising all manner of job training and a college education, the military has tried to appear to be an alternative to the dead end faced by most black youth. But once inside the military, the youth find the fancy promises to be lies and that they are just so much cannon fodder for

the imperialist war drive.

Widespread anger is starting to emerge from black youth who were promised technical training and experience in hi-tech jobs. Once they signed on the dotted line most were, instead, made low-level foot soldiers in the infantry. There are also mounting complaints of racist harassment inside the army. And there is a growing consciousness that they are just being used as killing machines against other oppressed peoples.

Bush and Congress offer little choice

## More blacks in jail in the U.S. than in racist South Africa

There are more black people behind bars in the U.S. than in racist South Africa.

According to a report by the Sentencing Project, for every 100,000 black people in the U.S. there are 3,109 in jail or waiting trial. Meanwhile in South Africa, it is only 729 per 100,000 black people.

This is racism pure and simple. And it has gotten worse — the prison rate doubling in the last ten years — with Reagan and Bush's "war on drugs."

While they claim to be fighting drugs, the CIA sponsored big-time drug runners to help finance their contra war on the

to the black youth these days — either go to war or go to jail. But another choice is emerging. That is the choice of fighting back. Build up the movement to fight racism! Build up the workers' movement to fight for jobs and livelihood! Build up the movement against imperialist war! Put an end to the racist treatment that has blacks dying abroad for the rich, while they suffer impoverishment at home.

(Taken in part from Feb. 21 leaflet of MLP-Seattle.)

Nicaraguans. While they claim to be fighting drug abuse, they are cutting funds to drug rehabilitation programs, to jobs, and to education. While they claim to be fighting drugs, they are not targeting the drug lords and bankers but, instead, filling up the black neighborhoods with police.

Drug abuse is a serious problem, but it can only be dealt with by giving people an alternative — jobs, a decent education, a decent life. But Bush and Congress offer only police and jails. The "war on drugs" is just a disguise for racism.

(Taken from Feb. 12 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of MLP-Detroit.)

## U.S. out of the Persian Gulf!

Continued from front page

continue harassing Arabs for months to come.

And it is a disaster because it devastated Iraq and Kuwait, and the sorrows of the Arab toilers are our sorrows as well.

The movement of the 90s

The bourgeoisie laughs that Viet Nam is finally behind it.

But this proves once again that all the talk of national reconciliation between supporters and opponents of the war in Viet Nam was a fraud. The only thing that the capitalists and the Pentagon regretted about Viet Nam was that they lost.

The bourgeoisie sneers that the Viet Nam-style anti-war movement is over. But what we saw during the Persian Gulf war is something far different. Not just a replay of the Viet Nam-era movement, but the birth of the movement of the 90s. A new movement to combat a new world order.

A movement that has brought new people into struggle, and that has revived the interests of those with experience in the old movement.

A movement that arises in the conditions of increasing economic desperation for millions.

A movement that arises when world revisionism has collapsed.

A movement that has to learn anew old lessons about the divisions in society, and a movement that needs to solve new tasks, better than the old movement.

But it failed to stop the war

It is said that the movement failed to stop the war.

But this war is backed by all the forces of the corrupt world of exploitation and militarism. The stubborn support of capitalism for this war, that kept this war going, also lays the basis for the movement to come to profound conclusions.

The anti-war movement has to absorb the lessons of the last seven months.

Whose opposition to war was serious, and who was simply trying to advise the Pentagon on better ways to subjugate the Middle East? On what should the anti-war movement be based? Hopes in the UN and Congress or on organizing the masses of working people? On what should hopes be placed in the Middle East? On the governments of exploiters or on new movements among the toilers?

When the dust clears

In fact, the movement accomplished much. Its vast extent in such a short period is a sign that America is not just a land of flag-wavers and willing killing machines, but a land of rebellious activists and people searching for change. It has embraced rebellious GIs, and students just beginning to think about the world, and circles of workers discussing world events. It shows that there is a potential for organizing against imperialism.

For now, let us continue this struggle till the end. With the collapse of the confrontation, the size of demonstrations will be smaller. But demonstrations against continuing American occupation of the Persian Gulf will find an audience and puncture the myth of unanimous approval for "might makes right".

Let the activists study the lessons of the struggle. Let us see that all the forces of the establishment were linked with this war. Only those who have no stake in imperialism, only the oppressed masses, will support justice for the toilers of other lands.

Let the activists build up an independent press of leaflets and newspapers because the capitalist-owned press has proved itself to be the Pentagon News Service.

Let us dedicate ourselves to a protracted struggle. Our task is not to be a pressure group on Congress or the rich, but to overthrow the old society and build a new society free of militarism and oppression.



# The World in Struggle

## Soviet miners launch a new strike

Nearly a million miners in the Soviet Union started a strike March 1 for higher pay, better food and decent housing. They include miners from the Donbass in the Ukraine, Vorkuta in the Polar North, and Karaganda in Kazakhstan. They are due to be joined by miners from the Kuzbas in a few days.

The miners are demanding pay raises of 100-150%. The authorities have offered the miners only a 40% increase.

They are also protesting that the Soviet government failed to deliver on the promises made earlier, after the coal miners struck two years ago.

Meanwhile, teachers in the Soviet Union were awarded large pay raises after a one-day strike on February 25 when teachers in Moscow and other cities stayed home to protest their low salaries. ■

## Rail workers wildcat in Argentina

Railway workers launched a wildcat strike against the government of President Menem. They walked out demanding that their monthly wage be raised from \$76 to \$215. They have successfully shut down five of the country's six rail lines.

The government has already fired 300 workers and threatens to fire even more.

This has had the effect of turning what was originally set to be a 48-hour strike into an indefinite one. In their action, the workers defied the union bureaucracy.

President Menem is threatening to bring in the military to crush the strike. Last year he used the military to break a phone workers' struggle. ■

## General strike in Ecuador

Ecuador was shut down by a general strike February 13. The strike was called to oppose the government's raising of transit fares by 15% and gasoline prices by 25%. When first announced in late January, the measures provoked four days of rioting in the capitol, Quito.

The strike found strong support among government and transport workers. Demonstrations were held in Quito and other cities. In clashes with security

forces, over 100 workers were arrested and two wounded by gunfire.

President Rodrigo Borja tried to defuse the situation. When he could not talk the workers out of striking, he declared the day a national holiday.

Ecuadoran workers' living standards are being decimated by inflation. At the same time, President Borja is passing new legislation to cut back on workers' trade union rights. ■

## Workers protest in Panama

Thousands of workers marched in Panama City on February 7 to protest mass layoffs. Since the U.S. invasion in December of '89, more than 24,000 public sector employees have been laid off by President Guillermo Endara, who is rapidly privatizing state enterprises. The marchers also protested rising fuel prices and Endara's plans to revise labor laws.

The protesting workers marched on

the presidential palace in Panama City, where they intended to deliver a petition to Endara. But Endara refused to meet with them, and shut them out with ranks of heavily armed police.

This repression of the workers, with the memory of the thousands of poor people killed by the invasion, shows what kind of "liberation" the U.S. invasion brought to Panama's working people. ■

## Brazilian dockers strike

7,000 dock workers shut down the port of Santos, Brazil on February 8. Santos is near the main Brazilian industrial center of Sao Paulo. Workers are demanding a pay raise of 150%, while the port authority has offered only 50%.

The workers are trying to keep up with Brazil's soaring inflation. Last year prices rose some 1,800%.

Meanwhile President Fernando Collor

announced a new austerity program in early February. It increased prices for gasoline and utilities while imposing a wage freeze. Oil workers at the government's giant oil monopoly are threatening to join the dockers in striking for higher wages. Meanwhile the government is preparing to use troops in case workers succeed in launching a national strike. ■

## Korean shipyard strike wins support

10,000 workers at the giant Daewoo shipyard in South Korea went on strike the second week of February. They were soon joined by the 3,000 auto workers of Daewoo Motors.

The auto workers fought riot police in the streets of Incheon after walking out of the plant. The auto workers walked out in support of the shipyard workers' strike, and to protest the arrest of union leaders who were trying to organize nationwide

support for the shipyard strike. After fighting the riot police, the auto workers organized an occupation of the Daewoo Motors plant. This is the most determined movement of workers since the strike at the Hyundai shipyard in Ulsan last spring.

Meanwhile, the third anniversary of President Roh Tae Woo's administration was marked by angry demonstrations. Student protesters clashed with riot police

in cities across South Korea.

Like Kuwait and Panama, Korea is another country where U.S. imperialism invaded and waged a bloody war. As in Kuwait, the U.S. used the fig leaf of the United Nations. Nearly 40 years after the end of the Korean war, some 40,000 American troops still occupy the country.

Workers in South Korea have had to fight long and hard to win the most elementary trade union and democratic rights under dictatorial regimes backed up by the U.S. military. The experience of Korea is a stark example that the imperialists' idea of "liberation" does not mean freedom for the working people. ■

## Riots oppose banning of pirate TV in Reunion

In late February riots broke out in the French colony of Reunion after the local government shut down a pirate TV station. The station had been operating for five years and broadcast shows popular with the island's youth, who regard the local government-owned station as establishment-oriented.

Eight people were killed during three

days of riots as youths fought the island's police forces. France dispatched riot police to the island to quell the rioting.

Reunion is in the Indian Ocean east of Madagascar and has been ruled by France since 1638. About one-third of the residents are unemployed and poor, especially the Creole descendants of African slaves. ■

## IN BRIEF

### GM plant in Mexico struck

2,600 auto workers at a General Motors plant in Mexico City went on strike February 8. They are demanding a pay raise of 40%. The plant, which produces pick-up trucks, was completely shut down for one day. But GM management then went to the Mexican government and had the strike declared illegal. GM is the largest private employer in Mexico.

### Silver workers strike in Mexico

2,700 workers are striking a silver, lead and zinc complex in the central Mexican state of Coahuila. The workers want a 35% wage increase and other benefits. The company has only offered 23%.

### Colombian oil workers protest death-squad murder

8,000 workers of the government-owned Colombian oil company shut down oil production on February 8. The 24-hour strike was called to protest the murder of a union activist who was killed February 7 by a right-wing death squad. The government-linked death squads have murdered thousands of leftist and trade union activists in recent years.

### Nicaraguan health workers occupy hospitals

Throughout February, some 20,000 health workers have been fighting Violeta Chamorro's regime over a contract. In mid-month, they occupied 135 hospitals around the country.

### Protests against unemployment in eastern Germany

Tens of thousands of workers marched throughout eastern Germany at the end of February to protest unemployment. There were also several short strikes. People across Germany are also denouncing new taxes imposed by the Kohl government in the name of paying for the integration of eastern Germany into the Federal Republic.

### Rail workers strike in Rumania

20,000 railway workers walked out on strike February 9 in the northern city of Iasi. Workers in other cities quickly

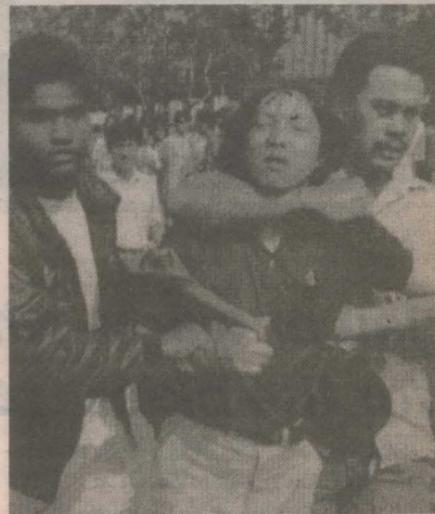
joined the walkout. The workers are demanding higher pay and the firing of corrupt officials in the transport ministry. The government ruled the strike illegal, but the workers defied the back-to-work order.

### Strikes in Yugoslavia

More than 15,000 workers outside Belgrade struck for back wages that are owed to hundreds of thousands employed by state enterprises. They are also demanding a rollback of prices. Strikes are also reported from other areas of the country.

### Protest against military coup in Thailand

On February 25 some 1,000 people demonstrated in Bangkok against the military coup that overthrew the government on February 23. The protesters refused to accept the generals' martial-law ban on demonstrations.



Thal cops grab student protester

### Government employees strike in Zaire

In Zaire, government activities were shut down for three days the first week of February by a strike of public sector employees. Primary and secondary schools closed, as teachers supported the strike. It demanded higher wages and also called for the resignation of President Mobutu. The country has also been rocked by riots over food shortages and rising prices. ■