

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Stop the bombing! U.S. imperialism, get out of the gulf!

The following two articles are from the February 14 issue of Bay Area Workers Voice, paper of the MLP-San Francisco Bay Area:

Bombs kill people. Lots of bombs kill lots of people. The 60,000-plus US bombing raids are turning Baghdad, Basra and other cities into rubble. They are killing lots of people.

The Pentagon swears that it is only hitting "military targets." But the entire country of Iraq has become a "military target." Civilian bomb shelters are said to be radio centers. Housing projects are said to be anti-aircraft bunkers. Anything and everything is to be blown up in the name of military necessity.

This is just what they said during Viet Nam. When villagers were burned to death by U.S. napalm bombs, the Pentagon would explain away the pictures of burned babies by claiming the village was being used as a "screen for the enemy." (The Iraqi military's use of chemicals against the Kurds and Iranians does not mean we can forget that the use of napalm by the U.S. military in Indochina was one of the most ghastly and extensive uses of chemical weapons in war.)

Now the "screen for the enemy" is Baghdad and Basra, the millions of unfortunates who live there be damned. Just like Viet Nam, the logic of this killing is more killing.

This week the U.S. has started dropping 15,000 pound bombs with the force of "a small nuclear weapon" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Feb. 12). The Pentagon is also preparing to use gas/fire bombs that can suffocate humans in a mile square area (another form of chemical slaughter created by corporate America). This is not to mention the talk in U.S. and British military circles about using nuclear weapons.

There is nothing "smart" or "high-tech" about death. The U.S. bombardment of Iraq is causing death and destruction on a huge scale.

This is murder to fatten the profits of Chevron and Exxon. To boost the stock prices of Raytheon and General Dynamics. To prop up the hated Kuwaiti and Saudi oil kings. To shore up the imperialist empire of the Pentagon and U.S. corporations.

Take a stand against this killing! The working people, the black and Latino people, the youth (including the young men and women trapped in the military) cannot stand by while their Arab brothers and sisters are slaughtered by "our" government.

Build the anti-war struggle. Turn the work places, schools and communities into centers of anti-war discussion, networks and organization.

Spread the word—with leaflets, word of mouth, and

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every means at our disposal—to challenge the media lies used to sanctify this war.

Come out to the demonstrations! Let your voice be heard!

No more blood for imperialism! □

The liberal democrats want a kinder, gentler, imperialist war

One early casualty of this war has been the lying claim of the Democratic politicians that they are the party of “peace.” Where are these “doves” now that war is upon us?

The Democratic Party crowd has joined Bush’s war party. On Jan. 17, The Senate voted 98 to 0 in support of the “leadership of the President” in unleashing the Persian Gulf bloodbath.

But there are a few muffled voices of unease. As the Middle East catastrophe unfolds and opposition to the war becomes stronger, it can be expected that these voices will pipe up louder. These liberal Democrats will pose as anti-

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war heroes. They will do their best to line up the anti-war movement behind Democratic politics-as-usual. That is why we should keep a careful eye on what these Democratic fakers have been up to.

Dellums ducks voting “no”

Take the case of Ron Dellums. He wrings his hands and sheds tears about the horrors of war, but he and his buddies in congress have refused to take a stand against Bush’s war.

Last summer, Dellums supported imposing sanctions on Iraq—sanctions requiring a huge U.S. military blockade. He called for sanctions to be given plenty of time to work, rather than go to war. That is to say, better starve the Iraqis into submission than face the dangers of a shooting war.

In November, Dellums initiated a lawsuit to require that Bush receive an OK from congress before opening fire on Iraq. This wasn’t a lawsuit against going to war, only that congress should be allowed in on it.

But this became a moot point when Bush started the war and congress gave the war its near unanimous blessing.

There were only 6 votes in the entire House and Senate against the Jan. 17 resolution. Dellums wasn’t among the 6. He voted “present”. The excuse for this shamelessness was that he could not vote “against the troops.”

This excuse is piss poor. “Support the troops!” has become the battle cry of the war-makers. No matter that Bush and the generals are the ones who have sent the troops to the other side of the world to kill and be killed. Every stand against this criminal war is being branded as an alleged slap at the troops. So Dellums refuses to take a stand, preferring to lie on his belly as an accomplice in crime.

The Dellums cease-fire means more warfare

Last week, Ron Dellums and 80 House Democrats came up with a cease-fire plan. It is based on a joint U.S.-Soviet statement calling for Iraq to make an “unequivocal commitment” to leave Kuwait in exchange for a U.S.-Soviet effort for a “comprehensive Mid East peace.”

Dellums and co. want Bush to offer a cease-fire as soon as the Iraqi regime promises to get out of Kuwait. What if Iraq doesn’t agree to such a promise? What then, Hon. Rep Dellums? More bombardment, more destruction, more slaughter?

Oh yes, now Dellums is warning about the dangers of a ground war. Yesterday Dellums preferred that Iraq be strangled by starvation instead of shooting. Today he prefers the air war to ground war. Either way, Dellums and his liberal cronies offer no alternative to war on Iraq. They only beg for a kinder, gentler warfare.

Watch out for Democratic Party
“peace” swindlers

The fine phrases from Dellums and the others about "peace" should be put to the test.

To stand against this criminal war means demanding that the U.S. forces must get out of the Persian Gulf.

It means rejecting the pretensions of the Pentagon to be the world's policeman and guardian of the global interests of the corporations and arms makers.

It means supporting the Kuwaiti, Saudi, Iraqi and other working people in their struggles to settle accounts with their own kings and dictators that oppress them.

It means repudiating the Republican and Democratic Parties as parties of war and tools of the capitalist war

machine.

It means cutting through illusions in congress, the courts and other pillars of the ruling class.

It means encouraging mass anti-war action from below, in the streets, work places, communities, and among the GI's where a number of truly brave soldiers are taking a stand against the war.

Put Dellums and the liberal Democrats to such a test and they fail. They fail miserably because they are tied with a thousand threads, like flies in a web, to the imperialist system that has unleashed this horrible war. They fail because their aim is not fight U.S. imperialism but to tie the anti-war movement to that system. □

No blood for oil or empire! Student day of action against the war

The following articles are from the February 12 issue of the Detroit Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit:

A national day of action in the schools has been called for February 21. This is the anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. And we should honor him by denouncing racism and demonstrating against the oil war.

Protests against the war have already begun in the Jr. and Sr. high schools in the Detroit area. In the city, students have begun wearing anti-war buttons, passing out leaflets, and putting up anti-war stickers, even in ROTC classrooms. Around the city, students walked out of Bloomfield middle school in January. About 30 were suspended. And on February 1, thirty students sat-in against the war outside the principal's office at Berkley High School. Eight were suspended.

Military recruiters and pro-war preachers are given free access to the schools, but student protesters are being punished. This is not right. We say no to military recruiters in the schools. Let's fight for the right of students to hold anti-war protests.

This February 21 let us build up the anti-war movement in the schools. Wear anti-war armbands. Pass out anti-war leaflets. Hold lunch-time and after-school rallies. And join together for a protest at the Detroit School Board to demand students' rights to hold anti-war assemblies in the schools. □

Protest in your school — demonstrate at the School Board!

Honor Malcolm X, fight imperialism!

"The same government that you go abroad to fight

for and die for is the government that is in a conspiracy to deprive you of your voting rights, deprive you of your economic opportunities, deprive you of decent housing, deprive you of decent education...it is the government itself, the government of America, that is responsible for the oppression and exploitation and degradation of black people in this country." (from *Malcolm X Speaks*, pp. 30-31)

It was for rebellious words like these that Malcolm X was assassinated 26 years ago. Yet, they are still true today.

The U.S. government is trampling on the black people, spreading racism against Arabs, and driving down the working people of every nationality.

Meanwhile, it is sending youth to die in an imperialist war. It is a war for oil. Bush is squabbling with Iraq's dictator over who gets exactly how much of the oil profits — while the workers and poor in both countries suffer. It is a war for empire. Bush wants to preserve the stability of the pro-U.S. kings and emirs, build up U.S. military bases, and control the Mid-East.

Such is imperialism. It is a two-headed snake — spreading the venom of racism and exploitation at home, while gobbling up the working people of other lands.

Let us learn from Malcolm X and stand up against this war, against our own government, against imperialism. □

Jail or War — What Choice Is this for the Black Youth?

Bush and Congress offer little choice to the black youth these day — either go to war or go to jail.

In Detroit, layoffs are growing and there are already three times more blacks unemployed than whites. It's even worse for black teen-agers, only about 22% can find jobs.

Meanwhile, black median income is only half that of whites. Black people are twice as likely to be without health insurance. Over half the black children live in poverty. And some one-third of the people in Detroit have been forced onto some kind of public assistance — and now even that measly help is being taken away by the budget cutting of Governor Engler and the Democrats.

So what choice is left but to “voluntarily” join the army, or to get swept to jail in Bush’s racist so-called “war on drugs.”

But there is another choice. Fight back! Build up the movement to fight racism! Build up the workers’ movement to fight for jobs and livelihood! Build up the movement against the oil war! Put an end to the racist treatment that has blacks dying abroad for the rich, while they suffer impoverishment at home. □

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 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. □

Again, Blacks Sent to the Front Lines in a War for the Rich

Black people are 12.3% of the U.S. population. But 21% of the armed forces are black. And more than that, 29% of the forces sent to the Persian Gulf are black. Black

people are once again being sent to the front lines in a war for the rich.

This is the same kind of racism that meant, in 1966 alone, that 66% of the U.S. soldiers killed in Vietnam were black. And this racism will not be solved by a draft — as Jesse Jackson, Congressman John Conyers, and Mayor Coleman Young propose. There was a draft during the Vietnam war and it didn’t help. No, calling for a draft just means preparing for more war and death. And these liberal Democrats know it. They are as much imperialists as Bush and the Republicans.

Instead we have to fight back. We have to fight against this war and support the GI resistance to the racism, repression, and warmongering inside the army. □

Don’t Die for Saudi Arabian Slavery!

Bush says the war is to defend Saudi Arabia. But that country is run by an oil-rich king who gives no rights to the working people.

Indeed, slavery was actually legal in Saudi Arabia up to a few years ago. And even today, “unofficially,” wealthy Saudis pay slave traders to raid central Africa for black slaves. Meanwhile, women are pushed into an extreme sexual apartheid — forced to wear veils and sit in segregated areas. And the working people, many of them immigrants, have no rights, not even to vote.

Why should we die to defend the rich oil kings? Say NO to this war! □

No Freedom in Kuwait

Before the invasion, the majority of the people in Kuwait were minorities. About 80% of Kuwait’s labor force were immigrant workers — housekeepers from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh; hospital workers from Pakistan; construction workers from Egypt; teachers and oil workers from Palestine.

They are allowed no rights, no unions, no political parties, no other democratic institutions. They are mostly segregated into shanty towns. They are not even allowed citizenship, even after living there for decades, and even if they were born there.

The only rights in Kuwait are for the emir (king), who has made billions off the immigrant labor and oil.

The invasion by Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is not helping the working people. But neither will Bush’s war — it aims to put the emir back in power. We must oppose both sides in this war and support, instead, the working people. □

More on the slogan "Support our troops"

The following article from the Feb. 15 issue of Chicago Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Chicago, expands on some of the points in the article on the "support our troops" slogan in the Feb. issue of the Workers' Advocate, and adds some additional points.

Congress and newspapers, war-lover and supposed critic of the war alike, tell us that we must all unite to "support our troops". This is an appeal of the bourgeoisie and the rabid-flag-wavers. But it is also meant to draw in working people worried about the fate of their co-workers or children or friends who have been sent off to fight in the Gulf. "Maybe you think the war is wrong," they say. "But now that it's started, you must support our troops."

What hypocrites. They want us to just forget what this war is all about with mindless yellow ribbon campaigns. Why, you can even put signs that say "world peace" with your yellow ribbons. But this "world peace" is the "peace" of the "new world order". In Bush's double-speak, war is "peace". It is the "peace" of the slaughter of the Iraqi people. It is the "peace" of the lives of young men and women sent to die for the greater profits of the oil billionaires and so that the rich U.S. capitalists can dominate the Middle East.

The "Support the Troops" campaign is also meant to throw blame on anti-war activists for deaths, injuries, psychological troubles, etc. of the troops for not "supporting the troops." But who sent the troops there in the first place and what for? This is an unjust war. It does not help the ordinary soldier to get a patriotic sendoff or to hear news censored so that it seems that all is well.

"Be All You Can Be, Join the Army" the recruiting ads say. The military is presented in an oh, so innocent light as a way to get an education, a way to get a job. It is presented as the alternative to two of the other big choices the bourgeoisie has for working class and minority youth, the streets or prison. Again what hypocrites. The rich capitalists close down factories. The educational system is left to rot while big handouts are given to the rich and the military machine is built. Then the military is presented as the alternative to the very situation the bourgeoisie has created.

"Be what we want," they say. "Be a part of the military machine of U.S. imperialism." After all, what is the purpose of the U.S. military? The military invaded Panama, Grenada, Lebanon and many other countries for the profits and empires of the rich. U.S. troops were sent to put down struggles of the black people in the 60's. U.S. troops have been used to break strikes. All the recruiting ads cover over the truth. That the rich capitalists want an army of cannon fodder to keep other countries in line, to put down dissent

and strikes at home, to defend their rule and profits.

* * * * *

Unfortunately, in the anti-war movement there are those who say that the movement should give the slogan "Support Our Troops". Here in Chicago the movement has been flooded with buttons that say so. Some peace groups even put yellow ribbons on their literature tables. This is a big mistake.

There can be no unity between the Pentagon and anti-war activists, between supporters and opponents of the war. Furthermore, the only way to help those caught up in the army is to support GI resistance. We do not support this war. We are not looking for ways to raise the morale of the troops so that they can better fight, kill and die for U.S. imperialism. No! We are working to build an anti-war movement to end this war. We work to find ways and means of getting the truth into the armed forces, and we link up with the soldiers who are organizing against the war or refusing to take part in it.

There are those in the anti-war movement who promote that we can unite everyone by demonstrating our reasonableness and patriotism and common concerns. But again this just covers over what is actually going on against the anti-war forces. The "Support Our Troops" campaign is not preparing for discussions. It is part of the ideological preparation for repression at home. The rich and their government, the flag-waving press and the militarists are carrying out a multi-pronged offensive against the rights of the people.

1) They are seeking to cover up the protests, and marginalize them.

2) They are working to build up a flag-waving "America, love it or leave it" movement.

3) They are attacking Arabs in the U.S.

4) They are laying the groundwork for police repression through anti-terrorist hysteria. And the government and capitalists are seeking to build networks to look for "suspicious" people in factories, post offices, etc.

5) They are presenting dissent as treason by saying that it will result in the death of troops.

They are having a hard time accomplishing this. And it is the growth of the anti-war movement that is hurting their plans. But there can be no illusions. The war in the Gulf means flag-waving repression at home.

The anti-war movement should not get caught up in any of this flag-waving. Build the anti-war movement. Expose the aims of this war. Organize groups and committees against the war in factories, workplaces and schools. Unite with those GIs who want to find a way to oppose the war and encourage other GIs to resist. This is our task. □

The Communist Part of Iran denounces the war

The following statement gives the views of the Communist Party of Iran on the outbreak of the war:

War in the Middle East

In the early hours of 17 January, the nightmare which had for five months made the world hold its breath became a reality. With a wave of cruise-missiles and a massive air bomb attack by the U.S. and its allies on Iraqi cities and installations, a bloody war began in the Middle East whose destructive and reactionary consequences will change the face of the world.

The mass media, politicians and spokesmen of the U.S. bourgeoisie and its allies now openly declare that, contrary to all their hitherto propaganda, demagoguery and provocations over Kuwait's sovereignty, the battle of democracy against dictatorship, the defense of international law, etc., Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was a pretext for their setting up an imperialist "New Order" following the collapse of the Eastern bloc.

The thousands of tons of bombs dropped round-the-clock on the working people of Iraq is paving the way for this New Order. Anyone even slightly acquainted with the history of capitalism and the record of imperialist militarism, would clearly see through this war the rise of a new era of naked domination and aggression by the imperialist powers. The world after the Cold War and the new balance that is to be created following the elimination of the Soviet bloc from the scene, is being defined through this war. What this New Order will look like can well be seen from the bodies of innocent people covering its track. The responsibility for the invasion of Kuwait and its resulting hardship lies with Iraq. But the war today is entirely a product of the U.S. It is the result of world-domineering by a power which sees in this war an opportunity to avoid its decline and disintegration in the face of the realities of the contemporary world.

The crisis and the war in the Middle East have set yet another stage for a show of hypocrisy by capitalism and its politicians and media. They hid from the people the truth about this blatant aggression. Within months they prepared the world for this genocide. States which hail Israel and its crimes against the Palestinian people every day, those who give protection to the racist South African regime, the invaders of Grenada and Panama, the perpetrators of the genocide in Vietnam, and the only ones in history to have actually used nuclear bombs against people, suddenly took the pose of defenders of humanity and international law. In the name of standing up to aggression, they organized the biggest military aggression of recent history. In the name

of standing up to dictatorship, they dropped thousands of tons of bombs on the working people of a country. In the name of destroying weapons of mass destruction, they turned millions of innocent human beings into guinea pigs for the latest and most devastating missile systems and guided bombings.

This war is a war against humanity. It is against every expression of civilization, freedom and progress. It is a pre-emptive war against the oppressed mankind that is emerging from the apathy of the '80s. It is a war against all those who through the disintegration of the previous imperialist world order saw a way to freedom, equality and humanity. This war is the prelude to tomorrow's suppressions. It is an ultimatum the architects of the new reactionary order are issuing against labor and freedom movements throughout the world.

With this war the world awakens to the realities of the '90s. The facade of "democracy" and "humanity", raised by the Western bourgeoisie to contend [with] the rival bloc, is being trampled under its own feet. The propaganda designed to mobilize the dim-witted intellectuals in the West and East and deceive the workers, is rapidly revealing itself for what it is. The naive dream of "peace under the market" is shattered, and capital once again lays bare its true nature. The "European identity" proves its first applications: denial of universal human identity, turning a blind eye to non-European suffering and pain, dividing the people of the world into first-class and second-class human beings. The world of the '90s is to be the world of the revival of colonialist values and ethics, of militarism and generalized terrorism, of censorship and bootlicker journalism. This is the "New" Order that is being shaped by this war.

The hardships of this war are not confined to its immediate victims in the Middle East, to its dead, wounded and homeless. Nor are the practical consequences of the war limited to the opening of a period of naked militarism and domination by the imperialist powers. This war pushes the world back in every respect. If they are not stopped, the world will turn into the scene of ignorant religious and patriotic prejudices, of blind terrorism, and racism. Political regression and cultural-moral degeneration on a world scale will be the inevitable result of this war.

The Communist Party of Iran emphatically condemns this war and the attack by the U.S. and its allies against the people of Iraq. Neither the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait nor any other regional crisis justifies such a horrendous and anti-human act. The problem of the occupation of Kuwait must be settled within a regional framework and by non-military means. We call for an immediate end to the war and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the area.

This war must be ended. The activists of the Communist Party of Iran must find their places in the forefront of the anti-war protest movements of the people of the different countries—in particular in Europe and the U.S.A. The truth of this war, its capitalist and reactionary nature and the suffering by its immediate victims must be explained to the people, against the hypocritical and biased propaganda by the official press and mass media. At the same time, efforts should be made, in Iran and in other countries, to prevent the protest against the war and against the aggression by the U.S. from being exploited by anti-working class, reactionary forces such as Islamic and nationalist currents.

A powerful and social manifestation by the working class in different countries, in particular in the U.S.A. and Europe, is the key both to putting an immediate end to this

war, and to foiling the perspective which the bourgeoisie has put before the world today. The very fact that such a war can be initiated, the fact that capital can mobilize public opinion for such an act, and that the heads of the European and U.S. bourgeoisie dare draw such a bleak prospect of suppression and aggression for humanity at the end of the twentieth century is itself the result of the absence of this united and active workers' camp. As part of the international working class movement, the Communist Party of Iran is committed to working to build a powerful workers' rank against this war and the grim future conceived by the bourgeoisie for the world.

Communist Party of Iran
(January 1991) □

What sort of "new order" in the Persian Gulf?

Bush says the U.S. is at war for a "new world order." But the kind of world he's fighting for doesn't look all that new.

In fact, Bush's vision is not that different from the unjust old world order that exists today. What does Bush want in the Persian Gulf? He wants the Western oil companies and the local oil kings to continue to run roughshod. The working people in the Gulf — mainly made up of the immigrant poor of Arab and Asian lands — will remain the servants and wage slaves of the rich exploiters. Tyranny and the denial of elementary human rights will reign supreme.

The "new" in all this is that from now on the oil monopolies and local kings will be directly protected by U.S. bayonets, troops, and bases.

That's new? It looks suspiciously close to old-style, Western colonialism.

What has brought us to this

For the first half of this century, British imperialism ruled and dominated most of the Persian Gulf. London had seized control of Iraq and the Arabian peninsula with the collapse of the Ottoman (Turkish) empire in World War I. While the British imposed kings on thrones in this region, it was British military power which ruled the roost — to keep at bay other rival powers and to keep the local Arab people down.

U.S. imperialism established connections with the local oil monarchies in the 30's, especially with Saudi Arabia. The U.S. oil monopolies set about to eventually become

the main oil lords of the region.

But after the end of World War II, nationalist sentiments had spread in many of these lands. Throughout Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, old-style colonialism was collapsing. In some places, the people won their liberation through hard and bitter struggle. Elsewhere, the Western imperialists decided to end their direct rule and allow regimes of local exploiters — whom they had groomed and cultivated — more leeway. Both to give them more wealth and also to let them have responsibility for putting down their own laboring people. But foreign navies and Anglo-American military agreements remained in the background as the ultimate club.

Eventually, the local regimes grew into stronger capitalist powers. In the 60's, U.S. imperialism decided to allow Iran under the Shah to be the regional policeman in the Gulf. The Shah sent his military to help put down a guerrilla movement in Oman. He was used to undermine Iraqi power as well. And Iran was also seen as a bulwark against the Soviet imperialists who were allied with Iraq.

But the Shah's collapse in 1979 signaled the end of the system of ruling the region through a loyal, local cop. The overthrow of the Shah showed other peoples in the region that tyranny could be ended. The U.S. tried to woo Iran under the mullahs but there were problems. The Iranian regime also encouraged unrest throughout the Gulf for its own expansionist, Pan-Islamic motives.

So the U.S. "tilted to" Saddam in his aggression against Iran, to keep him from being defeated and to bleed both Iran and Iraq. And it bolstered the Saudi and other Gulf regimes with military aid. Throughout the 1980's, relations

with Saddam grew warmer and warmer. The U.S. thought it could use Saddam Hussein, while keeping his own ambitions limited. Meanwhile, the wars and rivalries of the region proved to be a huge bonanza for all the world's merchants of death, as weapons makers profited billions out of human death and misery.

But it turned out Saddam wanted to go beyond what the U.S. was willing. He wanted to be the regional overlord and took over Kuwait. That upset the balance U.S. imperialism had been cultivating. Washington saw this crisis as the opportunity to establish a massive military presence. Its goal: cut Iraq down to size so that it cannot be a regional power and establish military bases in the region to make sure that U.S. and pro-U.S. oil interests remain supreme. That's what this current war is all about.

In short, a return to much of the old system of direct, foreign imperialist presence in the region.

What else is "new" in the "new order"?

There are two more things "new" about this world order.

First, the new policy takes place with the collapse of Soviet imperialism as a serious contender in the region. As long as the Soviets were playing the game of rivalries in the Middle East, the U.S. felt constrained in how far it could push its ambitions. But now the Soviets are in dire straits; and in exchange for economic bribes, they have given the green light to the U.S. war. They have just been rewarded with a \$1 billion credit line from the Kuwaiti government-in-exile!

The U.S. imperialists are clearly out to redivide the region by smashing Iraq, formerly in the Soviet sphere of influence. But they do this not through conflict with the Soviets but by using current Soviet weakness to buy their collaboration. The U.S. hopes that this type of collaboration can be repeated elsewhere in the world too.

The second thing that's new concerns U.S. rivalry with Japan and Germany. Many capitalist journalists and experts are quite frank about this. The U.S. ruling class knows that it is losing in economic competition with them, but it wants

to use its gigantic military machine — the one trump card it has — in order to get concessions from them in economic matters. Today it's the demand that they foot part of the bill for the Gulf war. Tomorrow it may be trade concessions. And once the U.S. has a direct military presence on the oil lines of the Gulf, it would give Washington an enormous advantage if the rivalries with Japan and Germany get sharper — as they eventually will. The German and Japanese imperialists are not all that eager to simply play a subordinate role to the U.S., although they have promised to give funds to the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq.

Nothing good for the working people in this new order

As is clear, the "new world order" is the Pentagon's dream vision in the post-Cold War world. Faced with the collapse of the Soviet superpower and the emergence of regional upstarts, the U.S. ruling class sees its role as world policeman as the doorway into the 21st century.

But there can be no repeat of the 50's and 60's when U.S. imperialism thought it could rule the world forever. The "American century" defeated in Indochina cannot be brought back so easily. The U.S. economy is shot through with serious problems, as the current economic crisis is bringing out. And the Middle East is a powder keg, which cannot be mastered by cruise missiles and smart bombs. Hussein may be defeated, but the war will unleash unforeseen changes and movements throughout the Arab world.

There is no place for the working people of the U.S. or abroad in Bush's "new order." Here at home we will have to keep paying for the Pentagon world cops while poverty and homelessness grow and the cities and industries crumble and decay. In the Persian Gulf, the people will have to languish under the jackboot of U.S.-backed kings and sheikhs who have long outlived their day.

But these are also conditions for revolt. And rebellion there will be. The workers of the U.S. and the world will not quietly be pawns for the U.S. billionaires' and generals' dreams of world supremacy. □

The double standard and other war news

The bourgeois press has proven to be a bunch of cheerleaders for the war. It roots for the ravaging of Iraq with bombs, as if this were the Superbowl, while displaying patriotic indignation and copious tears over war meaning some casualties for the imperialist side as well. It shrugs off the deaths of masses of Iraqis, while it makes a show of being so kind and gentle and, right in the midst of a war, even concerned for the plight of children--American, European or Israeli children only, if you please. It shouts about Iraqi atrocities, while hiding American atrocities or dismissing them as Iraqi exaggerations.

No gas masks for Palestinians-- Israel's human shields

Take the Scud missile attacks on Israel. While seeing nothing wrong with the devastation of Baghdad, the bombing of water supply systems, power plants, food storehouses, roads, bridges, radio stations, etc. as "military targets", the press shouts that the minor damage done by the Scuds is the worst war crime. Why, it is done by the same vicious Iraqis who are using POWs as "human shields".

But what about the Israeli use of "human shields"?

While giving gas masks to the population of Israel proper, the Israeli government did not give any gas masks to the Palestinians in the occupied territories. It sought to make use of the almost two million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as human shields.

But, say the apologists for Israel's racist and theocratic regime, didn't the Israel Supreme Court order on January 14, just before the bombing broke out, that gas masks be distributed to Palestinians in the occupied territories? Doesn't it show the Israeli regime's high moral standards? One minor detail, however. The gas masks weren't distributed. And the court has done nothing.

This has barely been noticed in the patriotic, "support our troops" press. The *Los Angeles Times* managed to report on January 22 that only 13,000 gas masks had been distributed in the first four days. Furthermore, no masks for children (nor the tent-like apparatus that Israel uses for children three or under) were distributed. Among the few Palestinians so honored as to be offered gas masks, there were those who indignantly refused masks, asking whether they were supposed to wear them while watching their children die. Can you imagine the twisted, sadistic mentality of the Israeli army of occupation--to think it clever to have parents watch their children suffocate and die? Just another example of "civilized" psychological warfare.

More recently, the flag-waving *Detroit News* got around on February 7 to mentioning that only 50,000 masks had

been issued by then in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As well, there were still none for Palestinian children in these occupied territories. So sorry, the Israeli army said, it just didn't have any masks to spare for the Palestinians, but if other countries would care to donate some masks, perhaps it would pass them on.

The Israeli government and the American press professes horror at seeing Palestinians get on their roofs and cheer when Scuds hit Israel. But what are the Palestinians supposed to do? An entire people is being held under permanent house arrest or curfew during the war, (see the February issue of the *Workers' Advocate*) as well as being denied gas masks. Were they supposed to simply wring their hands in horror and huddle in fear?

For year after year, the Israeli army treats an entire people as hostages, subject to any humiliation that it can think up. It closes the schools, reminding one of the bans in the American South on teaching slaves to read. It bans the sending of money from people abroad to Palestinian humanitarian and welfare organizations, and then bans these organizations themselves. It jails youth just for flying the prohibited Palestinian national flag. During this war it bans any expression of Palestinian views. Is it any wonder a fierce hatred burns among the people subject to such treatment?

And tell us, oh kinder and gentler American patriots, what justifies your cheering on the smart bombs hitting Iraqi bridges, and bunkers, and buildings? Is it more civilized to cheer with a yellow ribbon than from a roof top?

No gas masks for Iraqi POWs-- the Pentagon's human shields

But is it just Israel and Iraq that resort to using human shields? Not at all. The American armed forces devastating Iraq recently announced that they would have no gas masks or protective equipment for Iraqi POWs who are kept in camps in areas where American soldiers are so equipped.

BBC says: Give bombs a chance

Meanwhile the "Allied" governments waging the war on Iraq are showing their dedication to freedom by banning demonstrations or dissent.

The French government confiscated tapes with an Arabic song "Saddam, go for it!" Hardly a revolutionary song, but the government is determined to keep its Arab population in line during the war.

And in Britain? The BBC went so far as to bar Lennon's songs "Give peace a chance" and "Imagine".

These songs do not call for struggle, but no matter, any expression of the yearning for peace is treason when its time for the British government to show its claws.

It can be noted that the British government has a history of killing Iraqis, and with any weapon of mass slaughter that is convenient. The patron saint of the British bourgeoisie, Winston Churchill, personally approved using chemical weapons on Arabs. In 1919, when the British Royal Air Force consulted him about this, he stated "I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favor of using poisoned gas against uncivilized tribes." Of course, this humanitarian added "It is not necessary to use only [!] the most deadly gasses; gasses can be used which would cause great inconvenience and would spread a lively terror and yet would leave no serious permanent effects on most of those affected." For Churchill, chemical weapons represented "the application of Western science to modern warfare... We cannot in any circumstance acquiesce in the non-utilization of any weapons which are available to procure a speedy termination of the disorder which prevails on the frontier." (Feb. 18, *The Nation*) The British armed forces proceeded to gas Iraqis in 1920 in order to keep the government they favored in power.

Mass bombing--an atrocity of modern war

Today, in complaining about the atrocities of warfare, the Western press concentrates on those weapons or practices which may be used against it. And indeed the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein does not hold back from atrocities.

But when it comes to atrocities on the American side, these are hailed as ways of "saving lives"--the lives worthy of being counted being Allied soldiers fighting against Iraq.

The mass bombing of a country, to terrorize it, sap its will to live, starve its population, and bring it to its knees, is itself an atrocity of war. Iraq is being so devastated. In such a situation, what becomes of the distinction between military and civilian targets? Anything that serves to "shorten" the war is called military. The few restrictions the Pentagon does respect seem just as much to save

precious bombs, of which there isn't an unlimited supply, as for any other reason.

Food, water, electricity, etc. have become targets. A potato warehouse here, the water supply of a city there. Civilian radio stations were declared a military target on the grounds that they can broadcast speeches of Saddam Hussein. Now the Pentagon has gone so far as to call bomb shelters military targets. And hotels, if they have shelters below them. It hasn't taken much for the Pentagon to overcome any scruples it may have had over bombing shelters. Just mumble a few words about "collateral damage". And besides, it claims, there was camouflage paint there--presumably the Iraqis are supposed to mark every building in Baghdad on the roof with a big T for target or C for civilian, and trust in the good faith of the Pentagon. Meanwhile the Pentagon leaks to the press that, after all, the relatives of Saddam or other government officials might have been using the shelter. Who knows, maybe they can kill Saddam if they destroy all the shelters?

After all, the "lesson of Vietnam" according to Bush and the chauvinists, is that nothing is supposed to prevent the application of overwhelming power.

It can be noted that this applies to nuclear weapons as well. While making a fuss about Iraqi nuclear weapons, the mass media is considering the pros and cons of the American use nuclear weapons. It doesn't condemn the presence of American and Israeli nuclear weapons in the region. It didn't condemn the Allied bombing of a nuclear plant which was in operation. This was a first; and it means dangers for the population nearby. Yet the same press that shouts about "environmental terrorism" over oil spills (unless, of course, Allied bombs have caused these spills), sees nothing wrong with nuclear terrorism so long as it is against Iraq.

But is it surprising that the patriotic press, which saw nothing barbaric in sanctions designed to starve an entire country, sees nothing barbaric in the saturation bombing of that country?

Down with the two barbaric sides in this war! Let us concentrate our fire on the atrocities and war drive of our government. This is our duty, living in the U.S., as well as the best way to encourage the revolutionary movement of our sisters and brothers in Iraq and around the world. □

Union leaders support Bush's war

The morning after Bush started to bomb Iraq, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland jumped to support the U.S. war. He declared:

"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."

Let no one misunderstand this: this is support for Bush's imperialist war. Kirkland may feign support for the rank-and-file soldier, but he is setting aside all differences with, and offering full support to, Bush, the generals, and other enemies of the common people. This stand gives no help to the workers who are being sent to kill and be killed in a war for the oil monopolies and the greater glory of the Pentagon.

The issue Kirkland ignores is the big question. What kind of war is Bush waging in the Persian Gulf? It is an unjust war, a war for the oil monopolies, a war for the "right" of the U.S. government to control far-off lands, a war to keep fueling the appetite of the Pentagon's huge budgets. It is a war in which the sons and daughters of the American workers will fight for the interests of the rich men who rule this country, and kill the sons and daughters of the working people of other lands.

Kirkland is not the workers' voice

The workers of the U.S. and their children have no stake in this war in the Persian Gulf. But that does not prevent Lane Kirkland from supporting such a shameful cause in the name of the "American labor movement." But just because Kirkland heads up the AFL-CIO doesn't mean he speaks for the working class.

No, who he is speaking for is the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy, a layer of officials who sit on top of the rank-and-file workers of this country. These pro-capitalist bigshots sell out the interests of the working class to curry favor with the rich and powerful. These officials, who pay themselves huge salaries comparable to corporate executives, are far removed from the concerns and hopes of the working class.

The union bureaucrats have a long history of supporting imperialist war. Kirkland's predecessor, George "I never walked a picket line" Meany, made himself notorious for supporting the aggressive war against the Vietnamese people's liberation struggle. The AFL-CIO supports the U.S. government's wars and foreign interventions because the union officialdom is part of the establishment and gets status, high pay, and privileges in return for holding back the revolt of the workers.

What about the so-called critics of the war?

Besides the outright supporters of the Gulf war like Lane Kirkland, a small number of union officials claim to be critics of the war.

Shortly before the outbreak of the war, several top union chiefs, including the presidents of the United Auto Workers, the International Association of Machinists, the International Union of Electrical Workers, and the Service Employees International Union, came out with a statement opposing early recourse to war and supporting the policy of brutal sanctions against Iraq. Since the war broke out, however, we haven't heard where they stand. Quite possibly, they are going along with the Democrats in Congress who have rallied to Bush's side now that the war has begun.

Some, like the union leaders on the San Francisco Central Labor Council, remain critics of the war. But even these officials are quite soft in their opposition to the U.S. government's policy in the Gulf. They merely call for a return to the U.S. policy before the bombing started: military pressure and an economic blockade imposed by massive force. They do not oppose U.S. imperialism's self-proclaimed right to be policeman of the Gulf. They are not opposed to imperialism, but only haggle over how best to impose U.S. control.

In particular, they are against building a serious movement against the war. Though these labor bureaucrats may have signed on to a few protest marches, they are strongly opposed to any militancy in the fight against Bush's war and condemn it as "violence." Thus the San Francisco Central Labor Council in a statement released January 18 declared: "...we cannot and do not condone violence against anyone, nor destruction or defacing of property or blockage of bridges, highways or other means of conveyance in the exercise of ... rights to protest."

Mobilize the rank-and-file against imperialist war

Many reformist groups in the anti-war movement, like the CPUSA and SWP, glorify the union officialdom. They act as if mobilizing the workers into the anti-war struggle means creating illusions about the establishment "labor leaders." They do more to publicize empty resolutions by the union bureaucrats than the union hacks themselves do.

The anti-war movement must not help polish the image of the union officials. Instead, we must take anti-war politics directly to the rank and file. We must not mistake the pro-establishment union press as a workers' press, but support rebellious literature of the rank-and-file and the class struggle. Spread anti-war literature among the workers; form workers' networks to oppose the war; mobilize the workers into mass actions against the imperialist war. □

NY postal: Cancelling contract struggle in the name of the war

In the last issue of the Supplement an article reported on the plan of postal workers in the NALC in New York to demonstrate against the USPS contract demands. Below we reprint an article from the January 28 issue of the New York Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-NY, on how the union bureaucrats of the city-wide local squelched the protest. The paper also contained four articles on the war in the Persian Gulf and the struggle against it, and the article "Injured postal workers picket outside Detroit GMF".

Plans for letter carriers' picket cancelled by union officials

At the December union meeting of (New York) Branch 36 of the National Association of Letter Carriers it was decided to hold demonstrations or pickets in January to denounce management's outrageous contract demands. This decision was the result of an effort by rank-and-file carriers from FDR Station, who felt that workers needed to play an active role in the contract dispute, which is now in the hands of an arbitrator.

These workers had circulated a petition prior to their local union meeting in support of a picket. Over 130 signatures were collected in just two days, and the proposal was approved overwhelmingly by those present at the meeting. At a subsequent union meeting, however, it was decided to cancel the picket line if war broke out in the Persian Gulf.

What lies behind the cancellation of the picket against management's contract demands?

Union officials bend over backward to keep rank and file passive

After the expiration of the postal contract last November 20, the dispute was sent into arbitration, where it remains today. Management's contract proposals had been outrageous, with the USPS refusing to grant any wage increases whatsoever, and demanding the right to hire more casuals and other sorts of "second class" employees.

The leadership of the various postal unions, for their part, had failed to mobilize the workers to put up any sort of resistance to the Postal Service's arrogant attempts to railroad the workers. Workers were kept in the dark as to the progress of the negotiations before the contract deadline, and there has been absolutely no attempt to prepare the workers for a fight. No meetings to discuss the issues surrounding the contract, no picket lines, no demon-

strations.

So the initiative of the FDR rank-and-file workers to hold a picket line was significant because it broke through the stifling passivity imposed by the union bureaucrats. But the stand of the union officialdom against any sort of initiative or militant action by the rank and file is so pervasive that even the shop stewards at FDR refused to cooperate with the petition campaign in favor of pickets. In fact, some of these shop stewards openly opposed the idea, and virulently campaigned against the petition.

It is not surprising, then, that union officials would jump at the very first opportunity to liquidate the picket lines. And this was provided by the war in the Gulf.

This is not the time to curtail the fight for a better contract

The war in the Persian Gulf is a rich man's war. It is not being fought "to defend freedom," as Bush claims, but for control of the oil-rich Persian Gulf region. No rational person would equate the medieval tyrannies of the kings of Saudi Arabia or of Kuwait with freedom.

But it is the working people and poor who are being asked to sacrifice in this war. It is them who will do the fighting and the dying. And it is them who will be hurt the most by the deepening recession, which will only be made worse by the war.

Do you think the Postal Service will give up their contract demands because there is a war with Iraq? You can be sure that they won't. So why should postal workers give up the struggle? Will those postal workers who are now in the Gulf want us to give in to management or would they want to come back to a better contract? This is not a time to curtail the struggle for our economic demands and against management's onslaught.

Build up a trend for rank-and-file action, independent of any control from the union bureaucracy

The liquidation of the planned actions against management's contract demands this month, only highlights the need to build up a fighting trend among postal workers independent from the union bureaucrats. Even though the idea for pickets or demonstrations came from rank-and-file workers, and the petition for such actions was organized by them, the December meeting of NALC local Branch 36 left the organization of these actions in the hands of the union bureaucracy. The result was that nothing has been carried out.

This is a very enlightening lesson for postal carriers, and

for postal workers generally. It means that we have to fight all that much harder to build up a trend which is willing to

confront management, which bases itself on the rank and file, and which is independent of the union bureaucrats. □

Defend the militant wing of the anti-war movement

The following articles are from the January 22 issue of Boston Worker, voice of the MLP-Boston. The lead article was "No More Blood For Imperialism! Take to the Streets against Bush's Oil War!" It also had articles "The Meaning of Iraq's Missile Attacks on Israel" and "Movement News/Anti-War Movement, An Explosive First Week."

Twice the past week reformist "official" leaders of the movement have tried to keep people away from militant mass marches through the streets.

On January 16 when people first heard of the war, a spontaneous march began from Harvard Square. This march grew to 500 by the time it reached downtown Boston, but no thanks to the official organizers of the MIT [Massachusetts of the Institute of Technology] peace center. When the marchers stopped in at the MIT teach-in and called on people to join them, the reformist official "leaders" told people not to join the march, but to stay and listen to speeches.

On January 19, the MLP and other activists called on people at the Coalition for Peace rally to join them in a march through black and latino neighborhoods to a speak-out going on at Madison Park High. Again the "official" leaders told people not to march. But 80 to 100 marched anyhow. Along the march route through the South End and Roxbury, motorists honked support and 10 to 15 people came out on the streets and joined the march. But when the marchers came into the auditorium and sat down, they were asked to leave by the official organizers. The excuse was given that too many of the marchers were white and they did not want to overwhelm the "people from the community". But interestingly enough the "official" organizers expelled the black and latino people who joined the march as well as the whites. Clearly color was not the issue. The issue was that the "official" organizers did not want militant protest to spread.

These shameful actions of the "official" leaders are no accident. The centers of the movement are currently controlled by people and organizations tied to the left wing of the Democratic Party and liberal capitalist institutions and foundations. And these people do not want too militant

a movement that would upset their ties with the rich, the politicians etc. Activists should learn from these incidents the need to get organized and take matters into their own hands [in order] to build the movement. □

Bush shows rail workers whose way of life he's fighting for

The same day Bush started bombing Baghdad he dropped a bomb on American railroad workers. Last fall Bush invoked the Railway Act to prevent a national railroad strike. He appointed a commission to settle the contract dispute between railroad workers, who have gone 2 1/2 years without a raise, and the railroad companies. On January 16 Bush released the recommendations of his commission. And those recommendations were a 7 year contract with only a 10 per cent raise over the life of the contract and shifting of most health insurance increases onto the workers. At the current rate of inflation, this means a 20 to 25 per cent cut in real wages. In addition, at a time when thousands of railroad workers are being laid off, Bush refused to increase railroad unemployment benefits above their current 130 dollar a week maximum. (Railroad workers are not covered by state unemployment insurance systems.) Clearly Bush has shown that it is not the workers "way of life" that he wants us to fight for, but the bankers' and capitalists' way of robbery.

Needless to say, railroad workers are furious about Bush's action. But not so the soldout union hacks. One of them, Mr. Kilroy of the TCU, has announced, without any vote of the workers, that his union will accept Bush's wage cuts "as a patriotic gesture to support the war effort". ... Mr Kilroy has shown us the true meaning of the patriotic fervor that is presently being whipped up--fight for the rich, die for their empire, and slave for their profits. We say "No!" □

Aerospace workers and the war

The following account was sent in by a comrade.

This report is based on discussions with dozens of individuals with a cross section of politics, and who work at several different aerospace plants, both commercial and military.

Before the bombing started, the vast majority vacillated on whether they favored a war. A minority said give sanctions a chance. Some would say "we should kick ass," etc., but not as a consistent view—they also tended to voice opposition to the war, such as "we're not being told the real reasons for it." In some areas, supervisors attempted to distribute ribbons, etc. before the war started, but found no interest in this.

Within a few days after it started, a few workers and the supervisors in certain areas started circulating American flags and yellow ribbons, later came buttons and hats. The majority on many different work crews have a flag or ribbon on their tool box or badge, etc. In some places, the flags tend to be thicker among macho types, for example the assemblers (riveters), whereas women are more likely to have yellow ribbons. In other places, the flags are mainly those posted by supervision, while most workers just wear ribbons.

There is a noticeable difference in the atmosphere between the commercial and military production shops. In military, supervision is pushing a pro-war stand very actively, with overt intimidation, such as appointing "incident commanders" to whom workers are to report all suspicious activity, "domestic terrorism," etc. In commercial, the supervision is generally indifferent to the issue. Consequently, the "acceptable norm" of peer group opinions is more pro-war in the military shops. Also, the number of ex-military personnel in each shop makes an impact on the general opinion. But the actual views of workers beneath the surface don't seem much different in the different areas.

Among workers with flags and ribbons, the majority have a stand, as one worker put it, "I don't oppose the war and I don't support it either." The range of opinion is from some who think the war is wrong but "support the troops", to more who are vacillating on the justness and necessity of the war. Now, the initial opinion expressed tends to be most often pro-war, and even more so in the military shops. But the above description is based on more thorough discussions that reveal more facets of their thinking.

A minority of the workers with flags definitely supports the war, including those circulating the flags. Discussions with these elements start on the political nonsense of Bush—"liberate Kuwait," etc. Very quickly though, these workers will agree that this is hypocritical B.S., that the U.S. really has other interests in the region, etc. Then the discussion shifts to oil. Will the world economy collapse without oil, who really benefits from cheap oil in the U.S., what do the Arabs do with their oil money, why is oil

wasted in the U.S., and a million other variants. Generally, their eventual "conclusions" are that we probably do need to prevent Saddam's expansion for economic reasons but that we're not told the real or whole story about the war. "It could be wrong," one flagman said at the end of a discussion. None of this seems to dampen their enthusiasm for supporting the war in the slightest. Under the pressure of discussion, these workers tend to eventually come out with the position that the war needs to get over quickly (a view that the vacillators come out with right away).

We haven't talked to a lot of the hardcore reactionaries in depth. There are a few blowhards around and, along with management, they are more vocal in the military shops. They tend to be considered weird and extreme, but they seem to swim comfortably in the current atmosphere and have illusions that 99% agree with them. These persons are a minority among those workers who have a long-time association with the U.S. military. One thing about these elements is that, contrary to all other sections of the workers, they are adamant that the issue of the war is not oil. They focus on nationalistic views, and often in an emotional way. But while they know which side their bread is buttered on, there are signs that even with these people the politics are not always solid. For example, after a long spiel of reactionary "reasoning," one militarist said that before the war, he thought that "Hussein and Bush should fight it out, not our troops."

Two other odd cases. One worker has long had a bunch of liberal political stickers on his tool box. He now has an American flag on his box, too. He says he is completely opposed to the war and Bush, but completely supports our troops. He is obviously capitulating to the patriotic atmosphere and is uncomfortable talking to our comrades. One shop steward, who is the stereotypical building trades style pro-union aristocrat, denounces the war as being fought for only one reason—the oil cartels. "We should be fighting Russia to free Lithuania instead."

On the other hand, a couple of the more leftist-thinking workers have been asking our comrades about when there are demonstrations they can go to. One went to her first demonstration and was a vocal participant in the Marxist-Leninist Party contingent. She loved it. There are many black workers, mainly those in their mid-30s or older, who are unequivocally against the war. And there remains the minority that is anti-militarist among the workforce. The latter two sections tend to feel isolated in a "sea of ignorance, Europeans," etc.

Summing all this up, it seems to me that support for the war is very weak. The popularity of the "support the troops" line is interesting. One use of it is to avoid politics. The workers' real basis of support seems to be economic, that we have a higher standard of living and somehow, they're not exactly sure how, this war is needed to protect that. But they are uncomfortable with saying this straight out—it sounds too undemocratic. So they prefer political

arguments like "opposing aggression." But this is easily punctured, and they are back to the economic question. And so the vacillation proceeds.

The "support the troops" line also reflects a heavy preoccupation with body bags. And with a shaky rationale for the war, it stands to reason that the toleration for sacrifice is lower.

The "support the troops" line may be the current form for patriotism, but it also reflects that nationalism per se is not quite acceptable, that demagogy allegedly more humanitarian and pro-worker is needed. The weakness of nationalism is reflected in the reaction to Iraqi civilian casualties. The shelter bombing is a big issue.

If Bush wraps things up quickly and avoids a major fiasco, the lukewarm support for the war may last among

the aerospace workers. But in the long run, no matter how this war is resolved, a questioning of foreign policy has been sparked among broad masses. This is a questioning that leads to exposure of imperialism.

Generally, regarding our agitation and propaganda, I think we need a spirit of outrage at U.S. crimes, a spirit that prevails among many masses outside the U.S., and an analytical approach to the workers' class interests, i.e. a deeper exposure of the oil and empire question. These two things are somewhat contradictory since the workers' support for the war is actually scandalous: big-power chauvinism, but nonetheless we need to appeal for changing it. Official optimistic declarations that workers oppose the war solve nothing, and such statements contradict our advocacy that the movement reach out and win over the working class. □

Layoffs at McLouth: Recession comes to steel

The following two articles are from the February 11 issue of Detroit Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit. It also contained the article "Fight for Jobs or Income at Great Lakes Steel".

The army of the unemployed is growing every day. Just a few weeks ago, 200 workers from McLouth Steel were laid off adding their feet to the shuffle at the MESC [Michigan unemployment offices]. Of these, 155 were hourly workers. More layoffs are expected.

But how can this be? Isn't McLouth 87% "employee-owned and managed"? And look at District 29 Director and McLouth Board member Harry Lester, acting like a fat capitalist by laying off the very workers whose union dues have fed his bulging stomach? "We had to cut back in order to fall in line with production," he is quoted in the *Free Press* on Jan. 15.

How can this be? Because Employee Stock Ownership did not change the capitalist character of McLouth, nor the fact that it was still being run by rich capitalists like Sambucci and now McBride.

It was Harry Lester who in 1988 acted as salesman to sell the idea to the workers that they should take a 10% wage cut in exchange for the ESOP [Employee Stock Ownership Plan]. The pay cuts were to entice new capitalist investors. The ESOP was supposed to solve all the workers' problems. Instead it has meant more job com-

ination, more unsafe conditions, NO rank-and-file "management" and now layoffs. But Harry's still collecting both checks from the union and company. And all the capitalist insurance companies, banks, etc.--who invested in the exploitation of the McLouth workers--have gotten paid off, with fat interest.

And what about McLouth local's president, John Skidmore? He's encouraging the layoffs by declaring now "we're at fighting weight." Easy for him to say, since it is the laid-off who will be losing weight. Skidmore was even happy that McLouth didn't have to bother with a phoney job security clause like at GLS. He's said that not having such a clause "...gives us the edge." (*Heritage Sunday*, Jan. 20) So not only is he unconcerned about the layoffs, but he hopes the trimmed work force will give McLouth a competitive edge. That way McLouth may grab orders from other steel producers, so that the workers there lose jobs. This is the typical mindset of a USWA bureaucrat. Forget working class solidarity, forget even fighting for the workers in your own local, the union bureaucrats have to save the company profits. The problems at McLouth are a result of the deepening capitalist economic crisis. The union bureaucrats of the USWA all down the line have gone over to the side of the companies. We workers must band together to defend our jobs and the jobs of our fellow workers. We need broad working class unity, to defend our own class interests, not the interests of the capitalists. □

Free speech or censorship

The pro-company censors are at it again. Once again they are trying to stifle us and prevent workers from having access to the independent voice of opposition in the mill.

For over 15 years we have been reporting on events in the mill and defending workers against company attacks on questions of safety, wages, working conditions and against the treachery of sellout officialdom. We have employed various means to assist the plant-wide struggle such as leaflets, stickers, posters, cartoons, petitions, and struggles in union meetings. As well, we have been a voice of the toilers on political questions like the struggle against apartheid, against racism, on the liberation struggles in Central America and supporting the workers' struggles against the phoney "communism" in Eastern Europe and China.

Every step of the way, those few who are happy with the status quo and company program have opposed us. They have attacked our literature, spread lies about us and snitched on us to the company. And every step of the way we have stood up to these attacks and continued our work. Many brave workers throughout the mill have also stood up to this pressure and circulated the literature, seeing it as representing their voice.

Under attack again

Once again we are under attack.

We have opposed the predatory war for oil in the Persian Gulf. We have spread literature stating that neither Bush nor Hussein should be supported in this war. Both sides are using the working people's sons and daughters as cannon fodder in a struggle over control of oil, wealth and power. This war will not benefit the toilers, only the ruling elite of both countries. This is a rich man's war being fought by the poor, we are doing the killing and dying.

To oppose this slaughter workers in the mill have spread leaflets, stickers and newspapers telling the truth of the

war. But supporters of the war have been tearing the stickers down and ripping up the literature. This is an attack on both the right to voice opposition and the right of workers to decide for themselves what they can read. This is reactionary censorship akin to the Nazi book burning in the '30's. These attacks are being done in a secretive, cowardly fashion. Even notes have been secretly put on the locker of a *Detroit Workers' Voice* supporter in a feeble attempt to intimidate him.

All workers must defend their right to voice their opinions and to read whatever they wish. A nation-wide campaign of self-censorship is also being waged by the news media to downplay the widespread opposition to the war. They are doing this to assist the Bush administration in waging the war.

Dozens of marches, rallies, meetings and sit-ins, numbering hundreds of thousands of people, have been held to oppose the war in the last month alone. Resistance to the war has spread among ordinary soldiers. To date over 100 GI's have refused Gulf service and many have become movement activists. In Germany alone 100 GI's have requested Conscientious Objector status and another 27 have requested political asylum in Sweden. The generals have been shackling some GI's and forcing them on Gulf-bound planes at gun point. As well, reservists and Marines in the U.S. have been refusing orders to the Gulf. Very little of this information is being reported in the regular media. That is one reason why we workers must build our alternative, working class press, that is militant and opposition.

Fight censorship

We workers must fight the censorship in whatever form it comes. We have the right to speak and be heard. We have the right to read and hear what we want. We must defend our right to be informed. We must continue to spread *DWV* and the stickers to be sure the independent voice is heard. □

Anti-racist news

Anti-racists chase KKK from West Chester

More than 500 workers and youth chased the KKK from West Chester, Pennsylvania on January 12.

The KKK and some skinheads marched into the center of town, protected by street barricades and surrounded by two rows of cops. But hundreds of blacks, latinos and whites pushed through the barricades and chased the racists down the street to their cars. As the racists sped away, their cars were battered with rocks and bottles.

Several of the anti-racist protesters were arrested. Anger turned against the cops. There was a march on the police station, where the chant rang out: "Let them go! Let them go!" More protesters were arrested, and the police threatened to use tear gas to disperse the crowd. But the people refused to leave until they were promised that all protesters would be released in thirty minutes. □

Another police attack on Mohawks

The Mohawk Indians in Quebec are continuing to defend themselves against land grabbing and violent repression.

For decades on end, the native people of the region have tried through Canadian courts to secure recognition of their rights to ancestral lands. The government tells them to be patient. But at the current rate of settlement all claims will be resolved through the courts in only 150 more years.

Last spring the Mohawks erected barricades to stop the expansion of a golf course onto their burial grounds near Oka, Quebec, outside Montreal. Their just stand was supported by demonstrations and other actions by many thousands of Canadians, native and non-native alike. But the Quebec and federal governments responded with brutal police and army repression. The siege proper ended on September 26, 1990 and resulted in hundreds of arrests and beatings of native people. Since then, police have kept up harassment and brutality.

On January 8, police entered the Kahnawake reservation to arrest two native people for a supposed traffic violation. The Mohawks reminded the police that they had no legal jurisdiction on the reservation. Nevertheless, the cops called in reinforcements and attacked. About 150 Mohawks stood up against savage violence by one hundred heavily armed riot police. Reporters for the *Montreal Gazette* witnessed and described atrocities by the police, who also smashed cameras to try to stop pictures of their crimes from reaching the outside world.

While the Mohawks suffered many injuries, arrests, and property damage, they were able to injure nine police thugs and damage three cruisers in the battle. They are defiant

and ready to continue the struggle for their rights. □

Coleman Young declares a "state of emergency"

Detroit is home of the largest U.S. concentration of Arab-Americans. On January 18, Mayor Coleman Young declared a state of emergency in the city. And he asked the governor to call out the National Guard to protect Detroit from "terrorism." There was a huge outcry of protest. And the governor refused Young's request, saying such an action is premature.

Young, who tries to portray himself as a fighter against racism, claimed he had so many police on duty to protect Arab-Americans from attack, he could not handle "terrorist" threats. But nobody believes the Guard was being called to protect Arabs. Whatever Young had in mind, the effect of his call was to step up anti-Arab racist hysteria.

The last time the National Guard came to Detroit was during the black rebellion in 1967. The Guard was used to beat, abuse and kill young blacks who were rebelling against racism and unbearable conditions. The National Guard's brutality was so hated that Coleman Young was swept into office when he denounced them. But now Mayor Young says: "The National Guard had a bad reputation with black people in the city dating back to 1967...(but) the National Guard also played some positive roles." Positive roles for whom? For the rich people and racists who wanted the rebellion stopped, no matter at what cost to the blacks of Detroit?

The Guard was used for racist terror against blacks in the past. And Young's call today just fuels the anti-Arab racist campaign. □

Oil war and racism go hand-in-hand

Some liberal Democrats in Congress and the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee held a news conference January 23. They criticized the FBI interrogations of Arab-Americans. And these circles are demanding a Congressional investigation of the FBI and the hate crimes directed against Arab immigrants. Some facts may be brought out—eventually—but with the bourgeoisie in a pro-war frenzy, Republicans and Democrats alike, it is hard to conceive how such an investigation will stop the racism.

What is needed is mass struggle against racism and the war that is fueling it. Arab and American workers and youth are already beginning to unite in mass marches, protests at recruiting centers, and in working class communities. It is this which can unite the working people and provide a barrier to the government's racist crusade. □

No to red, white, and blue racism against the Arabs!

*From the February 15 issue of Chicago Workers' Voice,
paper of the MLP-Chicago:*

The U.S. government with its loyal media machine is inciting red-white-and-blue hatred against Arab peoples in an effort to mobilize unthinking racism behind its imperialist war.

On January 16 FBI agents questioned more than 200 Arab-Americans across the U.S. This harassment has continued as FBI and local police invade homes and businesses, interrogating residents about their political beliefs and demanding information on "terrorist activities".

In Chicago, Palestinians, Iraqis and other Arabs have been questioned. One Palestinian man who is active in the Palestinian Community Center, reported that very early in the morning on January 16, FBI agents came to his home. They stated that they were concerned that the war might cause anti-Arab violence but then they proceeded to grill him about his political activities and associates! Obviously, their mention of the danger of anti-Arab attacks was actually a threat, and not any evidence of FBI concern for Arab-American civil rights.

During the first week of February, Chicago police raided the home of a Palestinian family on the Southwest side. Supposedly acting on a tip about "stolen guns" the police kicked in the door of the house and for eight hours terrorized the mother and children of the household. Police tore up the house, telling the family that they were looking for bombs. When the father came home, the police arrested him and confiscated electronic equipment they alleged to be stolen. There were no more mention of bombs or stolen guns.

In other incidents on February first, Chicago police harassed a group of Arab-American high school boys, striking one of them. On the same night an Arab-owned store was vandalized and a pro-war sticker was left on its broken front window.

Around the country FBI agents and police have spoken to university administrators, employers and landlords,

questioning them about Arab students, employees and tenants and urging vigilance against "suspicious characters" (meaning Arab people). Meanwhile the U.S. Justice Department ordered immigration authorities to photograph and fingerprint anyone with Iraqi or Kuwaiti passports entering the U.S. The Federal Aviation Administration has ordered the screening of travelers that fit a specific "profile", that is, people who look Arabic.

This nasty racist campaign includes all kinds of stereotyping and slurs. It is encouraging all kinds of racist scum to surface. Songs, talk shows, t-shirts and movies are turning up with ugly racist attacks on the Arab peoples. Arab organizations report a surge in beatings, vandalism, bombings, hate mail and death threats.

U.S. imperialism's partners in crime are carrying on their own racist offensive against the Arab peoples. In Great Britain, at least 30 Iraqi students are being held in prisoner of war camps for the duration of the war because they have "ties to the Iraqi military". More than two hundred people from various Arab countries have been arrested. Some have been deported, others are being held in detention centers, all without being charged with any crime. One of the detainees is a Palestinian professor who have lived in England for 16 years and is active in a human rights organization which condemned Saddam Hussein for his murder of the Kurds with poisonous gas and for other human rights violations. In France and in Italy, Arab immigrant workers are being harassed and deported.

This racist propaganda campaign against all Arabs is aimed at justifying the war and its slaughter of Iraqis. It goes hand-in-hand with the "anti-terrorist" campaign which is really just pro-war hysteria to be used against the anti-war movement as well as the Arab community in general.

The *Chicago Workers' Voice* calls on its readers to take a stand!

No! to Racist Harassment!

No! to Political Repression!

No! to the War for Oil Profits and Power! □

Defend women's rights!

Detroit pro-choice forces counter anti-abortion rally

Every year, on the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision of January 22, 1973, in which the Supreme Court legalized abortion, the anti-abortion zealots wring their hands. This year 35 people counterprotested on Sunday, January 20 in favor of abortion rights next to the anti-abortion rally of 200 in downtown Detroit.

The ranks of pro-choice forces were down from a similar action last year because many women's rights activists had gone to the massive January 19 anti-war rally in Washington, D.C. Despite the lower numbers, the pro-choice action went well. Slogans rang out for over an hour. Activists called attention to the hypocrisy of the anti-abortion movement's claiming to be "pro-life" while lining up behind the U.S. oil war. Indeed, only the day before, Operation Rescue had turned their picket at a suburban Detroit women's clinic into a pro-war rally, replete with flag-waving and yellow ribbons. Apparently inspired by the death and suffering in the Persian Gulf, OR had claimed that there was little difference between Saddam Hussein and pro-choice activists. □

Don't prey on women!

Opponents of abortion rights held a prayer vigil on the grounds of a Detroit women's clinic on January 22. About 60 eventually showed up.

But so did eight pro-choice activists and supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party. They challenged arriving anti-abortion zealots to explain how they could be "pro-life" if they support Bush's war and harass women at clinics. When the anti-abortion vigil formed up, pro-choice pickets marched right up to them, drowning out their chants with slogans.

The cops eventually showed up and attempted to quell the pro-choice side. But the activists said they were not going until the anti-abortion forces did. The police then dispersed both sides. □

Corpus Christi rejects "pro-life" amendment

On January 20, voters in Corpus Christi, Texas defeated

by 62% a proposed amendment to the city charter which asserted that "human life begins at conception." Why had anyone proposed this addition to the charter? Did it indicate a growing interest in philosophy and biology in Texas? No, it was simply an attempt by anti-women forces to lay the basis for legislation attacking abortion rights as murder.

The amendment was backed by antiabortion zealots led by Catholic Bishop Rene Gracida. Gracida gained notoriety last year for excommunicating a doctor and two clinic employees for taking part in abortions. But this attempt to have religious ignorance transformed into government policy failed. □

Utah bans almost all abortions

Utah Governor Norm Bangerter signed a bill in late January banning almost all abortions in the state. The only exceptions would be for rape or incest, "grave damage" to the pregnant woman's health, or to prevent the birth of a child with severe birth defects.

This is another salvo in the state-by-state war on abortion rights that was given a green light by the Supreme Court's Webster decision a year and a half ago. □

Chicago hospital limits abortions in exchange for church land

On December 19, the Catholic archdiocese in Chicago sold some land to the Illinois Masonic Medical Center. It imposed the condition that the hospital eliminate most abortions. It will now only perform abortions when the pregnancy threatens the life of a woman. This will block access to safe abortion for many women. And this medical center was one of the few facilities in the area which provided abortions through the second trimester.

But this dirty deal was not good enough for Illinois "Right to Life" leader Richard O'Connor who stated, "It is never necessary to perform an abortion to save a woman's life." Obviously the death of a living woman means nothing to this hypocrite.

Down with hypocrisy of the anti-abortion crusaders! Down with the profit-oriented medical establishment which trades the health of women for a piece of land! □

The population bomb is a dud!

The following article was written by the Los Angeles Supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party, and included in a January leaflet which also reprinted the article «Pro-family» paper against the poor having families (about the Philadelphia Inquirer) from the January 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate.

Have you noticed that the quality of life on this planet has been in a big nose dive? Hunger and famine are endemic to many populations. Breathing the air and drinking the water can be hazardous to your health. Oil spills defile our beaches and wreak havoc on wildlife. Poverty, unemployment and homelessness are increasing. Warfare destroys the lives of millions of people.

According to some, all of these social ills can be blamed on a single source: overpopulation. While it's probably safe to say that if left unchecked, the population would, at some time in the future, exceed the Earth's carrying capacity, today, population per se is not "the ultimate threat to mankind," as it is commonly portrayed. This notion became popular in the early 70's following the publication of *The Population Bomb*, by Paul Ehrlich. Actually what this book boils down to is nothing but a crock of warmed-over Malthusian stew.

In his *Essay on the Principles of Population*, published in 1798, the Reverend Malthus purports to show why the poor we shall always have with us. He begins by conjuring up his most oft-quoted dictum that while human population increases geometrically, i.e., 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32... food resources could be expected, even under the most favorable of conditions, to grow only arithmetically, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... (*Essay*, vol. 2, pp. 170-1).

But contrary to the simple-minded and class-biased assertions of Malthus, human reproductive behavior is very complex. It is profoundly influenced by cultural values, gender relations, religious beliefs and standards of living. What Gandhi said about the role of British imperialism in India applies equally to U.S. imperialism and its neo-colonies; namely, that if you strip the people of nearly everything meaningful in their lives and reduce women to mere breeding factories, population rates will soar.

Malthus's unscientific notions, especially regarding food production, have been proved to be dead wrong. In 1798 the U.S. population was about 5 million and there was more than enough food for everyone. Today the population

is about 250 million and there is still more than enough food. This is the situation despite the fact that over the past 40 years more than 4 million farms have gone out of business and that every year about 1 million acres of farmland are turned into highways, housing developments and factories.

In 1798 the *Essay* was received with open arms by the British ruling class as it relieved them of responsibility for the suffering and poverty of the working class; a time when the French Revolution was spreading seditious ideas about liberty, fraternity and equality. Even today, these discredited ideas of Malthus are promoted by the ruling class and their high-paid scribblers as part of their ideological smokescreen intended to shield from public scrutiny the real material basis of the social ills which plague humankind. For example, from the learned lips of congressman Tony Beilenson in his *Special Report on the Environment* of July 1990, we are told that, "starvation, poverty and virtually every environmental problem we face today," can be blamed on population growth. From the executive director of Zero Population Growth we learn that the "invisible force driving global environmental deterioration [is] people, too many of them" (*ZPG Reporter*, April 1990). And from the Michigan chapter of the bourgeois feminist organization NOW, we see another example in the theme of their pro-choice TV campaign which ran ads based on the idea of saving all the money that would otherwise be paid to raise welfare kids. These ads appealed, not to the defense of a woman's right of choice, but rather to the resentment of the bourgeoisie for every penny spent on the poor. These kind of Reaganite appeals can only serve to dampen the struggle for women's rights by turning off millions of potential allies who can see through the thinly veiled racist bilge that it represents.

Given the high level of technological development that exists, the reason people are impoverished and go hungry is that under capitalism everything, including food, is a commodity that can be bought only if you have money. With socialist production planned to meet human needs and not for sale and profit as under capitalism, all the people could share in the abundance of life's necessities while want, misery and starvation would be relegated to the dustbin of history. □

The centennial of the Wounded Knee massacre: One hundred years of lies

The following article was sent in by a comrade.

During these last days of 1990 many Native Americans and others have been reflecting upon and commemorating the cruel slaughter of hundreds of unarmed men, women and children by the U.S. Army at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota. "Officially" 153 Indian people were killed there on the morning of December 29, 1890. But since many of those wounded fled into the brutally cold landscape and died later, the real death toll was much higher, probably well over 200.

There are a number of lessons to be drawn from this event that have current relevance for both the Native American peoples and for the masses of American people as a whole. First and foremost in this regard is the U.S. government and military establishment's breakneck preparations for new and bloodier Wounded Knees in the Middle East. And just as in Vietnam a disproportionate number of Native American youth will be sent to die in the holocaust being prepared there.

This reality alone makes it especially embittering that a handful of so-called "Sioux leaders" are preaching that the Wounded Knee Centennial should be "a time for healing". There are other realities too: like the fact that the Native American people who were doubly devastated by the budget cuts and other effects of the capitalist offensive of the 1980s face even worse times ahead as a new recession spreads across the land. Huge unemployment is going to be added to more federal budget cuts in programs for the poor being heaped on top of the budget cuts of the 1980s. And Indian people face more attacks by the racist groups being fostered by the government and ruling class politicians and media. Its no time for talk of healing. Rather, it's a time for the Native People to organize and participate in new rounds of struggle against their oppressors. Let the struggles of the Native Peoples in Canada last year herald in a new upsurge of struggle in the United States!

Now let us turn to a few lessons from the Wounded Knee massacre.

(1) The government and Army lied then and they lie now.

The government and Army are joined in their lying by the entire media establishment, including such "enlightened" and liberal outlets as National Public Radio and the Reuters news service. Let's look at how one of these outlets has been lying about the events surrounding the Wounded Knee massacre one hundred years ago.

The facts concerning this mass murder have long been established. A review of them will reveal to us the blatant bias and dishonesty of so-called "even-handed" or "objec-

tive" journalism.

The Indians of the northern plains had given up their valiant armed resistance thirteen years before the massacre and had been surviving poorly but peacefully on the concentration camps called reservations. Around 1890 they began to practice the "Ghost Dance" religion. (This was a semi-christian and pacifist religion which envisioned a return to the happier times of the buffalo, plenty of game, no white men, the return of all Indians who had died or been killed to earth, a return to the freedom of the old days. The main religious practice consisted of dancing and dancing until the hour of salvation.) So what happened? Large detachments of heavily armed soldiers were sent all over the reservations to suppress this religion by any means necessary. Included among the soldiers were individuals and units of the late Custer's Seventh Cavalry (notorious among the Indian people for such genocidal acts as the slaughtering in Black Kettle's camp of Cheyennes and Arapahos a few years previously). A military dictatorship was clamped down and wholesale arrests ordered of anyone suspected of organizing "Ghost Dances". One of those ordered seized was the famous Sitting Bull. After being woken in the middle of the night and escorted from his cabin he was killed by the police as an argument developed.

On hearing this, old and ill Big Foot (who also had been ordered arrested) began to flee with his ill-fated band of Oglalas, Hunkpapas, and Minneconjus (all bands of the Lakota or "grassland Sioux" Indians) toward the badlands: 230 women and children, 120 men of all ages. The Army caught up with them a few days later (December 28), and the Indians agreed to return to the reservation headquarters.

On the morning of December 29, 500 heavily armed and mounted soldiers with four repeating cannons at their disposal were in the process of taking the Indians' guns and horses in preparation for herding them like cattle to Pine Ridge headquarters. The soldiers were under the command of vengeance-minded and glory-seeking elements of the Seventh Cavalry. They forced the dismounted Indians to stack anything which could even be construed as a weapon in the middle of the camp. According to survivors' accounts, one man began arguing with the soldiers about their taking his gun and the gun went off. Accounts differ as to how the latter happened. (An Army account was that a medicine man gave a signal for the disarmed, outnumbered and surrounded men, women and children to attack the soldiers with "hidden weapons".) A frenzied slaughter of the Indians was then started as the already aimed repeating cannons were fired into the camp.

The Army called this the "last battle of the Indian Wars" and Congress pinned the Medal of (dis)Honor on several of the participants. Despite protests by Indians in

South Dakota these medals have never been rescinded. Thus to this day Congress and the Army maintain the fiction that the mass murder of Native People at Wounded Knee Creek was a "heroic action".

But what of the liberal "free press"? Does it refute this lie? The Reuters article of December 28, 1990 is a good example of how it works overtime to repeat it. It says: "On Dec. 29, after a vicious blizzard, shots rang out amid the Indian camp along Wounded Knee Creek...the federal troops opened up with their rapid-fire Hotchkiss cannons."

The implication of this for those unfamiliar with the historical events is that the Indians opened fire on the troops who then responded in kind. But Reuters is wily with its "objective journalism" so it writes that shots rang out "amid" the Indian camp. In this way it can pretend, to those with more knowledge of what really happened, its fairly reporting history. But there is more to it than this, however. A number of facts in the Reuters article show that the author did some research into the real history. Yet he leaves out the fact that the Indians had given up 99% of their weapons before the massacre started. This is probably justified on the grounds that "that's just the Indian version". If it is, then Reuters is showing that its either racist, just a mouthpiece for the government, and likely both. What of the fact that most of the 26 soldiers who died were either struck by shrapnel from the cannons or from rifle fire from other soldiers? Is that just an "Indian version" of what happened or is it from the reports of Army doctors? And then, if only a tiny handful of soldiers died from anything but a frenzied cross-fire, does not that confirm that the surviving Indian people told the truth when they said their weapons had been given up? If they had kept any weaponry of note they could have defended themselves better.

Reuters really exposes where it stands when it writes that 1890 was "a time of high tension between whites and Indians" and "The slaughter of Lt. Col. George Custer's troops at the hands of Sitting Bull's warriors...was still fresh in the minds of most whites". This is lying propaganda twice over, being put forward to defend the Wounded Knee massacre. We shall deal below with the fact that the "high tension" in 1890 and earlier (as well as today) was only between some whites and the Native Peoples. Here we will comment on how an allegedly enlightened news service in the allegedly enlightened America of the last decade of the 20th century passes off slanderous filth as "history".

By the time of the battle of the Little Bighorn, Custer, the Army, and the forces they represented (expanding American capitalism) had already proven that they were the slaughterers. Custer personally had led his troops into a village and killed 103 men, women and children (only 11 of whom were warriors) just a few years earlier. He then proceeded to slaughter all the horses. His superior (General Sheridan) defended this vile act and uttered the infamous words: "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead." (Which became: "The only good Indian is a dead Indian".) And the Army chain of command backed up

Sheridan against those who opposed him.

In 1876 the glory-seeking Custer (again under the command of Sheridan) was out to once again implement this dictum when he attacked the combined camps of Sioux and Cheyennes on the Little Bighorn River in eastern Montana. Problem was that this time the camps were a little bigger, some of the Indians had a little more warning, and Custer divided his forces. Custer and his professional soldiers died after once again searching out and attacking Indian encampments (and after killing or wounding a lot of women and children in their first charge).

The Indian people defended themselves valiantly, suffered many casualties, and after a second day of fighting (against Reno's and Benteen's forces) escaped into the mountains as more soldiers approached. This was a stirring victory by a besieged people whose culture and freedom were being utterly destroyed on orders from the highest circles in Washington. Reuters writes of "The slaughter of Lt. Col. George Custer's troops at the hands of Sitting Bull's warriors" as if the warriors had snuck up on unarmed and innocent babes in their sleep and murdered them. It consciously ignores the entire history of the government's attempt to swindle or bribe the Sioux Indians out of their sacred Black Hills (which it had promised to let them retain forever), and then, when that failed, its policy of driving them out with the Army. Even the poet Longfellow could take a stand as to where the wrong lay. In writing of the death of Custer over a century ago he said:

Whose was the right and the wrong?
Sing it, O funeral song,
With a voice that is full of tears,
And say that our broken faith
Wrought all this ruin and scathe,
In the Year of a Hundred Years.

But Reuters just can't bring itself to take even this stand. That wouldn't be modern "objective journalism"... that is, lying journalism.

We should finally also note that its been widely reported over the years that a large number of Indian women participated in the final dispatching of a number of Custer's men (not just "Sitting Bull's warriors"). Of course to write of this raises the issue of the desperate nature of the people's war the Lakota and other Indians were waging, the many just grievances of the women against the soldiers, and so on. It might also cause the reader to ask where did the women come from? ... or to recall that the "slaughtered" Custer was attacking camps full of women and children when he got his just reward ... and that this was not an isolated incident but a general policy. Better to leave out the relevant real history and scribble lies.

(2) The ruling establishment is lying about its past crimes in order to catch the present generation by surprise when it carries out new crimes against the people.

Actually the ruling establishment lies about events like the Wounded Knee massacre in a number of ways, but always with the same basic aims. I dealt with one of these ways above. Another way it lies is using the old ploy of admitting that events like the Wounded Knee massacre took place, admitting that the government and military were to blame (usually: "made a mistake"), and assuring one and all that it could never happen again since the military and government are now enlightened, "new and modern", and so on.

Of course those who were robbing the Indians in the last century used the same tactic. And this robbery continues at this very moment as the big corporations and government agencies steal land, loot the reservations of any wealth they can find, turn them into garbage dumps, and etc. The government also continues to break its "solemn" treaties regarding the rights of Indians off the reservations. In Washington State, Arizona, Minnesota, New York, and elsewhere the Native Americans are struggling to defend themselves on these fronts.

Nor is it the case that the government stopped sending the police and military to commit violence and murder against Indians with the Wounded Knee massacre of 1890. We only have to go "way back" to the 1960s, 70s, and even 80s to see that the Native Peoples were repeatedly gassed, clubbed, jailed, and sometimes shot when they rose against racist attacks, against violations of their rights, against blatant robbery, and against the general conditions they are forced to live under. More, 1890 was not the last time that Indians were placed under martial law and shot and killed by government forces at Wounded Knee, South Dakota. We only have to go back to 1973 for that. When the Lakota and other Indians and their supporters occupied this small hamlet (on their own reservation) in an armed protest against racist attacks in South Dakota, conditions on the reservation, and the sellout policies of the corrupt tribal president, then the FBI and Army flooded onto the reservation with all the instruments of modern warfare to suppress the protest. Democratic rights were suspended both on and off the reservation and several young Indians were wounded or killed both during the siege that developed and when the government took revenge in the aftermath. Finally, we only have to go "way back" to the summer of 1990 to see the Army and police in Canada (representing the powers of money and capital there just as they do in the United States) being sent to take away rights and violently suppress the Mohawks as they bravely defended their lands from further theft.

(3) The establishment wants to perpetuate the myth of an always heroic and noble military in order to gain recruits and mobilize mass support for its crimes against the people around the world.

The last decade of the 1800s saw the transition of expanding American capitalism into imperialism. It would now go all over the earth committing one Wounded Knee massacre after another: In the Philippines (beginning in 1898), in Latin America (time and again), in the islands of the Pacific during World War II, in Korea, Vietnam, Panama and many other places. Massacre unarmed women and children at point-blank range à la Wounded Knee? Remember Mai Lai, Vietnam! Dump the victims into mass graves and try to cover up all other evidence à la Wounded Knee? Remember Panama, 1989! Ghoulish racist savagery? Remember the orders to take no prisoners and the bestial beheadings of thousands of Japanese soldiers in the Pacific during World War II, the showing of captured Vietnamese national liberation fighters out of helicopters, etc., etc.

Oh, if caught and widely denounced for its crimes, the military establishment may slap the wrist of some low-ranking officer and swear it has taken measures to prevent any such occurrence from happening again. But the atrocities continue. And the means for carrying them out are evermore deadly in this age of high-tech warfare.

Once in uniform a soldier is supposed to become a mindless robot carrying out his or her "duty". The rest of society is supposed to "support our brave service men and women" against "the enemy". To criticize or otherwise oppose this holy dictate is treason, "weakening our country in the face of the enemy", and so on.

No, to prevent more American military atrocities overseas (or at home), it's necessary to expose and denounce the crimes of the past, explode all the myths about an allegedly always heroic and noble military machine, and expose the fundamental economic and political aims the military has been sent to enforce (like oil profits and the other economic and strategic interests of U.S. imperialism in the Persian Gulf). Neither the generals nor the corporate news media nor the bought-and-paid-for capitalist politicians are going to do this. Only the masses of people can. And this requires building up an oppositional politics, organization and media. (The present activity of the U.S. news media in the Persian Gulf is but the latest example of where it stands. It oohs and aahs over everything military, and repeats every lie Bush, the generals, the kings and oil sheiks can cook up. Rather than take a stand independent of both Bush and Hussein it finds a million ways to line up behind Bush.)

(4) Racism remains a favorite tool of the ruling class.

Everyone knows that today most men and women have joined the military because of economic coercion in one form or another. This was also true for many of the soldiers sent to the West in the 1800s. There are obviously other reasons why people join up: misplaced concepts of how to gain "manhood" or "respect", "patriotic duty", and the like. As well there are some who join the military in response to the subtle bribes implied in the slogans like

“fun, travel, and adventure!” and promises of glory. But *how is it that* (mainly) sons of the poor could slaughter cold and hungry men, women, and children as they did in South Dakota 100 years ago?

The ordinary soldier is hammered on the head with the dictate that he must obey orders, and that in combat situations he can be shot for disobeying them. He is also isolated and subjected to the corrupting influences of officers, NCOs and the general life of whores and whiskey that follow soldiers everywhere. The main thing though is that he is influenced by the political and ideological winds of the society from which he comes, as well as the reflection of these winds within the military.

For years the ordinary soldiers were taught to hate and fear the Indians through the Army chain of command. Newspapers and politicians spread every imaginable lie about the nature of the Indian people. In short, heavy doses of racism were fed to the soldiers in order to rationalize a genocidal policy.

The establishment has never deviated from this path in the ensuing years. What lies have not been told about the “enemy” of the day? What physical attributes of a race have not been ridiculed? What racist epithets have not been invented and popularized? The peoples of the Philippines, Latin America, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, and the Arab countries have all gotten their fill of what was first used against the Native Americans and black people in the United States. To end this racism, the ruling establishment has to be overthrown.

(5) The capitalist system spelled the death of the old Native American cultures and is at the root of all of the troubles facing Indian peoples today.

At the time of the Wounded Knee massacre the United States population was 60 million. The Native American population had been reduced to a million or so through genocidal methods like mass murder with guns (“The only good Indian is a dead Indian!”), burning villages and destroying crops, giving Indians blankets infected with the deadly smallpox disease (19th century germ warfare), offering bounties for Indian scalps, and many other wonderful methods. In the last decades of the 1800s the total destruction of what remained of the Native Peoples’ culture was being systematically worked out in the highest circles of government and being implemented all down the line. The missionaries (who saw the “Ghost Dance” religion as a danger to their positions) often played a big role in this implementation.

But not all of the white people carried out the genocidal acts, approved of them, or even knew of them. Among those that did know of them, there were many who came to actively support the Indians. And by the last decades of the 19th century the same Army which was sent out to suppress the Indians had also become a tool for suppressing the workers as they waged militant strikes. This was a class

army of the rich: of the big industrialists, railway magnates, big ranchers, mining companies, land speculators and other swindlers.

The power of money controlled the country and it was the drive to accumulate capital which lay at the root of the treatment of the Indian people. If the needs of capital dictated a railroad should be built, then the buffalo had to go because they blocked the tracks. If buffalo hides commanded a good price on the market, then the buffalo were slaughtered. The fact that people of a thousands of years old culture had to survive on these buffalo didn’t matter a damn. If gold were discovered in the Black Hills, as it was, then it didn’t matter that this was the last refuge of many of the plains Indians—promised them forever—they had to clear out. If money could be made by speculating in land to sell to new immigrants (as it could be in the Dakotas in the 1880s) then the Native People had to be driven off of it. And if they for any reason left their barren reservations, then they had to be taught a lesson they wouldn’t forget. The government and Army were the tools of King Capital, and whenever the Indians resisted Capital’s encroachments on their freedom and way of life, the King brought out his tools to suppress them.

* * * * *

More nobility and equality between human beings existed in the old North American Indian communal societies than has existed on this continent at anytime since. At the same time the old cultures had their dark sides.

For example, if a natural calamity occurred, all the people suffered together. There weren’t rich people who could escape a disaster, speculate on it and make money from it, while the masses suffered as is the rule today. That was a positive side of the old communalism, one which all of the oppressed people today yearn for. A negative side was that the people were so much at the mercy of natural disasters.

But today modern capitalism has developed the productive forces of society to such an extent that it’s possible to overcome such things as the effects of natural disasters and to rationally build up an abundant life for all. For this to occur in reality, however, it’s necessary for the masses of people to make the huge productive and distributive apparatus, built up over the centuries, their communal apparatus. Workers’ communism sets its task as organizing the working class and all others oppressed by capital to bring this about.

With thoughts like these in mind we will be stronger in the coming struggles against a bloody slaughter for oil profits in the Persian Gulf, against the racism, unemployment, poverty, and repression which loom ahead in America. By pushing forward these struggles we are pushing forward the struggle to wipe out all systems of exploitation, oppression and war to aggrandize a few million rich men. This is one person’s opinion on the centennial of the massacre at Wounded Knee. □

For your reference: Trotskyist "Spartacist League" on the "Defend Iraq" slogan

The January 18 issue of Workers Vanguard, biweekly paper put out by the central apparatus of the Spartacist League contained the article "Break with the imperialist 'doves'! For labor strikes against the war! Down with the two war parties!" Below is the section of the article that mentioned the MLP. A reply begins on the next page.

In contrast to the ISO cynics, the Marxist-Leninist Party (MLP), an odd Stalinist sect which hails Enver Hoxha (the departed Stalinist boss of Albania), openly polemicizes against defending Iraq while denouncing as reformist the two January demonstrations. The MLP sees no difference between military defense of Iraq and political support to Saddam Hussein, and therefore accuses sundry "Trotskyists" of perpetrating "a total fraud" (*Workers' Advocate*, 1 December 1990). "In the real world," they say, "you can't separate the military from the political." So to defend Nicaragua against Yankee imperialism you have to politically support the Sandinistas? To defend the Spanish Republic against Franco you have to politically support the popular front? To defend the Teamsters against government union-busters you have to politically support the corrupt sellout bureaucracy?

Taking out WWP and ISO for their undercover "support" for Iraq, while falsely accusing them of being Trotskyists, the MLP doesn't even mention the Spartacist League. They do, however, read *Workers Vanguard*, and felt compelled to polemicize against a quotation we used from Lenin and Zinoviev's 1919 pamphlet *Socialism and War*:

"For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just', and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack: any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressive, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers." [Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 300-301, near the beginning of Chapter I, under the heading "The difference between wars of aggression and of de-

fense"—ed.]

Now that's clear enough, but these "Marxist-Leninists" can't see "any parallel" of Iraq vs. the U.S. today with "the hypothetical wars Lenin was discussing." Why not? Because India was a colony. So what about China? Well, Hussein is a reactionary who didn't want a confrontation with imperialism. But as we pointed out, "When Lenin wrote this, Morocco was ruled by the sultan Mulai Yusuf, Persia by the military dictator Ephraim Khan and China by the warlord Yüan Shih-kai—rulers just as bloody and reactionary as Iraq's Saddam Hussein."

American imperialism certainly qualifies hands down as a "predatory great power" which must be defeated. The MLP states, correctly that "Saddam deserves to be overthrown but it's not up to Washington to deal with him—that's a task before the Iraqi and other oppressed peoples of that region." And a victorious defense of Iraq against the imperialist military juggernaut would enormously embolden the working masses in Iraq and throughout the Near East. For would-be communists not to see that is to be willfully blind.

Aside from its quirky theorizing, pushing further and further back the historical moment when the "communist movement" went wrong while still clinging to Stalinism, the MLP's contradiction lies in its desire to be the left wing of a "movement." Its criticism of "the movement" is that somehow the reformists are dupes of their liberal bloc partners! *Workers' Advocate* (1 January) declares "defy the liberals, don't split the movement!" Yet while it makes "left" criticisms, the MLP's own program remains very much in the popular-front framework. Take their front-page headline. "Take to the streets against Bush's war." This is an appeal for a pro-Democratic Party "peace" movement. The Spartacist League calls for labor political strikes against the bipartisan imperialist war! We say the workers in Iraq and the U.S. need a revolutionary, vanguard party to lead them and the oppressed masses in struggle for socialist revolution. □

More on the "defend Iraq" slogan: Building an anti-imperialist movement or putting hopes in Hussein's military?

With the sanctions against Iraq replaced with open warfare, the anti-war movement has grown even larger. The ravaging of Iraq has reinforced mass revulsion at the war drive of U.S. imperialism. As the anti-war movement has grown, it has drawn in many new people with varying ideas and viewpoints.

Our Party has welcomed this movement, and sought to strengthen it. We have taken part in the general movement, and we have also worked hard at the workplaces and elsewhere to spread the anti-war movement among the working class. We have sought to develop an independent working class trend that exposes the real role of the Democratic Party, of Congress, of the United Nations, and other establishment and imperialist organizations. We have also patiently opposed the "more patriotic than thou" and "support our troops" slogans, and promoted oppositional slogans and working class internationalism.

We have advocated that the chief enemy is at home. But we have also dealt with ideas about Iraq that go against an anti-imperialist perspective. From the start, we showed that Saddam Hussein was a tyrant, not an anti-imperialist. And in the article *Should the anti-war movement "defend Iraq"* in the December issue of the *Workers' Advocate*, we dealt with the "military support" for Hussein that the Trotskyists (and certain other reformist groups that originated in Trotskyism) are advocating in the name of "defending Iraq." They put forward this "military support" as the revolutionary, or anti-imperialist, or truly internationalist position. In fact, it is a direct abandonment of the tasks of encouraging the anti-imperialist struggle here or in the Middle East. We showed that it implied that the only real sides were for Bush or for Hussein. Such a stand prevents work for the real defeat for U.S. imperialism, for the only real defeat for imperialism is building up progressive movements of the toiling masses both here and in the Middle East.

With the increasing devastation of Iraq and the cries of bloodthirsty chauvinism from the White House and the newspapers, a noble sentiment comes up to defend the Iraqi masses from this slaughter. This solidarity with the Iraqi people should encourage people to keep up the anti-war struggle, and to look ardently into how to build the movement. But it does not justify the slogan "defend Iraq", if such a slogan is used to mean "military support" for Saddam's war.

It is true that the liberals don't want slogans in favor of Iraq's military victory. They will run as fast as possible from anything that suggests it. For this reason, various Trotskyists such as the Spartacist League suggest that slogans like "victory to Iraq" show real independence from the liberals

and the Democratic Party.

But the value of a slogan is not measured by how red in the face the liberals become, but by whether it answers the needs of the revolutionary movement. The bourgeoisie, liberal or conservative, will change its opinion of the Iraqi tyranny from day to day. Yesterday the American bourgeoisie, led by Reagan and then Bush, flirted with Saddam, covered up his crimes against the Kurds, and even gave him some military support. Today Bush calls him the new Hitler. And the liberal politicians follow in the wake of bourgeois opinion, quibbling with Bush over how best to achieve bourgeois objectives. But the anti-imperialist movement needs a consistent view of Saddam's tyranny that doesn't change from day to day, and isn't dependent on the shifts of the bourgeoisie in its pursuit of imperialist class interests.

Our article on the slogan "Defend Iraq" has created a certain stir. The Spartacist League (SL) has taken it upon itself to answer it. In the issue of their paper, *Workers' Vanguard*, of January 18, they comment on our stand. (Elsewhere in this issue of the *Supplement*, we reprint the section of their article that deals directly with us.) They write in a breezy fashion and don't much bother with facts. They start by calling us "an odd Stalinist sect which hails Enver Hoxha", neglecting our decade of criticism of the

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policies put forward by the Party of Labor of Albania, and our denunciation last year of how Albania had lost any socialist character. Actually, it is some Trotskyists, and possibly the SL itself, who are among the few people holding that the present economic situation in Albania is socialist, and that all one has to do is eliminate "Stalinist mismanagement". And they say that we "denounc(ed) as reformist the two January demonstrations." Although the Sparts probably regarded this last comment as fair-minded praise, because they themselves denounce anti-war demonstrations as "peace crawls", it isn't true. We supported the Washington demonstrations, although we vigorously opposed the wrong views of the official leaders, and instead put forward our own anti-imperialist views among the demonstrators.

But enough of refuting this or that Spart inaccuracy. Let us look into how the Sparts defend their stand of "military support" for Saddam Hussein.

The SL place their anti-imperialist hopes in the victory of Saddam's bayonets

First, however, let us be clear on what the SL's position is. Let's first verify that when SL gives the slogan of "defend Iraq", it does indeed mean military victory for Saddam Hussein's regime.

Most of the groups that are cheerleaders for the Iraqi military combine this with some statements against Saddam Hussein. Generally they tone down this criticism, but they hold their nose at some of the atrocities of Hussein's regime. The SL carries this hypocrisy to new heights. It is among the most loudmouthed in demanding support for Hussein's military efforts, while at the same time it also shouts against Hussein. For example, its January 4 paper had an article *Saddam Hussein's war on Kurds, leftists/Iraqi rulers' bloody reign*. And articles in *Workers Vanguard*, even as they cheer on Saddam's military, may end up with slogans calling for the overthrow of Hussein and all other rulers in the Middle East.

But this stand is impossible in practice, and the SL uses a number of verbal tricks to cover up its contradictory nature. If it advocated "organizing military support for Hussein while overthrowing Hussein" the absurdity would be too apparent. So when it talks about support for Hussein's army, it talks of "defending Iraq" or "defending Iraq against American imperialism", but when it talks of overthrowing the Iraqi regime, it is "overthrow Hussein." To overthrow Hussein while defending Iraq might sound reasonable, if one forget that what is meant by defending Iraq is lauding Hussein's military efforts.

And like other Trotskyists, SL defends its slogan by talking of "military but not political support". But if SL meant its slogan of "defend Iraq" to apply to the Iraqi masses, and not to the present-day Iraqi regime, why deny "political support"? Shouldn't there be full political support for the revolutionary movement of the Iraqi masses?

In fact, on the front page of *Workers' Vanguard*, you can

often find excitement over the military and diplomatic fortunes of the Hussein regime's current efforts. Such statements may be followed later by a call to overthrow Hussein and every other ruler in the Near East. Nevertheless, SL creates an atmosphere of expectation and cheerleading for the fortunes of Hussein's military adventure.

Nor does SL give examples of how the Iraqi workers "defend Iraq" while overthrowing Hussein. It does not polemicize against Hussein's "defense" of Iraq in favor of the workers' defense. The defense of Iraq it is talking about is simply Hussein's military and diplomatic efforts.

In SL's articles on the "victory to Iraq" slogan, it makes use of some articles by Trotsky on Ethiopia and Brazil. But the passages cited by SL advocate victory to the military efforts of emperors or "semi-fascists". And in one of the articles SL uses (*On Dictators and the Heights of Oslo*, April 22, 1936), Trotsky wrote that there was a "duty to choose between two dictators". By saying that these articles apply to the present situation, SL makes clear that it has chosen Hussein as the dictator to support in this war.

SL tries to show the revolutionary nature of its stand with some stock phrases about what the masses in the Near East should do. They should build Trotskyist parties, have a socialist federation of the Near East, workers' revolution, etc. Anything at all, just so long as you forget that SL's present call to the masses at the present is military support for Hussein's war. SL's immediate hopes are placed in the tanks and artillery of the Hussein regime. Its military victory would allegedly regenerate the popular movement, overthrow Hussein himself, etc. etc.

SL's eyes are dazzled by the wonders that will be brought by Saddam's bayonets. Far from this being a sign of anti-imperialist fervor, it instead shows that SL isn't dealing with the problems of the anti-imperialist movement at all.

SL's view of the oppressed countries eliminates the class movements

In our article on the "defend Iraq" slogan, we pointed out that some Trotskyists were trying to present their glorification of Hussein's military adventure as "Leninism." They would pick an individual statement out of context, and turn it into its opposite. In particular, we discussed their use of the following individual sentence from an important and detailed work of Lenin's:

"For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be "just," and "defensive" wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressive, slave-holding and predatory "Great" Powers." (Lenin, *Socialism and War*, Collected Works, Vol. 21, pp. 300-301)

We pointed out that Lenin put forth in this work and elsewhere that war had to be judged on the basis of the

politics that paved the way for these wars. In the examples given by Lenin above, he was referring to colonies and dependent countries fighting for their liberation against oppressors. But the Hussein regime in Iraq wasn't fighting for independence but to become a regional bully in the Persian Gulf. As a result, not only is the American war on Iraq barbarous, aggressive and imperialist, but the Iraqi side is also unjust. No matter who attacked first.

SL however has another view.

Their view is that since the U.S. is an imperialist power and Iraq is a Near Eastern country, the war is automatically a just war on the part of Iraq. They assert that the present-day situation with Iraq is analogous to the situations listed by Lenin. They ridicule us because we:

"can't see 'any parallel' of Iraq vs. the U.S. today with 'the hypothetical wars Lenin was discussing.' Why not? Because India was a colony. So what about China? Well, Hussein is a reactionary who didn't want a confrontation with imperialism. But as we pointed out, 'When Lenin wrote this, Morocco was ruled by the sultan Mulai Yusuf, Persia by the military dictator Ephraim Khan and China by the warlord Yüan Shih-kai—rulers just as bloody and reactionary as Iraq's Saddam Hussein.'"

So what does SL see in common between the Hussein regime and Morocco, Persia and China? That their rulers were reactionaries who didn't want to fight imperialism!

SL doesn't even ask what were the masses doing in these countries, what kind of movement was developing, and what were its tasks. It doesn't examine whether there was an ongoing revolutionary movement or liberation movement in these countries, and what relation it had to the "bloody and reactionary" rulers. Nor does it examine the actual relation of these countries to imperialism, apparently thinking it obvious that all countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, any time in this century, are analogous.

All SL can see is who controls the state power, and the sum total of its tactical wisdom is to give "military support" to the rulers. It paints up the confrontations of these rulers, no matter how blood-stained, no matter from which class, no matter what relation they have to the toiling masses, as the struggle of the oppressed against imperialism.

And SL would have us believe that Lenin shared these views, and allegedly would have given military support to Mulai Yusuf, Ephraim Khan, and Yüan Shih-kai.

The truth is the exact opposite.

Lenin opposed painting the local reactionary dregs in anti-imperialist colors. And his statement referred to wars which, most likely, would be waged not only against the European powers, but also against the Mulai Yusufs, Ephraim Khans, and Yüan Shih-kais.

Let's take a look.

India

The SL pretty much concedes that India in 1915 isn't

analogous to Iraq today, since India was a British colony back then.

China

But, says SL, look at China. This is supposed to be analogous to the present situation in Iraq and to justify "military support" for Saddam Hussein. This presumably means that

(1) SL does not see the Chinese struggle of that time against foreign dictate,

(2) SL believes that any war against imperialism was going to be led by the tyrant Yüan Shih-kai, and

(3) SL holds that the tasks facing the Chinese people at that time are similar to those facing the Iraqis today.

But what actually was going on in China in those years?

China was not a outright colony like India. Nevertheless, Lenin regarded it as a dependent country. His *Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions to the Second Congress of the Communist International* referred to "semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China".

This meant that their situation was quite different from present-day Iraq.

This was also a period of intense ferment in China. In May 1913, in his article *The Awakening of Asia*, Lenin wrote:

"Was it so long ago that China was considered typical of the lands that had been standing still for centuries? Today China is a land of seething political activity, the scene of a virile social movement and of a democratic upsurge. Following the 1905 movement in Russia, the democratic revolution spread to the whole of Asia—to Turkey, Persia, China. Ferment is growing in British India." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 85-6)

This movement overthrew the Chinese dynasty and set up a republic. But there were different class forces involved, and the movement did not proceed in a straight-forward way. For a few years, Yüan Shih-kai came to the head of the government, giving rise to dissension and struggle among different class forces.

Lenin pointed out that this might well give rise to a war between China and Europe—but with Yüan as one of the targets of this war. In 1913, in his famous article *Backward Europe and Advanced Asia*, Lenin stated:

"And 'advanced' Europe? It is plundering China and helping the foes of democracy, the foes of freedom in China!

"Here is a simple but instructive little calculation. A new Chinese loan has been concluded against Chinese democracy: 'Europe' is for Yüan Shih-kai, who is preparing a military dictatorship. Why does it support him? Because it is good business. ...

"What if the Chinese people do not recognize the loan? China, after all, is a republic, and the majority

in parliament are *against* the loan.

"Oh, then 'advanced' Europe will raise a cry about 'civilization', 'order', 'culture' and 'fatherland'! It will set the *guns* in motion and, in alliance with Yüan Shih-kai, that adventurer, traitor and friend of reaction, crush a republic in 'backward' Asia." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 100, underlining added)

So if today's Iraq and Saddam Hussein were actually analogous to the situation in China with respect to Yüan Shih-kai, it would mean that "military support" for Saddam Hussein meant alliance with imperialism.

Morocco

And what about Morocco? Apparently SL also disagrees with our assertion that Morocco was a colony. Morocco apparently is supposed to be analogous to the present situation in Iraq, and Lenin's statement about Morocco is supposed to justify "military support" for Saddam Hussein.

So SL presumably

(1) doesn't see any movement for national independence in Morocco,

(2) believes that a war against imperialism would have been led by the sultan Maulay Yussuf, and

(3) holds that the tasks of the mass movement in Morocco are similar that in present-day Iraq.

SL is wrong on all three points.

First of all, SL, that supposed great and most resolute enemy of imperialism, can't even recognize the struggle for national independence. They will grant it for India, which is a colony, but they can't see it for Morocco in 1915.

Was Morocco a "colony"? Oh no. Not at all. Our mistake. Why, it was simply a protectorate.

Most of the country was a French protectorate. A small part was a Spanish protectorate. And Tangier and the surrounding area was under general European control. It wasn't until 1956, four decades after Lenin's *Socialism and War*, that France and Spain were forced to recognize the independence of Morocco, and Morocco was sewn back together.

Well, but did Lenin have the Sultan Mulai Yusuf in mind when he talked about a Moroccan war against imperialism? After all, the SL is trying to justify military support for Saddam Hussein by comparing him to this reactionary sultan.

But look at what actually happened in Morocco.

Morocco was turned into a protectorate in several stages. In 1907, there was the Act of Algeiras. And popular resentment at this treachery struck not just at the imperialists but also at sultan Maulay Abd al-Aziz. As the resentment spread, he was finally forced out in 1908, and replaced by his brother Maulay Hafid. Then in 1912 came the Treaty of Fez, which established the French protectorate. Again the mass anger turned not only against France, but against the sultan (Maulay Hafid), and so the sultan Maulay Yusuf came to power. This was the sultan referred to by SL. He in turn had a shaky rule and relied on French

help to stay in power, in so far as he had any power.

It seems unlikely that Lenin or anyone else expected him to lead a struggle against the French imperialists.

In fact, a war against the French did break out. And it was during the years of sultan's rule. A great rebellion broke out in the Rif region of Morocco in 1921. At first directed against the Spanish, the rebels brought the war into French Morocco in April 1925. But its leader was not sultan Maulay Yusuf, nor was the sultan any part of it. It was led by Abd el-Krim, and "military support" for the sultan would have meant opposing the actual anti-imperialist struggle of the Moroccan people.

It seems the rebellion of the Rif Kabyle tribes was the type of war envisioned by Lenin in *Socialism and War*. Although it took the initiative to attack the French, it was a just war for independence. The Communist International supported it, and the French workers carried out some actions in support of the Rif rebellion. If the Morocco of sultan Maulay Yusuf is really analogous to modern Iraq, as SL believes, it simply verifies that "military support" for Hussein means betraying the anti-imperialist struggle.

Far be it from us, however, to paint the Rif rebellion in unrealistic colors. It seems that Morocco was quite backward socially and economically, even compared to a number of other dependent countries of that time. Certainly the Communist International felt this way. In 1922, *The Theses on the Eastern Question* at the Fourth World Congress of the CI regarded Morocco as among those countries with nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples where "the feudal-patriarchal system has not decayed to such an extent as to completely separate the native aristocracy from the mass of the people" so that "those upper classes take up the active leadership of the struggle against imperialist violence (Mesopotamia, Morocco, Mongolia)".

But this backwardness of Morocco underlines the fallacy of SL's views. Even in backward Morocco, it was not the Maulay Yusuf, but the Rif rebellion that struck at imperialism. To analyze Morocco, and its struggle against the French, one had to know more than that Morocco was an oppressed country and the sultan was the local ruler. One had to look into the class structure and mass struggles in Morocco. Even the very backwardness of Morocco underlines the poverty of SL's little set of stereotyped dogmas, which can't grasp the variety of conditions facing the anti-imperialist struggle in different countries and different times.

Finally, we note that the Rif rebellion was put down in blood. Afterwards, independence came in a much slower and more painful way that left the royalty in power.

Iran

SL would also have us believe that the situation in Persia (Iran) was analogous to present-day Iraq.

However here too, as we have seen, Persia was regarded by Lenin as a dependent semi-colony at that time.

The particular situation in the years leading up to the

writing of *Socialism and War* was that there was a revolutionary wave in Persia, but it faced intervention and suppression by Russian bayonets and other imperialists. The result was a series of unstable reactionary governments came to power.

In 1908 Lenin pointed out:

"There has been a counter-revolution in Persia ... The exploits of the Cossacks in mass shootings, punitive expeditions, manhandling and pillage in Russia are followed by their exploits in suppressing the revolution in Persia. ... It is not the first time that Russia's Christian soldiers are cast in the role of international hangman. ... The position of the Persian revolutionaries is a difficult one; theirs is a country which the masters of India on the one hand [the British government], and the counter-revolutionary Russian Government on the other, were on the point of dividing up between themselves. But the dogged struggle in Tabriz and the repeated swing of the fortunes of war to the revolutionaries who, it seemed, had been utterly defeated, are evidence that the Shah's bashi-bazouks, even though aided by Russian Lyakhovs [who commanded troops intervening in Persia] and British diplomats, are encountering the most vigorous resistance from the people. A revolutionary movement that can offer armed resistance to attempts at restoration, that compels the attempters to call in foreign aid—such a movement cannot be destroyed. In these circumstances, even the fullest triumph of Persian reaction would merely be the prelude to fresh popular rebellion." (*Inflammable material in world politics*, July 23 (August 5), 1908 in *Collected Works*, vol 15, pp. 182-3)

In fact, the revolutionary ferment lasted for some time in Iran, continuing for several years after World War I. Isn't it clear that Lenin, in *Socialism and War*, was considering the possibility that a revival of the revolutionary movement would result in a new struggle against foreign intervention, and not praising the military dictator of the moment?

"Three worldist" disregard of the class struggle

So it turns out that the very examples chosen by SL speak out against it. SL's views have nothing in common with Lenin's stand on war and peace. The SL has lost sight of the toiling masses and the revolutionary movements, and ends up attributing the possibility of anti-imperialist liberation struggles to the government leaders of the moment, be they ever so reactionary.

Underneath its revolutionary verbiage, the views SL puts forward on dictators and oppressor governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America are reminiscent of what used to be called "third worldism." "Three worldism" couldn't handle the class struggle in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Faced with the development of national liberation move-

ments and the setbacks in developing independent working class action in the industrialized countries, it increasingly despaired of the class struggle. Over a period of time, it ended up spawning views that even apologized for the most reactionary governments and classes in the third world, and presented their squabbles with the "first world" and "second world" in anti-imperialist colors.

SL denounces the anti-war movement in the U.S. as "peace crawls"

The SL connects its views on "defending Iraq" to a denunciation of the anti-war movement in the U.S. According to SL, aside from its differences with us on theoretical issues, "the MLP's contradiction lies its desire to the left wing of a 'movement.'"

What's wrong with trying to build up the left-wing of the anti-war movement? Isn't this what anti-imperialist activists and class-conscious workers should do?

Not according to the SL.

It denounces the movement as "pop front 'peace' crawls", which is one of the subheads in its article. True, SL does take part in demonstrations. But it has an arrogant, sectarian attitude. Only its own contingents, and those who follow its particular slogans, are of value. It actually theorizes against the "anti-war movement" in article after article. It counterposes the movement to real revolutionary work, to labor political strikes, to a full-fledged socialist revolution, to anything you like. It denounces the movement for the stands of the reformists and liberals. It closes its eyes to the important role of the anti-war movement played in the development of revolutionary views in the past. And by denouncing this movement, it turns its back in practice on one of the crucial ways in which anti-imperialist sentiment is actually manifested among the masses.

Its article actually works its way to the conclusion that none of the anti-war movements are any good anyway. "To those who want to fight imperialist war," the SL says, "we point to the only victorious 'antiwar movement' in history, Lenin and Trotsky's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution which ended the slaughter of World War I for the Russian workers and peasants..." If the Bolsheviks had had this type of contempt for the mass movements and struggles of the oppressed, they never would have been able to lead the Russian workers in the October Bolshevik revolution.

SL goes so far as to even try to smear the movement with a fascist taint. Why, the October 5 issue of *Workers Vanguard* pontificates, "As a matter of fact, the largest protest to date in the West against the U.S.-led intervention in the Persian Gulf was a rally of 15,000 led by the French fascist leader Le Pen!" (p. 10)

Our Party has a different approach. We don't believe that you have to denounce the movement to be independent of the Democratic Party and the reformists. On the contrary, the wide development of the mass anti-war movement creates good conditions for denouncing the

capitalist parties and their reformist apologists. And we appeal to the activists and demonstrators to strengthen the anti-war movement. The SL may be so envious of who gets positions on the speakers' platforms that it curses the demonstrations, but this only shows that it is more concerned with official positions than with encouraging the rank-and-file activists and the mass ferment against the war. When they denounce the "movement" for not bringing revolution immediately or for having backward ideas, it shows that the SL doesn't have the faintest idea of how the masses actually come to anti-imperialist and revolutionary stands, of how the masses of people actually express oppositional sentiment, of how to wage political struggle against reformism and capitalist politics, and of how to encourage the spread of political consciousness.

The SL so identifies anti-imperialism with denouncing the movement that they assume that the MLP denounced the big January anti-war demonstrations in Washington, D.C., because the *Workers' Advocate* put forward anti-imperialism and criticized the views of the official organizers of the coalitions. No, SL sectarians, we leave to you the "honor" of opposing this and other mass outpourings against the war.

Labor political strikes against the war

The SL lays special stress on the slogan of "labor political strikes against the war." It counterposes this to the movement. It even suggests that, unlike demonstrations, this could stop the war. In a front page article on October 5, for example, it writes "....For labor political strikes against the impending war! Action by longshoremen, Teamsters, shipyard and transport workers to stop the supply of munitions would be a powerful blow against a vicious imperialist war in the Near East."

Of course if there were important mass political strikes against the war, this would electrify the movement, encourage activists to orient themselves to the working class, and affect the political climate of the whole country. The problem, however, is that such strikes, even small ones, aren't going to take place at the present time. SL thinks it is very radical because it shouts about such strikes, but it shows that they are more interested in striking a pose than in doing real work.

The problem with their slogan of anti-war strikes is not that the SL is interested in the working class, but the opposite. The SL doesn't seem interested in the actual work that has to be done to draw the working class into the struggle. After all, the patient discussions, the drawing of workers into the "movement", the daily efforts to build up an independent voice of the working class, all would pale beside the brilliant light of "labor political strikes" that actually paralyze the sending of munitions to the Gulf.

Looking towards the pro-capitalist trade union apparatus

In fact, just as SL's loud anti-imperialist shouting ends up cheerleading for the Iraqi military, so its slogans about "labor political strikes" ends up speculating on the labor bureaucrats. Just as the case with Saddam Hussein, they combine general denunciations of the labor union hacks, as strident as you like, with expectations in the official pro-capitalist union apparatus doing something.

Near the end of the *Statement of the Spartacist League/U.S. on the Impending War* in the January 18 issue of *Workers' Vanguard*, there is the following remark:

"While Teamster tops wave the flag, the heads of nine major unions declare, 'we emphatically oppose the initiation of offensive military action...at this time' (their answer is 'sanctions'). And the ILWU West Coast longshore union declared: 'a US invasion of Iraq is unacceptable, indeed, unthinkable.' This is empty talk, but it's a pale reflection of the discontent in the ranks. For action by longshoremen, Teamsters, shipyard workers and transport workers to stop shipping of munitions to the Persian Gulf!"

The empty words from the trade union hacks are just as meaningless as similar statements from liberal politicians at demonstrations. Yet the SL curses demonstrations when it sees the liberal politicians, while it takes heart at the declarations of the pro-capitalist trade union hacks. Take any of the SL's denunciation of "pop frontism" with the liberals and pro-capitalist politicians, and substitute the trade union bureaucracy for the liberals, and labor action for demonstrations, and you have SL slapping itself in the face.

Is it support for the Democrats to denounce Bush?

But what we propose is supposedly, in SL's view, all "very much in the popular-front framework." Why, you ask? Well, says SL,

"take their front-page headline. 'Take to the streets against Bush's war.' This is an appeal for a pro-Democratic Party 'peace' movement."

Oh really?

Why didn't SL quote the rest of the front page headline of the January 1 *Workers' Advocate*, which demanded "No more blood for imperialism"? Or the front page editorial which declared that "imperialism means war" and appealed for the working class to get organized? Or the inside article on Congress, which declared that "Congress and Bush agree on the war buildup" and showed what the liberal Democrats were up to?

But facts don't bother SL much. It itself admits that our article on the controversies in the anti-war movement in that very same January 1 *Workers' Advocate* put forward the orientation to "defy the liberals". It seems to find that puzzling, probably because it identifies the movement with

the liberal politicians and their friends. And then it turns around and pretends denouncing "Bush's war" means we want to build a movement to support the Democratic Party liberals.

SL's idea of anti-imperialism is so narrow that it finds the denunciation of Bush suspect in itself.

Worshipping world revisionism even as it collapses

While the SL curses the "anti-war movement" in the name of anti-imperialism and socialism, its radicalism suffers a complete breakdown when it comes to the state-capitalism of the revisionist countries. It doesn't denounce the imperialist acts of Soviet revisionism. On the contrary, it fervently defends the brutal Soviet aggression against Afghanistan and is upset that Soviet troops withdrew. And it believes that revisionist state-capitalism is really socialism, which has simply suffered from Stalinist "mismanagement".

The ongoing collapse of the revisionist regimes hasn't changed SL's mind. It simply wants to pick up some of the *slivers* fragmenting off from the revisionist parties and groupings. So it appeals to the revisionists in the name of upholding the allegedly socialist base that is being abandoned by the revisionist leaderships.

The lead article of the November 30, 1990 issue of *Workers' Vanguard* is devoted to the Soviet Union. At one point it declares:

"Many military cadre are rightly outraged by the widespread denigration of Soviet patriotism; increasing draft dodging and desertions, especially in the non-Russian republics; the open surfacing of Nazi collaborators in the Baltic republics; the sabotage and vilification of the military intervention in Afghanistan against the CIA-armed Islamic *mujahedin*. But perhaps more than anything else, they are outraged by Gorbachev's unilateral retreat before NATO and the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, as demobilized officers and soldiers return to face the threat of unemployment and tent cities." (p. 11)

So the SL doesn't even shrink from appealing to the soldiers and officers on the basis of preserving the old, repressive military system. It is upset that at the disintegration of the old apparatus—horrors, there are draft dodgers. This throws a whole new light on SL's opposition to "anti-war movements".

Nor is the SL happy with national self-determination. It can see nothing but Nazis in the Baltic republics. And elsewhere on the same page the SL proudly reproduces a leaflet for circulation in Russia which talks of the "the right of every nation with an anti-counterrevolutionary leadership to whatever self-determination it considers

necessary" (underlining added).

The SL also wants to reverse the verdict on Afghanistan, just as American militarists want to reverse the verdict on Vietnam. And it is upset with the dismantling of the Soviet imperialist hold over Eastern Europe.

And what does the SL hope to gain with this?

"A Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union could recruit into its ranks Red Army men who do not want to see their country exploited and colonized by Western imperialism."

Thus SL's "military support" of Soviet revisionism leads it to endorse some of the most blatant imperialist acts of the Soviet leadership.

An anti-Imperialism that has little to do with the independent motion of the toilers

The SL would present itself as the only anti-imperialists, and the one who is really challenging the system and raising fundamental slogans and problems. But again and again its revolutionary slogans end up as play-acting or sectarianism, while its actual orientation ends up banking on some already existing powers-that-be. It does not orient itself on building up an independent workers movement, and it denounces building a left-wing of the movement, but instead dreams of great upsurges following from the action of the some of the old, corrupt forces in the world.

The SL talks about revolution in the Near East and the defeat of U.S. imperialism. But faced with the realities of the present day, it ends up placing its hopes on the military victory of the Saddam Hussein regime.

The SL would like to pose as the real fighters against the Democratic Party and the liberals. But when it sees the actual anti-war movement, it whines about "peace crawls", and fails to see the actual oppositional sentiment of the masses.

The SL talks about the working class and counterposes the "movement" to "labor political strikes". But this ends up as repeated, empty appeals for the pro-capitalist trade union apparatus to do something.

And when it comes to the collapse of revisionism proceeding before everyone's eyes, SL still insists that the bureaucratic state-capitalism economic base is "socialist" and calls for its defense. In the name of defense of socialism, the Soviet Union, etc. it cheers on some of the most blatant imperialist and repressive steps of the Soviet revisionism. It denounces the Soviet leadership for not being more resolute in slaughtering Afghans or in suppressing the self-determination of nations "with counter-revolutionary leaderships" in the USSR.

The SL thinks it is revolutionary, but lapses again and again into "military support" for the forces of the corrupt, old world, from Saddam Hussein to the pro-Soviet revisionists. □