

# A Socialist ACTION



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50 CENTS

## Stop the U.S. war against Iraq! Demonstrate on Jan. 26! Bring the Troops Home Now!

By MALIK MIAH

The United States' invasion of Iraq has begun.

In the most massive bombing raid in the history of humanity, President George Bush launched Operation Desert Storm against the people of Iraq on Jan. 16 in the darkness of night.

Because of military news censorship, the first casualty of this war is the truth. Nevertheless, the picture as far as it can be pieced together from various news sources and the U.S. government is that wave after wave of U.S., British, French, Saudi, and Kuwaiti fighter-bombers dropped tons of highly destructive bombs on Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. According to the Pentagon, in 14 hours over 1000 sorties were flown to destroy Iraqi defenses.

The U.S.-led forces have over 1800 war planes. It is expected that an average of 1300 sorties per day will be flown. At the height

### The meaning of the Gulf War and how to stop it See page 14

of the Vietnam War, for comparison, 1300 sorties were flown in a two-week period according to an NBC News report.

Bush's goal is the leveling of Iraqi and Kuwaiti "military" targets as soon as possible, hoping for the surrender of President Saddam Hussein. This assault, including carpet bombing by B-52 aircraft, will mean the loss of tens of thousands of Arab lives as well as U.S. soldiers.

In a cynical statement launching this horrifying war for the "liberation of Kuwait," Bush said the United States will accept nothing less than Iraq's total defeat. "We have no choice but to force Saddam from Kuwait by force. We will not fail," Bush said. "Our objectives are clear," he said. "Saddam Hussein's forces will leave Kuwait, the legitimate government of Kuwait will be restored to its rightful place and Kuwait will once again be free."

In addition to the 1800 war planes, the United States has six aircraft carriers and 425,000 American soldiers poised to strike Iraq on the ground. There are also 265,000 allied troops and aircraft under U.S. command.

As of Jan. 17 ground troops have not been used in the war. The Pentagon is seeking total air superiority first.

Several U.S.-led aircraft have been shot down by Iraqi defenses. Scores of Iraqi civilians have been killed by the terror bombing.

Iraq's President Saddam Hussein says the Iraqi people will never surrender. Iraqi defenses have struck back, including firing missiles into Saudi Arabia, where the invading forces are stationed. At least 8 to 10 scud



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

**Jan. 16 in San Francisco, Calif. Over 20,000 demonstrators hit the streets as news of U.S. attack hit the airwaves.**

missiles have been fired into Tel Aviv, Haifa, and other areas of Israel.

According to press reports, the Israeli military initiated an air assault against Iraq in retaliation for the missile attack, but its aircraft were immediately called back after Secretary of States James Baker insisted in an emergency phone call with Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that all retaliation should be left to the United States. Baker was clearly anxious that the United States' "coalition" with the reactionary Arab regimes not come apart should Israel enter the war.

Despite the massive air attacks, the Iraqi people appear to be standing firm in defense of their country. Support for Iraq from Palestinians and other Arabs also seems to be growing.

Bush's criminal actions have won wide support from Democrats and Republicans in Congress, who voted a week before the invasion to back his war drive against Iraq. On

Jan. 17, the U.S. Senate adopted a resolution without opposition to support Bush's war. All the major Western powers are backing Bush. The French National Assembly voted to place its troops under U.S. command. News report indicate that the French government plans to ban all antiwar protests during the war.

The Soviet Union is also 100 percent behind Bush's war.

But the Arab people, excepting their traitor rulers, and hundreds of thousands of other people around the world, are protesting the invasion of Iraq. The protests in fact have been the most massive and widespread in the United States since the height of the Vietnam War.

No matter the military outcome, politics in the United States and the world, especially the Arab world, will never be the same. War is easier to start than to end. History will condemn Washington for its actions. ■

### Protests grow as U.S. assault intensifies

By JEFF MACKLER

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 17—As soon as the news got out that the United States had launched a full-scale war on Iraq, mass protests erupted throughout the United States and cities and towns throughout the world.

In San Francisco, tens of thousands of demonstrators marched through the streets for several days and nights, blocking much of the downtown automobile traffic.

The late-night Jan. 16 demonstration in San Francisco was remarkably disciplined. Some angry protesters lit fires and placed obstacles in the streets along the march. The majority of the marchers, however, quickly put the fires out, cleared the streets and chanted, "Keep the march peaceful." Only a small number of marchers went off at the end of the night to carry out civil disobedience around the city.

In New York City, on Jan. 16, students at Columbia University initiated a march down Broadway. By the time the march reached 96th St., thousands of bystanders had joined in. At the UN building, some 10,000 people heard Leslie Cagan of the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East and Gabriella Gemma of the Coalition Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East urge support for the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 antiwar demonstrations.

On Jan. 17, over 5000 protested the U.S. carpet-bombing of Iraq at a mid-day demonstration in Times Square.

Overseas, more than 100,000 demonstrators marched throughout Germany on Jan. 17. Many participated in blockades in front of the entrances to U.S. bases there. An angry antiwar march in Milan drew 25,000, and 1000 marched in a torchlight parade through Oslo, Norway.

News reports also indicate that tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets in Paris on Jan. 17, despite the French "socialist" government's decision to ban all antiwar demonstrations.

#### Outrage precedes invasion

The Jan. 16-17 protests came on the heels of massive demonstrations in opposition to Washington's war threats against Iraq.

Thirty thousand marched in Seattle on Jan. 13 and 13,000 in Portland, Ore., on Jan. 12—the largest demonstrations ever in those cities.

In Minneapolis, a Jan. 13 indoor rally at the University of Minnesota's Northrup Auditorium drew an overflow crowd of more than 10,000 people in support of the demand: "Stop the war before it starts!" Over \$1000 were raised in button sales to send

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# Free the Iraqi hostages! End the blockade!



## Fightback

By  
Sylvia Weinstein

Four thousand civilians have died in Iraq because of the U.S. embargo. Half of them are children.

Dr Bernard Lown of the Harvard University School of Public Health and co-president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, said: "We found that sanctions are working and working brutally, right now." He had just returned to the U.S. from a fact finding mission in Iraq.

Children are the hardest hit by medical shortages. Forty-three percent of Iraq's estimated 18 million people are under age 15. Baghdad hospitals lack insulin, intravenous solution, and injectable forms of antibiotics and anesthetics. In Turkey, there are thousands of pounds of dried milk (desperately needed to save the lives of infants and for which Iraq has already paid) which cannot be delivered because of the imperialist embargo.

Meanwhile, George Bush walks around like a barnyard rooster, crowing that nothing less than all-out war with the people of Iraq will satisfy him—if Iraq fails to surrender unconditionally.

On Dec. 16, David Frost interviewed President Bush, which was shown on television on Jan. 2. Listen to what sounds like the ravings of a madman! The president harshly denounced Saddam as "the aggressor, the dictator, the rapist of Kuwait." Bush argued that the chance for a more peaceful world will be lost "if we give one single inch to placate [Iraq]."

He went on to say: "It is not acceptable to have any conditions for Saddam's withdrawal, halfway withdrawals or 'well, I'll do it tomorrow' excuses—that is not good enough." Bush also said that if the United States goes to war on Jan. 15, "it would be over in a few days, but what happens, realistically, is hard to tell."

### Nuclear weapons

From the very beginning of the United Nations-sanctioned blockade of Iraq, the Bush administration has hinted at the use of nuclear weapons,

if necessary, in order to have a quick end to the war, and "save American lives."

Unfortunately, I fear, this is not the raving of a madman, but a coldly calculated decision that appears to have been made by a section of the leaders of world capitalism. The evidence strongly suggests that the Bush Administration is prepared to save their system even if it means taking the world to the brink of nuclear annihilation.

This is what's behind Bush's "new world order." He is telling the world that, if it were up to him, the American imperialist colossus would stop at nothing to maintain control over their empire. And when President Bush says that he will not stand for "aggression" he means, in the last analysis, by anyone else but American capitalism.

The United States is the only country which has used nuclear bombs to destroy two cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and hundreds



of thousands of their inhabitants in August 1945. It was a signal to the people of the world that the ruling Mafia of American capitalism would go to any lengths to protect its profits.

It is clear that the current American ruling-class threats are not just aimed at Iraq. The real purpose is to warn the entire people of the world, East and West, that the American imperialists will stop at nothing in their determination to protect their world system and the uninterrupted flow of profits into their coffers.

### The war economy

The following light has been shed on the meaning of the

American military adventure in the Gulf and its consequences by Seymour Melman, chairman of the National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament:

"The operation of the U.S. war economy from 1949 through 1989 used up \$8.2 trillion in resources of every kind (measured in 1982 dollars). This exceeds the 1982 value of all of U.S. industry and infrastructure—\$7.3 trillion. This permanent war economy has meant a domestic war on the middle class, minorities, children, the poor, single parents, the homeless, and the elderly. Bush proposes a further escalation in the U.S. military. Direct U.S. costs of war in the Gulf

would be \$50 billion, with a cost in lives that could reach 45,000 American dead and wounded. Drawing on the Vietnam war experience, we reckon that the indirect cost to the U.S. economy of a Gulf war would be a further \$190 billion."

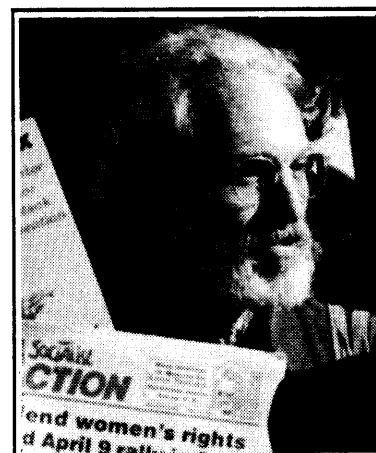
The majority of humankind want peace and a sane world where workers can develop society's resources in the interest of human needs, not for the profits of a few. We must organize the most massive worldwide response to the threat to kill tens of thousands of American and Arab lives. ALL OUT—FROM NOW UNTIL JAN. 26! BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

## Dances with Wolves: Cinema's new frontier?

"Dances with Wolves," a film starring and directed by Kevin Costner. Based on the novel by Michael Blake.

In the 1860s, while the Civil War was raging among the farmsteads of the Eastern United States, a second war was being fought on the Western frontier. The war of the plains was fought under the same flag of the Union, but with a different aim—to wipe out the indigenous people of the region.

"Dances with Wolves" begins on a battlefield back East. Soldiers in blue and in gray taunt each other across a fenced-off field. The movie's hero, Lt. John Dunbar (played by Kevin Costner), attempts a solo charge against the



## Behind the Lines

By  
Michael Schreiber

enemy lines—with no other purpose than suicide.

When, beyond all the bounds of luck, Dunbar comes through unscathed, his commanders praise him as a hero and grant him an assignment in the West. But later, when the lieutenant tries to make peace with the Sioux, he is beaten and carried in chains to be executed. Such is the logic of the Army.

Indeed, Lt. Dunbar went so far in his "treasonable acts" as to try to understand the point of view of the enemy Sioux and even to adopt their way of living. Thus the film presents us with a question: Can a person, specifically a soldier of the U.S. Army, successfully "cross over" into the camp of our government's enemies? The facts of the case are given. The answer is left to us.

In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, Costner said that his film is about "how the West was lost." This is obviously far from a conventional Western. Despite the deep-focused shots of thunderheads and prairies, it's the characters' personal confidences and self-doubts that give the film

strength.

Costner points out: "We've had a lot of films portraying Indians as the enemy, a few showing how they were cheated. This film explores how they felt being cheated. It's a very intimate approach to a very big subject."

Unfortunately, Costner allows some of the more conventional elements of Western melodrama to intrude. The soldiers who capture Lt. Dunbar at the end of the film are a stick-figure group of villains. It could have been inspiring to find a soldier among them who, while he served flag and country, had the potential to change his behavior—as the character played by Costner did before him. But Costner the filmmaker lets the opportunity get away.

Likewise, when Lt. Dunbar takes sides with the Sioux "goodies" against the Pawnee "baddies," the audience's sympathies are expected to follow right along. The Pawnees that we meet in the film resemble 19th-century Skinheads. They presumably have no wives and children, as the Sioux men do.

It would have been consistent

### After Wounded Knee

One hundred years ago, freedom for the Plains Indians came to an end. On New Year's Day, 1891, an Army detachment was sent out to Wounded Knee, S.D., to bury those who had died there.

The day before, a cold blizzard had swept through the Dakotas. And the soldiers found several hundred Oglala Sioux—women, children, and a few men—lying twisted in the snow.

Some of the people seemed to have frozen in the very horror of facing Army bayonets. Many women had shielded their faces with their shawls—as if to block out the sight of soldiers who were spraying their babies with Hotchkiss machine guns.

On this morning of the New Year, the soldiers posed by their frozen trophies and grinned for the photographers. Then the on-living were stripped naked for souvenirs and shoveled into a pit.

Two weeks later, on Jan. 18, the last of the Sioux warriors surrendered. The Army then offered them coffee, sugar, beef, and "protection." But during the next years, the Sioux were forced to give up three-fifths of the land that they had held shortly before Wounded Knee.—M.S.

with the movie's theme to point out that the Pawnees, too, were victims of the whites. During the previous 30 years, germ warfare (cholera and smallpox) had reduced their numbers by half. Their traditional way of life was shattered, and the remaining Pawnees were forced to become thieves and mercenaries for the U.S. Army against other Indian nations.

On the whole, however, the realism of "Dances with Wolves" goes far beyond the standard film-tinsel view of American history. From now on, the movie industry might find it less easy to speak with a forked tongue.

## Socialist ACTION

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Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN

Asst. Editors: MICHAEL SCHREIBER  
JOSEPH RYAN

Staff: Alex Chis, Paul Colvin, May May Gong, Malik Miah, Hayden Perry, Barbara Putnam, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: DAVID KIRSCHNER

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By CAROLE SELIGMAN

The National Organization for Women (NOW), the largest feminist organization in the United States, has endorsed the Jan. 26 national mobilization to bring U.S. troops home from the Middle East. This development bodes well for both the anti-war movement and the women's movement.

The Jan. 26 national mobilization is working under the shadow of the Jan. 15 deadline set by U.S. imperialism and the United Nations for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait.

Opposition to U.S. war moves by an organization like NOW, with its hundreds of thousands of members and supporters, makes a strong statement that the interests of American women do not lie with the U.S. government's militaristic foreign policy.

NOW has enormous respect nationally due to its leadership in mobilizing massive actions in defense of women's rights to control their own bodies, specifically in defense of the right to abortion. Its opposition to the impending war and its support and participation in the antiwar movement is a political development of major import.

The arguments of NOW President Molly Yard, contained in her press statement calling for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia, have gained wide publicity and support. Her opposition to the shedding of blood in support of countries (Kuwait and Saudi Arabia) with "such appalling records in human rights" has been repeated in diverse publications.

#### Women's rights movement gains

NOW's participation in the antiwar movement puts them in a strong position to continue their fight for women's rights.

The year 1991 will be a very important one for the struggle of women to retain the right to abortion. Court cases, such as the reactionary Guam law that outlawed abortion, will be heard in federal district court, and ultimately, make their way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court justices show every sign of a willingness to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. They have already partially done so in the *Webster* decision of 1989.

Making abortion illegal will mean an automatic death sentence for thousands of women. Such is the case in every country where abortion is outlawed.

# NOW starts the year off right, endorses nat'l antiwar actions



Brenda Bishop

April 9, 1989: In 1990, NOW abandoned strategy of mass demonstrations in favor of electoral work.

Despite this critical situation and the fact that NOW has a proven track record of ability to organize massive mobilizations in defense of women's rights (remember the giant street marches and rallies in Washington, D.C., in 1988 and '89!) the leadership has allowed itself to be side-tracked since 1989.

They have concentrated their activity on various electoral campaigns of Democrats, and an occasional Republican candidate, who promise their support for the right to choose. The strategy of working in electoral politics and excluding mass demonstrations has had a very negative impact on NOW

chapters and the women's movement as a whole.

NOW experienced its largest periods of growth during two periods in its history—the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s and early 1980s, and the mass mobilizations in Washington, D.C., for abortion rights in 1988-89.

These were both periods of intensive organizing of the pro-feminist population and of outreach to new forces. Both these periods of growth had in common the independent organization of women and their allies. During these campaigns the message was, "We are not asking for what is rightfully ours, we are demanding it. We are relying on our own power to achieve our demands. We welcome all who support us but our movement is not for sale."

This bold stance inspired many women and brought thousands of them into the movement. However, when the NOW leadership decided to make electoral politics the centerpiece of its work during 1990, NOW lost much of its ability to inspire confidence in its leadership.

Why? The simple reason is that electoral activity within the framework of the two capitalist political parties—the Democrats and the Republicans—just looks like more of the same "old-boy politics" to most critical-thinking activists in the feminist movement.

While many of the Democratic and Republican party candidates are women, both these parties—programmatically and in practice—are run in the interests of the ruling rich. And the bosses of this country oppose women's rights because it costs them money. A major source of profit in the capitalist world is the unequal wages, benefits, and job segregation of men and women.

How could the political parties which represent the status quo (that is, the capitalist system) also represent the 50 percent of the population that is super-exploited by that system?

This simple axiom of political life is not understood by the leadership of NOW, but the fact that NOW has initiated a series of

public hearings on the establishment of a third political party may shed more light on this issue.

There is certainly a great need for a political party in this country which really represents working people—men and women, African Americans, and others whose interests are the opposite from those of the bosses. Such a party will be built when the illusion that meaningful reforms can be won through support to the capitalist parties is shattered. In the meantime, however, NOW needs to rebuild its ability to mobilize women in their own interests.

#### Power of mass movement

NOW's forthright opposition to U.S. war moves in the Persian Gulf show that there's a lot of vitality within the women's movement, and 1991 is a good time to exercise that vitality in a new mobilization for women's rights.

A new round of massive street demonstrations are needed to organize the movement and put the government on notice that women will not allow a continuing whittling away of our rights. Not just abortion rights, but affirmative action in all spheres of life, especially in employment, birth control, childcare, healthcare—all these are reforms that will have to be fought for independently of those institutions controlled by the enemies of women's rights.

Jan. 22 is the 18th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision that abolished laws against abortion. A most fitting celebration of the *Roe v. Wade* decision would be to launch, on Jan. 22, a renewed mobilization to defend it.

Local events celebrating this major victory for women's rights and women's lives will take place all around the country. Norma McCorvey, the "Roe" plaintiff in the original case which was eventually decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, will speak at some of the planned events.

Contact the NOW chapter or other women's rights organizations in your area to get involved.

## Palestinian women speak out to their American sisters on Gulf War

As Palestinian women burdened by the suffering of our people because of the continued state of aggression and occupation of our land by Israel, we appeal to you as women who have still not forgotten the aftermath of the effects of the Vietnam War to raise your voices now against sending your young men to the Gulf.

It was your voices that brought your boys back from Vietnam. But it was already too late, and the harm was already done, and the suffering continues. Let your voices be heard now, before it is too late.

The forceful reaction of your President to the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict is absolutely alarming—and out of proportion. Was it not only recently that the USA devastated Panama for the sake of one "corrupt" leader? And invaded Grenada to topple a regime not to its liking?

It is such actions, and the double standards with which the USA grants itself the right to deal with issues, that is making it lose its credibility in the whole region and amongst its friends. And it is precisely because of that, our people are enraged and are in support of any action which would challenge the double standards of the USA.

For the last 42 years we have been waiting the implementation of the United Nations resolution regarding the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, and later the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Occupied Territories, but to no avail.

Not only was there no mechanism to enforce the implementation of these resolutions, Israel was being rewarded for its aggression by the continuous moral and financial support of the USA, which enabled it to maintain the Occupied Territories and to establish settlements in these areas against all UN resolutions and against the declared position of the USA.

Even a simple resolution to condemn flagrant violations of human rights would

be vetoed by the USA; the latest was after the massacre of Palestinian laborers in Rishon, thus encouraging further suppression and violation of Palestinian human rights. And whenever the possibility of sanctions against Israel would come up, it would be flatly refused.

It is argued that sanctions [against Israel] are impractical and not possible to implement, while anyone who dared to suggest them would be made to feel guilty of being anti-semitic. It's amazing how in less than 24 hours, the USA was able to rally all these forces "to maintain the security of the Gulf." Where was it when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982?

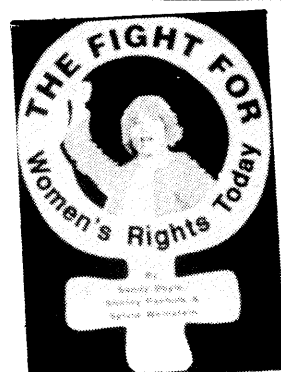
Mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of these young men already in the Gulf: spare your people and our people the tragedy of another war. Your men can always work and make money to buy the oil they may need. But no oil or money will be able to compensate for the loss of your men in such a futile war.

We sincerely share your anxiety about the safety of Americans and other foreign civilians trapped in the area of conflict; but we would like to remind your President that we Palestinians are and have been hostages in our own land, terrorized and without any protection for more than two decades!

Is the value of human life subject to varying exchange rates? If you divorce politics and national interests from moral and human values, we are all going to pay a high price.

It is your voices that need to challenge the President of the USA, who seems to be relaxed enough to play golf while your boys are burning in the Gulf. It is more honorable to lose face than to lose lives.

Sent from the occupied territories, Aug. 24, 1990



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# Boston Black community targets anti-union construction contractor

By SCOTT ADAMS-COOPER

BOSTON—The construction site of a new Postal Service facility in Boston's Black community of Roxbury has been the scene of protests by Black community leaders and workers.

The protests, organized by the newly formed Greater Roxbury Workers Association (GRWA), have targeted Suffolk Construction, a notorious anti-union general contractor.

GRWA was formed in late October 1990 to make sure that workers in Roxbury receive a fair share of construction work in the community. GRWA has also protested hiring practices at a number of city-sponsored housing development projects.

City and state regulations require that publicly funded building projects employ significant numbers of local residents. According to the Boston ordinance, for example, at least 50 percent of the employee hours on city-funded projects have to be worked by "Boston residents." In addition, 25 percent of the employee-hours are supposed to be worked by "minorities" and at least 10 percent by women.

Chuck Turner, chairman of the Roxbury

neighborhood council and one of the founders of GRWA, thinks that the city and state hiring requirements don't go far enough. He would like to see at least 50 percent of the workers on local construction sites come from the neighborhoods where the work is taking place.

Regular picketing at the post office site has shut down all work there after an initial spate of daily arrests.

In a bulletin released on Dec. 12, GRWA addressed the arrest issue and vowed their willingness to continue to be arrested if necessary.

"We understand that people will try to make it look as if we are in the wrong, as if we are the criminals," the bulletin declared. "But if we don't stand up for our rights to a fair share of the work in our community, who will? If we don't stop this theft that goes on daily, how will we persuade our children that crime does not pay? If we don't take action to see that those in our community who have the skills can work on construction jobs in our community, how can we persuade our children to develop skills?"

The Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler, a leader in the Black community, told *Socialist*

Action that "access to these jobs is intimately linked with the problems of crime and drugs in our community." Hagler has been arrested twice at the post office site and has been threatened by a judge with two months' incarceration without bail if he is arrested again.

The GRWA bulletin highlighted the enormous economic stakes: "The average salary for a worker on the post office site is \$25 an hour or \$200 a day. Each week, the average salary for a worker on the post office site is \$1000. Ten construction workers earn in one week ... an amount of money equal to a year's work for one worker in our community earning \$5 an hour. [We] are determined to do whatever is necessary to get our fair share of the dollars spent on construction in our community."

While GRWA was able to negotiate an initial agreement with the contractors to hire some workers from the Black community, it did not last long. As soon as the bosses thought that the community's attention had shifted, they laid off the Black workers and brought in crews from Worcester, Mass., and Providence, R.I.—each nearly 50 miles from Boston.

GRWA has received a lot of support from

Dave Hartman



Rank and file members of the ANC have good reason to be wary of conciliation with apartheid regime.

## ...South Africa

(continued from page 16)

icy toward sanctions. An internal ANC discussion bulletin also raised this as a possibility.

The ANC conference, however, did not change its position of maintaining full sanctions until apartheid is ended. But it did reaffirm its commitment to negotiations with the government.

De Klerk has invited the ANC and other groups to join in negotiating a new constitution for the country in February when the white parliament opens. The white rulers are seeking to maneuver the liberation forces into a government-organized gathering to guarantee that white economic and political power would be maintained while giving Blacks a share of the government.

The two other major liberation groups—the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO)—are also debating whether to join negotiations with the government.

In another development, the ANC conference rejected de Klerk's call to end the use of mass nonviolent action to pressure the government to remove all obstacles before formal negotiations can begin. "We will not

trade off our mass struggle for negotiations," said Mandela.

The ANC is demanding the unconditional release of all political prisoners and the return of all exiles, the end to all political trials, and the repeal of repressive security laws. A deadline of April 30 has been set by the ANC for their demands to be met. If not, the NEC says it will suspend talks.

Both the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP), which has a strategic alliance with the ANC, have declared 1991 as the year of mass action—a campaign of demonstrations, strikes, stay-aways, and boycotts—"to achieve our objectives as quickly as possible."

Retreat toward "new realism"

At the same time, the consultative conference refused to reverse the ANC's retreat from its own Freedom Charter program. While many criticisms have been made of the Charter for not being far-reaching enough to bring about genuine Black majority rule, it does include many radical democratic demands. Now many of these demands are being dropped by the top leadership.

The most important shift concerns nation-

alization of state enterprises and land. Mandela in his world tour last year said the ANC was now for a "mixed economy" in a post-apartheid South Africa. An official ANC document now proposes a "state minerals marketing authority" and other concessions, such as full compensation, to the white capitalist owners.

Considering that whites—who are 13 percent of the population—own 86 percent of the land and earn at least 10 times what a Black does, such a post-apartheid South Africa would remain under white domination. Blacks would be denied economic

the community and from unionists. It won support at a Dec. 14 rally of 1000 building trades workers at the JFK Federal Building who had gathered to protest the use of Suffolk Construction's scab labor on a rehabilitation job at that site.

The building trades union leaders, unfortunately, refused to let the Rev. Ellis-Hagler address the crowd on the issue of the post office site. But the union members were glad nonetheless to hear of Suffolk being picketed in Roxbury. Leaders and rank-and-file members of Local 26 of the Hotel Workers have walked the picketline at the post office site, as have other unionists. ■

### WHERE WE STAND

The struggle of Black construction workers in Boston should be supported by all working people. The building trades unions should have welcomed the Rev. Ellis-Hagler to the platform at their rally. They should likewise welcome the Black workers led by the Greater Roxbury Workers Association into their unions. This would strengthen the unions and weaken the anti-union forces that are now in the majority in the construction industry.

At the same time, the building trades unions should demand that all affirmative-action laws be fully enforced and strengthened. This would help cement an alliance between the Black community and the trade unions that could be a powerful force in the inner cities. It would form a base to begin to reorganize the construction industry.

—the editors

clout.

Tony Karon writes in *New Era*, a publication edited by supporters of the ANC and the SACP, that "the immediate phase of our struggle is not for a national democratic state. It is for the creation of democratic conditions in which the political contest can continue."

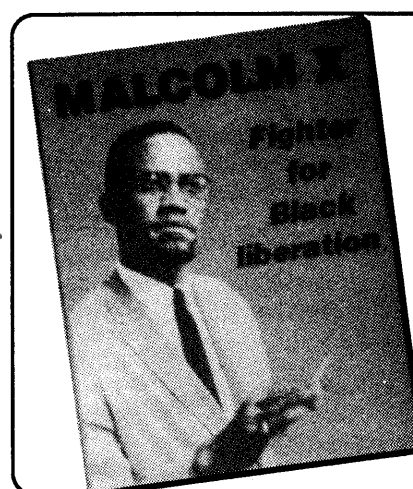
Albie Sachs, also writing in *New Era*, explains, "We have to negotiate because we're just not strong enough to overthrow racist power—they've still got too many guns. ... The painful lesson learned by the Angolans is that a sharp, decisive, and total victory (of which many of us have been dreaming for a long time) might solve some immediate problems, but gives rise to other problems that can be really terrible."

This "new realism" is supported both by the ANC and SACP top leaderships. According to the resident chairman of the SACP, Raymond Mhlaba, some 23 of the 33 members of the ANC's NEC belong to the Communist Party. The SACP, a pro-Moscow party, not only endorses the policy of the ANC, but uses its influence inside the trade unions to advance the ANC's policy of compromise. Popular revolution is no longer seen as viable.

The discussions at the ANC conference reflect the deeper debates within the Black liberation movement. De Klerk's refusal to meet their just demands, the government-encouraged ethnic violence, and the weakening of the government's international isolation are behind the impatience of more militant Blacks in the ANC—as well as in other groups.

Urgently needed in South Africa today is the convening of a Constituent Assembly based on one-person, one-vote to draft a new constitution. Broad-based united-front mass actions (including the use of civil disobedience) should be used to win this demand. Negotiations with the government, if held, should involve all anti-apartheid forces.

Any other policy will keep the initiative in the hands of the white minority government, and weaken the Black majority's struggle for genuine self-determination. ■



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# Daily News strike reaches third month as workers combat union-busting boss



Striking newspaper workers are showing their militancy on the picketline in spite of over 100 being arrested.

By CHRIS BIELER

NEW YORK—"The *Daily News* strikers are fighting for all of us," United Mine Workers President Richard Trumka said on Dec. 10. "If they win, all working people win. If they lose, we all lose."

Trumka was speaking to 10,000 cheering workers who had gathered to demonstrate their support for the unions on strike at the New York *Daily News*.

Such rallies, called by the Allied Printing Trades Council and backed by New York City's Central Labor Council, have become regular occurrences outside the *Daily News* headquarters in midtown Manhattan since the strike began on Oct. 26.

The official demands of the rally, as at all the other rallies, were "Ban Replacement Workers!" "End Attacks on Working People!" and "Keep New York a Union Town!"

In addition to bolstering the morale of the strikers on the picket lines, the rallies have also struck a deep chord among the most conscious labor activists in the city. Leaders of AFSCME unions, whose own members are facing massive cutbacks and layoffs, have pledged their support.

Some labor leaders (such as Barry Feinstein of the Teamsters and Sonny Hall of the transit workers) have threatened strike action in industries where the reactionary Taylor Law forbids strikes. This is a development that has not been seen since Mike Quill and the militant transit strikes in the 1960s and reflects pressure from the ranks.

## Democratic Party "friends"

Archbishop of New York, Cardinal O'Connor, and the Rev. Jesse Jackson, also spoke at the Dec. 10 rally. It has become something of a fashion for Democratic Party officials to show up at these strike events. Their appearance has been encouraged by the *News* union leadership in the name of reaching out for allies.

Most unionists, nevertheless, are not fooled by these fake friends of labor. After Democratic Governor Mario Cuomo spoke on Dec. 10, hailing the union movement as "a source of justice in this country," New York City AFSCME leaders condemned his talk as a cynical attempt to garner support from labor. They noted that his appearance came immediately after he had announced massive cutbacks and layoffs of up to 10,000 state workers.

Black, Latino, and Asian labor leaders were also prominent on the speakers platform at the Dec. 10 rally. This was an important development; racial minorities make up 55 percent of the organized labor movement in New York City.

In a move—astounding in its cynicism—to race-bait the strike, the *Daily News* management has portrayed its strikebreaking campaign as a fight against racism in the unions and a way to open job opportunities for minorities. Ironically, in a 1986 court case the *News* was found guilty of race discrimination against its own employees!

How do these union-busters "fight racism?" Every morning at 5 a.m., hundreds of homeless men and women—mostly Black—line up with their shopping carts at

the *Daily News* headquarters to receive their free bundle of the scab newspaper from a management desperate to have papers sold on the city's subways.

## The bosses claim "progress"

The Dec. 10 rally was carefully timed to happen on the eve of a quarterly board of directors meeting of the newspaper's owner, the Chicago-based *Tribune* Corporation. Some union officials had hoped that the strikers' success in crippling distribution of the paper would lead to an announcement that the owners would either settle with the union or sell the paper to someone who would. ("Settle or Sell" was the headline of the first edition of the strikers' *Real News* paper.)

Indeed, the financial report presented by publisher James Hoge confirmed the success of the strike in hitting the newspaper where it hurts—in its pocketbook. Revenues have dropped \$100 million since the strike began. Management, however, still claimed to have a paid circulation of 600,000 (pre-strike circulation was 1.1 million). But industry analysts estimate it is closer to 350,000.

Nevertheless, the *Tribune* board reaffirmed its "complete support" for the *Daily News* management. "It is the opinion...that we are making progress," Hoge told the press after the board meeting. This was a signal to both business and labor that the *Tribune* is prepared to throw the full weight and capital of its media empire into the effort to break the strike.

The "progress" Hoge was hoping for was revealed on Dec. 12 when labor and management met with federal mediators in

Washington, D.C., for the first time since the strike began. In a transparent attempt to divide the drivers' union from the seven other striking unions, management refused to meet with the unions collectively. It continued to insist on absolute "management rights" in regard to work rules.

But the unions held fast. The two demands they raised that had to be resolved before their members could return to work were: a guarantee that all strikers be allowed to return to their jobs after a settlement, and an agreement that management drop a \$150 million damage suit against the unions.

## Shift to political terrain

Although the *Daily News* bosses continue to publish their scab editions unchallenged, they've lost most of their advertisers and distributors. The front line of the strike is now shifting to the political terrain. The *Tribune* media empire is counting on its political allies among politicians, in the courts, and in the media. In response, labor must forge its own political strategy based on the independent power of labor and its natural allies.

From the outset, the *Daily News* strike involved stakes far greater than the jobs of 2600 newspaper workers—as important as they are. Coming on the heels of other important labor struggles (such as the strikes at Hormel, Eastern, Greyhound, and Pittston Coal), the *Daily News* strike rapidly became a fight for a labor movement that is faced with givebacks, layoffs, and the use of replacement workers.

Instinctively, organized labor in the New York City area sensed that if we lose this one, there would be no stopping the union-

busting. "Keep New York a Labor Town!" has become the demand that speaks and continues to speak to the sentiments of the vast majority of New York City's working people.

Unfortunately, the power of the strike has been undercut by the union leadership's definition of a victory as being a settlement along the lines of the massive givebacks agreed to by New York *Post* workers last September.

At the same time, union leaders are pushing a strategy (through labor lawyer and advisor Theodore Kheel) of trying to force the sale of the paper to a "better" boss. The new owner, presumably, would be one who could extract givebacks by means of deals with the union bureaucracy instead of using more blatant strikebreaking methods.

## Militancy continues in streets

But despite the backroom maneuvering by the union leadership, the *Daily News* strikers have shown a strong resolve to fight back. The militancy of the rank and file continues to be expressed on the picketlines and in the streets. Over 100 newspaper workers have been arrested since the strike began.

Using the best tactics of American labor's proud history (such as "flying" squads, the *Real News* strike newspaper, and reaching out to newsstand workers), the strikers have captured the imagination of thousands of workers.

Under the specific local conditions, the decision by the union to attack the weak link in management's \$40 million strategy—distribution at the city's newsstands—met with success. This was due to the concentration of workers (many of whom are in unions under similar attacks) in neighborhoods throughout the city. However, reliance on a national "corporate campaign" boycott of *Tribune* holdings, as some labor leaders suggest, would not be nearly as effective.

The *Daily News* strikers can learn from the miners who fought Pittston Coal in 1989. Although they resorted to a corporate campaign, the miners maintained militant picket lines at the point of production. That and the "wildcat" strikes in other regions made the threat of a national coal strike a reality and brought about a settlement. As Miners President Richard Trumka said at the Dec. 10 rally, "Every time the labor movement listens to lawyers, it loses its courage."

Mass rallies have been useful organizing tools both for the miners and the *Daily News* strikers. But such events should be seen not merely as occasions for the workers to let off steam and the union bureaucrats to let off hot air. The rallies can increase the momentum for building mass picket lines at the newspaper plant.

Top priority should be placed on shutting production down tight. Implementation of this strategy would probably mean losing the phony "support" of the Cuomos and other Democratic Party politicians.

But it will be more than compensated for by the gain of an aroused, independent labor movement fighting for its own interests and relying on the ranks of labor and its allies. ■

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# Black Marine refuses to fight in Gulf war

Tahan K. Jones, a Black Marine corporal who lives in Oakland, Calif., released the following statement to the press in December.

I, Corporal Tahan K. Jones, have declared my opposition to war by filing a conscientious objector claim with the United States Marine Corps. I believe that military solutions should not be utilized to solve international problems and crises. War is a tremendous waste of resources, human lives, and money that should be used to solve our fiscal and economic crises at home.

I can not be part of an institution that sacrifices the lives of young men and women for cheap oil. Blood is still more precious than oil. I believe that it is totally immoral and senseless to squander resources that should be allocated for human needs (such as affordable housing, education, healthcare, protecting our environment, repairing our infrastructure, jobs, and economic development) and waste these resources for organized mass violence.

I came to the conviction of conscientious objection after examining the Vietnam War, the invasions of Grenada and Panama, and reflecting on the war and mili-

tary experiences of veterans. From my perspective as an African-American male, Black soldiers have been used as cannon fodder as part of United States foreign policy that relies on military aggression.

Black soldiers died in disproportionate numbers in Vietnam. While Black soldiers have given their lives, limbs, and sanity on foreign soil, Black people at home are victimized by police brutality, disproportionate unemployment, high infant mortality, lack of decent and affordable housing, decreasing life expectancy, escalating incarceration rates, high drop-out rates, and AIDS. The money that is being used for war and destruction could be better spent to improve the quality of life for African-Americans and the majority of the people of this country.

If a shooting war breaks out in the Middle East, African-American women will come home in body bags in disproportionate numbers, as their male counterparts did in Vietnam. I believe that it is immoral and hypocritical that African-Americans are asked to make the ultimate sacrifice for a nation that refuses to enact a Civil Rights bill to end employment discrimination.

The military training and indoctrination I received

from the U.S. Marine Corps was based on racism, sexism, and de-humanizing of other human beings. The suffering of the people of Panama is a result of this callous disregard for human life and basic human rights. The invasion of Panama caused the senseless death of thousands, that included civilians and women and children who were poor and Black like me! There are now 10,000 refugees in Panama nearly a year after the invasion.

I feel ashamed to be a part of an institution that is so hypocritical that it would justify its invasions of Grenada and Panama and condemn another country for its intervention. The United States government ignores international laws concerning its military aggression and calls for their enforcement when their interests are involved.

I believe that President Bush has the responsibility to U.S. servicepeople and their families, taxpayers, the people of Iraq, and to humanity to pursue all avenues that would avoid bloodshed. War is never a solution to international problems; war causes more problems than it solves. ■

## Protest U.S. intervention in the Middle East!



Eva Akesson

By JEFF MACKLER

An antiwar movement of unprecedented breadth and unity is emerging across the country.

The Bush administration and its military chieftains have paraded before the cameras to try to convince a wary public that war is necessary to "free Kuwait." Meanwhile, organizing for the Jan. 26 national protests in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, called by the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, is in high gear.

Simultaneous demonstrations have been called throughout Europe, Canada, and Latin America. In Paris, a mass action has been initiated by the largest trade-union federation in France, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), and by a host of worker's parties and left organizations.

The rapidly-growing American antiwar movement has united forces ranging from SANE/Freeze, Pledge of Resistance, CISPEs, War Resisters League, National Organization for Women and the Mobilization for Survival, with major AFL-CIO central labor councils, regional and national church denominations, environmental organizations, and political parties of the left.

This diverse coalition has effectively put aside, at least for the time being, a host of different and conflicting positions on the Middle East in favor of a united-front-type effort to thwart the bipartisan war plans of the U.S. government.

The energetic involvement of campus

youth, now organizing on a city-wide, regional, and national basis adds another dynamic aspect to the movement, as does the growing number of GI resisters, often Black and Chicano, who link the antiwar struggle to the communities of the oppressed. The most recent national poll indicates that 75 percent of Blacks in the U.S. oppose U.S. intervention.

The antiwar sentiment has already reached into the ranks of the military services. This was shown by the case of Jeff Paterson, a marine who refused to fight in the Gulf. When the judge moved to send Paterson's attorney to the Middle East to take testimony from the troops, the government quickly gave Paterson an administrative discharge.

And finally, the youthful activists are standing shoulder to shoulder with Vietnam veterans, whose experience exposes the lie of government and media hype about imperialism's "democratic" war aims. The 'generation gap' is gone, as today's parents caution their children from direct experience about the horror, not glory of modern warfare, U.S. style.

Without doubt, the new antiwar movement stands on the shoulders of all social movements of past decades. From the beginning—in its teach-ins, rallies, mass demonstrations, and leadership composition—the new antiwar forces have demonstrated an awareness of the importance of building a broad non-exclusionary movement. It is qualitatively more aware of the destructive and disunifying nature of sexist, racist, and

homophobic prejudice.

The movement also emerges at a time of growing social polarization, economic insecurity stemming from capitalist decline, and a general disillusionment with the twin parties of the rich.

In this regard, it is not unusual that the San Francisco Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, a sponsor of Jan. 26, has invited Tony Mazzochi (Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers secretary-treasurer) to speak at a labor-sponsored meeting on independent labor politics on Jan. 8. Mazzochi was one of the first trade unionists to call for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

### Unifying demands

"Bring the Troops Home Now!" is the unifying demand of the Jan. 26 actions, with two additional slogans, "No War in the Middle East" and "Money for Human Needs Not War," forming the political package that has united the movement as in no time in the recent past.

Local affiliates of the 160 organizations that attended the Dec. 1 New York City national conference that initiated the Jan. 26 actions have formed city-wide and regional coalitions to plan building actions the weekend of Jan. 19-21.

More than 100 activists met in Cleveland, Ohio, last week in a new formation which fused the major forces of previously competing peace and anti-intervention groups to prepare for Jan. 26. Weekly meetings of the Emergency Committee to Stop the War in

the Middle East, based in Chicago, have attracted the same broad range of political forces.

In short, in virtually every major city in the country, and in many areas where the antiwar movement was formerly barely visible (such as Mississippi, Georgia, Kansas, and Utah), groups have come together to march and rally in Washington and San Francisco against what is seen as an imminent war.

Local demonstrations on Dec. 1 of 10,000 and 7000 in Boston and Seattle respectively (as compared to 500 and 400 in the same cities on Oct. 20) are but one measure of the growing power of the movement.

Over 5000 mobilized in Chicago on Dec. 8 (as compared to a few hundred in mid-October) and 750 marched through the streets of Milwaukee, Wisc., on the same date. Organizers of the city-wide coalition in Los Angeles report weekly protests ranging from 1200 to 2000.

Without doubt, these protests demanding the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops, are the largest and most impressive local protests since the era of the Vietnam War.

As a rule, the antiwar activists have rejected the government's thesis that U.S. intervention and war are justified to compel a withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Whatever the views of the constituent groups in the movement on this issue, they have proved to be subordinate to the demand of "Bring the Troops Home Now!"

Similarly, past illusions in the peacekeeping nature of the United Nations have diminished in the face of the *carte blanche* given by this body to U.S. war aims.

### Role of Zionism exposed

A deepening understanding of the plight of the Palestinian people is yet another gain for the nascent antiwar movement. The stone-throwing youth of the *Intifada* have inspired young people worldwide in their fight for a Palestinian nation.

In the process, they have increased international awareness of the historic role of Zionism in the Middle East; they have opened the eyes of a new generation to the original injustice done to the Palestinian people in 1947—when their nation was carved up to form the Zionist, apartheid state of Israel.

The broad unity achieved around the Jan. 26 national actions has not been complete, however. One component of the struggle, led by the New York-based Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, is organizing its own national protest in both Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, on Jan. 19.

Initiated by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, this group played a key role in calling the Oct. 20 regional protests against U.S. intervention in the Middle East. The Coalition also supports the demand to "Bring the Troops Home Now." Ongoing efforts to unify the Jan. 26 and Jan. 19 protests have not proved successful, and it is certain that many have been somewhat disoriented by the different dates.

Nevertheless, the deep and mounting antiwar sentiment in the country is certain to attract major forces to both events, with the Jan. 26 actions serving to culminate the first round of mass opposition to Washington's war drive. ■

# Calif. students organize to stop U.S. war moves in the Middle East

The following is an interview with Hilary Diamond, an organizer for the California Student Network Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East. The interview was given to Socialist Action editor Alan Benjamin on Dec. 28 and has been edited for space.

**Socialist Action:** We are seeing an explosion of antiwar activity among students—the largest since the Vietnam War. Why has the student antiwar movement developed with such strength at this time?

**Hilary Diamond:** Last September, when the schools went back into session, antiwar committees started to form on individual campuses almost immediately. Soon afterwards, networks began forming between the different campuses and between different areas.

This process was widespread. We've gotten phone calls from smaller campuses in places like Mississippi and other areas that traditionally have not had large student movements.

In past years, the political problems that had arisen on the world scene—such as Central America and South Africa—saw some amount of student involvement. And yet things are different now. This is partly due to the deteriorating economy; students are wondering what they are studying for—will they be able to make it into society?

On some campuses, students have been faced with large budget cuts. At San Francisco State, for example, students in some classes have to sit on the floor for lack of chairs. Something like 200 classes were cut just last semester, and tuition was raised at the same time.

A lot of the rallies on campuses have been able to tie in the question of the money taken out of schools and the warped priorities of the government, where they have millions of dollars for war and no money for schools and other social needs.

**SA:** Is the military draft seen as a more immediate prospect for students now?

**H.D.:** People are concerned with the draft. However, it has not been reinstated yet. When it is reinstated, the amount of antiwar activity is going to quadruple.

I think there is also a growing awareness and solidarity between students and people who are part of the "economic draft." Young people often go into the ROTC or the reserves in order to get help to get into schools.

**SA:** How did the California Student Network form and what does it seek to do?

**H.D.:** We had our first meetings after a number of colleges and universities had already formed committees. We wanted to gather together to discuss strategies of building the antiwar movement and of reaching out to other campuses who didn't have committees. We wanted to have better communication and understanding of what was going on and the ability to share materials and speakers.

We decided to organize for a week of stu-

dent protests, Dec. 3-8, and the idea ended up taking off nationally. Teach-ins, forums, and vigils were organized from one end of the country to the other.

I'll give just a few examples. At the University of California, Davis (which is a new area for antiwar organizing) 1000 people showed up for one protest march and 700 at another rally. At Fordham University in New York, students organized a nighttime vigil—really a sleepout—in the sleet and rain. And students in Chicago led a march through the city.

Within California, campuses such as Laney College and Mills College—which

issues of the war as well. The New York student network hooked into it, and then the Chicago one. We ended up with about 70 different campuses participating in the week of student protests.

Out of those 70 campuses, a loose umbrella coalition calling itself the National Student Network against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East formed on the basis of three demands: Bring the Troops Home Now; Money for Tuition, not Ammunition; and No Selective Service, No Economic or Mandatory Draft.

**SA:** I understand that both the California and the national networks are



Hilary Diamond

Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action



On Nov. 30, over 350 students demonstrated in Twin Cities, Minn., against U.S. war moves.

Eva Akesson

may not have been able to put together rallies on their own since there were maybe only one or two activists who were plugged into the Student Network—were able to hold rallies and to get lists of names from those rallies and from that point to begin organizing their own committees.

**SA:** How many campuses are hooked into the California Network?

**H.D.:** About 10 or 12 regularly participate in the meetings, and around 20 identify with it.

**SA:** What are the links between the California Network and student groups in other parts of the country?

**H.D.:** As soon as the California Student Network formed, there was communication with Students Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East in New York, Chicago Campuses Against the War, and with students in the Twin Cities, Ohio, and other places.

We explained that we were going to have the Dec. 3-8 week of activities, which would focus on the Jeff Paterson case and bring in the issue of the draft and larger

participating in building the Washington, D.C., and San Francisco national marches on Jan. 26.

**H.D.:** That's correct. On both the East Coast [in Washington, D.C.] and here on the West Coast [in San Francisco], student conferences which are planned to take place on Jan. 27 are loosely coordinated with the Jan. 26 marches. There has been cooperation between the planners of Jan. 26 and the student conferences.

The students will help build the 26th. And the community organizations backing the marches will help publicize the conferences by having the information on their leaflets and so on. Basically, both activities are around the same demand: Bring the Troops Home Now.

**SA:** What are these student conferences attempting to do?

**H.D.:** I can speak most directly to the one to be held here in San Francisco. We've developed an initial agenda. We want to keep the focus particularly on the war rather than on a multi-issue program. Other issues will come into it, of course, as they

relate to the war.

We'll be having a number of workshops that people can participate in. There will be one workshop on racism and the war, for example, and another on sexism and the war. Other workshops will deal with Palestine, with the media, and with building an alliance between students and the university staff, faculty, and the community at large.

**SA:** Will people be voting on any proposals at the conference?

**H.D.:** We are discussing proposals for consideration by the body, such as plans for further coordinated student actions and for some sort of communication system. We've been kicking around the idea of a student newspaper or fact sheet in which every campus could have a paragraph about what they're doing.

For more information on the student conferences: On the West Coast, call Hilary at (415) 626-8053. In the New York City area, call Jon, Tara, or Betsy at (212) 227-0225.

## ...Protests grow

(continued from page 1)

students to the Jan. 26 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Many students walked out of their classes to participate in marches and rallies. On Jan. 15, just before the deadline for war, 200 7th and 8th graders at Monteria Junior High School in Oakland, Calif., cut classes in order to hold a protest discussion. And on Jan. 16, two dozen high school and middle school students in Rockport, Texas, were arrested when they walked out in protest.

Similar scenes were repeated in thousands of cities, small towns, and suburban districts across the country. From Colorado to West Virginia to Louisiana, the chant was raised: "No blood for oil!"

Many cities and small towns in Europe were also the scene of antiwar activities. Berlin, Frankfurt, London, and Paris each had demonstrations of over 100,000 people on the weekend prior to the deadline for war. In Turkey, an illegal march drew 40,000.

Demonstrations also continued in cities



and towns in Canada. Protesters in Toronto staged sit-ins at the local offices of two cabinet ministers.

### Unity proposals issued

In response to the U.S. bombing of Iraq, organizers of the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 demonstrations in the San Francisco Bay Area urged support for each other's demonstrations. It is expected that a similar course

will be taken by the organizers of the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 demonstrations in Washington, D.C.

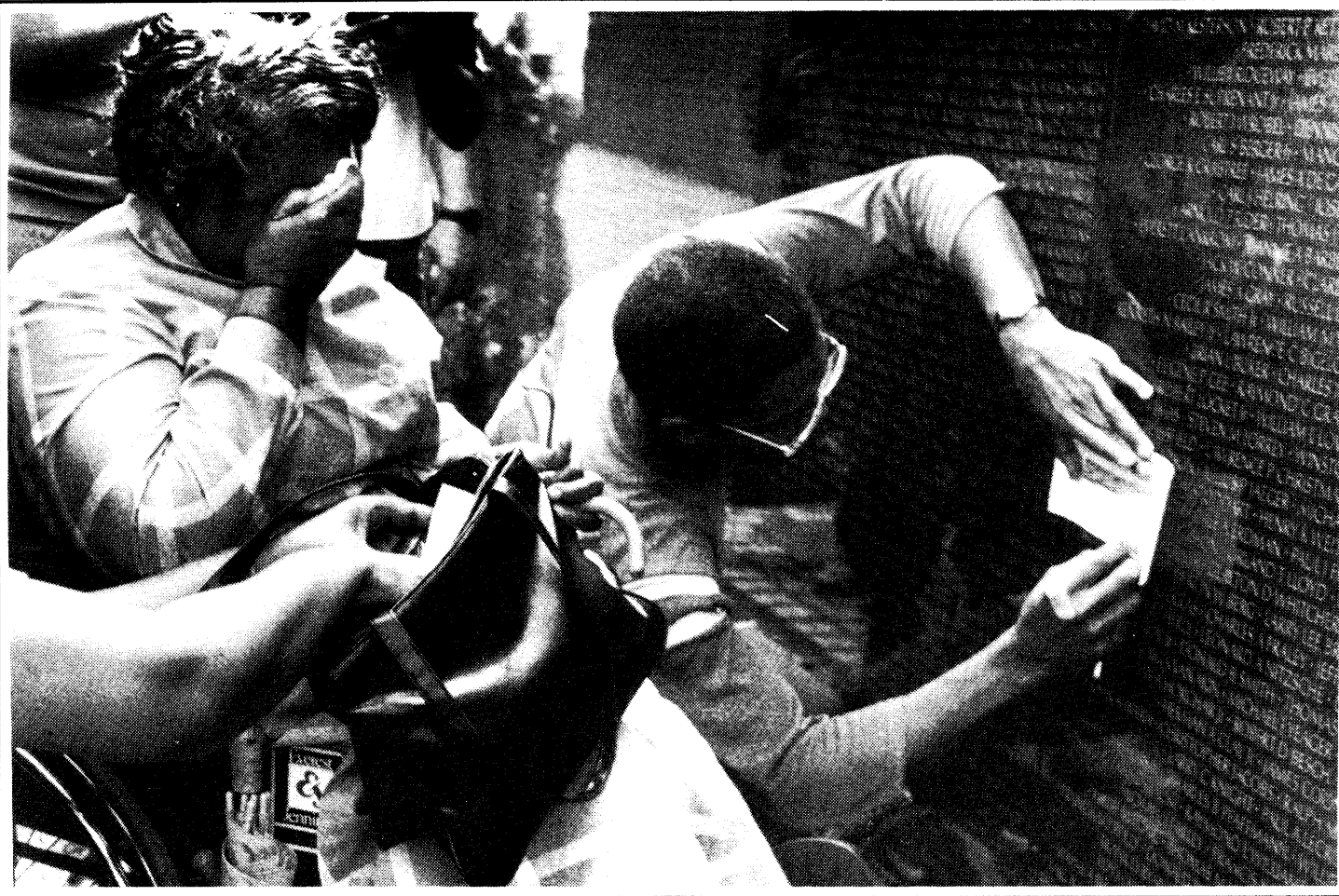
The steering committee of the San Francisco-based Jan. 26 Mobilization to Bring the Troops Home Now paved the way for this united response. At an emergency meeting on Jan. 16, the Mobilization's steering committee unanimously approved a proposal which urges all-out support for (1)

the Jan. 19 antiwar demonstration, (2) the Jan. 21 "March for Peace" organized by the Black community in commemoration of Martin Luther King's birthday, and (3) the Jan. 26 antiwar demonstration.

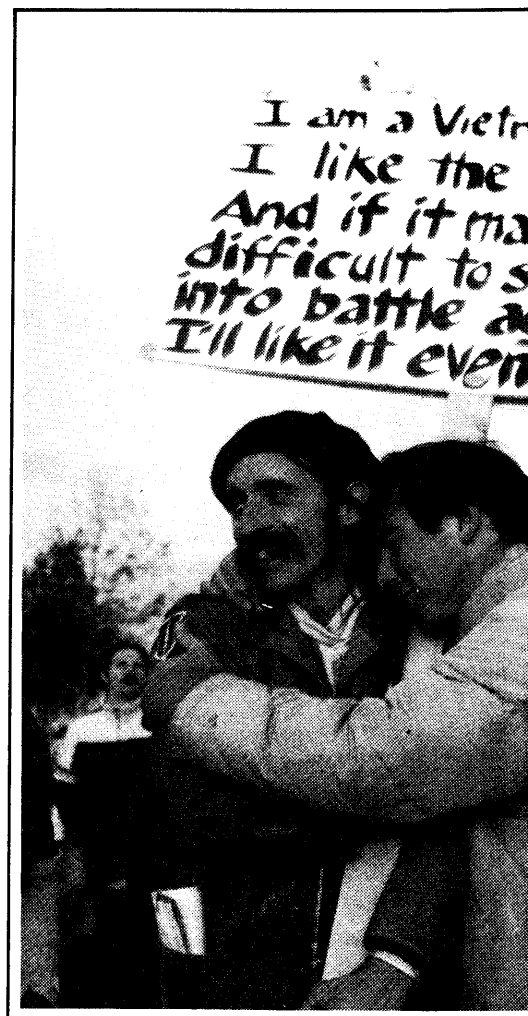
Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco Labor Council (AFL-CIO), told the Mobilization's steering committee that he would place his offices and phones at the full disposal of this three-pronged effort. The S.F. Labor Council has prepared a 900-piece mailing in support of the Jan. 26 demonstration.

A joint press conference by the organizers of both antiwar coalitions is scheduled for Jan. 18 at the office of the S.F. Labor Council. Speakers will include representatives of the two coalitions, as well as Dr. Rev. Amos Brown, pastor of the Third Baptist Church, Walter Johnson, and Paul Varicali, secretary-treasurer of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 790.

Another important sign of the deep opposition within the U.S. labor movement to the U.S. war was the decision by the Bay Area SEIU Joint Council to endorse both the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 antiwar protests.



Wendy Wattiss



# Why the 'Vietnam Syndrome' haunts U.S. warmakers today

By CAROLE SELIGMAN

*The following is an edited and abridged version of a talk given by Carole Seligman at a San Francisco Socialist Educational Conference on Oct. 13, 1990. Seligman is a National Committee member of Socialist Action.*

Any historical analogy has its limitations, but the phenomenon in American politics called the "Vietnam Syndrome" is the most potent factor favoring the development of the new antiwar movement.

Vietnam, the name of a small Asian country 10,000 miles from Washington, D.C., became the name that symbolized very different things to different people in the United States—depending on what social class one belongs to.

- To the ruling rich that own and control the wealth and institutions of the United States, the Vietnam War symbolized the only decisive defeat ever suffered by American military might.

- To the working people of the neo-colonial world—exploited and plundered by the financial, political and military arms of imperialism—the Vietnam War represented an example of resistance and triumph over this exploitation.

- To the politically conscious generations of American people who resisted the Vietnam War from within the United States and built a movement powerful enough to win a clear majority of the American people to the antiwar cause, Vietnam stands for the possibilities of collective mass action to bring about real change.

For many people of my generation the Vietnam War was the main historical factor that shaped us; that formed us as thinking, moral, human beings; that taught us politics—that is, how to engage in revolutionary politics in the heartland of world imperialism. It taught many of us—especially those among us who didn't really know or understand the nature of the country into which we happened to be born—the brutal truth about the hypocrisy of our so-called democracy.

This "democracy" claimed in the pages of its press that it was necessary to destroy peasant villages in Vietnam in order to "save them." Outrage against this hypocrisy and brutality taught us that one could fight back and that we could win the support of the American people in so doing.

Many, perhaps most of the families of the 58,000 American soldiers who died in that war—and the families of hundreds of thousands of veterans who suffer from the physical and psychological wounds of fighting a war against a civilian population and a popular revolution—feel that the Vietnam War was an unjustified, bitter sacrifice.

American jails are filled with Vietnam veterans. American streets are filled with Vietnam veterans without jobs or homes to live in. American mental institutions make no pretense of seriously trying to deal with the aftermath of an unpopular war. The enormous growth in drug addiction in the United States is partially rooted in the Vietnam War.

All of these factors and more are aspects of what is called the Vietnam Syndrome. And they combine to create another aspect of this syndrome, the aspect that frightens and gives pause to the U.S. warmakers.

There is massive skepticism about U.S. foreign policy within the population—particularly about a policy which threatens another protracted war.

This is the political expression of the Vietnam Syndrome. The potential ability of such skepticism to be turned into conscious, organized opposition is a big factor affecting U.S. foreign policy. Today's antiwar movement must make full and conscious use of the Vietnam Syndrome.

## Yesterday and today

During the Vietnam War there was constant discussion and debate in the antiwar movement over whether the government was even aware of the movement, let alone taking it into account in its plans. The government pretended to ignore the mass demonstrations.

Only at the end of the war, with the publication of the Pentagon Papers and the defection of a few government policy makers, like Daniel Ellsberg, did the movement as a whole learn how much the government was aware of every move the opposition made. This was made clear when government efforts to sabotage the movement through police and FBI disruptions became documented—mostly after the war was over.

So let me say from the outset: We in the new antiwar movement fighting against the U.S. war moves in the Middle East need to study and absorb, or in the case of the older generations, remember, the lessons of the Vietnam antiwar movement if we want to

exploit the existence of the Vietnam Syndrome and put it to full use in building our movement today.

There are many important differences between the U.S. war against Vietnam and the potential U.S. war against Iraq. But there are important similarities, too, and we should discuss both.

A big difference is the world political context in which U.S. aggression takes place today. During the Vietnam War the workers' states led by degenerated Stalinist regimes (the Soviet Union, China, etc.) at least made the *gesture* of opposing U.S. aggression. They doled out limited but important aid to the Vietnamese revolutionaries which helped them in a very limited fashion to defend themselves.

The Soviet Union's political adherents in the United States, the Communist Party (CPUSA), were against the Vietnam War and were a significant force—and obstacle—in the antiwar movement. In contrast, today the CPUSA advocates economic sanctions against Iraq.

Similarly, today the Soviet Union's Stalinist leaders have embarked on the project of attempting to restore capitalism in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe. They are making a huge political concession to U.S. imperialism—one of them being political support for U.S. aggression in the Middle East.

Before the Middle East crisis started, some people mistakenly floated the view that the world was moving toward peace and disarmament with the end of the Cold War and the lessening of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.

However, just the opposite has proven to be the case. The drive of U.S. imperialism to ensure its ownership and control of raw materials, resources, and markets around the world has been exacerbated by the lessening threat of Soviet opposition. Today, with Soviet approval, over 500,000 U.S. (and Allied) troops stand poised to invade Iraq. This new world context, the open collaboration of Gorbachev with Bush, is a major point of difference from the context of the Vietnamese revolution.

Another major difference is the nature of "the enemy." During the Vietnam War the genuine revolutionary struggle for self-determination and freedom from imperialism of the Vietnamese people gained tremendous respect from large sections of the U.S. antiwar movement, particularly, the student left-

wing of the movement.

Today, Saddam Hussein, the right-wing dictator of Iraq, previously armed and financed by U.S. imperialism, and a former CIA-backed torturer, inspires no sympathy, nor is he identified with the revolutionary struggle of the Arab masses by antiwar activists of any political persuasion.

The most conscious antiwar fighters, however, make no mistake of confusing our opinions of Saddam Hussein with any justification for U.S. military aggression in the Middle East. Neither should abhorrence for Hussein weaken the support or identification of conscious anti-imperialists with the desire for self-determination of the Arab and Palestinian peoples.

Another way of looking at this question of "who is the enemy?" brings out a similarity between government propaganda now and the propaganda of the 1960s.

Although American jingoism and national chauvinism were considerably weakened with the success of the Chinese Revolution and rise of anti-colonial revolutions following World War II, as well as the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the United States, this didn't stop the rulers from giving the Vietnam War a racist undertone.

We should not underestimate the potential impact of attempts by the U.S. government to stir up anti-Arab racism (and the role of the Zionists in promoting racism as well). But we can acknowledge that this factor is not as useful a tool for the capitalists as it has been in the past.

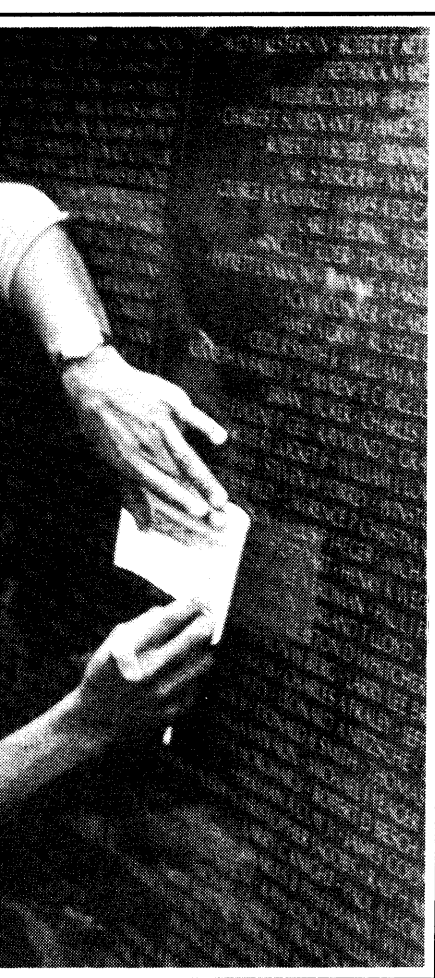
Mass support exists in this country for Black South Africa and for the poor peoples of Central America. These factors affect the racist arguments. I can well envision a repeat of the Vietnam experience of African-Americans in demonstrations carrying placards and banners reading "No Viet Cong ever called me nigger," coming back to haunt current national chauvinists.

## GIs not immune to antiwar ideas

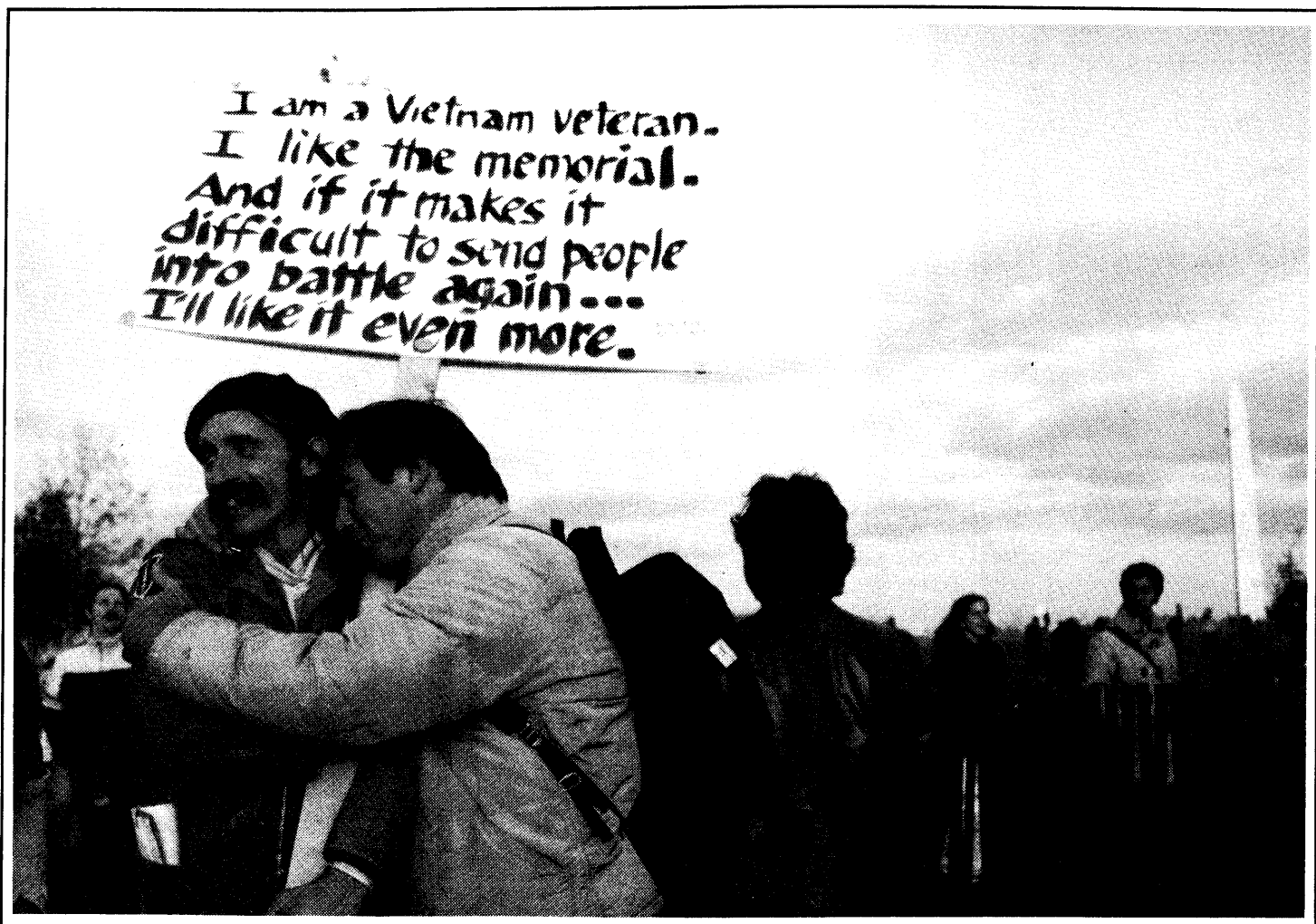
One factor affecting mass consciousness on the war issue in terms of the Vietnam Syndrome is the draft and the fear of its reinstatement. Although many of the soldiers now in the Middle East are in the military by choice, many are there because of the phenomenon called the "economic draft." Young people enlist in the armed forces due to the lack of decent jobs or job training in the civilian sector.

This, combined with continued discrimination and institutionalized racism, causes disproportionate numbers of Black and Latino youth to sign up in the armed forces in the expectation of getting training and entry into decent jobs afterwards. The presence of so many numbers of oppressed national minorities in the military is not a good omen from the U.S. rulers' point of view. It will be





Wendy Watriss



Susan Meiselas

# ndrome' ers today

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hard to insulate these troops from the antiwar movement as it develops.

The early signs of resistance by reservists and active duty soldiers is a sign of big trouble for the U.S. rulers should a protracted war take place.

One of the most important lessons of the anti-Vietnam War movement was that the soldiers could not remain insulated from the antiwar sentiment that was developing in the population. Of course the main factor was the inadvisability of fighting a war against a popular revolution that enjoyed the mass support of the Vietnamese people.

But the ability of the American antiwar movement to make the conscious decision to orient to winning over the American troops to the antiwar position was also decisive. Towards the end of the Vietnam War the government came to the conclusion that the American army fighting there was no longer "a reliable fighting force."

## Role of students and women

An interesting similarity between today's antiwar movement and the Vietnam antiwar movement is the spontaneous creation of the same organizational forms. Through *ad hoc* committees, coalitions and community-based groupings, demonstrations, rallies and teach-ins to oppose the war have arisen throughout the U.S. and the world.

The main forces moving into opposition and actively discussing, educating, and organizing against the war are students. There are two main reasons for this.

One, before the factors that move masses into action are apparent—casualties and body bags, real material changes in life—the people who have spare time to consider issues, like students and intellectuals (many of whom work part-time hours and have no families to support) will take the lead.

Two, in the general context of U.S. politics today, the main driving force of all politics—class division and class struggle—are hidden because of the unprecedented lengthy period of prosperity and stability of American capitalism.

This has been responsible for the almost complete absorption or co-optation of all the American trade unions and any potential militant leaders of the American working class into the organizations and institutions of the capitalist state.

Unfortunately, there is no political party, for example, a labor party, representing the interests of the American working class—or even of its most exploited and oppressed section—the Black, Latino and women section. The union officialdom is engaged in a program of partnership with their own bosses in competition with workers in other countries and other industries.

Even the leaderships of organizations of the oppressed, such as in the women's

movement and the movements of nationally oppressed groups, are engaged in political alliances with Democratic Party politicians that undermine the very purpose for their existence as representing the interests of the oppressed.

The refusal of the leaderships of these organizations to implement policies dictated by the needs and interests of the majority was in effect during the anti-Vietnam War movement and remain in effect today. This void has caused students to play the vanguard oppositional role in the emerging antiwar movement.

## Red-baiting: Less of a problem

A big difference between the early Vietnam student movement and today's movement is the failure of the use of anti-communism (red-baiting) as a deterrent to united action.

During the first several years of the Vietnam antiwar movement, a big fight was waged over a non-exclusion policy. The leaderships of the early 1960s' "Ban the Bomb" demonstrations tried to suppress "leftist" placards opposing the Vietnam War. Later, when opposition to the Vietnam war developed further there were many struggles to ensure that the movement would be open to all those who opposed the war—not just liberals. This has not been an issue in the new antiwar movement.

Another big difference between today and the 1960s is the role of women in the movement. The women's movement itself, that is, the second wave of American feminism, came directly out of the civil rights and antiwar movements—often with a lot of anger directed at sexism among leaders of the antiwar organizations.

Today the new movement is stronger because of the leadership role women are playing in much greater numbers than before. More women are taking part in teach-ins and campus organizing. I think it's undeniable that part of the reason for this is that the big fight for abortion rights has empowered a massive number of women and caused them to radicalize and question everything—not just specifically women's issues—but everything. This factor puts the new movement a big step ahead of our predecessors because of its access to expanded forces, talents, leadership, and creativity.

## What policies should guide us?

Now that I've touched on some of the big differences in the movements of the 1960's and today, let me say that despite these differences we can still learn an enormous amount from the old movement and work to avoid its mistakes. In fact we can arrive at some general outlines of what policies should guide our efforts to build the movement based on how these tactics or strategies

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Susan Meiselas



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

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worked in the past.

The most conscious organizers of the anti-Vietnam War movement were the revolutionary Marxists (represented by the Socialist Workers Party—SWP—at that time), some non-affiliated independents, and some of the radical pacifists.

These folks had the long-term view that even though the movement began small and, at first, was unpopular, it would grow if the war continued to escalate (which it did because the Vietnamese were intransigent in defense of their revolution). They believed the antiwar movement would eventually reach and win over the majority of the American people. Think of how far-sighted this very idea was.

In the early 1960s America was experiencing a boom period of economic prosperity. Politically, the country was overwhelmingly "anti-communist." There had been no big organized opposition to the Korean War, and vestiges of McCarthyism—which was responsible for witchhunts against communists and radicals in America in the 1950s—still existed. Most people felt the spread of "communism" had to be stopped, and equated this with the patriotism engendered during the Second World War.

But big changes were also occurring in the country. In the South, Blacks were fighting against "Jim Crow" segregation laws—a struggle which exposed the hypocrisy of American "democracy" and won the sympathy and support of millions of students and youth. Internationally, there was an unprecedented upsurge in Third World countries around the fight for independence from colonial occupiers. The highest expression of this was the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

Revolutionary Marxists saw these events as building blocks for organizing opposition to the Vietnam War. They had not given up on the American people; many of them had been participants in the struggles to form independent unions, the CIO, in the 1930s, and they remembered how people can become radicalized when forced to act in their own interests.

This was one of the big contributions of the SWP to the anti-Vietnam War movement. Their vision that working people and their sons and daughters could and would oppose the war if the movement structured itself (mass, peaceful demonstrations) in such a way as to leave the door wide open for them to do so was vindicated.

After many years of raising this vision and

much opposition and debate from proponents of civil disobedience (as a strategy) and ultra-left street fighting—the correctness of this approach was confirmed by demonstrations that involved literally millions of people—the largest antiwar demonstrations in the history of the United States.

An integral part of this approach was to orient to active duty G.I.s, educating them and welcoming them into the movement—as opposed to treating them as mercenaries, as some in the movement wished to do.

A no less important component of this approach was the efforts—successful efforts—of the radical wing to keep the movement independent of the two political parties of the ruling class—the Democrats and Republicans.

At first this was easy because there was no division over the Vietnam War among the capitalists or their representatives in Washington. Liberal and conservative Democratic and Republican politicians alike supported the war 100 percent.

Later on, however, as the antiwar protests developed into a mass movement and the U.S. suffered military reversals in Vietnam—like the 1968 Tet offensive—fissures and cracks developed among the capitalists and this was reflected in so-called "peace candidates" running for election under the banner of the two pro-war parties.

Unfortunately, every election year saw a downturn in the movement. Activists prioritized electing some "peace" candidate, like Eugene McCarthy or George McGovern; candidates who had voted for every military appropriations bill to finance the war. This only added to the ability of the U.S. to continue the war as the movement was sidetracked into electoral politics as opposed to mass demonstrations.

#### The central role of demands

The political demands of the anti-Vietnam War movement were heatedly debated, especially in its early stages. At the time of the first wave of teach-ins in 1965 there was no clear consensus for the one demand that respected the right of the Vietnamese to self-determination; that is, the demand on the U.S. government to get out, and get out now!

Eventually, then, like today, the demand "Bring our Troops Home Now!" became the

(continued on page 10)

# What's really behind Shevardnadze's resignation?

By NAT WEINSTEIN

Eduard A. Shevardnadze's resignation from his post as Soviet Foreign Minister was accompanied by a prophecy of doom: "Dictatorship is coming. I state it with complete responsibility. No one knows of what kind this dictatorship will be, and who will come—what kind of dictator, what the regime will be like...."

These words have precipitated a reaction of grave apprehension from both worlds—from that of capitalism as well as from the world ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracies. And so it should, since Shevardnadze's prediction of impending disaster for these ruling groups reflects nothing more than the reality.

What is this underlying reality?

The attempts by all of the Stalinist ruling groups which still retain their fundamental positions of power to make the shift to capitalism have achieved nothing less than calamitous results. All of these states have suffered major declines in productivity.

In Poland, which is touted as the farthest along toward capitalist restoration, the Dec. 31 *New York Times* reported a Czech economist as saying: "Economic output [in Poland] is down some 25 to 30 percent, meaning it is at 1975 levels. This is unacceptable." *The Times* reporter, Steven Greenhouse, added that "inflation was running at well above 50 percent on an annualized rate."

(To fully appreciate the significance of this statistic, account should be taken of the way percentages are figured. Thus, to recoup a decline of 25 to 30 percent would require an increase in economic output of 36 to 43 percent!)

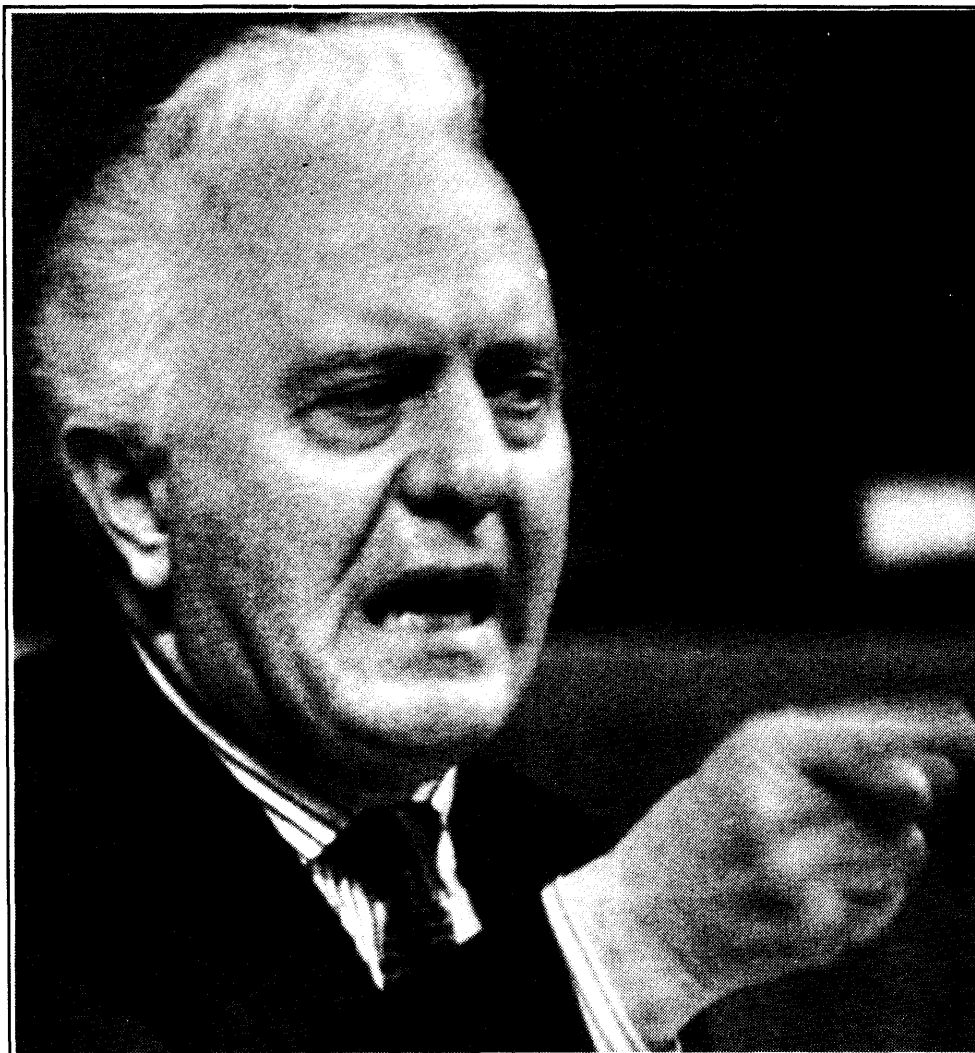
## Planned economy gutted

But these bare statistics hardly reveal the real impact of this decline in terms of lowered living standards for Polish workers and the shocking explosion of unemployment, homelessness and generalized misery. We should also take note that the security of jobs, food, shelter and other basic necessities of life, from universal health care to vacations, were *effectively guaranteed* before the attempt to return these societies to capitalist anarchy began.

It would be the biggest mistake to underestimate the importance to these masses of the most extensive social "safety net" ever established anywhere in the world.

Shevardnadze's cry of despair struck home with such force because the ruling capitalists and bureaucrats, everywhere, know how deep-rooted is this treasured conquest of the system of planned economy.

This is especially true in the Soviet Union. This is because their revolution in 1917 was consciously carried through by the most complete self-mobilization of the masses of workers and farmers history has



Shevardnadze: "No one knows what kind this dictatorship will be..."

ever seen. Moreover, because it has been in existence the longest, it is most deeply embedded in the hearts of Soviet workers and farmers.

And that points to the source of the current despair of the Shevardnadzes in all these countries. It lies in the repeated failure of one scheme after another to maintain living standards, much less improve them, in the course of their march to capitalist "prosperity."

The deepening decline in living standards in these countries has so far, according to the same *Times* reporter mentioned above, wrecked all "seamless economic theories about the best way to jump from Marxism to market economics."

## Economics of misery

How do these theories work out in real life? Let's take the "success" of restorationist economists in achieving a remarkable reduction in inflation and stabilization of the Polish zloty as a reliable currency.

This, they boast, has succeeded in "filling" the stores with goods of all kinds, from sausage to clothing. The only trouble with this shining example of market reforms is that the shelves are full and the lines of people waiting to buy are gone *only* because in-

comes have been devastated by massive wage cuts and unemployment.

The phenomenon of unemployment, moreover, was non-existent prior to embarking on the road to capitalism. Poles simply do not have the money to buy what is being sold.

This failure to maintain living standards, however, would be tolerated by the vast majority who work for a living only if they saw evidence of a better life to come. This, in fact, is the *only* reason that considerable support for the introduction of a market-driven economy came into existence in the first place.

But there has been an increasingly explosive resistance of the working classes, who are deeply disappointed in the progress of the "reforms." This is because they have received only the disadvantages of capitalism without any of its benefits. They would be more patient if, at least, they could see mass infusions of capital coming into these countries from the developed capitalist world.

Without investment from abroad, where would the capital come from to finance the modernization of existing plants and equipment along with construction of new productive facilities based on up-to-date technology?

Bureaucrats have, of course, shown an eagerness to transform themselves from parasitic "exploiters" into full-blooded capitalists. But they don't have that kind of money, and besides, they and the legions of entrepreneurs who have sprung up in the soil of *perestroika* have shown a natural propensity to pay little or nothing for the enterprises they have so far "privatized."

## Fear of workers' democracy

Meanwhile, foreign capitalists are unwilling to risk their money, partly because full guarantees for capitalist investment have been blocked by worker resistance and because they, like Shevardnadze, see a revolutionary explosion coming down the pike. That's what the former Soviet Foreign Secretary and capitalist restorationist really fears when he cries out in despair: "No one knows of what kind this dictatorship will be, and who will come—what kind of dictator, what the regime will be like."

One possibility has already begun to flower with Gorbachev's wrangling of Bonapartist executive powers from an ineffectual and compliant parliament in anticipation of and preparation against the coming explosions.

Parliamentary democracy only works when governments can rule with the consent of the governed. It is an axiom of history that bourgeois democracy flowers in prosperity and withers and gives way to dictatorship in periods of crisis.

But their greatest fear is an uprising that could ultimately result in the reconquest of democratic political power by the workers. Shevardnadze, along with all the world's bosses and bureaucrats, see that outcome as the worst kind of dictatorship that could possibly befall them. But we can be sure that such "democrats" will welcome the coming dictatorship of a Gorbachev when it becomes necessary to preserve their privileges and/or "privatized" (i.e., ripped-off) public property.

**Gorbachev's USSR:  
Is Stalinism Dead?**

*A collection of essays in defense  
of socialist democracy*  
Edited by Carl Finamore

Send \$9.95 (includes tax) to Walnut  
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San Francisco, CA 94110.

## ...Syndrome

(continued from page 9)

most popular slogan of the movement. But, unlike today, it took several years before that demand gained majority support in the anti-Vietnam War movement as a whole.

The beauty of this demand is that (1) it ends the war if it is carried out—it's the simplest solution; (2) it's the only solution that respects the right to self-determination—be it the right of the Vietnamese or the Arab people; (3) it places the blame for the war where it belongs—with the U.S. government; and (4) it is the demand that most appeals to the families of soldiers and the soldiers themselves. It had the ability to rally the whole population and appealed to the sentiments of the GIs, who also wanted to come home.

All these points are applicable in today's crisis as well.

### The current debates

But, like in the past, new debates have arisen about what demands to raise and what tactics will best serve our cause. I'll focus on three of the current debates.

One demand being raised—and supported by the Communist Party in this country—is to have the United Nations (U.N.) mediate

the Middle East crisis.

Advancing this demand would become a deadly trap for the antiwar movement. In the first place, this demand is advanced by the U.S. government. The U.N. sanctions against Iraq have been used by the U.S. warmakers to cloak their aggression in the Middle East. Where was the U.N. when the U.S. invaded Grenada and Panama? Where was the U.N. while Zionist Israel was invading its neighbors?

Basically what the U.S. is trying to accomplish is to put a U.N. sticker on the helmets of American troops—just like they did during the Korean War (1950-53), where 38,000 GIs and over 2 million Koreans were killed. If the antiwar movement focused on this demand it would amount to no more than a tail for the U.S. government and the oil corporations.

Another demand being raised that could disarm the antiwar movement is the one that focuses on negotiations. There is no question of the right of oppressed people, especially when under pressure, to negotiate with their enemy to buy time or get a better deal. But the antiwar movement in this country would lose its leverage, its independent political and social weight, if we conceded that right to the U.S. rulers, who negotiate through military intimidation.

We must ask ourselves what, if any, is the legitimate role for the U.S. in the Middle

East? Trade? Buy oil at Arab set prices? What about sending aid, reparations for the deaths its weapons and dollars have caused in the hands of the Shah of Iran, in the hands of Saddam Hussein versus the Kurdish minority and the Iranian people, in the hands of Zionist police and soldiers in expelling and killing the Palestinian people whose nation has been colonized and stolen from them?

The U.S. has nothing to negotiate in the Middle East that we could or should support. It has no right to take part in any Middle East Peace Conference to work out solutions to Arab issues in Arab countries. We can only justifiably demand: U.S. Hands Off the Middle East! Let the Arab people decide their own affairs free from any U.S. intervention!

Another debate that I see down the road is one over tactics, not strategy or politics like the previous points. But some tactical questions, however, are very important, and I think they will come up again.

The issue is posed: What kinds of actions should the movement engage in? Should we promote the direction of highly trained and committed people to such activities as blockades of military recruiting stations or other military installations—or direct these people to organize legal, peaceful mass action?

This debate was a major one during the Vietnam War that grew in importance as the war continued to escalate even after the ma-

majority went into opposition and the protest demonstrations got truly massive.

To me this issue is the same issue as the vision of the movement. Do we have the confidence of winning over a majority of the American people and if so how do we go about it? Or do we think that only the most committed people—those willing to sacrifice and spend time in jail—can end the war?

As you know I think that the Vietnam experience confirms the former answer. Through mass, legal, peaceful demonstrations centered around the slogan of "Bring Our Troops Home Now!" we can mobilize the vast majority—American working people and their organizations—to either stop the war before it starts or end it soon after it starts.

In summary, the stakes in the Middle East are very high. The cost in lives on both sides should the U.S. start shooting is unknown, admittedly in the tens of thousands and possibly in the hundreds of thousands. The cost in dollars is already \$1.63 billion a month.

Socialist Action is optimistic that a massive movement can and will be built capable of stopping it. We urge you to join Socialist Action to work with us to build this movement, and more than that, to work for a society and a world where imperialist war will be only a horrible memory from the distant past.



Reuters/Bettman News Photo

# Intifada! Palestinians' slings and stones demoralize Zionist army

By HAYDEN PERRY

"Intifada," by Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari; Simon and Schuster; New York; 350 pages; \$22.95.

In the long history of struggle against tyrants, the oppressed have found unique ways to confront an enemy who possesses overwhelming strength. Often they have contributed a new word to the English language.

The Irish who ostracized the hated English land agent, Captain Boycott, gave us the boycott as a means of struggle. The irregular bands of Spanish peasants who staged hit-and-run raids against Napoleon's invading armies utilized the tactic of guerrilla warfare.

Now the Palestinians have given us a new word and a new method of struggle—the Intifada. With nothing more than stones and slingshots, youth in the West Bank and Gaza are defying the Israeli army of occupation. They are demonstrating that people without guns, united and determined, can frustrate a powerful military power.

"Intifada" tells how this mass movement of rebellion was born, how it is run, and why the Israelis have been unable to suppress it. As Jews the two authors had access to Israel officialdom. As objective historians they present an accurate and sympathetic account of the Palestinians' struggle. Their Zionist outlook, however, colors their conclusion.

## A full-blown uprising

The authors date the Intifada from Dec. 8, 1987, when the enraged inhabitants of Gaza responded to the killing of four Palestinians by an Israeli truck driver. They said the truck driver deliberately rammed the Palestinians' car in revenge for the death of an Israeli.

The military government in the territories has been accustomed, over the past 20 years, to sporadic outbreaks of resistance by students and other young people. But this was something different. "This time," the authors write, "the outburst was spontaneous and encompassed the entire population, young and

old, male and female, town and country, religious and secular. But above all, it was sheer numbers that catapulted the riots into a full-blown uprising." It was an Intifada.

It is an uprising without arms, using the tools of civil disobedience, boycott, commercial strikes, and harassment by stone-throwing youth. It is an uprising marked by the readiness of the Palestinians to bear the weight of casualties and suffering. They endured 500 dead and 8500 wounded in the first two years of the Intifada without weakening their resolve.

Schiff and Ya'ari say, "The Intifada began, not as a national uprising to throw off the yoke of foreign domination, but as an uprising of the poor, an awesome outburst by the forgotten and the forsaken at the bottom of the social heap. It was with a sense of nothing more to lose that thousands of refugees grabbed hoes, axes, stones, and whatever came to hand to march out and proclaim they would no longer stand for being treated like the dregs of humanity."

## New layer of leadership

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) did not base itself on this layer of Palestinians. The refugees in turn were less influenced by the national prospects the PLO held out. The refugees were responding to the slights and humiliations that the Israelis inflicted on them day after day: Being pulled off buses and searched, held up for hours at road blocks, being cheated by Israeli employers. They were taught by daily experience that Israel is a cruel place where they could never experience respect or compassion.

Out of the Intifada a new layer of leaders arose. They are men and women who have spent their entire adult lives under occupation. They scorn the older generation of leaders who have depended on careful diplomacy to relate to the occupation. Under the Israeli policy of so-called "benevolent occupation," the standard of living of some Palestinians improved, and a certain *modus vivendi* developed over 20 years.

This was not the experience of the

Palestinians in the wretched refugee camps. Out of sight, out of mind, even the PLO did not include them in their political equations. The Israelis also left the refugees to fester, ignored by everyone. Consequently the government was totally unprepared when the refugees poured out of the camps. The police were overwhelmed by the sheer masses. Often they ran away. The army had to be called in, raising serious problems for the government.

## IDF is ill-equipped

The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is a powerful military machine designed to defend Israel's borders against armed attack. It also serves to suppress "terrorism" within Israel. It is not equipped to wage war on the third front, the Intifada.

Soldiers have to leave their tanks and heavy artillery behind when they patrol the streets and roads of Gaza and the West Bank. While Israeli scientists are developing the most sophisticated, computerized weapons of war, the government equips its soldiers on occupation duty with clubs.

Military policy is to chase and club stone throwers, preferably breaking the arm that threw the stone. This practice, often seen on world TV, shocks public opinion, and brutalizes the army, but fails to halt the Intifada. The young people display their bruises as badges of honor.

When moderate force fails, more force is applied. Houses and orchards are bulldozed, curfews confine whole communities indoors, leaders are deported, and nearly 50,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned at one time or other. All this has been to no avail.

The army high command has concluded that force alone will not end the Intifada. This notion has been totally rejected by the government. The General Staff has been accused of "being soft on the Palestinians." Settlers have reviled their army and begun to form vigilante bands.

## Unified National Command

The settlers are not facing unorganized bands of stone throwers. The Intifada has

structure and leadership, with a Unified National Command (UNC) and a network of Popular Committees in every village throughout Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. Yasser Arafat wanted to co-opt the Intifada and make the Popular Committees subordinate to the PLO. But the young fighters did not want to wait for orders from PLO headquarters in Tunis.

The UNC has developed into a loose coalition of al Fatah, the Democratic Front, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian Communist Party, and the new leaders of the Intifada. Each group operates much on its own, though the PLO has become a more dominant force as Intifada leaders in the territories are caught and imprisoned by the Israelis.

An increasingly important factor in the Palestinian struggle is the Islamic Resistance Movement. The Muslims were encouraged by the Israelis because they opposed the secular PLO, and they represented the older, more conservative Palestinians.

The Muslims soon moved, however, to relate to the Intifada, setting up the Islamic Resistance Movement, known by the acronym Hamas. Operating underground, Hamas generated more revolutionary zeal than the PLO. They steered young recruits to resist the pressure of prison and torture with the added strength of religious conviction.

The Israelis have since realized they had helped nurture a more deadly force than the PLO, which only asked for a mini-state. The Islamic fundamentalists refuse to recognize Israel, and talk of a Jihad, a holy war that threatens every infidel. The government has responded with arrests and deportations, but the roots of Hamas are now deep in the Palestinian community. They are striking fear into the average Israeli as Zionists are threatened with ever more violent attacks.

## Mass deportations projected

Deportation of residents of an occupied territory is against international law, and has been used sparingly by the Israelis in recent years. But three years of Intifada has convinced many settlers that deportation of all Palestinians can be the only solution. Concern over this prospect has led the United Nations to condemn this practice in the occupied territories. There is no sign the Israelis are listening. In fact, the Israeli government is using the arrival of thousands of Soviet Jews to push out the Palestinians.

Meanwhile the PLO still holds out hope for a mini-state. Many of the Intifada tactics are attempts to create an economy and government structure that is independent of Israel. But this has been very difficult. An attempted boycott of all Israeli products had to be called off as the Palestinians suffered more than the Israelis. The Palestinians still have to work for the Israelis under their terms, and under threat of mass firings.

The authors of "Intifada" see the mini-state as the solution to the Palestinian problem. They see this development from the Zionist standpoint. They do not even speak of a state, but of a Palestinian "entity," confederated with Jordan, totally demilitarized, and subject to reoccupation at any time. This would not be a state for the Palestinians but a bantustan, or reservation, that the South African Blacks and American Indians know so well.

It is a pity that Schiff and Ya'ari, who have presented such a sympathetic view of the Intifada, should leave the Palestinians such a grim prospect as a goal for all their sacrifice. The authors cannot admit that the Palestinians have been robbed of their country; that giving them a few acres of it back is not justice. Despite this serious shortcoming "Intifada" is a valuable account of this historic struggle that is so crucial to the future of the Middle East. ■

## International Viewpoint

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The coffin of one of four PRT members killed last August is taken to burial.

## Defend Mexican Trotskyists victimized in free elections fight

By DANIEL COHEN

MEXICO CITY—Last Aug. 16, four members of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Party, PRT), the Mexican section of the Fourth International, were murdered in the town of Jolalpan in the state of Puebla while defending the Jolalpan town hall. Those directly responsible for the killing were armed groups of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the party that has ruled Mexico for 70 years.

The town council of Jolalpan was won in the local elections in November 1989 by a slate including members of the PRT. The new council took over on Feb. 15, 1990. Its victory in the elections was formally recognized by the Electoral College of the Local Chamber of Deputies, as well as by the Puebla state government authorities.

Since the day the new council took office, which was carried out in a peaceful and legal way, a group of PRI members stationed themselves at the entrances of the town hall, trying to block the town council from functioning. For months, they mounted a series of provocations, which culminated in the Aug. 16 clash.

For their part, the authorities of the state of Puebla not only refused to apprehend those responsible for the PRI attack, they proceeded to arrest other PRT members.

Following this provocation, a PRI municipal government was imposed on the town in October, arbitrarily replacing the democratically elected PRT municipal government.

One of the reasons given by the state authorities for imposing their own council was supposedly to bring to an end the violence that began on Aug. 16. The new council, however, lacked any legitimacy, as the local population had never been consulted regarding its composition. Even local PRI loyalists were put off by the fact that the new council was being headed up by a regional political boss from outside the immediate area and not one of their own.

### Stepped-up repression

Events in recent weeks have produced a dramatic change in the situation in the struggle of the people of Jolalpan.

On Dec. 5, a force of over 500 heavily armed and motorized police attacked the town in an operation in which over 200 local residents were rounded up and subjected to threats, while many were brutally beaten before being dragged away to prison.

As a result there are now 57 new political prisoners who join the seven previously arrested as a reprisal against the local commu-

nity's efforts to throw off decades of corrupt control by the ruling PRI and its corrupt local chieftains, or caciques.

The most recent repression followed several days of protests by members of the Union Regional de Ejidos y Comunidades del Sur del Estado de Puebla, URECSEP, the regional organization that brings together the democratic communal and ejidal peasants in this part of the state. The protests were carried out in response to the failure of state authorities to make good on their promises to take action to free the seven prisoners held in the state prison in the capital city of Puebla.

The illegitimate local authorities adopted a course of action aimed at overcoming by force of arms and intimidation any resistance to their rule. They brought in new police forces and deputized a group of 50 armed supporters who began to carry out operations en masse in the town against URECSEP and PRT supporters.

Homes were raided and death threats made against the leaders of the URECSEP. Then on Nov. 26, following the mysterious death of a local PRI henchman, the PRI municipal government intensified its attacks, illegally arresting three close relatives of URECSEP President Avelino Castillo, tying them up, and eventually turning them over to state authorities for prosecution.

Since the three were all engaged in the communal harvest activities alongside the other members of the community, there was no possibility of carrying through on plans to frame them on charges related to the death of the PRI henchman.

But false charges were later levied against one of the three detainees, Valentin Castillo, for having supposedly robbed a soft drink truck. Local Pepsi bottlers deny having pressed any charges in the case.

In the face of such escalating repression, a regional assembly of the URECSEP decided to begin a week of protests on Sunday, Dec. 2, to demand the release of all political prisoners, the legal recognition of the PRT city council, and an end to the repression against the peasants of the region.

At the same time it was agreed to carry out protests at the San Antonio Ranch, an area of 100 hectares of irrigated lands (the only in the region) which rightfully belong to the agricultural commune of Jolalpan but are being taken over by a North American rancher named Willis, who lives in Cuautla, Morelos.

### State attempts to frame up PRT

All of the protest activities were carried out with total success and without any violence occurring. On Dec. 2, several hundred local residents, backed by a contingent of



Avelino Castillo (white shirt), municipal president and current leader of the Regional Peasant Organization, with Rosario Ibarra de Piedra.

supporters from the Union General Obrera, Campesina, Popular/General Workers', Peasants' and Peoples' Union (UGOCP), a national organization with which the URECSEP maintains fraternal relations, carried out protests along the main highway to Jolalpan to dramatize their plight.

Then on Monday, Dec. 3, protesters moved to the San Antonio ranch, where a camp was set up to defend the land.

On Wednesday, Dec. 5, however, 11 bus loads of police moved into the area to begin a campaign of their own. Over 200 persons were detained at the San Antonio ranch alone, while police operations extended to the center of town.

State authorities tried to justify the raid based on the preposterous claim that they were attacking a guerrilla base that had been set up by the PRT along with forces loyal to Martinez Soriano, a well-known ultraleft figure with a long history of suspicious relations with state authorities. Martinez Soriano has been accused of involvement in the assassination of several socialist leaders and activists in Mexico.

As is well known, the PRT has never maintained any sort of relationship with Martinez Soriano nor does it advocate guerrilla warfare as a tactical option for Mexico. However, to back up their claim, state authorities released photos of huge caches of arms in front of a PRT banner.

The photos were clearly a product of a pre-arranged photo session which was also employed to back charges against the demonstrators that they had violated Mexican law by possessing high-powered arms. Of the more than 50 detainees who were imprisoned following the early December raids, at least 13 have been charged with felonies regarding possession of arms. The others have been falsely accused of illegal land occupations in relation to the protest at the San Antonio ranch.

Though authorities tried to justify their assault as an attack on a guerrilla base, which they claimed had been established at the San Antonio ranch, police forces carried their raid to the heart of town. PRT Municipal President Bartolo Tiempos Quintana, for example, was dragged from his home and beaten along with his wife before being taken away to the San Antonio ranch with others.

This was done despite the fact that Tiempos Quintana had been unable to attend any of the protest activities during that period. He is now being held in state prison charged with illegal arms possession. Other homes that were raided include that of Avelino Castillo, whose home was ransacked, along with his daughter's store, where police stole over 7 million pesos in family savings.

Many of the over 200 who were detained in the initial police raid were beaten before being released, as the police opted for focusing their efforts at framing up leaders of the movements and all those who had come from outside Jolalpan to express their solidarity with the movement. Of the 60 detainees, the majority were UGOCP members from the states of Veracruz and Oaxaca.

### Your support is needed

More than ever, public support is needed in order to stop the wave of repression against the people of Jolalpan. At present, the area is virtually under siege by police forces, and the growing number of prisoners are being denied access to legal counsel.

Telegrams should be sent immediately to protest the repression. These should be sent both to the governor of the state of Puebla, as well as to the National Minister of the Interior, Fernando Gutierrez Barrios.

Their addresses appear below along with the address of the National Office of the PRT, to which copies of all support letters should be sent. We are also in need of any possible financial support to help with legal costs, and publicity regarding the case. All donations should be sent in the form of an international money order to the name and address indicated below for the PRT National Office.

Protest messages should be sent to the following addresses:

- Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, Secretario de Gobernación, Bucareli, Mexico, D.F., Mexico.

- Gobernador Mariano Pina Olaya, Gobernador de Puebla, Palacio de Gobierno, Puebla, Puebla, Mexico.

Donations and copies of all messages of support should be sent to: Simon Castillejos, Xola 181, Colonia Alamos, C.P.03400, Mexico, D.F., Mexico. ■

# Walesa elected president; instability still continues

WARSAW—The second round of Poland's presidential elections gave Lech Walesa the easy victory that was expected. With every prominent Polish politician and media personality united behind him, Walesa captured three-quarters of the vote.

His opponent, "Stan" Tyminski, had been subjected to a devastating campaign of personal denunciation. (Earlier, Polish TV showed interviews with Tyminski's neighbors in Canada, who accused him of everything from wife-beating to starving his children.)

The West had made it clear that a good score for Tyminski would jeopardize trade and credit relations. The Roman Catholic Church, still a very powerful force in Polish politics, had called on the faithful to vote for Walesa. In these circumstances, Walesa's victory was never in doubt.

Nevertheless, Walesa and his supporters were far from happy after the voting was over. First, the very fact that Walesa had to face a complete unknown in the run-off second round detracted from his victory.

Second, despite the frantic appeals to "patriotic Poles" to vote against Tyminski and avert a national disaster, the turn-out was well down on the first round, amounting to just over 50 percent of eligible voters.

Third, Walesa had to make a series of conciliatory gestures towards Mazowiecki (the outgoing president) and his supporters to secure the votes of their electorate.

The victory celebrations were therefore much more muted than anyone could have imagined before the election campaign began. And the nationalistic rhetoric and exaggerated religious imagery of Walesa's inauguration could not conceal the fact that the Polish political system had moved into a new and deeper phase of instability and crisis.

## Unable to form government

The two weeks that elapsed between Walesa's election and the Christmas holidays were enough to prove that the real problems were only beginning. Unable to assemble a cabinet, select a premier, or define any concrete policies for whatever government would finally be appointed, Walesa began to back down on his campaign promises one by one.

Walesa's basic campaign slogan had been that of a "speedup"—a process of accelerated political reform (rapid elections to parliament) and also economic reform (faster privatization and marketization). He had fiercely criticized the hardship caused by Mazowiecki government's economic policies. And he had promised to square accounts with the Stalinist bureaucrats who still occupy the dominant position in the Polish civil service and economy.

Yet, just before Christmas, Walesa was forced to suggest that it might be best if the Mazowiecki government carry on as before—despite Mazowiecki's having received a resounding vote of "no confidence" from the Polish people in the first round of the elections (only 18 percent of the votes cast). As an alternative, Walesa proposed any gov-



Is Lech Walesa praying for a miracle? How can he implement policies overwhelmingly rejected in elections?

**'...the Polish workers are not about to accept the unemployment and poverty that comes with the tyranny of the capitalist market.'**

ernment appointed by himself be given an extended term of office, delaying the parliamentary elections scheduled for the spring by another full year. Hardly the "speedup" he had promised!

The essential problem Walesa faces in putting together a government centers on the figure of Leszek Balcerowicz, vice-premier in the Mazowiecki cabinet and the author of its economic program—the so-called "Balcerowicz plan."

While critical of this plan during the election campaign, Walesa now claims it represents the only real possibility of modernizing Poland's economy. Under heavy pressure from the capitalists in the West and the bureaucrats in the economic apparatus, Walesa now concedes that Balcerowicz will have to

play an important part in the new government.

This has raised a storm of protest from Walesa's own supporters, particularly from the rank and file of Solidarity. Balcerowicz is firmly identified with a policy of mass unemployment, recession, and widespread pauperization. The votes for both Walesa and Tyminski were primarily votes *against* Balcerowicz.

Poland's voters overwhelmingly rejected the policy of preparing the way for a restoration of capitalism by slashing living standards and selling off the country's factories. Yet this is what Walesa is now proposing.

Walesa is now caught between the devil and the deep blue sea—in more ways than one, in fact. To retain his base of mass support, he must distance himself from the economic policies of the Mazowiecki government. But he himself is fully committed to restoring capitalism. As he is now finding out, there is no "painless" way to do this. It requires an all-out attack on the living standards of working people, the very people who form his base of support. This is why he is compelled to call on the services of Balcerowicz.

Moreover, the project of capitalist restoration also needs the assistance of Western capital—as Walesa has repeatedly declared himself. Yet Western capital will only be prepared to move into Poland when they see the working class has been defeated and demoralized, docile enough to accept the terms that Western capital itself dictates.

This is the road that Balcerowicz has been proposing, and the West is demanding more of the same, threatening to withdraw support from Walesa if he changes course.

(The U.S. State Department is the most vociferous supporter of Balcerowicz becoming the new premier; indeed, the first meeting between Walesa and Balcerowicz was arranged by the U.S. ambassador.)

Finally, Walesa is beginning to realize that he cannot deliver on the last of his campaign promises either—that of squaring accounts with the Stalinist bureaucracy. In the first place, he cannot run the country without their assistance; not for a very long

time, at any rate. Their stranglehold on Poland's administrative and economic infrastructure is still practically absolute.

Secondly, it is the Stalinists who hold the key to any real attempt to restore capitalism. They alone have the funds and connections, and they alone are properly placed to constitute the "first wave" of home-grown capitalists.

Thirdly, should the going begin to get rough, it is the Stalinists, still well entrenched in the army and police, that Walesa will have to call on to get him out of trouble.

## Rumblings among rank and file

At the time of this writing, Walesa has been in office only 18 days. Yet it is already clear that his presidency will make no change in the disastrous policies pursued by the Mazowiecki government.

Just like Mazowiecki, Walesa remains a political prisoner of both Western capital and the country's Stalinist bureaucrats. It is these people who are calling the tune in Poland today—and Walesa shows no signs of opposing their plans to restore capitalism through a vicious attack on Polish workers' living standards.

The difference, however, is that most Polish workers emerged from the election campaign—and the strikes which accompanied it—with a new sense of self-confidence. They had accomplished what they had set out to do: bring down the Mazowiecki government and display their rejection of the "Balcerowicz plan." Walesa can have few illusions that they will now stand back and accept the same policies from him.

In fact, the last few weeks have already seen the beginnings of a certain recomposition within the Polish labor movement. In a few regions, new rank-and-file structures have emerged within Solidarity, opposed to both Walesa and Mazowiecki. In several key industrial plants, splits within Solidarity have led to the creation of new, extremely militant, left-wing structures. This includes the Crakow Steel Works, employing over 40,000 and the FSO car factory in Warsaw, employing 22,000.

The basic contradiction in Poland remains as it was: the contradiction between the project of merciless capitalist restoration pursued by the country's pro-imperialist politicians, and the project of real democracy and social justice which inspired the founding of Solidarity and continues to inspire many working people.

Under Walesa's presidency, this contradiction can only become more acute. Having fought for 10 solid years to overthrow the tyranny of Stalinism, the Polish workers are not about to accept the unemployment and poverty that comes with the tyranny of the capitalist market. ■

**POLAND:  
The fight  
for workers'  
democracy**



**SOLIDARNOSC**

By Zbigniew Kowalewski  
with an introduction and article by Carl Finamore

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# The Gulf War: What it means and how to stop it

(Statement by Socialist Action Political Committee)

President George Bush, and America's ruling capitalist class, have unleashed the most destructive air armada the world has ever seen against the 17 million people of Iraq. However, the real immediate target of "Desert Storm" (the code-name for the U.S.-led strike launched on Jan. 16) is the 200 million-strong Arab nation, carved up into separate states over the past century by the Western colonialists.

From Northern Africa to the Persian Gulf the Arab nation, parceled out as booty among the imperialist brigands, has been in virtually unending revolt since the beginning of this century. In a cascading series of uprisings, Arabs, along with hundreds of millions of other captive peoples of the world, have fought for and achieved a condition of semi-independence from Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Austria—to name only the main imperialist oppressors.

In the course of the colonial revolution most of the old-style colonies won their political "independence"—many of them only since the end of World War II.

But as the vassal states won a measure of independence they were immediately subjugated by a new kind of capitalist imperialism which continues to reign over and super-exploit the neo-colonial world by virtue of its enormous economic power. Kings, princes, and military and civilian dictators of all kinds are regularly installed and replaced by mighty international banking and industrial corporations—backed up by the military might of the most developed industrial powers in the capitalist world.

And standing above them all is the super-imperialism of the American ruling class, the richest and most powerful of the new colonialist powers.

## The U.S. government: world cop

The U.S. military colossus, before World War II, sent its marines mainly to maintain "order" in its Latin American backyard. But, since the second big redivision of the colonial world among the victors after WWII, American military power has increasingly functioned as a central force for maintaining imperialist world domination.

And now, ever since Stalinist dictatorship began to crack under the impact of the upsurge that swept Eastern Europe starting in the autumn of 1989, the role of world protector of profits and privilege has definitively passed to the ruling class of the United States. President Bush's proclaimed "New



World Order" signifies American military power standing at the head of an unholy alliance of capitalist imperialists and their puppet regimes, and Stalinist bureaucratic despots.

All the world's direct and indirect exploitative regimes are compelled to unite in defense of profits and privilege wherever it is challenged. But because of profound differences among them caused by a deepening crisis in the world economy, they find it increasingly difficult to hold together.

United in defense of their power and privileges against the world's great majority of exploited and oppressed peoples, they are increasingly riven by conflict over the distribution among themselves of the wealth systematically expropriated from the world's laboring peoples. This inherently contradictory process requires a powerful super-arbiter to act in their collective interests when they begin to fight among themselves. American imperialism's role in the New World Order is to police its partners in the ruling alliance, as well as its rebellious victims.

That's the real meaning of the American-

led imperialist assault on Iraq. The stakes are far higher than a fight over who shall reap the greatest share of the oil profits produced in the Persian Gulf. The very existence of the present world social order is threatened by an impending economic catastrophe that promises to severely aggravate the existing divisions between the ruling groups. Only this economic reality can explain the present war crisis which has resulted in the U.S. president's decision to risk tens of thousands of American lives in the face of the most widespread and vigorous opposition to war in American history.

The Iraqi regime, wracked by a crisis partly resulting from their eight-year war with Iran and partly from hostile economic action by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, took a course of action highly inimical to the interests of the imperialist world. [See the last four issues of this newspaper for detailed documentation.] This led to the ultimatum issued by George Bush to Saddam Hussein and the people of Iraq.

It seems highly unlikely that Saddam Hussein will capitulate to the Commander-in-Chief of the New World Order despite the awesome military power unleashed. The Iraqi regime is showing that it believes it has less to lose by fighting back.

The commitment they seem to have made to take on the American-led imperialist Goliath flows from a belief that they can cut a better deal for Iraq by basing themselves on the militant determination of the one million-strong Iraqi army, backed up by the equally determined support of the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people, the Arab nation as a whole, and last but not least the opposition by the American people to imperialist war taking its heavy toll of dead and maimed American men and women in uniform.

## Tactics for antiwar movement

Even before the shooting started on Jan. 17 the temperature of antiwar sentiment had been rising to a boiling point. Demonstrations, often entirely spontaneous, erupted in cities throughout the nation. And such protests, more widespread than anyone could have expected, also broke out in places which had not seen such actions even during the Vietnam War era.

Two major antiwar demonstrations, scheduled to take place in both Washington D.C. and in San Francisco on Jan. 19 and 26 have been gathering an accelerating momentum. Moreover, symptomatically, groups of demonstrators began unscheduled demonstrations on bridges and streets in a multitude of large and small cities throughout the land.

Many of these peaceful protest actions spilled over into civil disobedience—blocking traffic on bridges and city streets—testifying to the rising temper of opposition.

Similar protests are beginning to proliferate throughout Europe. Besides independently mobilized massive actions ranging from England to Germany, many European antiwar groups and coalitions are scheduled to join the giant Jan. 26 actions planned for both coasts of the United States. The next big days of protest, it seems clear, will increasingly take place on a world scale.

Thus, while Bush makes token declarations of opposition to Gorbachev's crack-down on Lithuanian protestors, he is faced with a similar potentially revolutionary dynamic beginning to unfold throughout the imperialist camp.

There is much evidence of the unprecedented depths being reached at such an early stage in the Gulf War. More participation by main line trade unions have already been registered here and abroad. In the San Francisco region alone, six Bay Area Central Labor Councils have endorsed the Jan. 26 march and rally against the war.

Another symptom is a "March for Peace" planned to take place in San Francisco on Jan. 21 by Black community organizations commemorating Martin Luther King's birthday. Even before the shooting began it was re-oriented by its organizers to focus on a protest against the impending war. And within minutes of the dropping of the first bombs on Baghdad, demonstrators began to appear at pre-selected sites scheduled by antiwar coalitions for the day the threatened shooting war would begin.

Thus on Jan. 17, places like the Federal Building in San Francisco attracted over 30,000 protestors, and the next day tens of thousands more demonstrated at the same site early in the morning and closed it down. This was another symptom of a previously unequalled national opposition to an American war.

In addition to these planned and partially planned demonstrations, a television reporter covering one entirely unplanned at the San Francisco Stock Exchange on the same day noted that in his view the selection of this site by what in his opinion seemed to be a spontaneous demonstration by a cross-section of the population signified a surprising "rise in mass consciousness."

## Need for peaceful, legal protests

The criminal war on the Arab people can be brought to a halt, just as the assault on the Vietnamese people was halted by millions marching in the streets of America. The Jan. 19th, 21st and 26th mass mobilizations point the way. The American people can stop this crime against the Arab nation and the entire human race by way of a relentless series of peaceful and legal marches, demonstrations and protest meetings around the central demand: "Bring U.S. Troops Home Now!"

Every such mobilization, showing clearly where the overwhelming majority stand, contributes to ever larger mobilizations that will ultimately prove to be irresistible.

But antiwar activists and their organizations must be on guard against letting their natural outrage, triggered by the criminal assault on the Arab people, lead them away from constitutionally guaranteed peaceful, legal mass protest. The criminal U.S. capitalist government will be sure to try to hold the movement as a whole responsible for any poorly considered reflex action taken by a small minority of the movement.

Moreover, the Vietnam War experience shows that the secret police agencies of federal, state and local governments are capable of attempting to dupe innocent and sincere protestors into taking illegal actions. In fact the official record of those days proves that these police agencies hired and paid for provocateurs to carry out illegal acts which it then sought to blame on law-abiding peaceful protestors. [See "COINTELPRO," the documented account from government records of these and other illegal acts by the FBI and other secret police agencies.]

The organizations of working people have a special responsibility to help build effective mass peaceful protest. The experiences of trade unionists and civil and human rights fighters are especially relevant to guide the struggle under today's conditions. And they will be serving, at the same time, to advance their own class interests as well as the interests of the great majority of the people. ■

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# Mass movement topples military ruler of Bangladesh

BY MALIK MIAH

In the past year, popular revolts have brought down Stalinist regimes throughout Eastern Europe. The working people of these countries and the Soviet Union are beginning for the first time in decades to engage in real politics. New organizations have been formed; political debates on history and most importantly on what to do next to turn around their economies are sharp and very lively. The new regimes' authority among the people is based on their actions. If they falter in rooting out the old ways, the people are back in the streets. (The best example is Romania.)

While Poland, Germany, and the Soviet Union have been front-page news for months, the fight for democratic change is not limited to the deformed and degenerated workers' states ruled by bureaucratic castes. Mass protests demanding an end to dictatorial capitalist rule are taking place in many other countries. A prime example is in one of the poorest countries of the world: Bangladesh, a South Asian nation of some 115 million people with an annual per-capita income under \$75.

On Dec. 4, 1990, General Muhammed Ershad's military-backed "civilian" regime resigned. President Ershad came to power in a military coup in 1982. Ershad's downfall was a direct result of mass agitation that began Oct. 1.

Ataus Samad reporting for *India Abroad* from Dhaka, the country's capital, writes: "The death toll in the clashes between pro-democracy demonstrators and the police, military and paramilitary troops rose to 70 in five days, and yet the people kept coming out on the streets.

"The main opposition alliances then confronted the regime with a

continuous countrywide strike. The government was no longer sustainable."

This powerful movement was led by students. "The struggle was spearheaded by the students of Dhaka and all other universities and colleges, even higher secondary schools," reports *India Abroad* correspondent Bhabani Sen Gupta from New Delhi, India. "It rapidly spread to teachers, intellectuals, the middle classes and even the civil service. Only at a late stage was it adopted by the political parties.

"Newspapers remained closed for four days because journalists refused to work under press censorship.

"Ershad declared a National Emergency on Nov. 27 and clamped curfews on all major cities and towns. But the people broke the curfews, ignored the Emergency and came out in human waves of challenges to the regime."

## Protests oust Ershad

On Dec. 3 the army chief of staff broke with Ershad, and the 37,000-member government bureaucracy threatened to resign if Ershad did not step down.

Fearing an even greater mass revolt that could go beyond the leadership of the pro-capitalist opposition parties, Ershad resigned. On Dec. 6 the Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was chosen acting president. And for the first time since Bangladesh came into existence in 1971 after a war of national liberation from Pakistan, free elections were scheduled for Feb. 27, 1991, for 300 parliamentary seats.

Ershad and several of his top aides have been placed under house arrest. The democratic movement is demanding their prosecution on charges of corruption, abuse of power, misappropriation of public

## Which Side Are You On?

By  
Malik Miah



funds, and laundering of money. They're also demanding the immediate arrest and punishment of the armed thugs who were used by Ershad's Jatiyo Party against the opposition.

Whether the elections are free and democratic is not yet decided. All previous Bangladesh governments took power through coups or assassinations. They all promised free elections. Most of the elections called to legitimize any of these governments, however, were marred by fraud and vote-rigging. So far the military has not intervened in the new situation.

Some 100 parties plan to participate in the elections. The main contenders are led by Sheik Hasina Wazed of the Awami League, and Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Both are pro-capitalist formations that ruled the country once before.

The pro-working class and peasant parties are extremely weak.

But the people's taste of their power will not be forgotten quickly. The big challenge facing the socialist left is to begin constructing a political party rooted among the workers and peasants

that can mobilize the working people and students to defend their democratic opening and move to establish their own government. ■

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# How the U.S. recruited Nazis to fight communism

## A chronicle of the protection and use of Nazi war criminals to fight the Cold War

By PAUL SIEGEL

Christopher Simpson, "Blowback: America's Recruitment of Nazis and Its Effects on the Cold War." Weidenfeld & Nicolson, New York, 1988. 398 pp. \$19.95.

According to the mythology of the American media, the Cold War was a struggle between "democracy" and "communism," in which the superior values of democracy (espoused by the U.S. government) finally triumphed. Linked with the political values of democracy were the spiritual values exemplified by the Catholic Church, which maintained a brave fight against suppression in Eastern Europe.

In reality, the United States government has been concerned with furthering the interests of American capitalism rather than promoting democratic values, as is testified by its secret use of thousands of Nazis and Nazi collaborators—including mass murderers.

This book is the first comprehensive scholarly study of what took place. Its author, Christopher Simpson, did a tremendous amount of research, using governmental records acquired through the Freedom of Information Act, libraries all over the world, and interviews with those having to do with the government's program of using and

shielding Nazi criminals.

An example of the U.S. government's Nazi agents was Baron Otto von Bolschwing, one of the CIA's highest-ranking contract employees after the war, whose job was to infiltrate spies into Hungary and Romania. Von Bolschwing had been a close associate of Adolf Eichmann, working in his "Jewish Affairs" office, which was the center of the Nazis' campaign to exterminate the Jews.

As SS operations chief in Bucharest in 1941, Von Bolschwing, according to captured German war records, "personally helped organize a coup attempt and pogrom led by the Romanian Iron Guard. ... Some victims [of the pogrom] were actually butchered in a municipal meat-packing plant, hung on meathooks, and branded as 'kosher meat' with red-hot irons."

In 1953 the CIA secretly brought Von Bolschwing to the United States, providing

## BOOK REVIEW

him with a false record to do so. When this was discovered, the CIA admitted that it knew of his SS career but claimed that it did not know that he was a war criminal—even though the war records telling of his involvement in the Bucharest pogrom had been thoroughly combed by American experts.

### Approved by top officials

In fact, it was because of Von Bolschwing's connection with the Iron Guard that he was of particular use to the CIA. The experienced anti-Soviet fighters of

World War II were used to gather intelligence about the USSR and Eastern Europe; to train U.S. specialists in intelligence, propaganda, and covert warfare; to recruit emigrés for sabotage and assassinations within the USSR (most of them were quickly caught by Soviet counter-espionage); and for prospective guerrilla warfare following a nuclear war.

The program was secretly approved by top officials, beginning with Attorney General Tom Clark. Involved in it were State Department officials devoted to Soviet affairs who engineered Cold War strategy through several administrations, Democratic and Republican.

A source of strength of the program was General Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler's senior intelligence officer on the Soviet front, who made a deal with the United States authorities and subsequently (under the patronage of the United States) became the head of West German intelligence. Gehlen had amassed a great deal of intelligence from 4 million Soviet prisoners of war who were tortured and deliberately starved to death unless they revealed information and joined the "liberation army" sponsored by the Nazis.

The attitude of Allen Dulles, the head of the CIA, toward Gehlen seems to have been the attitude of the American higher-ups toward the Nazi criminals in general. "There are few archbishops in espionage," he said. "Besides, one needn't ask him to one's club." Without a doubt, Dulles also evenhandedly excluded Blacks, Jews, and women from his club.

Another source of strength for the program was the ties that the CIA established with

factions in the Catholic Church. The majority of the governments of Eastern Europe allied with Nazi Germany during the war were led by Catholic political parties. These parties, Simpson writes, "used the mantle and the moral authority of the church to help carry out the preparations for, and in some cases the actual execution of, the Nazi genocide of the Jews."

### Nazis and the Church

Intermarium, a far-right Catholic lay organization made up mainly of Eastern European exiles (whose name, "between the seas," expressed its ambition for a new Holy Roman Empire stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Aegean Sea) became during the war, in the words of a U.S. Army intelligence report, "an instrument of the German intelligence."

After the war, Intermarium was active in smuggling Nazis out of Eastern Europe and became "one of the single most important sources of recruits for the CIA's exile committees" as well as for CIA-controlled organizations such as Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberation, and the Assembly of Captive European Nations.

The work of the fronts was supplemented by covert operations. Simpson points out, "The CIA's present techniques for virtually every type of covert operation, from black propaganda [misinformation by secret agents] to murder, were first formulated during the agency's work with the Eastern European collaborationist troops it inherited from the Nazis."

The crumbling of Stalinism has brought great gains for the masses of Eastern Europe, but it has at the same time cleared the stage for future struggles by contending forces. Among the forces that have emerged are Iron Guardists in Romania, neo-Nazis in East Germany, and chauvinist groups in other countries. As the working class in seeking to retain its gains carries its struggle in the direction of socialist democracy, the CIA—which used such reactionary groups in the past—may well turn to them again. ■



# Martin Luther King's birthday defiled by Gulf war deadline

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Polls have shown that African Americans form the largest core of opposition to the government's pro-war policy in the Middle East.

Recently, many Blacks were deeply angered when President Bush appropriated the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. to serve the cause of the U.S. war machine. Dr. King's birthdate, Jan. 15, is the deadline for a possible military strike against Iraq.

Martin Luther King worked tirelessly for world peace. He spoke out against the war in Vietnam. And his anniversary celebrations have become a national day of opposition to racism. There is a deadly cynicism involved in the fact that on that day the signal could be given to send thousands of African-American youth to die in a new war.

Many Black community leaders are raising their voices in protest. "Of all the dates, they had to choose that one!" said Father Jim Goode of San Francisco's St. Paul of the Shipwreck Church. "I am outraged. That is the birthday of a man of nonviolence."

Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, also expressed her anger, emphasizing that she and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change are strongly opposed to U.S. military involvement in the Middle East. At a news conference in New York last month, she explained that if Dr. King were alive today, he would be speaking out against war in the Gulf.

Soon afterwards, the King Center and the Black community as a whole received a strong slap in the face when the Bush administration approved Gen. Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as Grand Marshall of the King birthday celebration in Atlanta. Amidst growing controversy, Powell later wrote Mrs. King that he would decline the honor.

Gen. Powell professes to be an admirer of Martin Luther King and his work. But Powell, a major strategist of the Gulf war operation as well as the brutal invasion of Panama, obviously chooses to ignore King's strong opposition to the government's war policies. During the last year of his life especially, King was a vocal opponent of the war in Vietnam.

## King's soul-searching

Martin Luther King decided to speak out against the Vietnam War belatedly and only after much soul-searching. Other civil rights leaders (who feared a break with the Democratic Party) advised him to ignore the issue.

In early 1965, President Lyndon Johnson ordered a new massive troop call-up and the



Flip Schulke

**"We are willing to make the Negro 100 percent of a citizen in warfare, but reduce him to 50 percent of a citizen on American soil."**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

bombing of North Vietnam. King finally decided he had to protest. At Virginia State College on July 5, 1965, he said, "I'm not going to sit by and see war escalated without saying anything about it. ... The war in Vietnam must be stopped. There must be a negotiated settlement with the Vietcong."

For those few words, King was called to order by the self-proclaimed "friends of the movement" in the Democratic Party. For a while, he avoided the issue of the war in his speeches. But he could not stay silent.

For one thing, a new generation of Black youth had challenged Dr. King in his philosophy of non-violence. How could he

preach to them about turning the other cheek, they asked, and say little or nothing about the violence that the U.S. government was using in Vietnam?

"Their questions hit home," King admitted in a speech in New York's Riverside Church (April 4, 1967), "and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government."

In addition, King was becoming increasingly concerned that the government had broken its promises to alleviate poverty in

the Black inner cities. He connected that failure with the war. As far as Blacks were concerned, LBJ's "Guns and Butter" project was a bitter illusion.

"The security we profess to seek in foreign adventures," King said on Feb. 25, 1967, "we will lose in our decaying cities. We are willing to make the Negro 100 percent of a citizen in warfare, but reduce him to 50 percent of a citizen on American soil. Half of all the Negroes live in substandard housing, and he has half the income of whites."

## Vietnam War was racist

King was disturbed at the casualty rate among Black GIs—who hadn't had the ability to obtain student deferments from the draft, as less poverty-stricken whites had. He pointed out, "There were twice as many Negroes in combat in Vietnam at the beginning of 1967, and twice as many died in action—20.6 percent—in proportion to their number in the population as whites."

(Unfortunately, Black people stand to take the brunt of the casualties again today. According to some reports, close to one-third of the troops—including 44 percent of the women—stationed in the Gulf region are Black. But African Americans are only 13 percent of the population.)

Finally, Martin Luther King was appalled at the immorality of the U.S. government's conduct of the war. He believed that he had to speak out against the government not only on behalf of African Americans, but as a person who was at one with the Vietnamese people whose lives were being destroyed.

In his Riverside Church speech, King declared: "Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed. I speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam."

"I speak as a citizen of the world," King continued, "for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours."

Several days later—on April 15, 1967—Dr. King spoke from the platform of a giant antiwar rally in New York. Some 400,000 people participated in what was the largest march and rally in American history until that time.

If King were here today, he would surely join us in the forefront of the new movement to bring the troops home now. He would demand that the tragedy of Vietnam never be repeated. ■

# South Africa: Death toll rises as ANC debates strategy

By MALIK MIAH

The political situation for Blacks in South Africa remains difficult. While President F.W. de Klerk pledges to negotiate a new non-racial constitution, Blacks still can't vote and they face daily violence from the police and government-backed vigilantes.

Supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party led by Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi have been given a green light by the government to lead violent attacks on more radical-minded Blacks in the townships. The police and army only show up after attacks have taken place, or when those attacked prepare to defend themselves.

The government's strategy is clear: push

the ANC and its central leader Nelson Mandela to meet as equals with Buthelezi (and government-backed Bantustan leaders) in order to stop the violence. De Klerk charges that the ANC's failure to do so raises questions about its future role in negotiating a non-apartheid South Africa.

So far, the ANC has refused the government's maneuver and has called on the police and army to stop the violence they are abetting. In addition, the ANC recently decided that its "armed wing" would help defend Black communities from violent attacks. The organization of Black self-defense guards would mark a major policy shift.

It was in this context of ongoing state-inspired violence that the African National

Congress held its first legal conference in more than 30 years in Johannesburg, Dec. 14-16.

## Tension at ANC conference

The consultative conference (a full-scale congress to elect a new leadership is scheduled for mid-June) was the first time the leadership of the ANC and its rank-and-file members were able to review the situation in South Africa and evaluate the strategy followed by the National Executive Committee (NEC) since the ANC's legalization last February.

There was obvious tension between the more militant delegates and the elder leaders. As reported by the media, the younger ANC

delegates in particular questioned the policy of carrying out private negotiations with the de Klerk government at the same time that the ANC has given up its commitment to "armed struggle." The ANC suspended its guerrilla warfare on Aug. 6. Mandela and de Klerk have met twice, in May and August.

The more militant delegates were also critical of the leadership's willingness to soften the ANC's call for international sanctions at a time when the United States, Japan, and Western Europe want to "reward" de Klerk for his modest reforms of apartheid.

In September, President Bush welcomed de Klerk to Washington. It was the first time in 45 years that a South African head of state has paid an official visit to the United States. Britain and Italy have already lifted all restrictions on new investment in South Africa.

In December, Nelson Mandela urged the 12 European Community (EC) heads of government to keep sanctions at least until early 1991, hinting at a change of ANC pol-

(continued on page 4)