



Shukur Ali, Vietnam vet

## More GIs sent to Gulf, antiwar protests grow

### Which slogan— 'Out Now' or 'Negotiations'?

By JEFF MACKLER

Today's rapid rise of the movement against U.S. intervention in the Middle East can be explained largely by the hard-won lessons of the Vietnam War era.

First among these is the simple idea that the United States, the self-proclaimed policeman of the world, has no right to intervene in the affairs of other nations; that these nations have the right to self-determination.

Support for the concept of self-determination today is captured in the slogan, "Bring the Troops Home Now," or alternately, "No U.S. Intervention in the Middle East."

These slogans—the dominant themes put forward during the national demonstrations of Oct. 20, 1990—express the deeply held opinions of a significant number of the American people that the United States has no rights in the Middle East whatsoever.

In opposition to and/or sometimes to "complement" the "Bring the Troops Home Now" slogan, a portion of those active in the new antiwar movement have raised a variety of slogans calling on the U.S. government to "Negotiate a Peaceful Solution."

This idea takes several forms, ranging from "Negotiate, Don't Escalate!" to "For a Peaceful Diplomatic Solution," to a call for a United Nations rather than a U.S.-negotiated solution.

At first glance, the idea of a negotiated solution in the Middle East seems reasonable and practical. Everyone who prefers peace to war should prefer negotiations to mass killing.

This sentiment is deeply rooted in the consciousness of the American people, who have indicated in every poll that they want the government to avoid a shooting war.

But the negotiations demand has another dimension, a fatal flaw, which poses a grave danger to the new antiwar movement.

It assumes that the United States, or for that matter, the United Nations, has a right to be a party to the negotiations process.

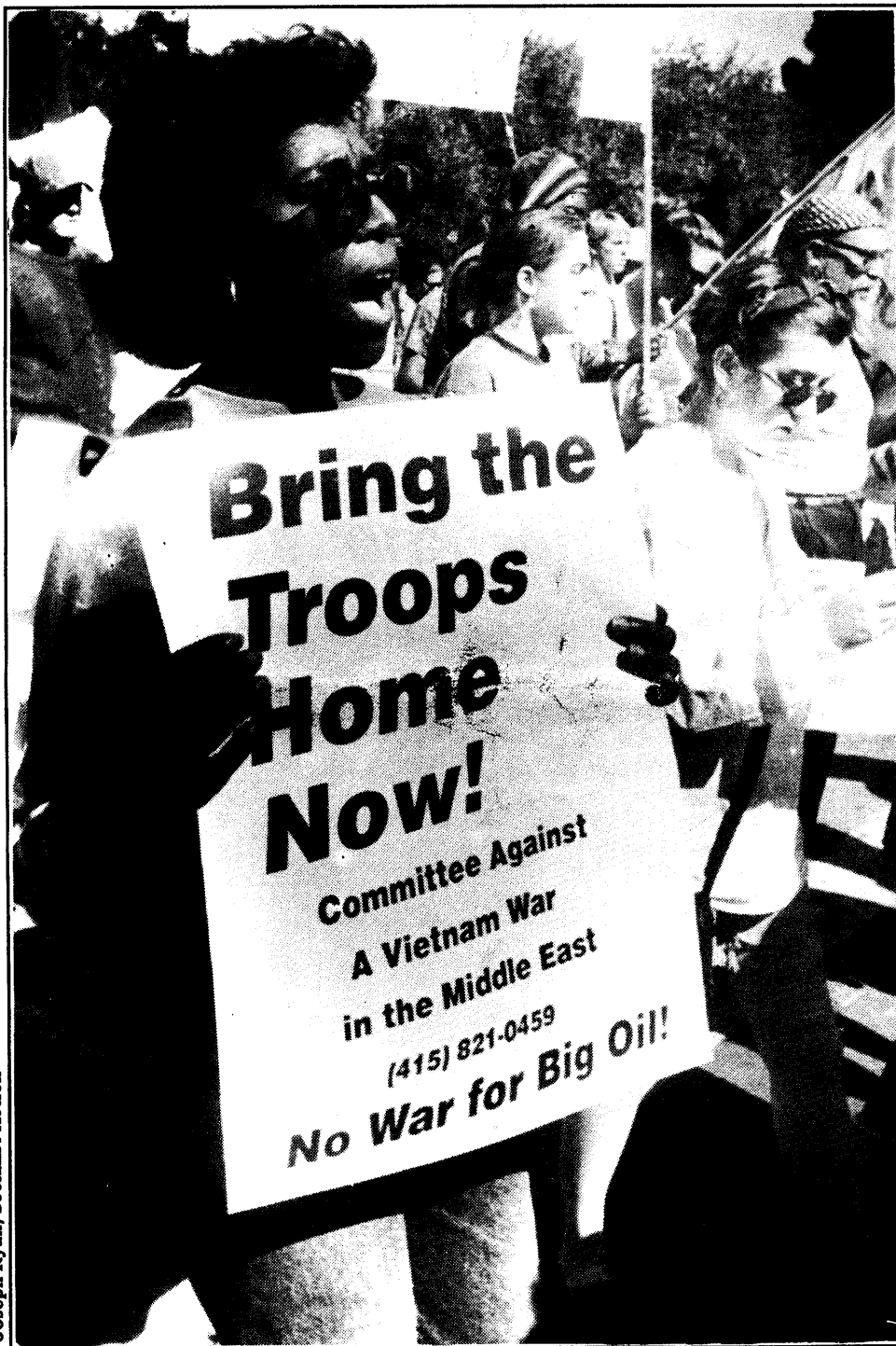
It assumes that the sending of 300,000 troops to Saudi Arabia, like the sending of U.S. troops to Vietnam, justifies U.S. participation in a resolution to the "conflict."

If thieves enter your residence and point guns at your head, demanding your possessions, are they justified in engaging you in the "negotiations" process? It is true that in this situation, you, as the victim, might feel compelled to negotiate.

But would you expect your friends to insist that you and the thieves are on the same plane? Or would you, if you had the power, insist that the thieves withdraw immediately?

The U.S. thief in the Middle East has no negotiation rights. It was the United States and its allies which carved up the region in the first place, imposing their will by force

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Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

Over 7000 demonstrated in San Francisco on Oct. 20

BY MALIK MIAH

The body bags are beginning to return home. Public support for war is eroding. But Washington is stepping up its war preparations, with plans to raise the number of troops in the Persian Gulf to over 300,000 by year's end.

On Oct. 20, successful antiwar protests took place in over 25 cities across the country and in many other cities around the world (including Paris, where 20,000 marched in protest of U.S. and French troop actions in the Middle East.)

The largest demonstration in this country took place in New York City, where 15,000 to 20,000 people marched and rallied. A giant yellow banner over the speakers' platform declared: "Fight for Social Justice, Not Big Oil! Bring the Troops Home Now!"

Several banners in the crowd demanded: "Free Jeff Paterson!" Paterson is a young Marine who is being held in the stockade in Hawaii for refusing to go into battle in the Gulf.

Seven army reservists who are refusing to fight were introduced from the speakers' platform. "I think the money we're spending to restore a royalist family to the throne of Kuwait could be better spent back home," said reservist Stephanie Atkinson in a press conference just before the demonstration.

Leslie Cagan of the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East told the New York rally that there is a need for "a diverse, mass, grassroots-based movement in this country demanding the immediate unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. military in the Persian Gulf."

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, 7000 protesters marched through sections of the city's Black and Hispanic communities. The main sponsors of the demonstration were the Emergency Committee Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East and the Committee Against a Vietnam War in the Middle East (CAVME, which also organized a Sept. 14 teach-in at the University of California Berkeley, attended by close to 2000 people).

Smaller numbers marched in other cities,

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## Congress approves new budget: Higher taxes and fewer services

By HAYDEN PERRY

Last month, a budget bill was finally passed—but at heavy cost to the American working class. Leading Democrats and Republicans say the new budget will reduce the massive government deficit.

In truth, the new agreement will hit the American working class with new taxes and fewer social benefits. The new budget continues to protect the capital gains of the rich. Tax loopholes for them remain wide open.

After months of public wrangling between the White House and Congress over how much to take from working people, in the end the Democratic-controlled Congress

voted to raise the maximum income rate from 28 percent to 31 percent. The new income taxes and other regressive sales taxes are supposed to increase government revenues by \$165 billion.

While the Democrats are beating their breasts as champions of the poor, their "soak the rich" rhetoric is largely a misrepresentation. They and their Republican counterparts use such rhetoric only to appeal to voters. Both parties, over the last decade in particular, have rushed to find tax breaks for the rich and lower the real income of working people. Today even two-income families are having a difficult time paying for basic necessities.

The talk about the Treasury obtaining big revenue from the super rich "is all garbage," according to a former official of the Reagan administration quoted by *The New York Times*. The article points out that the new law is so complex that some taxpayers earning over \$200,000 could end up paying less tax than before.

In 1988, the Internal Revenue Service reports, 472 couples and individuals earning \$200,000 or more (with a total income of \$211 million) paid no income tax at all. Of the high-income people who paid taxes, about 9300 paid less than 5 percent. An additional 17,082 reduced their liability to less

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# Eyewitness report of U.S. atrocities in Panama



## Fightback

By  
Sylvia Weinstein

Here is the story of one Panamanian woman during the U.S. invasion of her country on Dec. 20, 1989.

She is the mother of 16 children and several grandchildren who lived in her home at that time. I met her in Havana, Cuba, during the conference of the Federation of Cuban Women which began on Oct. 16 of this year. For six days, we were roommates in the same dorm.

They had heard rumors for days that the United States would invade their country. But she really didn't believe it. They had been friends with many North Americans and just did not believe that they would make war on the people of Panama.

She was awakened out of a sound sleep on Dec. 20 by the sound of helicopters over her home. Her 10-year-old grandson ran into her room crying. They looked out the window and could see lights and fires all around them. Then bullets began to smash through her windows. She and her grandson and daughter (with her two-week-old baby) dove under the bed to escape being killed.

Soon, loud-speakers began to demand that all people leave the building. She didn't want to, but realized that her house was burning. When she and her family went into the street, there were U.S. soldiers and tanks all over the place. They were ordering people out of the burning neighborhood.

Many people had sons, daughters, and other relatives in the neighborhood and wanted to run and help them out of the burning inferno—but the soldiers would not let them. They had to stand by while their meager possessions were burned into the ground. This particular woman lost her home and everything else she owned.

### The concentration camp

The troops demanded that all people in that area go to a camp which had been set up by U.S. troops. They told them they could get food, water, and shelter at the camp. Many, however, first wanted to find their families. But brute

force was used to move them away from their homes and into the camps.

She moved into the camp with her daughter and two-week-old granddaughter. There was no water, food, or beds—just some tents where they slept on the ground. Meanwhile, the army put up barbed-wire fences all around the camp. About 5000 people were behind barbed wire—men, women, and children.

The "toilets" were out in the open—they had nothing, not even a curtain. She pleaded with the soldiers to at least put curtains around the open areas they called "toilets." They laughed at her. She was so embarrassed she could not move her bowels for four days. She got a hernia from holding herself in.

The showers where they were supposed to bathe were also wide open. She pleaded, once again, to have some privacy when she took a shower. She explained that strange men and army troops were walking around the showers all of the time and that she had never even let her own husband see her that way. They thought this was very funny.

I should note here that she believed that some of the "American" GIs were Nicaraguan contras. Not only were their accents Nicaraguan, but they "spoke contra language," that is, they used terminology she and other Panamanians identified as such.

She was given a plastic identifi-

cation card (she showed it to us) so she could leave and re-enter the encampment. She left to go out and try to locate relatives who were missing and to try to find some food and clothes for her family. The camp still had very little food.

While she was out, she ran into her 10-year-old grandchild, who had been lost during the air raid. He was so happy to see his grandmother that he cried. At 10 at night, she arrived back at the camp with her grandson and was told by the guard that she could come in but not her grandson—he didn't have a card! Despite her pleas to allow her grandson into the camp the soldier was unmoved.

She pleaded that her grandson had been sleeping on the street and had only her to care for him—the child was hysterical at the thought of being separated from his grandmother again—but the soldier stood firm. She finally went outside the camp and slept on the ground with her grandchild. The next day, he was given a card and allowed to enter the concentration camp.

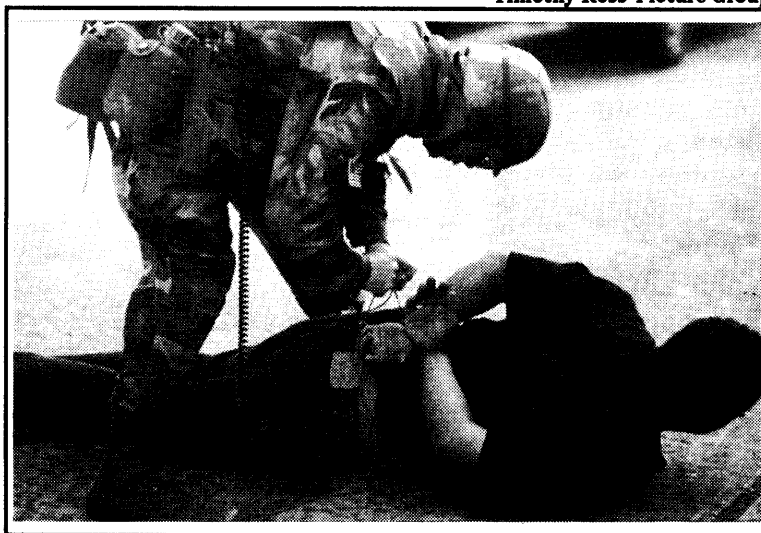
### Missing relatives

For weeks, people would try to search the ruins to find members of their families—even their bodies. When they went to the American authorities to ask about missing relatives, they were laughed at and told that "they had probably run away." But the people knew they were more likely killed in the bombings.

Finally huge earthmovers came and bull-dozed all of the burnt and destroyed housing without making an attempt to find and remove the dead. They got rid of the rubble, bodies and all. Now, all over Panama, families are still searching for missing children and other loved ones, who they believe were among those killed but unaccounted for in the invasion on Dec. 20, 1989.

When atrocities like this occur, the criminals responsible can sometimes hide it for a while. But history shows that the truth cannot be hidden forever.

Timothy Ross—Picture Group



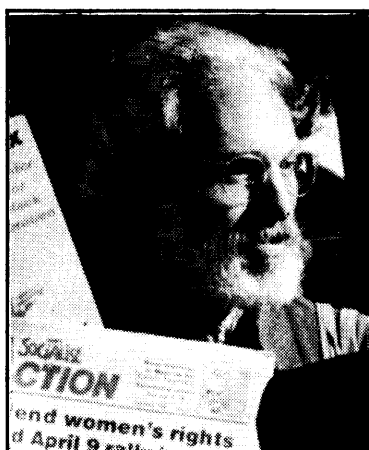
## 'Vietnam Syndrome' still haunts Washington

Poor Pentagon! It still seems to be haunted by what military planners label "The Vietnam Syndrome." In plain terms, they are referring to the antiwar sentiment of the American people that was forged during our experience with Vietnam in the 1960s and '70s.

And so, on television and radio, we see the military "experts" nearly in tears—all because of Vietnam! "It isn't easy to start a war in the Middle East," they complain, "without support from the folks back home."

For once, the Pentagon-types are right on target. Today's growing antiwar movement, indeed, has its foundations in the earlier movement to Bring the Troops Home from Vietnam. The antiwar teach-ins of today, for example, were first developed in 1965 at the University of Michigan and at Berkeley. The technique had been adapted from the sit-ins of the Black civil rights movement.

Discussions over tactics are tak-



## Behind the Lines

By  
Michael Schreiber

ing place within today's antiwar movement that echo the debates of the 1960s. Then, as now, a dispute raged over which slogans the antiwar movement should adopt—"negotiations" or "Bring the Troops Home Now."

### Debates over slogans

The main cheerleaders of the "negotiations" position were the leadership of the old "Peace Movement" (groups like SANE and the Student Peace Union) and the Stalinists of the Communist Party. They saw the antiwar movement as little more than a pressure group on the Democratic Party "Doves" in Congress.

In the early 1960s, people who advocated mass demonstrations around the slogan of "Bring the Troops Home Now" had to struggle to be heard. It was only with the growth of independent local antiwar committees—especially on the college campuses—that the "Out Now!" perspective (which appealed to both the troops and the masses of Americans) became predominant.

I took part in those early debates—although I was still a teenager and rather unsophisticated in politics. At the time I joined the Student Peace Union (SPU) in 1962, John F. Kennedy was threatening to bomb Cuba unless Khrushchev removed the missiles he had placed there. And many

Americans were hunkering down for a thermo-nuclear war.

The Cuban Missile Crisis soon subsided. But a real shooting war was still raging—and had been for two or three years. That was the war in Vietnam.

On a cold day in early 1963, I remember, I attended a Ban the Bomb picketline outside the statehouse in Columbus, Ohio. Some of us carried signs demanding that the United States get out of Vietnam. The organizers of the demonstration (the SPU, SANE, and other pacifist groups) immediately booted us off the picketline—which we expected they would do.

We protested: "But the government is involved in a real war! We can't keep quiet!" It was to no avail. In those early days, for a short period, Vietnam protesters were forced to set up separate picketlines across the street.

### I meet the Trotskyists

One day, some of us students from Ohio drove to New York City for a demonstration—at the United Nations building, I believe. In the evening, we went to a party at someone's apartment on the Lower East Side. The little apartment was very crowded, and I followed the knots of people who spilled out into the stairwells and on up to the roof.

People were talking excitedly

about politics, debating topics that seemed tremendously complicated to me. Perhaps I expressed some of my frustrations with the narrow-minded policies I had encountered in the SPU. Thus, a young guy (who seemed to be only a couple of years older than me) took me aside and gave me the lowdown on what was "really" happening.

The SPU national office, he explained, was run lock, stock, and barrel by people in the YPSL ("Yipsil," he pronounced it—the Young People's Socialist League.) Then he informed me that another youth group was gaining influence in the SPU. Activists around this group wanted mass demonstrations against the war in Vietnam—as I did. These people were the "Trotskyists" (who at that time were in the Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party and today are in Socialist Action).

I decided right there to try to get to know those "Trotskyists."

In February 1965, President Johnson ordered massive bombing attacks against North Vietnam. Nothing like this blitzkrieg had been seen since World War II. Thousands of people responded when one group, Students for a Democratic Society, put out the call for an April 17, 1965, mass march against U.S. involvement in Vietnam. I was one of the 20,000 people (mainly students) who rallied in Washington, D.C., that day.

The new antiwar movement had received its christening. More and more students were becoming radicalized, the independent committees were growing, and the relative strength of the Stalinists and the Democratic Party-influenced liberals receded.

Soon millions of Americans would take part in the mobilizations to Bring the Troops Home Now. And to the consternation of the Pentagon, the "Vietnam Syndrome" has lasted until this very moment.

# Socialist ACTION

Closing date:  
Nov. 1, 1990

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*Socialist Action* (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$8 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Socialist Action*, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

RATES: For one year (12 issues)—U.S. 2nd Class: \$8, 1st Class: \$16; Canada and Mexico 2nd Class: \$12, 1st Class: \$16; All other countries 2nd Class: \$15, 1st Class: \$30. (Money orders, checks should be in U.S. dollars.)

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialist Action*. These are expressed in editorials.

# Canadian women mobilize nationally against new restrictive abortion law

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

On Saturday, Oct. 13, women took to the streets in 35 cities and towns throughout Quebec and English Canada to demand that the restrictive abortion law passed by the Canadian House not be allowed to take effect. In some small towns this was the first such visible protest activity. These binational activities were organized by the Pro-Choice Action Network and the Canadian Rights Action League.

Pointing to the 4000 people who marched in Toronto, Cherie MacDonald spokesperson for the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC), told *Socialist Action*: "This turnout shows the firm base of support for reproductive freedom."

At a press conference prior to the Oct. 13 protest, the Canadian Medical Association, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the Canadian Public Health Association issued statements calling on the federal government not to proclaim this new

abortion law. These statements explained that this law would drastically limit access to abortion.

In practice, although the new law has not taken effect, access to abortion for Canadian and Quebecois women is already severely limited. Many doctors have stopped performing abortions, citing fear of possible legal action.

In one small town, gynecologists decided to protect themselves from lawsuits by referring all prospective abortion patients to a psychiatrist. They then learned such psychiatric exams would delay the abortions until the second trimester. Instead of dropping the plan for psychiatric exams, the town's gynecologists announced they would no longer perform abortions since their practice was only to perform first trimester abortions.

As access to abortions in small towns ceases, many women are forced to travel to the few large cities where clinics continue to operate. In Toronto this has resulted in long delays. The backlog of cases there now

means some women must wait a month for an appointment.

OCAC is calling on the newly elected New Democratic Party (NDP) provincial government to immediately declare the law unenforceable in Ontario. MacDonald explained that such an action by the largest provincial government could help pressure the Tories not to push ahead on the federal level.

Responding to those who argue such a declaration would only be appropriate if the new law takes effect and limits access, MacDonald stressed, "The new crisis of access is not in the future. It's here now."

Although the NDP has long had a strong pro-choice position, and leading members of the provincial government spoke at October rallies throughout Ontario, newly elected provincial Prime Minister Bob Rae is hesitating to take such a step.

While Ontario Attorney General Howard Hampton went so far as to state that if the

bill becomes law it will be his duty to enforce it, Rae has stated there is no reason to speculate since the bill isn't yet law. Although Rae has given verbal assurances that abortion access will remain in Ontario, he has also stated his desire not to unnecessarily antagonize the federal government over this issue.

MacDonald stated, "Bob Rae has shown no hesitation to directly challenge the federal government on other controversial issues—from the free trade agreement, to the goods and services tax. Yet, when it comes to the lives of women, he suddenly fears making waves. The women's movement won't stand idly by and allow our rights to be ignored. We have called a demonstration for Friday, Oct. 26, outside the Attorney General's office."

"We have invited Bob Rae to meet us there. Hopefully, he will join us to instruct the Attorney General to declare this law unenforceable. If he fails to do so and continues to waffle on this important issue, we will be forced to denounce his failure to live up to the promises in the NDP platform."

"We will be at the Attorney General's office to send a clear message that the women of Ontario will not allow our basic human rights to be eroded—regardless of what party holds the majority in Parliament." ■

By JONI JACOBS

More than 150 pro-choice activists from across the United States and Canada attended the first National Clinic Defense Conference in Washington, D.C., last month.

Sponsored and organized by the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Washington Area Clinic Defense Task Force (WACDTF), the conference was unique. For the first time it brought together abortion services providers and clinic defense activists.

Different perspectives on clinic defense have given rise to tensions between clinic directors and clinic defenders. Often clinic directors think it best to maintain a low profile in the midst of increasing violence and harassment of family-planning clinics. Clinic defense activists, on the other hand, think it's necessary to be aggressive in protecting the right of women to seek safe reproductive healthcare.

The Conference provided a forum for these tensions to be resolved as providers and activists addressed their differing concerns. Both sides agreed that keeping the clinics open is the top priority.

Overall, a celebratory atmosphere embraced the conference. Activists from city after city reported how Operation Rescue (O.R.) has been beaten back at the clinics, in the courts, and in public opinion.

The National Abortion Federation (NAF), which has been tracking incidents of anti-choice terrorism since 1977, reported that O.R.'s activity fell sharply in 1990.

According to NAF, 11,732 arrests were made during 182 blockades in 1988, the first year of O.R.'s national campaign of anti-choice terrorism. In 1989, O.R. staged 201 blockades with 12,358 arrests made. So far in 1990, however, O.R. has managed only 24 blockades and 614 arrests.

Not only are the blockades dwindling, but fewer and fewer anti-choice people participate in them. Ann Baker from The 80% Majority reported that 2600 O.R. members account for 27,000 arrests. Most O.R. members have been arrested 10 to 12 times. These figures debunk O.R.'s claim that a "groundswell" of opposition to abortion accounts for the high numbers of arrests.

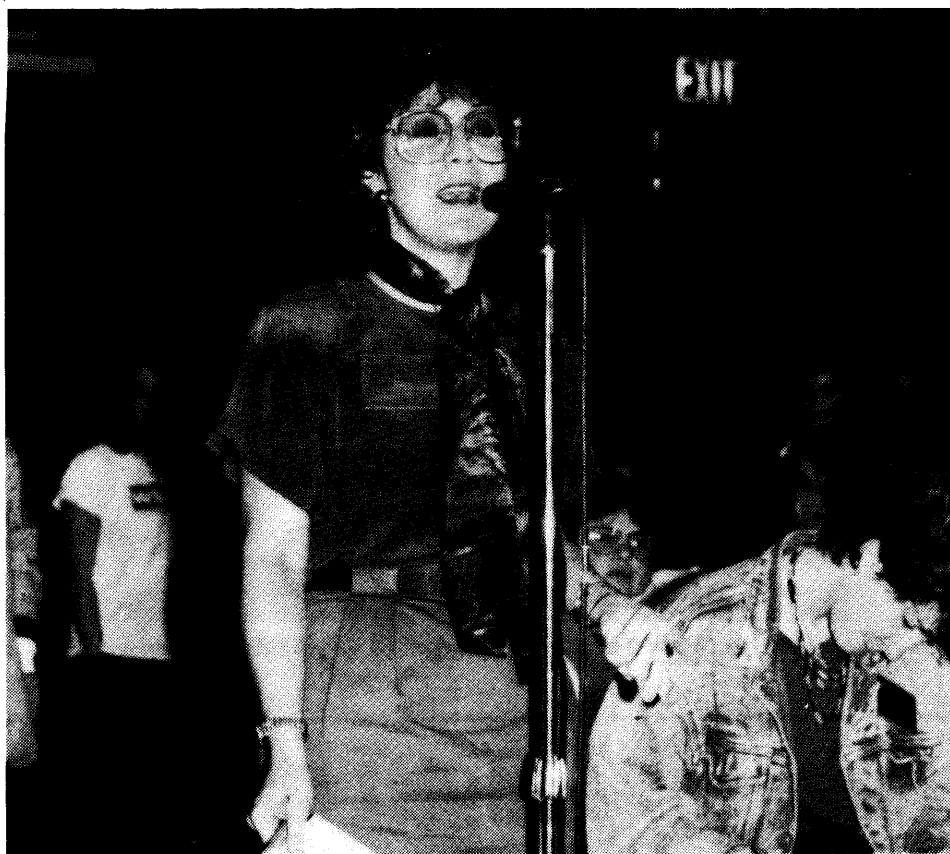
## Workshops focus on issues

Conference participants attended workshops on fundraising, physical-defense tactics, making the police responsive, and coalition building. These workshops discussed the "meat and potatoes" of successful clinic defense and provided activists with a chance to share war stories and helpful hints.

Despite O.R.'s announcement last month that it is "going underground," the Conference also educated activists on new tactics being used by anti-choice fanatics around the country. For instance, the incidents of "legal" picketing at clinics and doctors' private homes and offices is on the rise.

Susan Hill, director of the National Women's Health Organization in Fort Wayne, Ind., related a frightening anecdote. When women make their appointments for abortions at her clinic, they ask if they should bring blankets to shield them from

# Pro-choice activists meet at clinic defense conference



Renee Chelian from the Northland Family Planning Center in Detroit

the hundreds anti-choice picketers who gather almost daily in front of the clinic. "It's surreal that these large demonstrations are seen as 'normal'," she said.

Clinic pickets are actually physically dangerous for women seeking abortion. The 80% Majority reported that the rate of complications in abortion procedures increases when there is harassment outside the clinic. Wading through anti-choice fanatics to get into the clinic raises women's blood pressure, which can make the procedure more risky. Also, the shouting and singing distracts doctors from their ability to focus on providing quality care to women.

According to Renee Chelian of the Northland Family Planning Center in

Detroit, the anti-choice movement has successfully created a negative image of abortion providers. While 80% of Americans support the right of women to legal abortion, Chelian stated, most Americans think abortion is murder and abortion providers are murderers. Even pro-choice supporters sometimes think of abortion providers as making money off of women's bodies.

This negative image is driving away doctors from the practice of reproductive healthcare, which is creating a crisis for family-planning clinics in finding trained physicians.

Many medical schools, especially those connected to Catholic hospitals, no longer train students in abortion procedures. One

clinic worker attending the conference said she receives calls from medical students asking to train with the clinic, since their schools won't teach them the procedure.

## Debate over perspectives

At the last session of the Conference, the participants discussed what should be done to keep the large numbers of clinic defenders active now that the need for clinic defense is in a decline.

Several participants focused on the need to elect "pro-choice" candidates to office, despite an earlier warning from Merle Hoffman of Choices Women's Medical Center, Inc. "There's been a constant chipping away at abortion rights," she said, "and there are no safe harbors in the electorate or anywhere."

A large sentiment also existed for building an independent movement to fight for abortion rights. This sentiment is a natural outgrowth of clinic defense. As women put their bodies on the line to defend abortion rights, they see how the police protect O.R. at the expense of women's rights.

They see how city officials waiver on enforcing legal access to the clinics. They see how politicians change their vote with every public opinion poll on abortion. They gain an instinctual sense of their power and their ability to defend their rights without relying on the cops, the courts, or the corrupt, two-capitalist-party system.

Activists applauded a call for another mass mobilization like the historic April 1989 march in Washington, D.C., which drew 630,000 people. Yearly mobilizations have played a key role in the "Right-to-Life" movement's ability to remain visible and effective. By contrast, the pro-choice movement grew explosively while building the April 1989 march, but has stalled while focusing on the 1990 elections.

While the Conference did not call for any action, it was an important event. It demonstrated the breadth and strength of the clinic defense movement. It confirmed the success of the pro-choice movement and highlighted new battlegrounds in the struggle to keep abortion safe, legal, and accessible. ■

## Three key pamphlets on Women's Liberation

**The War on Abortion Rights: How to Fight 'Operation Rescue' and the 'Right to Life' Movement**

By Carole Seligman  
(Price: \$1.00)

**The Fight for Women's Rights Today**

By Sandy Doyle, Shirley Pasholk and Sylvia Weinstein  
(Price: \$1.25)

**Marxism and Feminism: The Worldwide Struggle for Women's Equality**

(Price: \$1.50)

Mail order to: 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Please include 65 cents for postage per pamphlet. Make checks payable to Walnut Publishing Co.

# Oberlin students fight for justice after April police riot injured many

Last April 14, a national conference titled "Education for the People" opened in Oberlin, Ohio. Student activists from a number of colleges came to discuss the impact of rising tuition costs and declining financial aid on working-class youth.

The Student Coalition Against Apartheid and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Union at Oberlin College called a "March Against Bigotry" the evening of April 13. Organizers of the Education for the People conference decided to make this march the official start of their conference.

That evening about 150 students marched to Oberlin College President S. Frederick Starr's house to voice their concerns. For years, the president's house has been a traditional campus protest site.

The students gathered on the president's lawn to listen to speakers discussing problems with access to education and bigotry. As Steve DeCastro, the principal organizer of the Education for the People conference, related his personal difficulty raising money for tuition, the cops moved in to break up the demonstration.

Days later four student leaders—Paul Dalton, Steve DeCastro, Dan Kiss, and Claude Moller—were arrested. Their trial took place on Oct. 11-17 in the Oberlin Municipal Court.

During the trial, the prosecution justified the cops' action by claiming the students were trespassing on the president's lawn. They claimed that when police attempted to arrest DeCastro, students began attacking them.

Yet, by the cops' own admission, it was their unprovoked assault which turned a peaceful demonstration into what several witnesses described as "chaos."

Oberlin College Security Chief Richard McDaniel claimed that Steve DeCastro was singled out because there was an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Under cross examination, he admitted this warrant was for an expired license sticker. Other cops claimed they arrested DeCastro because they were trained to arrest the "leader."

In order to reach DeCastro, the cops stepped over and on the seated crowd. When they got to where DeCastro was speaking, Patrolman William Wylie placed him in a choke hold, forcing him to the ground, while two other cops jumped on top of him.

Noting the obvious pain DeCastro was in and fearing for his safety, Dan Kiss attempted to pull one of the two cops off DeCastro's back. Sgt. Michael Moorman jumped Kiss, kneeling him in the back and neck. As he pinned Kiss to the ground, he handcuffed him and told him he was taking him to the cruiser.

He never told Kiss he was under arrest.

Neither did he read him his constitutional rights. When questioned about this, Oberlin cops insisted they're not required to inform prisoners of their rights at the moment of arrest.

In response to a request for help from the Oberlin cops, police from neighboring communities, including canine corps, descended on the area. What followed was a police riot. Moorman admitted to threatening a student, "I'm going to kill you all in two minutes." He also called for the fire department and considered turning high-pressure hoses on the students.

In describing the attack on DeCastro, Dilara Goksel, a Turkish student, said she observed "a lot of police violence in Turkey between 1981 and 1984, but nothing as unprovoked." As she stood behind the cruiser where Kiss was being detained, a cop grabbed her from behind, knocked her to the ground, and dragged her along the sidewalk. She still has a scar from these injuries.

A cop struck student Paul Dalton in the back, saying, "Get the hell out of here. This

is none of your business." He was then struck in the abdomen. When he saw Goksel being dragged on the sidewalk, he protested. A cop responded to his complaint by striking him twice in the groin with a heavy metal object and pushed him to the ground. When his injuries persisted several days later, he went to the hospital for medical treatment.

Claude Moller, one of the four arrested student leaders, required medical attention for injuries to his neck and arms after being trampled and clubbed on the right arm and at the base of his skull.

Fearing for the safety of Kiss and two other demonstrators who had been taken to the cruisers, students surrounded the police cars. When Oberlin Police Chief Jones arrived on the scene, he ordered Kiss and the others released.

Over 100 students went to the Oberlin Police Station to protest the police action. Of these, 43 filed formal complaints against police brutality.

Almost a week later, arrest warrants were

issued for Dalton, DeCastro, Kiss, and Moller. No one was charged with trespass, the supposed reason the police attacked the demonstration. No cops were arrested or disciplined for their actions.

Despite the overwhelming evidence of police misconduct, the four were found guilty of failure to disperse. Dalton and Kiss were found guilty of obstructing official business. Kiss was also found guilty of assault on a police officer and interfering with an arrest. Sentencing has been set for Dec. 11.

The students and their supporters were shocked by this verdict. They haven't yet decided on their next step. One possibility is to ask for a mistrial based on numerous procedural irregularities allowed by Judge Martin Heberling.

Regardless of what legal course the convicted students decide on, they have all vowed to continue their fight for accessible education. Contributions to help with legal expenses can be sent to: Student Defense Committee, MPU 1045, Oberlin, Ohio 44074.



Police assault on Oberlin students last April 14 was unprovoked and vicious.

## Interview with student activist Dan Kiss

The following interview with student activist Dan Kiss was conducted by Shirley Pasholk in Oberlin, Ohio, on Oct. 18.

**Socialist Action:** Why was the April 13 March Against Bigotry called?

**Dan Kiss:** A death threat had been made against a Latino student because of something he had written about racism—the limits of liberalism at Oberlin College—that was printed in the *Oberlin Review*. Neither the City Prosecutor nor the College Residential Life Services was interested in investigating. That was the spur for calling the march.

People were fed up with instances of intolerance and bigotry on campus. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Union had been knocked out of the Viewbook, the PR on what the college is all about. This handbook has more and more changed to reflect something white and unobjectionable.

Then, there's the huge issue of access to education, of who's being allowed into the institutions. The college is becoming a place where people of color can't afford to come. It's even a problem for middle-class white people, which prompted the antitrust probe by the Department of Justice.

**S.A.:** What is that probe?

**Kiss:** Last year the Department of Justice began examining price-fixing allegations against about 60 elitist colleges, including Oberlin, Kenyon, Connecticut Wesleyan, Yale, and Harvard. They're seeing tuition on an annual basis set within a few hundred dol-

lars at all these schools. The administrators admit that they share this information.

**S.A.:** Why do you think the college administrators and the cops decided to attack this particular demonstration?

**Kiss:** This tuition issue is the core of what the college is about—who it serves, who it excludes, what it wants to become, and who it just wants to make invisible. This is something the entire college is guilty of. They treat the workers in the Oberlin College Employees Association like some kind of riffraff. I think it was a personal indictment against Fred Starr too.

**S.A.:** How did other students respond to the police attack?

**Kiss:** Many acted with shock and disbelief. Then some of that disbelief turned to horror when they realized they were at a place where this could and would happen.

Others refused to believe. They doubted the integrity of the students involved. I think that's because we're trained to believe that authority does not abuse power.

**S.A.:** How did the faculty and staff respond?

**Kiss:** OCOPE, the Oberlin College Office and Professional Employees, Local 502 of the OPEIU, wrote a resolution in support of us almost right away.

We have a few tenured "Marxists" on the faculty who have done very little on this issue. I think it's because professors, in a lot of ways, have got it good and, as far as they're concerned, they've got a stake in these issues.

The administration effectively plays us off against the faculty. They say to the faculty, "If we lower tuition or freeze tuition, it's just going to hold your salary down." They say to us, "Hey, it's not our fault. It's those faculty." We know the faculty aren't paid extremely well here.

The alumni has been our most consistent source of support. They have really been the backbone of financial support for legal fees and medical costs. A lot of them have made phone calls and written letters to the trustees and the president. They wrote letters to the *Alumni Magazine*.

**S.A.:** What's happening on campus now?

**Kiss:** Organizing is going on preparing for a week of action and education on Nov. 5-9. The call for this originally came out of the Education for the People conference.

**S.A.:** What connections have you made with the students who are protesting institutional racism at Cleveland State University?

**Kiss:** I feel like we've made some good preliminary connections. We've talked to them many times and participated in some of their demonstrations. We're trying to hold a joint press conference.

CSU President John Flower and [Oberlin President] Fred Starr are really the same kind of people, the kind of college president who are really concerned about their reputation with the corporate class.

**S.A.:** What was your reaction to the guilty verdict?

**Kiss:** We were really disappointed. We

thought we had made our case well. We showed the police for what they are. That jury chose not to believe students and the actual neighbors of Fred Starr [who corroborated the statements of the students].

This shows we've got to get stronger. We've got to organize better. We've got to reach out to the kind of people who were sitting on the jury. Before the trial started, when the jury was being interviewed, they said they couldn't afford to send their kids to college. We have to work on reaching people like that.

I'd like to see us link educational accessibility to other human rights issues like healthcare and housing. Millions of people aren't getting adequate healthcare, if any. Millions are homeless and millions can't get an education. I think these things are all related. They're basic human rights.

People are being sent to the Middle East for oil. Can you imagine the U.S. government ever fighting for education or housing or healthcare? These aren't the kind of things we're socialized to fight for—but we're ready to start a war over oil.

I'm hoping this will bring home where the interests are in this country. It's a huge battle to convince people that education, housing, and healthcare are things that have to be nationalized. They have to be brought to whoever desires them and needs them—and that's everybody.

I see 1990 as a beginning and a real turning point. There have been some victories like the miners' strike against Pittston. I think there's a new militancy. People are going to see the necessity to organize.

By STEVE ARGUE

# 200 march in Twin Cities to protest police killings of poor

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Two hundred people marched on the Governor's Mansion here on Oct. 6 to demand the prosecution of cops involved in a number of murders and incidents of brutality.

Speakers at the rally included the mother and sister of James Ludwig, who was killed by the St. Paul police on Sept. 22. Ludwig was a homeless man who had committed no crime. He was only trying to run from the police when he was shot three times in the back—the third time with a high-powered shotgun, leaving no chance for survival. The cops who killed this man have already been let off the hook by the city government.

Another speaker at the rally was the sister of Ba See Lor and Thai Yang, two 13-year-old Hmong boys who were shot in the back by an Inver Grove Heights cop. The cop claimed that a screwdriver carried by one of the boys looked like a gun—from 30 yards away! And the cop was let off the hook by the city government.

## Killed while they slept

Placards were also displayed saying, "Remember Smally and Weise." Smally and Weise were an elderly Black couple murdered by the Minneapolis police. Under the pretext of the "war on drugs," the police burned down their house as they were sleeping.

Although people told the cops that there were no drugs in the house and only an elderly couple, the cops let the house burn. (Later, they found no drugs on the premises.) No cop was ever prosecuted for these murders.

The name of Hal Saran Scott was also raised. Hal Saran Scott was shot at point-blank range through the head while he was handcuffed and pinned against a police car.

The city government promoted the third police report on the Hal Saran Scott incident, which was written after witnesses came forward and after the coroner's report. This version said that Scott jerked back, accidentally releasing the trigger and killing himself. The cop was let off the hook by the city government.

Speakers at the rally also demanded the prosecution of the cops who attacked and brutalized 40 black people who were mourning the death of a loved one at North Memorial hospital.

Nothing has been done by the city gov-



Photo courtesy of Eva

'The police have only one job—and they do their job. Their job is to serve and protect the rich.'

ernments in these cases except for coverups for the cops.

"Rudy, you can't hide!"

The Oct. 6 march demanded that Governor Rudy Perpich direct the state attorney general to conduct investigations into these incidents and to prosecute the police.

Despite the fact that Perpich knew well in advance that the protesters would be there, he did not appear to speak to their demands or accept their petitions. For this reason, the crowd burst out with chants of "Rudy, Rudy, you can't hide, we charge you with genocide!"

Speakers at the rally included leaders from the Black community, the American Indian

Movement, a gay rights activist, and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor.

Steve Argue, speaking for Socialist Action, said:

"The police have only one job—and they do their job. Their job is to protect and serve the rich. The mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul are allowing their cops to brutalize and murder people. They are allowing this to go on because they need the kind of cop that brutalizes and murders people.

"These cops are the kind of people who don't give a damn about other human beings. They are the kind of people who can be directed to attack workers on picket lines and escort scabs into plants.

"We should not forget what Perpich did in Austin (Minn.), bringing cops together from around the state to break the Hormel meat-packers' strike after he was forced to pull the National Guard out of Austin. We must demand police prosecution, remain organized, stay out in the streets—and fight the power!"

Leaders of the coalition against police brutality urged people to attend a coalition meeting a few days later, where 30 people showed up to plan further actions and other educational work.

To get involved, contact the Twin Cities Committee Against Police Brutality, c/o the African Student Cultural Center, at (612) 625-0045.

can begin to challenge the Democrats and Republicans during elections and in the streets, mobilizing working people to fight and protect our rights.

If such a policy is not taken up by labor, workers can expect more tax increases from government and attacks on their living standards by the employers.

## Why I joined Socialist Action

By GEOFF KIPLING

In 1979, I joined the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), a youth group in political solidarity with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). In 1983, I was disturbed by the expulsion of a number of comrades I'd worked with in Cleveland. I didn't really understand what was going on, but I knew something was wrong.

I had also become increasingly concerned by the political revision reflected in SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes' "Their Trotsky and Ours" speech to the 1982 YSA convention. I found Barnes's characterization of the Fourth International shocking. [Barnes said that the programmatic traditions of the Trotskyist Fourth International were fundamentally flawed and inevitably led to sectarianism.—The editors.]

After the SWP leadership carried out mass expulsions of oppositionists at the beginning of 1984, I decided to leave the YSA and join the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT). I wasn't clear on the differences between the FIT and Socialist Action (SA), but I agreed with the FIT on the need to try to reach the ranks of the SWP to reverse its programmatic revisions.

As time went on, the differences that FIT and SA had over international questions sharpened. I agreed more with Socialist Action on those particular questions.

I disagreed with the FIT's characterization of Nicaragua as a dictatorship of the proletariat. I agreed with SA's analysis of Nicaragua as expressed in *Socialist Action* newspaper and the pamphlet, "Revolutionary Dynamics in Nicaragua."

Clearly a capitalist state continued to exist in Nicaragua from 1979 to the present.

Nicaragua confirms Trotsky's analysis of the theory of permanent revolution and the need to break with the capitalist class for any revolution to succeed. The Cuban model, not a mixed economy and governmental alliances with the bourgeoisie, was the road forward.

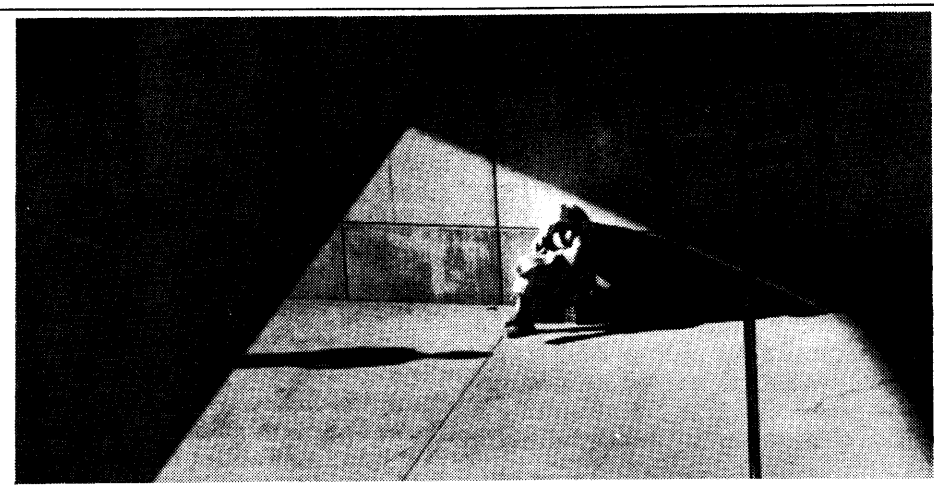
I was also concerned by the FIT's failure to appreciate the significance of the developing political revolution in Eastern Europe. I was shocked by FIT's opposition to the call for a socialist unification of Germany.

At the same time, the earlier debate on the best way to win SWP'ers back to a correct revolutionary program was being proven in practice. It was SA's party-building strategy, not the FIT's ideological tendency and monthly theoretical bulletin, which was attracting SWP members.

Now that the SWP has left the Fourth International, the FIT has decided on a new orientation—unifying all U.S. supporters of the Fourth International into a single organization. But, what type of organization would this be? [The FIT proposes that another group, Solidarity, also join in the new formation.—The editors.] But Solidarity, including the Fourth International supporters within it, is opposed to building a revolutionary party with democratic-centralist organizational norms.

What's needed is neither an ideological tendency, nor a discussion club, nor a loose federation of supporters of the Fourth International who agree to disagree on major questions. What's needed is a revolutionary party which can lead the transformation of society from one based on capitalist exploitation to one based on human needs.

This is the course Socialist Action is following. That's why I joined SA and I urge other FIT members who wish to build this type of organization to join SA.



Budget has nothing to offer 3 million homeless Americans

## ... Budget

(continued from page 1)

than 10 percent, which is about the same as paid by the average \$35,000-a-year family.

If "soak the rich" is an illusion, soak the working people is a grim reality. Motorists, airline passengers, smokers, and beer and wine drinkers will all chip in billions in higher taxes. While the new tax law would modestly benefit workers making less than \$20,000, working people with "middle incomes" would see their taxes rise. Moreover, all working people will pay more on regressive sales taxes such as gasoline.

Two groups selected for special sacrifices are veterans and the sick and elderly. Funds for veterans' program have been slashed just when a new wave of veterans will be coming home from the Middle East.

Medicare cuts hit the frailest segment of the population where their need is greatest—their healthcare. Premium charges are raised, and payments to doctors and hospitals are reduced. This means the hospitals will bill the sick elderly for the shortfall, and doctors will reject Medicare patients.

At the same time the war budget will continue to rise in real money, as will payouts

to the rich who stole billions in the Savings & Loan scandal.

## AFL-CIO tops said nothing

These sacrifices by the working class will do little to cut the national debt. The politicians promise only a \$30 billion cut in a deficit of \$220 billion. The coming recession and preparations for war in the Middle East will likely wipe out even that saving. There will be fewer people working and more "defense" spending.

The national debt is now over \$3 trillion. Congress has voted a new debt ceiling of \$5 trillion. Such is their expectation of a real debt reduction!

Unfortunately, a voice defending the interests of the working class was not heard during the weeks of budget "crisis." At a time when millions of workers and farmers were expressing their anger, the top officials of the AFL-CIO said nothing.

The disillusionment of the American people with both major capitalist parties has never been greater. There is growing support to limit the terms of all politicians, and voter turnout is less and less in every election. Yet the labor leadership continues to spend millions of dollars on so-called "friend of labor" Democratic Party candidates.

A mass-based union-organized labor party is on the agenda. Only such a workers' party

Maureen Fennell

By ANN HALVERSON

On a few days' notice, a handful of students at the University of California-Santa Cruz who are opposed to U.S. intervention in the Middle East called their first teach-in for Oct. 25. They expected only some 15 to 30 to attend. Actually some 800 students showed up for the event.

Like every other teach-in in the Northern California region during the last weeks of October, the speakers were universally greeted with resounding ovations. The applause seemed to swell in direct proportion to the keenness of the speakers' opposition to U.S. war policy.

Today's antiwar movement stands on the shoulders of the social struggles of the past three decades. Speakers and students alike are less sexist, racist, and homophobic than at any time in this writer's experience. They reject the Israeli destruction of the Palestinian nation, reject the anti-communist prejudices of past decades, and are unwilling to accept as good coin the lies and half-truths passed off as fact by the capitalist media.

Almost 700 attended a four-hour teach-in at San Francisco State University to hear panels of Vietnam veterans—including Brian Willson, Peggy Tuckson, and Stan Long—explain the lessons of the Vietnam War for today. Speaker after speaker urged the students to become involved in organizing for the Oct. 20 demonstrations in San Francisco.

About 250 attended a faculty-organized teach-in at Laney College in Oakland to cheer Marine Reservist Erik Larsen when he said he would refuse deployment to the Middle East to fight for oil profits.

On Oct. 18, about 75 students at San Francisco City College gathered to hear a panel of antiwar activists, including Larsen. Joni Jacobs of the National Organization for Women related the struggles of women for equal rights to the demands of the new antiwar movement. Peg Stevenson, an environmental activist from Greenpeace, added valuable information on the U.S. government's disregard for the development of alternative energy sources [see excerpts on this page].

Palestinian speakers addressed every Bay Area event to offer their support for the ris-

# Campus teach-ins: Students demand facts on Middle East



Veterans contingent leads Oct. 20 demonstration in San Francisco, Calif.

ing movement against U.S. intervention and to champion the national rights of the Palestinian people.

Similar events, rallies and marches are regular features of life at the University of California-Berkeley, where on Sept. 14 the First National Middle East Teach-in drew some 2000. The sponsor of this event, the Committee Against a Vietnam War in the Middle East (CAVME), has focused its attention in recent weeks to helping campus activists organize these educational meetings.

## Columbia

By JONATHAN HALABI

NEW YORK—Over 500 people crowded into Columbia University's Altschul Auditorium to attend the second major New York teach-in on the Gulf crisis. The crowd, mostly Columbia students, took every seat,

filled the aisles, and lined the walls. More waited outside for space to open up.

The speakers, Joe Stork of MERIP reports, and Rashid Khalidi, professor of history at the University of Chicago, spoke for just over an hour, detailing background and particulars of the crisis which the U.S. big-business media have so far successfully ignored. Columbia's Professor Edward Said, a well-known writer on Palestine, chaired the meeting.

The liveliest part of the meeting was the question and answer period. Two Zionist students got up, one to falsely attribute to the Arab masses every position the P.L.O. has taken, the second to berate the speakers for standing up for the aspirations of the Palestinian masses. Said calmly rebutted the two, with Stork and Khalidi also intervening.

The teach-in was organized by the Columbia Coalition Against U.S. Intervention in the Middle East. The coalition's next event will be held Nov. 8 and will

feature Pakistani journalist Eqbal Ahmed along with several other speakers.

## Kent State

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

CLEVELAND—Chanting "Money for Tuition, Not Ammunition," an estimated 600 Kent State University students held the first major Northeast Ohio campus protest against U.S. military involvement in the Middle East on Oct. 16.

When a few right-wing students started heckling, they were invited to remain afterward to discuss their objections. Over 100 students, including many passersby, stayed an hour after the demonstration and engaged rally organizers in a lively question and answer session.

Demonstrators gathered in front of the U.S. headquarters of BP America in Cleveland on Saturday, Oct. 20. Following a brief march through downtown streets, some 250 people participated in a rally on Public Square. Delegations came from several Northeast Ohio campuses, including Hiram College, Kent State University, and Oberlin College.

Speakers included Jerry Gordon, coordinator of the sponsoring organization, the Committee Against U.S. War in the Persian Gulf; Grace Jones, coordinator of the Cleveland Free South Africa Movement; and Cleveland Board of Education President Stanley E. Tolliver.

Although some speakers such as Ione Biggs, president of Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice/WILPF, urged that the United Nations be given "a chance to do its job," others such as Dan Kiss of the Oberlin Student Coalition Against Apartheid pointed to the UN's role in supporting U.S. aggression. Kiss also criticized the Soviet Union's complicity with U.S. imperialism in South Africa, Central America, and the Middle East. [See interview with Dan Kiss in this issue.]

Pointing to the BP America building in the background, Kiss stated, "That's what the U.S. government is all about—protecting corporate interests. That's why they arrested the students at Cleveland State—because these students were threatening corporate interests when they demonstrated inside Tower City [a shopping complex of high-priced specialty stores]. That's why they arrested us in Oberlin: because we were challenging corporate control of the college."

# Greenpeace leader condemns U.S. war plans

The following are major excerpts from a talk by Peg Stevenson, director of San Francisco Greenpeace's Campaign on Atmosphere and Energy, to the San Francisco City College Middle East Teach-In on Oct. 18.

I would like to make just a couple of points about oil and energy and the military build-up in Saudi Arabia.

This war is in part about oil—more specifically about George Bush's risking millions of lives and wasting billions of dollars rolling out the big guns to secure, by force, access to oil at the price he sets. His rationale is an old, predictable argument that American national security and our way of life (by which he means a national car fleet that averages 19 miles per gallons) are dependent on cheap oil.

The Reagan/Bush cabal set the stage for this war by peddling arms to Iraq, but even more so by systematically destroying federal programs on energy efficiency and renewable energy over the last 10 years. Since they came to office they have:

- Between 1981 and 1989, reduced federal funding for renewable energy by 90%.
- Turned the Department of Energy into the Department of Nuclear Weapons. In 1980, the DOE spent 81% of its budget on energy matters and 19% on weapons' production. Today the DOE spends 49% on energy

and 51% on weapons' production.

- Cut federal funding for mass transit by 50% since 1981.

• Rolled back auto-fuel efficiency standards at the request of Ford and GM. In terms of oil, that single action will waste over the next decades more oil than we imported from the Persian Gulf in 1985, and, in my opinion, make Ford and GM responsible for the lives risked today.

### Revolution in energy efficiency

I want to turn now to what the rest of us have been doing—which is creating a revolution in energy efficiency that has occurred in the economy despite open hostility from the federal government. The good news is that it is possible to supply energy needs right now, today, with increased energy efficiency and renewable energy. Again, in case you have any doubts, let me illustrate with a few facts:

- Since 1976, the U.S. GNP has nearly doubled, while energy use has stayed almost flat. This is due to a revolution in energy-efficiency technologies—millions of small and large decisions about which lightbulbs, building contractors, appliances, and cars are the best to buy.
- Since 1979, more than a million solar buildings have been installed across the United States.
- Since 1979, the United States has gotten

more energy from renewables—wind, solar, water, and wood—than from oil, gas, coal, and uranium combined. Wood alone now delivers twice as much energy as the entire nuclear power program.

The technology exists today, on the shelf, not in some exotic laboratory, which can make homes so heat tight that they will stay comfortable all year in any climate with little or no energy input. We can also make comfortable cars that get over 80 miles per gallon, triple the efficiency of our industrial motors, and build urban mass transit for a fraction of the cost of building highways.

And the future potential of energy efficiency is vast. If we had pursued a simple policy of consistently weatherizing buildings and replacing gas guzzlers with efficient cars since the first oil shock in 1973, we could today be importing no oil at all.

The truth is that even a simple set of actions on energy could go a long way towards making the perilous concentration of oil in the Persian Gulf irrelevant to human affairs. If we passed out caulking guns and subway tokens to the people, instead of M-16s to the soldiers, we remove oil as a source of conflict from the international stage.

The billions that are being spent in the Persian Gulf would be far better spent on a new program of national security—of real energy security.

### U.S. Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685).

- 1A. Title of publication: Socialist Action.
- 1B. Publication no. 721090.
2. Date of filing: Oct. 3, 1990.
3. Frequency of issue: Monthly. A) No. of issues published annually: 12. B) Annual subscription price: \$8.00.
4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.
5. Complete mailing address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.
6. Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: Socialist Action

Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543. Editor: Alan Benjamin, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543. Managing Editor: David Kinschner, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110-4543.

7. Owner (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.): Socialist Action Publishing Association (unincorporated), 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110, Nat Weinstein and Carl Finamore, 3435 Army St., Suite 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security

holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities (if there are none, so state: None).

9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 423.12 DMM only): Does not apply.

10. Extent and nature of circulation. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 3000. B. Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1584. (2) Mail subscriptions (Paid and/or requested): 930. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation (sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 2514. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 34. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 2548. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 416. (2) Return from news agents: 36. G. Total (Sum of E, F1, and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 3000.

Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 5000. B. Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 2435. (2) Mail subscription (Paid and/or requested): 951. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 3386. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 565. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D) 3951. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 1020. (2) Return from news agents: 29. G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 5000.

11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed)  
Alan Benjamin  
Editor

# ... 'Out Now!' vs. 'Negotiations'

(continued from page 1)

of arms against the wishes and interests of the Arab people. The latter have every right to determine their future. The United States has none.

But what of Saddam Hussein? Has he not violated the right of self-determination of the Kuwaiti people. Is not the United States justified in its intervention because it is supporting the rights of the "oppressed" Kuwaitis?

The "nation" of Kuwait, however, is a creation of imperialism—not a reflection of the wishes of the Arab people. Kuwait was ruled by 18 families, comprising 2000 idle princes—who together own some \$200 billion in wealth, which they invest abroad in U.S. and other capitalist enterprises. The Al Sabah monarchy is an imposed imperial creation.

The majority of the people in this British-created entity are immigrant workers, non-Kuwaitis. Less than 6 percent were allowed the vote—that is, before the monarchy abolished the fake parliament it had established.

U.S. troops have been sent to the Middle

East to advance the military and economic interests of America's corporate elite who are the real architects of U.S. foreign policy.

The American ruling class has never shunned alliances with dictators, including Saddam Hussein, who they armed and financed for seven years in the course of the U.S.-sponsored war against Iran—a war which cost the lives of 1 million people.

A U.S.-imposed solution in the Middle East, like all past "solutions" would simply mean the replacement of Hussein with a more acceptable tyrant, a tyrant who would again place the resources of the region at the disposal of U.S. oil companies—not of the Arab workers and peasants.

Left to themselves (that is, free from U.S. intervention) the people of the Middle East would likely replace their misrulers, readjust their imperialist-imposed borders, and begin to build the same kind of world that the American people hope for—a world of peace, justice, and cooperation.

Advocates of a "negotiated settlement" mistakenly undermine the strength of the new antiwar movement by the *de facto* ac-

ceptance of a U.S. role in the Middle East which "negotiations" imply.

## United Nations intervention?

The call for a United Nations' solution is equally flawed. The placing of a U.N. sticker on a U.S. helmet is hardly an advance for the Arab people.

The U.N. sanctions and threatened military action are in reality a product of the private agreements between Soviet President Gorbachev and his Stalinist associates and the Bush administration.

In return for economic aid to stabilize the weakened but still ruling Stalinist bureaucracy in the face of mass discontent, the United States has been given *carte blanche* to intervene in the Middle East under the cover of a U.N. mandate.

The U.S. war in Korea (1950-53) was waged under the banner of the United Nations. Similarly, the 1961 U.S. intervention in the Congo was conducted with U.N. troops who participated in the murder of the elected leader of that nation, Patrice Lumumba.

The U.S. intervened in Korea on behalf of the Sigman Rhee dictatorship. In the Congo, it imposed the Mobutu tyranny to prevent the people of this former Belgian colony

from owning and controlling their own natural resources, especially the diamond mines—which even today are in the domain of the former colonial rulers.

At this moment, the bipartisan U.S. warmakers are contemplating their options in the Middle East. They are evaluating the merits and relative costs of arranging a deal with their former ally Saddam Hussein, a possibility which cannot be excluded.

If Hussein was the only adversary on the scene, however, the U.S. would not flinch before launching an all-out war.

But there are two other factors which have come into play, factors which may yet stay the hand of the U.S. warmakers.

The first is the almost total unanimity of the Arab masses against the U.S. invasion. A U.S. war in the region could well crystallize the pent-up hatred of the Arab people and result in the toppling of more than one of "our" much-praised allies.

Equally important, a shooting war in the Middle East, like the Vietnam War, may well result in a massive mobilization of the American people in demonstrations and other forms of protest.

The demand to "Bring the Troops Home Now," coupled with a fight for "Money for Human Needs, Not War," could trigger a social movement which extends beyond the limits of all previous struggles.

The Vietnam War took place against a backdrop of a still-expanding economy and relative prosperity. The notion that Americans could produce both "guns and butter" was commonly accepted.

But today, in the face of an economy teetering on recession—with a nation plagued with ever-increasing insecurity, growing inequality, layoffs, union-busting and finally, a senseless war for oil profits and military domination—the U.S. policymakers will carefully weigh the stakes before they proceed.

And, as in the past, they may misjudge the mood of the American people and inadvertently set off a radicalization which could change the course of history.



Joseph Ryan/Socialist Action

As the United States prepares for war in the Middle East, it is instructive to review the key debates which engaged and at times divided the activists who constructed the Vietnam antiwar movement.

The "Vietnam Syndrome" remains a powerful "malady" afflicting the American people. It can best be defined as the well-justified skepticism regarding sending U.S. troops to fight in foreign lands.

It is a skepticism born of the Vietnam War-era movement to "Bring the Troops Home Now!"—a movement which eventually reached majority proportions in the United States.

The American working class, especially the youth who faced the draft, and the young soldiers who were sent to die were a central motor force in the anti-Vietnam War movement.

But the debates among the various currents in the radical, socialist, and pacifist movements often played an important role in determining the political orientation of the broadly-based antiwar movement.

The McCarthy-era witchhunt atmosphere still prevailed in the United States of the early 1960s, as American troops were sent to the other side of the world to die in Vietnam.

The simple notion that U.S. citizens had the Constitutional right to speak out against a shooting war was far from established.

Members of Congress and government officials at every level often accused the early leaders of the movement not only with harboring pro-communist sympathies, but with sedition and treason.

Not a single U.S. Representative or Senator supported the demand to "Bring Our Boys Home Now!"

A few self-proclaimed "doves," in an attempt to defuse the growing movement, sometimes advocated a "negotiated settlement." At the same time they voted for the war appropriations demanded by the Democratic and Republican party presidents alike.

Others, in the anti-Vietnam War movement itself called for a "negotiated settlement"—often hoping to elect Democratic Party "peace candidates" who were amenable to talks with the Vietnamese

## Some lessons from the Vietnam War



liberation fighters.

The negotiations demand represented the majority opinion among the activists in the opening years of the war.

More often than not, the national elections signaled a decline in the antiwar movement as activists turned from mass visible protests, which involved literally millions in the streets, to electoral activity on behalf of presidential politicians like Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern, who promised negotiations and perhaps peace only to vote for war expenditures after their defeat.

The U.S. government's justification

for the war was that it was a fight against the spread of Communism—a war for democracy.

Hence, in the name of "democracy," the U.S. government dropped more bombs on Vietnam than in the combined wars fought by all nations since the beginning of recorded history.

In the course of the war, the United States committed almost 4 million troops, maintaining at least 500,000 at any one time from 1966 to 1972.

An additional million-and-a-half Vietnamese "puppet troops" were drafted to fight and die by the various Vietnamese

dictators installed by the United States against the wishes of the Vietnamese people.

Over 50,000 South Korean troops, and a few thousand troops from Australia and New Zealand, augmented the U.S. fighting forces.

The United States had total air superiority. The liberation fighters had no air force and no armor. The United States enforced a total naval blockade for the entire war.

Despite these overwhelming military advantages, the United States was defeated by the relatively ill-equipped peasant army of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF), which consisted of some 200,000 regular and irregular troops.

The victory of this tiny force in the face of the world's most powerful army could only be explained by the virtual total support the Vietnamese fighters had from the population as a whole.

This courageous struggle, combined with a powerful U.S. antiwar movement and a demoralized U.S. conscript army whose rank-and-file soldiers began to openly defy the orders of their superiors, finally forced the withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam.

A decade after 58,000 American GIs and nearly 2 million Vietnamese were killed, the terrible truth of the war finally became known to the broad American public.

The Vietnamese had fought the war for their own liberation just as they had fought against their former French colonizers for nearly a century before the U.S. invasion. They had fought for the right to determine their own future—for the right to self-determination.

Like the earlier interventions of the British and French, U.S. intervention in the Middle East today is designed to deny the Arab people that very same right. Military and economic domination, not the character of their former ally, Saddam Hussein, motivate the U.S. warmakers, who arrogantly believe that the sending of U.S. troops gives them the *right* to "negotiate" the future of all nations. The new antiwar movement will reject this *right* and demand that the government "Bring the Troops Home Now!"—J.M.

# Socialist Workers Party shift on Middle East signals political retreat



Socialist Action contingent at the Oct. 20 anti-Middle East war march in San Francisco, Calif.

BY MALIK MIAH and BARRY SHEPPARD

Washington's war drive in the Middle East is at the center of world politics. The U.S.-led aggression against Iraq is an attack on the struggle of the Arab people as a whole to free themselves from imperialist domination. Working people everywhere need to mobilize to defeat that aggression.

It is encouraging that more and more Americans are rejecting Bush's war preparations. Although the shooting has not yet begun, thousands of U.S. citizens, including active duty GIs, have demonstrated against the government's war moves. It is against the interests of U.S. working people to send their sons and daughters to die to maintain imperialist domination of the Persian Gulf region and its vast oil reserves.

In the Arab East sizable protests in support of Iraq have taken place, particularly by Palestinians. These protests have even occurred in countries whose governments have provided Washington a figleaf for its aggression.

The acid test today of all groups claiming to be socialist is how they respond to the U.S. war drive. In a war between an imperialist country and an oppressed nation, working people must unconditionally defend the oppressed nation, whatever its leadership. This is an ABC of Leninism, and is why Socialist Action backs Iraq in its conflict with the U.S.-led reactionary alliance.

Whatever differences we have with Saddam Hussein's capitalist regime, in such a stand-off against imperialism, we defend Iraq. Only through the defeat of the imperialist aggression can the workers and farmers of Iraq move toward becoming strong enough to install their own revolutionary government. An imperialist victory would be a severe setback for them and the Arab people as a whole.

Those are the political stakes in this battle.

## SWP's political retreat

Socialist Action's principled stance on the side of Iraq in this conflict is based on our Leninist tradition of unconditional solidarity with the oppressed, which many of us first learned in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), an organization that has been in political decline since the early 1980s.

In the first few weeks following the U.S. military buildup, *The Militant*, a newspaper reflecting the views of the SWP leadership, took basically the same stance as *Socialist Action*. Articles explained Iraq's historic claim to Kuwait, the artificial nature of Kuwait's creation by the British, and why the Arab masses applauded when Iraq overthrew the Kuwaiti Emirate.

Like *Socialist Action*, *The Militant* recognized the progressive aspect of the Iraqi overthrow of the imperialist puppet regime of the Emirate, and why imperialism, especially U.S. and British imperialism, which share in the domination of the Gulf, saw the Iraqi move as a direct challenge to their interests. Both organizations did this without giving any political support to the capitalist military dictatorship in Iraq or to its methods.

Thus we were surprised to see a reversal in the SWP line. This reversal became crystal

clear in an introduction to a new pamphlet, "U.S. Hands off the Mideast! Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations," by SWP leader Mary Alice Waters. Waters uncritically endorses the mistaken policy followed by the government of Cuba in Iraq's conflict with imperialism.

While Cuba, in the United Nations Security Council, has condemned and exposed Washington's war aims in the Middle East, its representative voted with the U.S. to condemn Iraq and call for the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and the restoration of the "legitimate government" of the reactionary Emirate.

Cuba's representative to the U.N., Ricardo Alarcón, explained this vote as based on the "principles of noninterference." Alarcón told the Aug. 6 U.N. session:

"To Cuba, the principles of noninterference in the internal affairs of states—no matter what the reason [our emphasis]—of the

you on?

It is one thing for the Cuban leadership to adopt such an anti-Marxist stand—and quite another for the SWP to do so. The Cubans are under the threat of imperialist attack, and do not want to appear to justify the use of force in international relations. More important, they have yet to grasp the lessons of the nature of the worldwide class struggle in the epoch of imperialism, lessons we call Leninism. But for the SWP, this is a major retreat from those lessons.

It is not that Leninists are bloodthirsty or desire war and class conflict. But we look at the world realistically. The class conflict is a fact. The struggle of the oppressed nations to free themselves from imperialist oppression is a fact. The question is, which side do you take in these conflicts?

The horrible experiences of this century prove that the cause of modern war is the drive by the various imperialist powers—the



During Vietnam War SWP was main popularizer of 'Out Now!'

non-use of force in international relations, of the peaceful settlement of disputes between states, and of respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all nations are essential principles of our international order.

"It is in defense of those principles that we have expressed our disapproval and condemnation of the entry of Iraqi forces into the territory of Kuwait a few days ago and that we have declared that state of affairs must be ended with the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwaiti territory and the full restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty."

Waters simply reports the Cuban position without comment, with the clear message that it is completely correct. Thus the SWP, like the Cuban leadership, has endorsed the very position that Washington is using to justify its war drive: that Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait and the "legitimate government" be restored.

This turns everything on its head. There is nothing progressive at all in calling for the return of the reactionary Emirate to power. Nor is there anything progressive in now demanding that Iraq relinquish its historic claim to Kuwait. Most important, the actual real danger we face is a U.S. war against Iraq, and the main question is, which side are

United States, Germany, Japan, Britain, France and so on—to dominate and exploit the vast majority of humanity, and the struggle between these imperialist powers over the spoils.

There can be no peace until capitalism in its decadent and final phase, imperialism, is overthrown. This is the *only* road to world peace. These imperialist powers can only be overthrown by the combined struggle of the world's toilers and oppressed nations, led by the working class, against the handful of very rich families that dominate the imperialist countries.

The idea, contained in Alarcón's speech to the Security Council—that there can be a new world order based on noninterference in the internal affairs of one nation by another, or of the peaceful settlement of disputes between states, and the respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all nations, while imperialism exists—is a utopia. In this case it led the Cuban leadership to give partial political backing to Washington's war drive, however much Cuba sincerely opposes and exposes it.

For the SWP to adopt this idea represents a major retreat from Leninism, towards a bourgeois-pacifist position.

In the anti-Vietnam war movement of the

1960s and '70s, the SWP played a key role in explaining that the movement should focus its demands around the call for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces. The demand that most clearly expressed this was "Out Now!"

The SWP explained that demands such as the call for the U.S. to "negotiate" with the Vietnamese implied that Washington had the "right" to negotiate the future of Vietnam.

The SWP showed how the "negotiations" demand actually played into the hands of the warmakers by ceding them that right. The SWP stuck to this position even when it was in a small minority within the broader movement on this question.

"Out Now" expressed the unconditional opposition to imperialism that is the hallmark of Leninism's realistic view of the modern world. With the SWP retreating from Leninism, it should come as no surprise that it has rapidly altered its political stance in the new anti-Mideast war movement as well.

## Cleveland, Chicago votes

Prior to the Oct. 20 antiwar demonstrations, which the SWP endorsed although it did little to build, in at least two cities SWP representatives sought to undermine the clear and principled demands of the antiwar coalitions.

At a "town meeting" to discuss the war threat in Cleveland on Sept. 22, David Marshall, an SWP candidate for public office, said the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a setback for the people of the Middle East. Two weeks later another SWP member offered a "compromise" motion to add the slogan "For a Peaceful, Diplomatic Solution to the Gulf Crisis" to a leaflet for the Oct. 20 action. (Others at the meeting wanted even worse positions, calling for the United Nations to take over the anti-Iraq war effort.)

The SWP-sponsored motion won. Before that vote, the main slogans for the Oct. 20 demonstration in Cleveland were: "No U.S. War In the Middle East!" and "Bring U.S. Troops Home Now!" How easy it was for the SWP, once it began to lose its Leninist bearings, to come out for a "diplomatic" solution—i.e., for "negotiations!"

In Chicago on Oct. 8, SWP representatives changed their stance from an earlier meeting where they agreed with the central demand of the demonstration being "U.S. Out Now." Now they voted to add this sentence: "Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait was rightly condemned by the international community, but no show of U.S. force will bring political and economic security to the Middle East."

If ever there was a muddle-headed sentence from a Leninist point of view this is it. First, it attacks Iraq for overthrowing the imperialist puppet regime. Then it refers to this world dominated by the rapacious imperialist powers as the "international community."

It implicitly gives backing to the misnamed United Nations, which is dominated by these same imperialist powers, where the vote to condemn Iraq took place. To take the cake, it meekly points out that no U.S. "show of force" will "bring political and economic security to the Mideast." Indeed!

Not only will the United States not bring political and economic security to the Middle East, it will not pave the streets with gold, nor do many other good things. It will bring war, destruction, imperialist domination and exploitation to the Middle East. It will bring hunger, and oppression and backwardness.

It will preserve the rule of its puppet feudal Emirs. If it succeeds in crushing Iraq, it will strengthen Israeli domination of the Palestinians. Those are the kind of things imperialism "brings."

Finally, Waters' uncritical support of Cuba's defense of current territorial boundaries "no matter what the reason" opens the door to recognition of not only the Kuwaiti Emirs but the Israeli state, which has been "recognized" by the "international community" as an independent nation since 1948 (Kuwait only since 1961).

The Palestinians demand a democratic and secular Palestine—i.e., the overthrow of the Israeli state.

The logic of the new SWP position of defending current territorial boundaries would be to defend the boundaries of Israel. This would put them into conflict with the Palestinians. It would mean they would condemn any Arab country which was able to push back the borders of Israel in any future Israeli-Arab war. We hope that the SWP leadership does not take this logic to its conclusion, but backs off. ■



By CAROLINE LUND

PITTSBURGH—Last month I was able to interview Lea Tsemel, an attorney who has devoted her life to defending the human rights of Palestinians victimized by the Israeli authorities both in Israel and in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza.

Tsemel was in Pittsburgh as part of a tour sponsored by the Palestine Solidarity Committee, the United Electrical Workers Union, and the Political Speakers Forum Board of Carnegie Mellon University.

Born in Israel, Tsemel was raised in a Zionist family and became radicalized during the 1967 war, when she was a law student. She was appalled by the atrocities of the war and began asking questions, studying politics, and became a socialist and anti-Zionist.

I asked her to describe the current situation in Israel and the occupied territories in relation to the war moves in the Persian Gulf.

"Something very interesting has happened among the 'left' in Israel," she began. "As you know, for quite a long time, especially after the Palestinian Intifada [uprising], the Zionist left in Israel has called for negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Their slogan has been 'To get peace, you have to deal with the enemy.' The idea was, 'We don't admire them, we don't love them, but we have to talk peace with them.'

"Then came the invasion by Iraq of Kuwait, and Palestinians, both in Israel and the occupied territories, dared express their support for Saddam Hussein. I don't think it was support for him as a person, or support for his history. It was support for a hero who dared come out against the imperialist powers that are taking advantage of and exploiting the treasures of the area, which ought to belong to the Arab world.

"The reaction of the Zionist left was horrible and patronizing, saying more or less, 'How dare you! How can you be supportive of him? We don't want to have anything to do with you anymore.' The attitude of these liberal figures toward the Palestinians was like they were educating a naughty child."

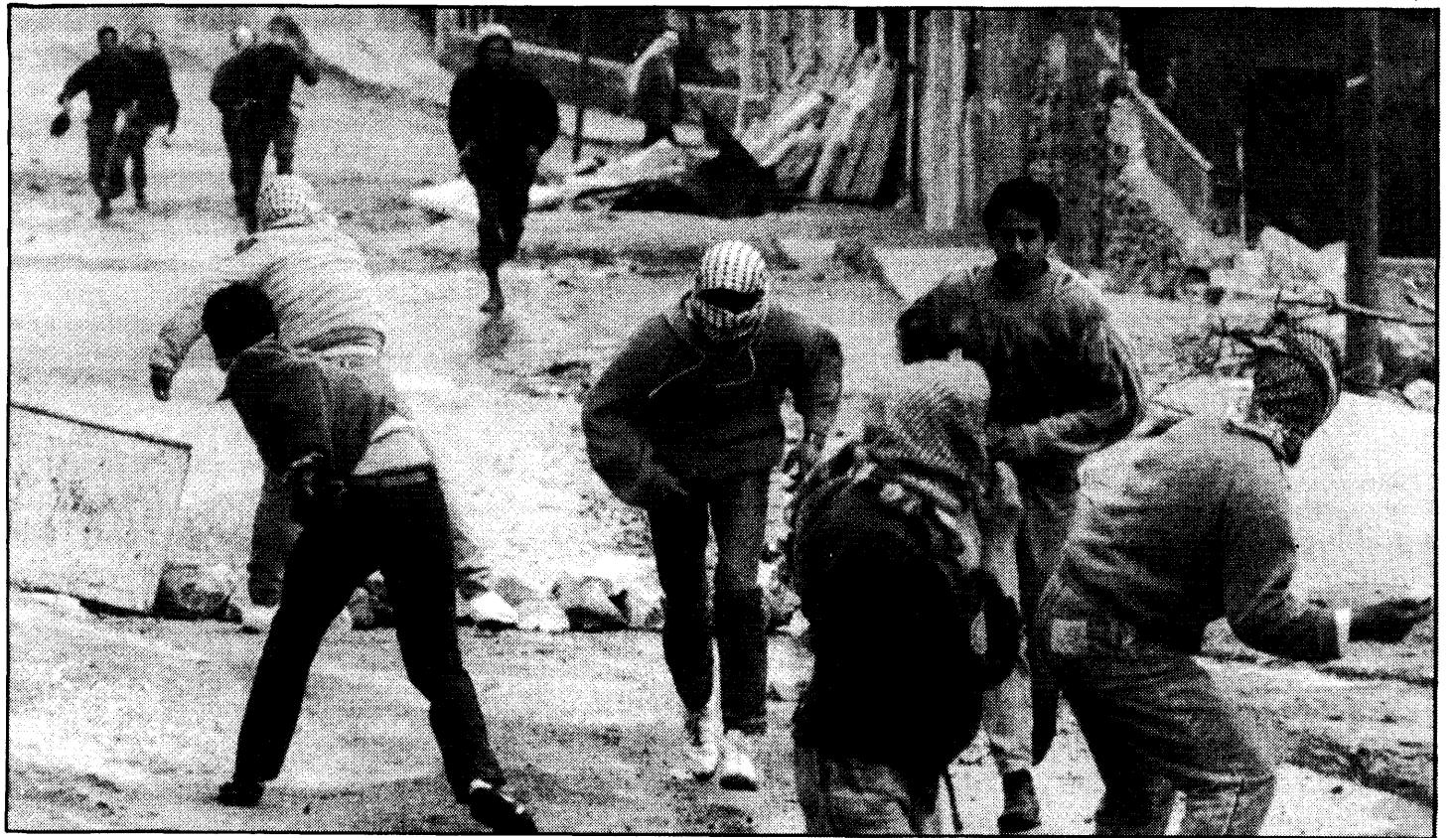
I asked if support for Iraq was just the position of the PLO, or if it had an echo among Palestinians in general.

Tsemel responded: "I'm not sure it is a formal position of all the Palestinian organizations, but of course there is much more support for Iraq among the grass roots, much more. I don't think the Palestinians are for the occupation of Kuwait. But I think they admire the person who related to the Arab people and stood up to American imperialism as someone should have done a long time ago."

#### Intifada's "small fire"

I asked about reports in the American press that the Palestinian Intifada had begun

# Israeli activist defends and justifies Palestinian support for Iraq in Gulf



to die out in recent months. [This interview was conducted before the Israeli massacre of 19 Palestinians at Temple Mount.]

"No, I don't think it's dying," Tsemel said. "It continues as a small fire. It is very difficult to carry out the Intifada now when public attention is elsewhere. Among the concessions the Palestinians made knowingly and willingly was to carry out a peaceful struggle. That is, mainly strikes, some stones, but no weapons. The benefit of this kind of struggle was that the world was watching and identifying with it. But in the present situation the world is not watching; it is ignoring the Palestinian struggle.

"So I think right now the Intifada is having more of an internal impact. People are educating themselves on how to survive under strike conditions, and deepening their conviction that they have to have their independence, otherwise there is no future."

Finally, I asked Tsemel to tell us about the case of her husband, Michael Warschawsky, who is presently serving an eight-month prison term which began in July.

"About three years ago," she began, "Michael was the director of the Alternative Information Center, which attempted to make available information that you don't

**'...I think they admire the person who related to the Arab people and stood up to American imperialism...'**

read in the daily newspapers, information from the Israeli and the foreign press. It was a center for left, anti-Zionist, and non-Zionist activity.

"One day the security services and police raided the office and closed it. Michael was charged with possession of materials belonging to an illegal organization. You should know that all of the components of the PLO are considered illegal organizations.

"He was charged with possession of the typeset draft of the beginning of a book in Arabic that teaches people how to sustain torture during interrogation.

"Michael was arrested and released on bail. The trial took a long time, in the district

court of Jerusalem. He was acquitted of most of the charges but found guilty of one—possession of this booklet which explained how to sustain torture during security forces interrogations. He refused to identify the person for whom the typesetting was done.

"He was sentenced to 20 months' imprisonment. In his appeal before the Supreme Court, the punishment was reduced to eight months. Right now he is in the prison at Ramle in Israel. It is quite a privileged place, compared to the prisons where my regular clients are held. It's a prison for white-collar offenders.

"We hope that later on, when Palestinians are sentenced to a similar short period of time, they can demand to have the same easy conditions as in this white-collar prison."

I asked if Warschawsky can receive letters, newspapers, and books.

"Yes, he can. He has received hundreds of letters. His address is: Michael Warschawsky, P.O. Box 13, Ramle, Israel."

Asked what message she would have for people in the United States who are concerned about the danger of war in the Middle East, Tsemel replied: "I think America should leave the Middle East immediately."

## Revolt in Turkish Kurdistan: The unreported 'Intifada'

By PINAR SELINAY

ISTANBUL, Turkey—Two years after the definitive outbreak of the Palestinian uprising, known worldwide as the "Intifada," a new Intifada has emerged on the scene. In response to the constant repression in Turkish Kurdistan, the Kurdish masses have made it clear that they are determined to wage their struggle for self-determination at all costs.

Kurdistan was carved up and distributed among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria following the First World War. Since that time, the Kurds in Turkey—who number between 10 million and 20 million, according to different estimates—have been subjected to relentless assimilation and annihilation policies intended to deprive them of a national identity and to force them to believe they are just Turks who happen to speak a different "dialect."

In reality, Kurdish is a distinct language belonging to the Indo-European language family, while Turkish is a Ural-Altaic language. The Kurds are a people native to the Middle East, while the Turks migrated to the area from Central Asia in successive waves, finally breaking into Asia Minor in the 11th century.

The spark that rekindled the rebellion took

place in the town of Nusaybin after the military shot into a funeral march in honor of several Kurdish militants who had been killed by government forces. In response, the people closed down all the businesses in Nusaybin, and the protests soon spread to other towns.

#### Lightning demonstrations

Thousands of people came together in "lightning demonstrations," in which they chanted slogans in Kurdish and then disappeared before the police had time to intervene. Even children participated in school boycotts. Some 700 people were arrested; many of them were tortured.

The Turkish ruling class is clearly frightened by the failure of their attempt to assimilate the Kurdish population. They have drastically upscaled the presence of military, police, and counter-insurgency forces in the area. The Kurdish region has been under martial law since 1978, replaced by an only slightly milder state of emergency in 1987.

The government employs some 20,000 "village guards" who are local community members paid to inform on anyone who has contact with the guerrillas and to prevent such contact from taking place. Those who accept the job are detested as traitors, while

those who refuse are often singled out for atrocities or even death by the government. In addition, "special teams," roving counter-insurgency forces who are trained outside Turkey, terrorize the area and kill at random.

Millions of villagers are driven out of their homes as part of a policy aimed at preventing them from assisting the guerrillas. As a result, innumerable homeless are clustered on the fringes of Kurdish towns, where they have no source of income and no access to land to harvest fruits and vegetables.

#### "Forget about people"

One Turkish general has gone so far as to state that should he be allowed to determine policy in the area: "Forget about people. Not even weeds would be left growing."

In addition to the torture and killings, the Turkish government has responded to the recent uprisings with new censorship laws that prohibit anything designed to "excite the public." Although primarily intended to keep people in the rest of Turkey (and the world) uninformed about the terror in Kurdistan, the legislation is also being used to silence and isolate the socialist press.

Moreover, this same legislation provides for the immediate banishment without trial of all persons living in the area who are considered undesirable for any reason. Such persons are then to be confined to specially selected Turkish towns known for their preponderance of reactionary Turkish nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and even fascist groups.

Nevertheless, there are some indications that sections of the Turkish capitalist class

are considering loosening up certain restrictions, which would include granting certain cultural rights such as the right to speak Kurdish (now illegal). Before doing so, however, they will try to isolate and crush the mass movement, which otherwise would only be fueled by the passage of such measures.

The Kurdish nation is the largest in the world without a state of its own. Tribal rivalries and state borders have been major barriers in preventing the Kurds from carrying out a successful struggle against their oppressors.

In addition, rather than waging a united fight for self-determination, various Kurdish organizations have sought alliances with rival governments (for example, the Kurds of Iraq with the Iranian government, and the Kurds of Iran with the Iraqi government) and even with North American imperialism. This has further hindered the struggle.

There is no doubt that the governments of the region and the United States will do all within their power to trap and deflect the struggle of the Kurdish masses, which at this point is still fragmented and isolated. The possibility of a new genocide in the manner of Halabje, a village in Iraq where thousands of Kurds were massacred through chemical warfare in March 1988, is always an overhanging threat.

The success of the Kurdish struggle for self-determination will depend to a large degree on the development of an independent leadership with the consciousness needed to avoid these pitfalls and the ability to link up with the struggles of the working class of the states that rule them. ■

# Boston teach-in reveals opposition of Blacks and veterans to U.S. war in the Middle East

By SCOTT ADAMS-COOPER

BOSTON—Two hundred people filled the Arlington Street Church here on Oct. 21 for a teach-in unlike any organized thus far against the war in the Middle East.

Sponsored by the Committee Against a Vietnam War in the Middle East, the teach-in brought together out-of-town guests with local Black leaders and Vietnam veterans. All of them denounced the war plans of the United States and scored the hypocrisy over a "fight for democracy" in the Persian Gulf.

Winston Warfield, a Vietnam veteran and

president of the Smedley Butler Brigade of the Veterans for Peace, chaired the meeting. Speakers included Daniel Sheehan of the Christic Institute and Ralph Schoenman, former Executive Director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

Minister Don Muhammed of the Nation of Islam addressed the meeting, as did Shakur Ali, who served three combat tours in Vietnam, and the Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler of the Church of the United Community. Chris Nteta, a South African supporter of the Black Consciousness Movement, also spoke. Roger Sheppard represented the

Committee Against a Vietnam War in the Middle East.

U.S. Marine Corps (Reserve) Lance Corporal Eric Glen Larsen, who has refused to serve in Saudi Arabia (see *Socialist Action*, October 1990) was a special guest at the teach-in. The crowd gave him a hero's welcome.

Larsen's two-day tour of the Boston area was met with intense media interest, as the press adjusts to dwindling support for the Bush administration's adventure in the Persian Gulf. While in Boston, Larsen was interviewed on local radio and television, fea-

tured in a long article in *The Boston Globe*, and interviewed by the BBC. He was also a guest on NBC's *Today Show* in a hookup from the Boston affiliate.

Later in the week, Larsen and Jeff Paterson were guests via telephone on a local TV show about soldiers who refuse to fight in the Persian Gulf. They were joined by two members of the Committee who spoke from the audience.

Excerpts from the presentations at the teach-in by Muhammed, Ellis-Hagler, Nteta, Ali, and Sheppard follow:

## Minister Don Muhammed:

### 'It's a war about who is going to rule the world.'

Minister Don Muhammed is a leader of the Nation of Islam, Mosque No. 11 in Roxbury, Mass.

There are times in our lives when we really don't like to do some of the things that we have to do. Such a time is now. The future of the world may very well be at stake. And it's quite possible that it could be in our hands.

I have to speak to you from a scriptural point of view. If we care anything about our loved ones, our children, if we care anything about the future of this world, we will be cognizant of what is going on in the Middle East. This is really not a war about oil. It's a war about who is going to rule this world.

And the sham that is being placed before the American people, that somehow we're in the Middle East because the interests of the United States are at stake, is the biggest game that has ever been played on anybody since time began.

The bodies of our youngsters are going to line up like you've never seen bodies before. And those of you in the Arlington Street Church, if you have the will to stand up to this mighty, awesome machine that wants to control the world, you have a chance to stop it, because God is on our side.

The scriptures say that "I will gather all nations to come together in the valley of Jehasaphat." All nations are involved in this war, and every nation on earth is going to feel the impact of this war, because this is not like the first one, it's not like the second one, this is the war of Armageddon.

I'm asking you to reflect. The word "Armageddon" means "a war of arms," and



Minister Don Muhammed

"mageddon" means "a place in the Middle East." And the suffix of that word is "do." And if we don't want to go through scriptures, where they say "blood will flow to the horse's mouth," we had better make a move in America, because there is *no more war after this one*.

This war is not over might; this war is over right. And those of us who stand with God, we're coming out the winner on this war.

They've got the nerve to send Black boys to line up on the border of Saudi Arabia. Why don't we send Bush's son; he knows

how to get money out of S&Ls.

These are some unusual times. The sands of the Saudi Arabian people are causing your computers to act up. They just don't seem to work right. It's hot in the day and cold at night, and your plans for attack in November could very well doom the entire Western world. And it's in your hands. It ain't in the hands of Black folks.

To think that this country would say to Black boys, "Be all that you can never be in this society. Come on and join the army." No, I'm not joining your army. I'm joining the army to fight drugs in the Black community. I'm joining the army to fight poverty in the Black community. I'm joining the army to fight for education in the Black community. Our fight is here in America, not abroad.

They didn't listen to the U.N. when the U.N. said NO on the invasion of Panama. They came back and said that they lost only 200 or 300 lives among the Mestizo Indians and the people of Panama. But three weeks ago they said they lost 6000 to 7000 lives of Black people in Panama. When the hell are we going to wake up and tell this filthy government: No, no, no, it's a new day!

Israel doesn't listen to the U.N. They tell the U.N. that the world's opinion isn't necessary, they do what they want to do.

To blockade a country—why don't we blockade South Africa. Why don't we cut off the economic flow to that country. Why don't we stand for justice in South Africa and do the right thing by making Nelson Mandela the rightful president of South Africa.

This fight's not about might, because might won't work today. The fight is about right. The fight is about justice. The fight is about equality. The fight is about real freedom.

Kuwait stole oil from Iraq. With the permission of this country, and with hired drills from this country, they dug underneath their soil to drain off their oil and put it on the market—to deliberately undermine the Iraqi economy; to bring it down.

If they didn't want Saddam, they wouldn't be putting forth this effort, and trying to figure out a way to minimize the casualties and the fatalities that are going to occur. And many commentators are not saying if, but *when*, the war takes place. You see, nobody said that he was wrong when he was fighting Iran. Nobody said he was wrong, even in the Arab world.

The scriptures have him in there too, because there's so many Arab fat-bellied sheiks who are doing nothing for the masses of the people, but who are working hand-in-hand with the manipulators and the mind-managers of the West, to use their resources to line the pockets of the few while the many are going down the drain.

Saddam has a million-man army. They're not soldiers; they're warriors. They've got a million men that are committed, that don't care whether they live or die. In their heart is a burning desire that the people are going to get freedom. And you cannot destroy people with that mentality, because they would just as soon give their life for a cause than to live on this earth and be disrespected.

We're going to have to turn President Bush around, because he is on a one-way street to hell. We should not allow him to take the future of America with him.

The real Americans are not the ones who are beating the drums for war. You're the real Americans, because you want to save America. You want America to prosper. But you cannot come in this church and leave your desire here. You cannot come in this church and leave your commitment here.

You've got to take your desire and your commitment to the streets, and maybe to the suites. But you have got to take what you've got to the doorstep and to the footstep of the powers of America. You've got to make your voices heard.

You've got to tell this government that we will never allow you to send this country to hell for a dollar. It is more important to us that we fight at home before we fight abroad, because nobody is doing anything to us, and we've got things to do here.

## Vietnam vet Shakur Ali:

### 'This government reneged on its promise'

Shakur Ali is a veteran of three tours of combat duty in Vietnam and Executive Director of "He's Not Heavy, He's My Brother/She's Not Heavy, She's My Sister," a youth services agency in Roxbury, Mass.

I'm here to talk about my experience as a combat veteran in Vietnam, in the United States Marine Corps, in the early '60s, and how my experience and how that war is affecting my community today, almost 20 years later.

More than 50,000 died in Vietnam. Three or four times more than that died after returning to the United States. They died from drug addiction, alcohol addiction, and violence, and I've seen it. I now work with a number of children that live in Roxbury, and it astonishes me to find that 60 percent to 80 percent of those children come from single-parent households, where the mother is the single parent and where the father is absent. And damn near 90 percent of those absentee fathers are Vietnam vets.

What the Vietnam war did to my community, indeed your community, I do not want to see repeated. I do not want anyone else to have to work with the kids I work with. I do

not want to see any other soldier go to East Africa—and let's call a spade a spade, it's East Africa—and put their fellow soldiers in body bags, as I have done.

I returned from Vietnam a junkie. I was addicted to opium, and because opium wasn't available to me on 125th Street and Lenox, where I'm from, heroin became my drug of choice. I went to the Veterans Administration and asked for help. They said sure, we have a room for you.

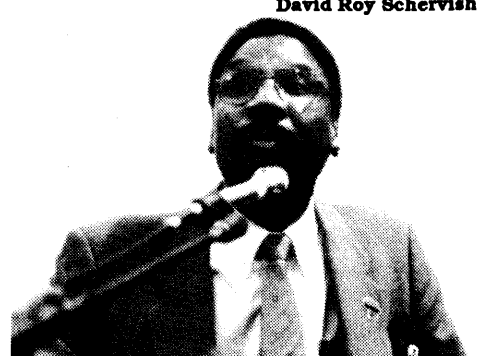
I went into the VA hospital on 23rd Street in New York City, and the room that they had for me was in the psychiatric ward. I wasn't insane; I was a drug addict. So, of course I never went in. I asked them to help me go into a rehabilitation center, and they

told me there was a waiting list a mile long.

I'd just returned from the war. I was wounded three times. I returned to combat three times, and each time I was wounded. I used drugs the same as mostly everybody else in Vietnam did, and I came back a drug addict. I couldn't get any help.

I came from a single-parent family. I was born in Harlem Hospital. At 17, I joined the Marine Corps. I didn't join because I was a patriot. I didn't join because I wanted to be a hero. I joined to get the hell out of Harlem, to get out of poverty. I was already thrown out of high school.

And the Marine Corps promised me that if in fact I went and served and did my thing, and came back in one piece, they would send me to school. And yet, three weeks ago, I



Shakur Ali

had to borrow \$14,000 to complete my graduate studies. What the hell happened to the GI Bill? This government reneged on its promise.

As I look at this audience I see a number of my brother members of the Smedley Butler Brigade of the Vets for Peace, and these brothers out there can tell you the same thing. The government was not there for us. They don't give a damn about us, and they don't give a damn about you.

The only way that we're going to combat the problem of our youth out there is to realize what started that problem. And as far as



Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler

David Roy Schervish

## Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler:

**'We're not there for democracy. We're not there for freedom.'**

*The Rev. Graylan Ellis-Hagler is a leader of the Church of the United Community, Roxbury, Mass.*

We must understand that Western powers for decades have played a chess game with land in the Middle East and in the Gulf. They have put rulers in and taken rulers out. They have arbitrarily divided land and established boundaries against the indigenous peoples' will. They have given people's land to other people, and then they sit back and act surprised when uprisings happen and unrest in that region occurs.

The troubles in the Middle East and the Gulf are because the West has stirred their

**'George Bush needs to understand the logic that if Iraq needs to leave Kuwait, then Israel needs to leave occupied Palestinian land.'**

cauldron of greed and domination, and in that they have denied people their own identity and sovereignty—and it's about time that it stopped.

We end up in this situation time and time again—in Africa, in Asia, in the Caribbean, in the Middle East, in Central America, in South America, in North America. That is only evidence to my argument. Every time we turn around, some indigenous people are dispossessed because of white Europeans' greed. It must come to an end.

I'm concerned—and there's no one here who can change my mind, because I've been in the thick of it for the last two to three years—what started the so-called "gang problem" in our city was the Vietnam War.

Soldiers like me who came back half-cocked, who didn't give a damn, would shoot you as quick as look at you. You can't give no poor nigger a gun, send him over there and tell him to shoot and die and fight for freedom, and then let that poor brother come back here and not service him when he comes back addicted to drugs, as a direct result of shooting and dying and fighting for other folks' freedom. And not expect him to react?

I've been to funerals of a lot of brothers who came back from Vietnam. And don't get me wrong when I say "brothers," because I'm a Vietnam vet. When I say brothers I'm talking about white brothers, I'm talking about Black brothers, I'm talking about Puerto Rican brothers, I'm talking about brothers that were over there dying.

And now we're back, and our government has forsaken us. Are you going to do the same thing again? Are we going through this one more time?

We've got to understand this. Already, eight GIs were killed on a cargo plane in Germany destined for the Gulf. With that figure more U.S. troops have been killed in the Gulf than died in the naked aggression in Panama. Put it into perspective. If troops remain there, I'm afraid that we will become so used to seeing body bags return to the States, as used to it as we are to seeing homeless people on the streets. Most of us, I don't think, even notice it anymore.

I'm tired also of the TV and the news media and the radio not telling me the truth. Every day some blonde-headed or brown-headed white kid soldier gets his mother on TV, but we know—because we have the records of the history of Vietnam—that when the shooting starts, Black and Brown men and women are going to fight and die in greater disproportionate numbers to their representation in the population. It's always the case.

When it comes to Black and Brown folks, in this white supremacist mentality there are three things: send them to war to die, put drugs in their arms, or lock them up in jail.

That's what we're seeing right now. That's what we will see.

We've got to understand that we are not there for democracy, even though we really don't know what democracy is about as a country. That's a word that we throw around. Kuwait is not a democracy. Saudi Arabia is not a democracy. We're not there for democracy. We're not there for freedom.

We are there for the same reason that we're everywhere else: There is some money to be made, and there's some non-white people to exploit, and there's some new territory to be grabbed. That is the reason that we are there. We are there because there is oil in that country. We are there for Texaco, we are there for Mobil, we are there for Royal Dutch Shell. We are there for big business. We are not there for any principled reason.

Don't we go everywhere for big business? Big business is the nature of America. You know, white politicians will send young people to die for oil profits, even while for young Blacks and Hispanics there are no jobs at home that will pay the rent or put enough money in their pocket to allow them to raise a family.

They will send Black and Brown people to fight and die in a war for the white man's dream and the white man's greed, even though they will still physically and mentally be lynched here at home because of the pervasiveness of racism.

The white man will send Black and Brown people to defend the flag and oil profits even though we are denied an equal education, housing, and health care and all. They will send Black youth and Brown people to die abroad, and they can't live with dignity or respect at home. It doesn't make sense.

George Bush needs to understand the logic that if Iraq needs to leave Kuwait, then Israel needs to leave occupied Palestinian land. The U.S. didn't deploy 200,000 troops to protect Palestinian land. They didn't ask for 200,000 troops when South Africa invaded Angola.

They didn't ask for 200,000 troops as monies are expended from South Africa to fund a group of bandits in Mozambique who kill children and destroy schools and blow up hospitals. They are not concerned about democracy or freedom or hope or dignity. They are only interested in what they can get their dirty, grubby little hands on.

I know that my role is to tell every Black and Brown kid that I run into: Don't you go down to that post office and give them your name to register for no draft! Don't you go and fight in a white man's war!

## Chris Nteta:

**'Capitalist intentions guide and govern American foreign policy.'**

*Chris Nteta is a South African supporter of the Black Consciousness Movement and professor at University of Massachusetts-Boston.*

In the United States, there is a growing movement to resist the war in the Middle East. However, today we learn that it is an international organization that is arising—in Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and many other countries—so we take heart and inspiration in knowing that we are not alone.

It would seem that United States' foreign policy is governed and guided not by those high ideals that we've come to associate with this country—the ideals that are spelled out in the "Declaration of Independence," in the Constitution, in the Bill of Rights. It's not guided by justice and the pursuit of peace and coexistence.

I'd like to submit that it's being guided by three things.

It is guided by *racism*. The fact that people of color die in foreign wars initiated by this country in disproportionate numbers to their population ratio is racism.

The second is commitment to capitalism—the markets, the resources. Capitalist intentions guide and govern American foreign policy.

The third is the militaristic nature of this country. It is the military-industrial complex that not only guides foreign policy but dominates the domestic policy of this country.

Those are the three: racism, capitalism, and militarism.

Politicians have talked about the "peace dividend." There were high expectations that with the cessation of the Cold War, this country would use the billions and billions of dollars that were being expended to expand the military buildup, to invest that money in fundamental needs that we have in this society. But now we hear that \$10 million is being spent every day in the Middle East to sustain the 200,000 troops that are there. What does that say about domestic policy?

The military-industrial complex governs the policy of this country. It leads to the kind of assault on small nations like those we've spoken of tonight. We've heard about Panama, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Cambodia, Libya—and now it is Iraq.

People have referred to oil, that this is a war for oil, for profits, a war that is going to profit not you and me but the oil companies. Today it may be about oil, but tomorrow it may be in South Africa—for the platinum, uranium, manganese, the diamonds, and the gold there.

I, as a South African, am here today to make sure that the resources and the raw material in my own country do not become the target for Bush to go cascading in. Today it may be oil; tomorrow it will be something else.

It is not surprising that the United States—no respecter of international law—should be using that very excuse to say that

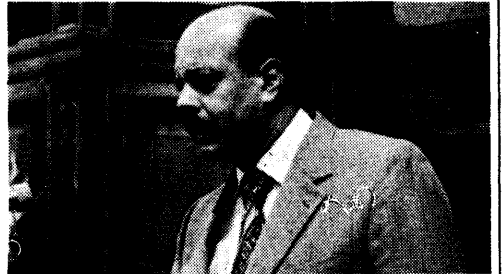
## Roger Sheppard:

**'We're building a movement to reach out to everybody.'**

*Roger Sheppard is a leader of the Committee Against a Vietnam War in the Middle East in Boston.*

The U.S. plans have been revealed in *L'Express* [a weekly French magazine]. They want a four-day mission, costing 20,000 U.S. lives, with commandos sent in, and we'll have carpet-bombing of Baghdad. They have difficulty swallowing their hypocrisy around the 19 Palestinians killed last week and the hundreds of others.

How do you think the world is going to react to the carpet-bombing of Iraq? Who does Bush think he is, that he can raise and



Roger Sheppard

lower nations, that he can level Panama, that he can tell how many thousand men and women of this country are going to die?

Who does this man think he is, that he summons the mighty and powerful of the world, and the deceitful. They congratulate each other that they can cooperate in the strangulation of Iraq. They toast each other in Helsinki. Gorbachev, the "savior" of the Soviet Union—what do the Azerbaijanis think? They're Islamic. Do they think Gorbachev is for the sovereignty of nations?

My neighbor has a yellow ribbon tied around a tree by my driveway. It's for her brother-in-law, a telephone worker called up to Saudi Arabia. That yellow ribbon means, "I want Gene home alive, as soon as possible."

We're building a movement to reach out to everybody: the vets, the Marines, everybody. Those yellow ribbons that are all around this country mean "we want all our troops home NOW!"



**BRING THE TROOPS HOME**

Chris Nteta

David Roy Schervish

they have the United Nations behind it. The United Nations has become a powerful excuse and screen to cover up the Rambo activities of the U.S. in the Middle East.

Let us remember that the United States, when it so chooses, thumbs its nose at the International Court of Justice. When invited to participate and answer to crimes perpetrated against Nicaragua—the mining of harbors in Nicaragua—the U.S. showed the international community. They refused to show up. They just did not care.

Today we are treated to the spectacle of the United States—that "respector" of international law and the international community and its bodies—saying that it didn't act alone, that it has the support and solidarity of Margaret Thatcher and Gorbachev, among others. And that it's not doing something evil, immoral, or illegal. I think we know better.

# A 20th century chronicle of Iraq's attempt to regain Kuwait

## Imperialism responded with secret deals, coups and assassinations



Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956. Iraqi leader Nuri es-Said agreed to join the anti-Nasser Baghdad Pact on the condition Kuwait be returned to Iraq.

In a Nov. 1 editorial, *The New York Times* warned against giving any credence to the view that Iraq has a legitimate historic claim to Kuwait, calling it "Goebbels-like Iraqi propaganda." *The Times* is obviously disturbed that the truth about the Iraq-Kuwait dispute is starting to get out. In this Part 2 of a three-part series, Ralph Schoenman continues to establish the facts about this hidden chapter of Middle Eastern politics.

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

In the aftermath of World War I, the Arab people's aspiration for self-determination was crushed when the major European powers reneged on their pledges to grant independence and divided up the Arab world among themselves. Iraq, in particular, was prevented access to the Gulf through the amputation of its Kuwaiti district.

In many ways the cold-blooded murder by British agents of King Ghazi I of Iraq marked a watershed for British rule in the region. Ghazi had refused to abandon his support of the Kuwaiti National Movement in its insurrectional struggle to reunite Kuwait with Iraq.

Ghazi was murdered on April 5, 1939. This was the eve of World War II, which would be fought, like the global conflagration of 1914, between rival imperial powers seeking to secure hegemony over subject peoples and world markets.

A new claimant, however, had emerged on the scene. Washington was now preparing actively to displace the colonial domain of enemy and ally alike. And by the end of the war, the United States was the dominant force in the region.

David Lamb described the new U.S. role in an article in *The Los Angeles Times* (Aug. 19, 1990):

"It was not until the final days of World War II in 1945—a war that extended U.S. interests to every corner of the globe—that Washington finally decided to exert its influence in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula."

In February 1945, Franklin Roosevelt met Abdul Aziz ibn-Saud, whom Lamb describes as "a barely literate warrior-leader whose isolated kingdom mattered little except to the oil barons."

But Roosevelt was not merely seeking to establish priority for U.S. oil companies in

this previously British domain. "Roosevelt hoped to gain support for increased Jewish immigration to Palestine," Lamb writes. "The two men [Roosevelt and the Saudi leader] got along well, and Roosevelt promised that the United States would make no policy decision on the Palestinian issue without first consulting Saudi Arabia."

Like the British before him, Roosevelt acted on the operating imperial principle, "Promise them anything." As Lamb put it, "It was the first of many promises that the United States would make to the Arabs in the post-war era. Few were ever kept."

The plan to establish a colonial-settler state in Palestine was linked directly to U.S. plans to displace Britain and France in the region. The United States needed a surrogate force on the scene to cope with the anti-colonial revolution in the Arab world. The Zionist leaders left Washington in no doubt as to their intentions.

In 1940, Joseph Weitz, the head of the Jewish Agency's Colonization Department who was responsible for the organization of settlements in Palestine, stated the official position: "Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country. We shall not achieve our goal if the Arabs are here in this small country. There is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to neighboring countries—all of them. Not one village, not one tribe shall be left."

On July 9, 1947, Rabbi Fischmann appeared before the United Nations Special Committee of Inquiry on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to present formally the claims of the Zionist movement. "The Promised Land," he said, "extends from the River of Egypt up to the Euphrates. It includes parts of Syria and Lebanon."

In fact, the map presented by Fischmann to the United Nations designated all of Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan, two-thirds of Syria, half of Iraq, a third of Arabia and Egypt up to the Nile, including Cairo, as part of "Eretz Israel"—or the land of Israel.

The partition of Palestine and the sanctioning of a settler state was part of a deliberate plan to displace Great Britain as the dominant colonial power in the Arab East. To achieve this end, Harry Truman enlisted Joseph Stalin, whose collusion with the United States was essential for the estab-

lishment of the state of Israel.

Within six months of the partitioning of Palestine and before the formal establishment of the state of Israel, the Zionist militia began the destruction of Palestinian towns and villages. In all, 800,000 people (out of a population of approximately 950,000) were expelled from their lands.

The resistance waged by the feudal Arab regimes was marked by scarcely concealed collusion. On July 21, 1951, King Abdullah of Jordan, brother of King Faisal I of Iraq, was assassinated upon discovery that he had conspired to divide Palestine between the Zionists and the Hashemite monarchy.

It was the collusion of Egypt's King Farouk with the British which inspired the Officers of the Liberation, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, to overthrow the monarchy on July 23, 1952. The wave of national pride which swept the Arab nation was directed against imperial domination in general but against the corrupt, feudal rulers in particular.

### Revolt sweeps Arab world

The tide of revolt swept British colonialism aside. On Oct. 19, 1954, the Anglo-Egyptian agreement was signed in Cairo. By June 13, 1956, the last British contingents left Egypt. Thirteen days later, President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal.

It had been clear from the end of World War II that the United States had become the principal imperialist power. From 1952 to 1955, Nasser sought to come to terms with U.S. capital, seeking U.S. arms and secretly soliciting U.S. support for a settlement with Israel.

Instead, U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles inaugurated the Baghdad Pact, designed specifically to counter the surge of revolt in the Arab East. On Nov. 21-22, 1955, the first conference of the signatory countries was held: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Great Britain participated. The United States was listed as an "observer" for cosmetic purposes.

The Baghdad Pact was perceived throughout the Arab world as an alliance of regimes subordinate to British and American imperialist control. In Iraq, it was greeted by riots of protest.

*Time* magazine (Nov. 26, 1956) provided

a graphic description of the mood in Iraq:

"Iraq has long been the only strongly pro-Western Arab state. This is largely the doing of astute old Premier Nuri es-Said, once an officer in the Ottoman army. His country is oil prosperous ... but mobs in the street denounce Nuri es-Said as a British stooge. Last week, open trouble broke out. For six days Arabs demonstrated in the holy city of An Najaf.... Radio Cairo boasted of open civil war in Iraq.

"Nuri es-Said jailed five opposition chieftains, including a former Justice Minister and a former President of the Chamber of Deputies for appealing to King Faisal II to withdraw from the Baghdad Pact."

Behind the scenes, however, Nuri es-Said signaled to the United States that he needed immediate help. Specifically, he sought U.S. assistance in securing the return of Iraq's southern district—that is, Kuwait—to Iraq in order to contain a revolution whose day had come.

As *Time* revealed, "Iraq was, until recently, counted a British preserve. Tough old Nuri es-Said, Iraq's strongman, is Britain's best friend in the area, but under pressure of nationalists he (1) announced publicly, after the Suez invasion, that Iraq will boycott all Baghdad Pact meetings attended by Britain, and (2) told the U.S. privately that if he is to survive he must disengage from the British."

With the invasion of Egypt by Britain, France and Israel, the mood throughout the Arab world was revolutionary.

*Time* reported on Dec. 31, 1956: "In most Arab lands of the Middle East, young army officers with revolutionary social ideas and anti-Western feelings are riding high. But they have yet to unseat Iraq's strongman, Nuri es-Said. Nuri has often been accused of being a British stooge. It took courage for him to keep Iraq in the anti-Communist Baghdad Pact along with Britain after Britain invaded Egypt."

Once again, Nuri es-Said "declared martial law, closed schools, and clapped on heavy censorship."

Radio Cairo broadcast throughout the Arab world, "The traitor is doomed." Nuri es-Said arrested 100 political leaders and court-martialed five of the most prominent. "Nuri," U.S. Ambassador Waldemar John Gallman told *Time*, "has ridden out the storm."

### The secret deal over Kuwait

What was not reported at the time, however, was Nuri es-Said's secret appeals to the British and Americans to help him placate Iraqi national sentiment by returning Kuwait to Iraq.

On March 9, 1956, British Secretary for Foreign Affairs Selwyn Lloyd visited Baghdad for the Consultative Meeting of the Permanent Council of the Baghdad Pact. Nuri es-Said specifically requested that Kuwait revert to Iraq as part of the union with Iraq and Jordan.

Selwyn Lloyd promised to place the matter before the British cabinet. Britain responded in typical fashion. Ambassador Michael Wright informed Nuri es-Said that "Britain is prepared to grant independence to Kuwait. As to the question of accession to Iraq, Kuwait has freedom of choice."

In April 1957, Iraqi Deputy-Prime Minister Tawfiq as-Suweidi held a meeting with the Sheikh of Kuwait, Abdallah as-Salim as-Sabah, in Shtoura, Lebanon. They began negotiations on Kuwait's accession to Iraq, negotiations which were contingent upon British approval—as the Sheikh feared his removal unless British sanction were secured.

In January 1958, Nuri es-Said addressed a meeting of the Baghdad Pact, which was attended by Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Great Britain as formal participants—with John Foster Dulles present. The Iraqi Prime Minister urged upon Baghdad Pact members the incorporation of Kuwait into Iraq. All present agreed with the sole exception of Great Britain, whose representative voiced opposition.

On Feb. 14, 1958, Iraq and Jordan formally federated, forming a union. In a meeting with British Secretary Selwyn Lloyd, the Union's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tewfiq as-Suweidi, raised the issue of Kuwait's accession to Iraq. He sought to convince the British that the "stability" of the Iraqi government would be greatly enhanced if Kuwait were to revert to Iraq.

The British evaded the request, as they had before. Once again, on May 5, 1958, Sheikh Abdallah as-Salim as-Sabah of Kuwait vis-

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ited Baghdad for a meeting with King Faisal II and Nuri es-Said. The latter formally sought the Kuwaiti Sheikh's agreement for Kuwait's accession to Iraq. Again, the Sheikh agreed, subject to British acquiescence.

Accordingly, on June 5, 1958, Iraq and Jordan, in the persons of Nuri es-Said and King Hussein, raised the demand for Kuwait's accession to the union of Iraq and Jordan in a confidential memorandum addressed to the British Embassy in Baghdad.

This time the language used was not supplicatory and its presence in a formal memorandum effectively placed Britain on notice that its clients were determined to confront Britain on the subject of severance of Kuwait from Iraq.

Now Britain's two client governments declared:

"Kuwait was a territory that was subject to the sovereignty of the Ottoman State from the point of view of international law. It was a District within the jurisdiction of the Province of Basra. That sovereignty was the subject of no doubt or disagreement, either on the part of the local Kuwaiti authorities or the British authorities.

"Indeed, it was implicitly recognized by the British government in the Turkish-British Agreement signed in London on 29 July 1913 which, in its Article VI, provided for the right of the Sheikh of Kuwait to exercise his administrative powers as an Ottoman Chief of Direction under the jurisdiction of the Province of Basra."

Iraq was now convinced that Britain was the sole obstacle to its ability to weather the gathering storm against the government of Nuri es-Said—both within Iraq and throughout the Arab world. Iraq believed it could delay or dissolve the tempest by regaining Kuwait.

Iraq proceeded to inform Britain that it was preparing a formal memorandum, well supported by documents and copies of secret understandings, on the necessity for Kuwait's immediate accession to the union of Iraq and Jordan. It warned, moreover, that this memorandum would be made public on July 12, 1958.

The British ambassador now informed Tawfiq as-Suweidi that Great Britain had "approved in principle" Kuwait's return to Iraq. The British requested, however, a meeting to be held in London on July 24, 1958, between Iraq's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the one hand, and the British Prime Minister and Secretary of Foreign Affairs, on the other, to work out "the details."

But Britain had stalled and lied too long. On July 14, 1958, the Iraqi monarchy was overthrown in the revolution led by Abdul Karim Qassim. King Faisal II and Nuri es-Said were executed. Britain immediately abrogated the agreement regarding Kuwait. And the Union between Iraq and Jordan was broken.

Jordan's King Hussein described the impact of the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy in an interview with Cable News Network on Aug. 11, 1990.

"In the 1950s, when the Arab Union existed between Jordan and Iraq, where Kuwait had not received its 'independence,' the famous late Nuri es-Said, the Prime Minister of the Union, spoke to the British very forcefully that either Kuwait returned to Iraq or the Union would take some action. Within days of those final discussions, the Union collapsed with the revolution in Iraq. This is the real background to the problem."

The July 14, 1958, revolution which overthrew Nuri es-Said ended the secret agreements to return Kuwait to Iraq. There is evidence that the United States and Britain had concluded that Nuri es-Said had outlived his usefulness to his sponsors when he decided to go public, in the manner of King Ghazi, with the demand for Kuwait's return to Iraq.

#### The overthrow of the monarchy

A recently published book titled, "Saddam Hussein and the Crisis in the Gulf," by Judith Miller and Laurie Mylroie (New York Times Books, 1990), describes the circumstances of the July 14 uprising.

Two years after Suez, Egypt and Syria joined, under Nasser, to form the United Arab Republic:

"The union of the Arabs, the overcoming of colonialism imposed frontiers, seemed at hand.... In that heady atmosphere, a group of Arab nationalist army officers, led by General Abdul Karim Qassim, succeeded in overthrowing the Iraqi monarchy. Although

the armed force that attacked the palace was small (less than 100 people) and lightly armed, the regent, Abdul Illah, failed to order the 2500-man contingent of well-armed Royal Guard ... to fight back.

"Abdul Illah's resignation and defeatism has never been satisfactorily explained. The commander of the Guard sought Abdul Illah's permission to attack the rebels. It was denied."

The regime had been left to its fate.

The book makes clear, moreover, that co-conspirators Abdul Karim Qassim and Colonel Abdul-Salam Aref were regarded, notably Aref, as "containable." But now the Iraqi masses took over.

"Within an hour, a huge mob, the poor and dispossessed of Baghdad, was in the streets shouting, cheering and calling for vengeance. They raged through the city, attacking the British embassy and other tar-

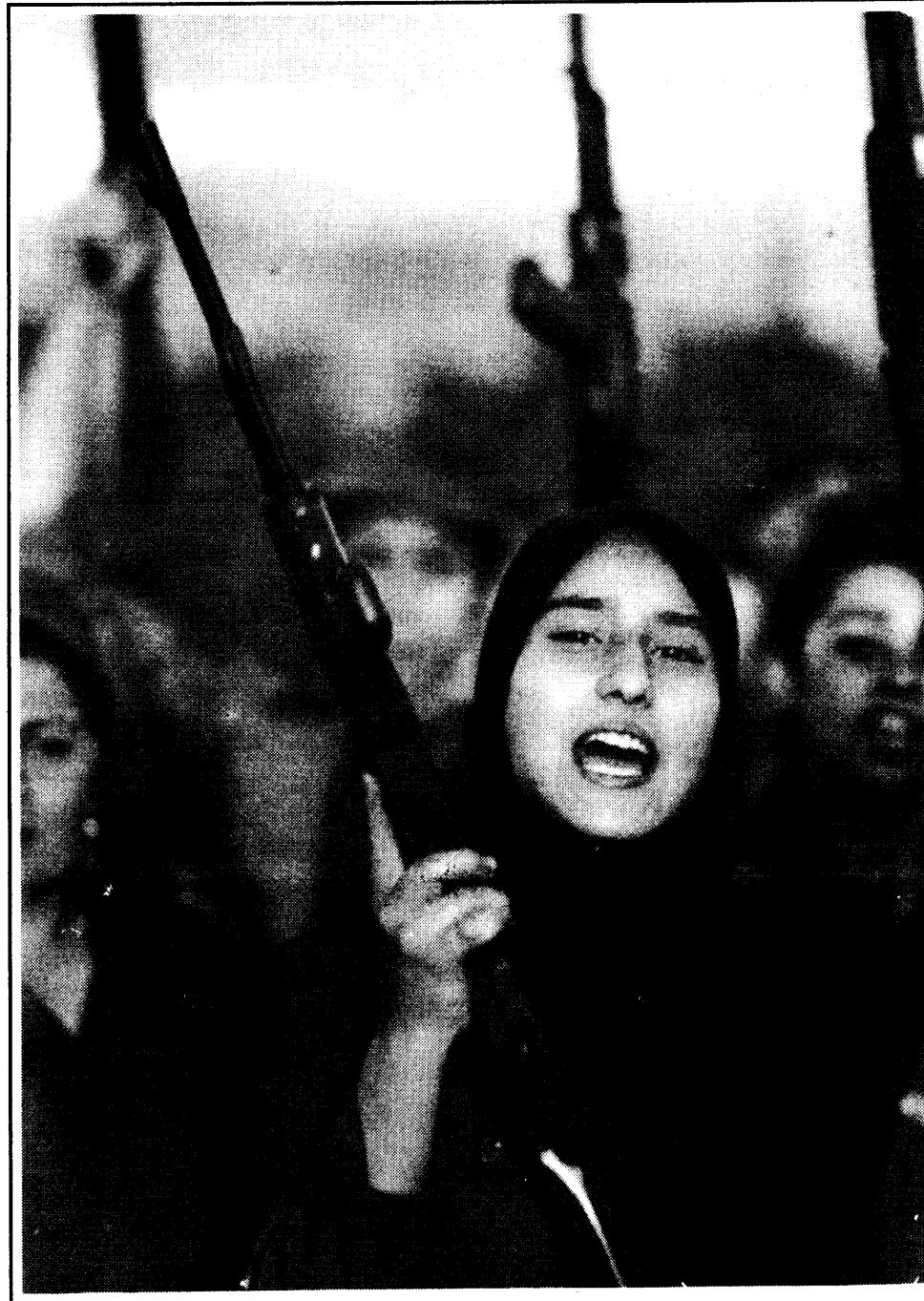
unleashed in the population, which obliged the regime to shift left, that mobilized the CIA.

When the Qassim government lifted the ban on the Iraqi Communist Party, "[t]his was too much for CIA officials.... CIA Director Allen Dulles hatched a plot to 'incapacitate' Colonel Qassim. The job was assigned to the CIA's euphemistically named Technical Services Division, or TSD."

This was not the first attempt by the CIA to assassinate Abdul Karim Qassim, nor was it the last. The CIA's evaluation, recounted by Jeff McConnell, is instructive:

"Qassim continued to alienate both the United States and Britain. Despite Iraq's opposition, neighboring Kuwait, until then a British colony, was declared independent in 1961. Iraq had opposed Kuwait's very existence for much of the century. It looked upon Kuwait, situated on land between Iraq

David Turnlev



Iraqi women are mobilized to defend their homeland against U.S. attack.

## 'Throughout the 1970s, the regime of Saddam Hussein attempted a compromise with the Kuwaiti rulers.'

gets, killing several Jordanian ministers. The mob seized the body of Abdul Illah and proceeded to mutilate it and drag it through the streets. When Nuri es-Said was discovered the next day, he was immediately shot."

The *Boston Sunday Globe* (Sept. 9, 1990) also shed light on these events. Jeff McConnell, an expert "on national security issues," wrote a major article titled "CIA's 'mission' against Hussein has a familiar ring to it."

The *Globe* article reveals that when George Bush ordered the CIA "to overthrow Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, a small circle of Americans felt a sense of *deja vu*. This was not the first time that the CIA had been asked to overthrow a radical Iraqi leader who was believed to oppose American interests."

McConnell points out that the coup led by Abdul Karim Qassim against Nuri es-Said did not initially alarm the CIA or Washington. Rather, it was the radicalization

and the Persian Gulf, as an artificial British creation to weaken Iraq and keep it from easy access to the Gulf. Qassim's threats to Kuwait were countered by Britain, which rushed in troops."

McConnell reveals the unrelenting campaign by the U.S. government to murder Qassim and overthrow his government. Finally, "in February 1963, everything changed," McConnell writes. "A second coup shook Iraq, ousting and killing Qassim. This was the result it [the CIA] had sought for five years. The CIA undertook an airlift of arms into Iraq to help ... the coup plotters and help solidify their control among the coup plotters."

The operation to murder Qassim, according to McConnell, resulted from his "disappointing" the CIA, who, it now emerges, had arranged for Nuri es-Said to be deprived of the support of his Royal Guard in the expectation that a military coup would assuage popular anger. The popular uprising, however, forced the Qassim regime left, bringing the CIA into action to select a more pliable 'replacement.'"

The leaders in the Ba'ath Party who carried out the coup for the CIA, according to McConnell, were competing for CIA favor in replacing Abdul Karim Qassim.

#### The origins of Saddam Hussein

The group which actually replaced Qassim was dubbed "the centrists" by Bruce T. Odell, who headed the CIA airlift. "The 'centrists,' Odell confided, "were much

friendlier to the West. They dropped opposition to Kuwait's independence and entry into the United Nations."

McConnell also reveals an interesting twist to these events regarding a young Iraqi under Odell's direction—Saddam Hussein, a "prominent member of the right-wing faction."

In 1968, Odell's right-wing client, Saddam Hussein, and other members of his faction "defeated the 'centrists'." The role of Saddam Hussein as the point man for the CIA was also disclosed by Jack Anderson on Oct. 28, 1990, in a syndicated column titled "Is Saddam Really As Bad As They Say?"

Anderson writes, "At 24, he [Saddam] unquestionably tried to assassinate Abdul Karim Qassim," describing one of the operations of the CIA in Baghdad.

Miller and Mylroie confirm these accounts. A year after Qassim overthrew the monarchy, they write, a group "tried to seize power by machine-gunning Qassim's car in broad daylight. Saddam was a member of the hit team.... He had already proven his mettle, or in the jargon of the American underworld, had 'made his bones,' by murdering a Communist supporter of Qassim in Takrit."

What ensued was a generalized slaughter of the left. Communist Party members, trade unionists, radicals of every tendency were tortured and killed, the CIA giving direction. According to Miller and Mylroie, "Saddam quickly found his place in the new regime. He became an interrogator and torturer in the Qasr-al-Nihayyah, or 'Palace of the End.'"

By 1965, Saddam Hussein's older cousin, General Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr became secretary-general of the Ba'ath Party, backed by Odell. By 1966, Saddam was made deputy secretary-general. On July 30, 1968, "Saddam and his Ba'athist comrades succeeded in seizing and holding state power. Bakr became President and Commander in Chief.... Saddam was made deputy-chairman of the Revolutionary Council in charge of internal security."

The relationship between the series of CIA-backed regimes in Baghdad and the posture of Iraqi governments toward imperialism centered on Kuwait. It was within days after Nuri es-Said prepared to go public with his demand for the recovery of Kuwait that he was overthrown.

The Qassim government was no less adamant about Kuwait. When Britain announced Kuwaiti "independence" in 1961, a collateral agreement between Sheikh Abdallah as-Salim as-Sabah of Kuwait and the British government was announced. Abdul Karim Qassim held a press conference on June 25, 1961, and declared:

"Iraq regards Kuwait as an integral part of its territory; it does not recognize the special relationship agreement between Britain and Kuwait signed on June 19, 1961, by Sheikh Abdallah as-Salim as-Sabah of Kuwait together with British Political Resident in the Gulf, M. G. Mead."

It was following this announcement that Britain massed forces in the Gulf and in Kuwait. From 1961 to 1963, however, Kuwait was unable to gain admission to the United Nations. After the overthrow of Abdul Karim Qassim, the "Prime Minister" of Kuwait visited Baghdad. For the first time in 30 years a joint statement was issued.

And, with the assumption of power by Saddam Hussein on July 30, 1968, a shift occurred. Hussein, in the words of current Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, "was bent upon reaching a settlement of the problem as would provide for a reasonable measure of the historic rights of Iraq as well as redress a part, limited though it might be, of the grievous wrong inflicted on Iraq since the beginning of this century."

Throughout the 1970s the regime of Saddam Hussein attempted a compromise with the Kuwaiti rulers. Iraq's only insistence was that it regain access to its former islands on the Gulf. As Tariq Aziz put it:

"During the 1970s, it was Iraq which took the initiative in approaching the rulers of Kuwait for such a settlement but, with the encouragement of their foreign power allies, they always insisted that Iraq accept the measures imposed by British colonial power."

These attempts at accommodation, however, went nowhere.

The third and last part of this series will deal with the expansion of Kuwait deeper into Iraqi territory in the 1970s (encompassing Iraqi oil fields), the ensnaring of Saddam Hussein by the Kuwaiti and Saudi monarchies to attack Iran, and the economic warfare waged against Iraq by the Sheikhs of Kuwait, the Emirates, and the Saudi monarchy. ■

# Despite isolation Cuba is still the home of the brave, land of the free

**A long-time supporter of the Cuban Revolution gives an eyewitness account of the high level of social services still available in an island bastion under attack**

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

Thirty years ago, right after the Cuban Revolution, I was very active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New York and Brooklyn. I had even helped arrange a reception for the Cuban revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro, at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem when they came to appear before the United Nations.

Although I had worked on organizing tours to Cuba for hundreds of people, I never had the chance to go myself. Either I was too busy or too broke to make the trip. When I finally could afford the time and the expense, the government of the United States brought down its "iron curtain" and refused to allow any U.S. citizen to travel to Cuba.

But on Oct. 14, 1990, a 30-year dream came true for me.

I arrived in Havana, Cuba, to participate in a conference of women organized by the Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC), the Federation of Cuban Women. The FMC is a non-governmental organization of over 3 million Cuban women.

For seven days women from all over the Caribbean met; and for seven days the women from the Federation answered all questions frankly and honestly, showered us with information, and organized visits to childcare and healthcare facilities, women's prisons, and whatever else we expressed interest in seeing.

There were nine women from the United States—none of us had ever met before. Three of us were fluent in Spanish—unfortunately I wasn't. But we had no trouble getting translations wherever we went. And we went everywhere, including what turned into a seven-mile walk to the Malecón (an historic walkway along the ocean's edge).

We visited all kinds of neighborhoods, and usually arrived back at our living quarters late at night. None of us was accosted or hassled by anyone.

## Conference brings women together

The FMC-sponsored conference was called in memory of the nuns and priests who were murdered by the military in El Salvador. This theme set the serious tone of the conference.

We were meeting with women from Nicaragua, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, as well as from Cuba. All of us were housed in a beautiful home that had been turned over to the Federation. It had obviously been the home of a very wealthy person during the days of the Batista regime. Now it is a dormitory for the use of the Cuban people.

One of the best rewards of being at this conference was living with and getting to know sisters from other countries. These women are fighting for justice and democracy in their countries. Everyone of them knew that it is the U.S. government which stands between them and justice.

Cuba is a beautiful country. But what is most beautiful about Cuba is that it is the sanctuary of the oppressed of the world.

I met a beautiful 16-year-old Panamanian woman. She had been shot in the back by U.S. troops when they invaded Panama. She will never walk again. She was in Cuba for medical reasons and was supplied her with her first wheel chair. [See Sylvia Weinstein's column on her discussion with a Panamanian woman in this issue.]

Cuba supplies medical care for wounded fighters from Africa and Central and Latin America. They receive hospital care, dental care and whatever else they need, and they don't pay one cent. Cuba carries out the policy carved on the Statue of Liberty:

*"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..."*

Unfortunately, it is the U.S. government which is creating the huddled masses yearning to breathe free from oppression. And it is Cuba and the Cuban people who dig deeper into their pockets to give refuge to all



Childcare centers are open from 6:00 in the morning till 9:00 at night.

who need it; despite the cost to this poor country.

We met many young men and women from various countries who were taking refuge in Cuba. Many were young college students who were receiving a totally free education at Havana University.

## Childcare in Cuba

The children of Cuba are especially lucky. When the Cubans call them "Cuba's future," they mean it and they provide for them the best childcare and education possible. All children of women who work outside of the home have childcare services. All childcare services are free!

We visited a childcare center in Havana. It was a center built 11 years ago and was considered a model center.

But just in case anyone tries to say that we were fooled by Cuban authorities, let me say that we observed four centers before we visited the one picked for this tour. At all of the centers the children were well supervised as they played.

Children may enter the childcare centers when they reach the age of 45 days. They can stay until they reach the age of six and then enter the school system. Women who take off that first 45 days after giving birth are guaranteed their jobs back.

There are over 1000 childcare centers in Cuba, and 115 centers were opened in Havana between 1987 and 1989. A total of 110,000 children are cared for from 6 a.m. until 9 p.m.

One of the FMC women told me that at first the centers were only open till 6 p.m., but they soon realized that many women work until 9 p.m.; so it was decided to keep the centers open later for the convenience of the mothers.

At the model childcare center we visited, the Frank Pais Center, there were 216 children and a staff of 49 workers (47 women and two men). There were 11 teachers and 18 aides, plus support workers such as cooks and cleaners. Head teachers at each center must have five years of university study, including one year of child development and psychology.

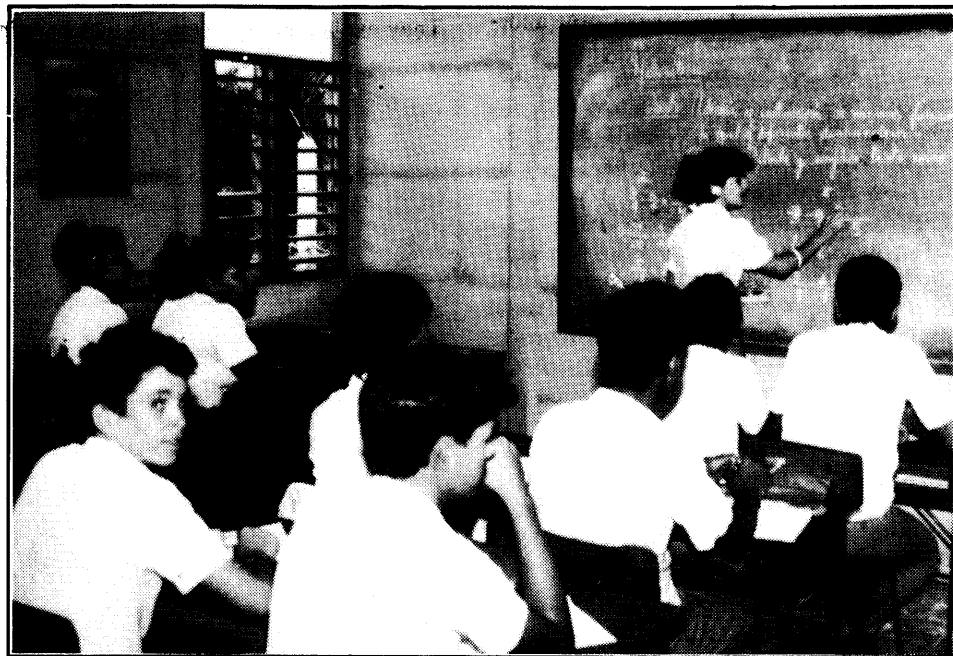
Thirty-one infants up to the age of two were being cared for in a special area of the center. Women wearing nurses' uniforms were taking care of them.

The nursery was well-scrubbed and furnished with play pens, cribs and dressing tables, as well as toys and brightly colored paintings on the wall. They had their own kitchen and refrigerator.

The other children are separated according to age and have their own rooms and play groups. Parents and friends had made beautiful papier-mâché children's chairs and tables. Each school provides clothes, tooth brushes, soap, and towels for each child.

Their schedule is like this. At 6:00 a.m. the children arrive and change from their home clothing to their school clothing. Each school washes and dries the clothing for use the next day. At 8:30 a.m. the children have gym where they do exercises and dance, at 8:45 a.m. they go to classes, according to their age level, where special effort is given to language development.

At 9:15 a.m. they have a snack, at 9:45



Education is free through college

**'Education is considered to be an essential social right in Cuba.'**

a.m. they listen to music or stories; 10:00 a.m. is bath time for all children; 11:15 a.m. is lunch; 12:00 to 2:30 p.m. is nap time—the children all have their own cots and bedding; 3:00 p.m. is snack time; 3:30 p.m. is crafts and/or singing or story reading time; 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. is set aside for independent activities.

All children are toilet trained by the staff at the schools. Children receive their own special identification such as a hat, color, flower, etc. This identification is placed on all of their belongings such as tooth brush, drinking glass, clothes—so that children too young to read can identify their things.

Parent meetings are held every two months and parents are filled in on the developmental programs so that the children can learn at home as well as at the center.

Children who are ill (with a temperature) are kept at home until they are well enough to return to the center.

Grandparents, too, have a role to play in childcare. There are grandparent clubs all over Cuba! Retired grandparents, and others, can "adopt" a center and help out. A total of 56 percent of the children in Cuba receive free, quality childcare.

## Education in Cuba

Education is considered to be an essential social right in Cuba and a key to the island nation's future. Education is free up through college level.

Primary schools stay open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Classes last from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. All children receive breakfast, snacks and lunch. Cuba has an established schedule for learning.

For example, all six-year-olds are expected to be doing some reading and writing after four months. I asked a teacher what if they didn't make it. The teacher explained that actually most children do learn in that time and those who didn't receive special help.

Cuba has made special efforts for the disabled and the mentally handicapped. They have separate schools for them and make every effort to educate them to take a productive place in society.

There are special summer and vacation camps for all Cuban children as well as children from all over the world. One of the women on the tour who lives in New York sends her two boys to an international summer school in Cuba for the summer, and her daughter is in a boarding school outside of Havana.

All these services are free, including clothing. The mother works at a full-time job in New York and doesn't want her children spending their time on the streets alone and unsupervised. Her daughter had been at the boarding school for three years. She is 16 and will very likely continue on through college in Cuba.

## Healthcare in Cuba

Likewise, all healthcare in Cuba is absolutely free. There is some charge for prescription drugs, but at very low cost. But

most medicine is simply free.

They have a very good medical system in Cuba. Doctors must live in the community in which their patients live. The doctor will have a house on the top floor and open a clinic on the bottom floor.

For the first year after the birth of a baby, the doctor will make monthly house calls to give immunization shots including polio vaccine. He or she is also expected to make sure that the living conditions of the infants are clean and that the babies are well cared for.

This is why Cuba's infant mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world—including among the industrialized countries. It is .07 percent and going down; in the United States, the infant mortality rate is .17 percent—two and a half times higher, and going up.

In addition to providing extraordinary medical care for its people, Cuba also exports many of its doctors to underdeveloped countries around the world.

Meanwhile, in the richest country in the world, "Every 67 seconds an American teenager has a baby. Every eight seconds of the school day an American child drops out

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Cuban women learn trades and skills that were denied to them in the past



Children are eligible for childcare services once they reach 45 days-old

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of school. Every 53 minutes an American child dies of poverty." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, October 25, 1990)

#### What about "choice"?

Abortion has been legal in Cuba since the revolution—over 30 years ago. Immediately after the revolution, the Cuban government legalized abortion. However, they became concerned because a large amount of their medical operations were going into abortion.

For a short time Cuba tried to discourage abortions, claiming that other medical needs outweighed their ability to perform abortions. What happened was that illegal and self-induced abortions created more medical problems than ever. Women were staying hospitalized longer due to botched abortions.

Cuba very soon stopped discouraging abortions, and it has been readily available ever since.

Women over the age of 16 can get immediate abortion—free and on demand. Women under the age of 16 must inform their legal guardians or parents. However, neither parents or guardians have the power to prevent abortions.

Abortions must be performed in hospitals rather than clinics and can be done up to 10 weeks of pregnancy. The method of abortion is by vacuum aspirator.

I asked what happened to women if they were over the 10-week limit and was told that since there is no stigma attached to abortion almost no one waited beyond the 10-week period.

Sex education begins in the third grade among male and female students. The IUD and birth control pills are the most commonly used contraceptives. Cuba does not produce either the diaphragm or the condom; those birth control devices must be imported, and are too expensive. There is no anti-choice movement in Cuba.

Despite the widespread sexual education campaign there is still teen-age pregnancy. In fact, when talking to some of the FMC women I was reminded of the complaints we hear in the United States about our exorbitantly high teen-age pregnancy rate. I mentioned a little joke that we tell about teen agers:

"They have three beliefs. (1) They will never get old, (2) They will never die, and (3) They cannot get pregnant if they do it standing up!" The Cuban women finished it off by adding "or they can't get pregnant the first time they have sex."

I also mentioned that we even have people in the United States who blame the high teen-age pregnancy rate on sexual education itself. The FMC sister said that she had also heard the same complaint from older Cubans; but she said that this is rare.

I had the opportunity to meet a "block" group of the FMC women. The block committees are women volunteers who provide

## 'Two things that are illegal in Cuba are racism and sexism.'

services within their community. We met with about 20 women of all ages. One was 74 years old; her husband was hanged in a public square by Batista's thugs for activity against his dictatorship.

They explained that their job was to help in the community in whatever way needed. For instance, if an older person was sick they took them to the doctor, helped with shopping and medical needs.

If there was a family having trouble, personal or financial, they intervened to help them out. They were responsible for any children who needed their help and generally interceded on behalf of their neighbors when dealing with a government agency.

I asked two questions of this group of

who was cruel to her or her children because women could work and make their own way.

I asked them what they thought of abortion. For years and years, they told me, women died of botched abortions. Or if lucky enough, they lived through them, but had to endure years of degradation by those who knew of the attempted abortion. Now it was open and honest and women had the right to decide how many children they would have.

Then I asked if their community involvement was sometimes looked upon as simply interfering into the private affairs of their neighbors. I was told that people came to the local FMC people with their problems because they knew they would be helped by them.

The answers to all our questions had the ring of truth. I couldn't help thinking of the times when I personally would have loved to have a neighbor like them, someone I could call on if I needed real help. Of course, most of us have someone we can rely on, but in Cuba you have a whole organization whose job is to be a good friend and neighbor and who enjoys doing it.

#### Housing in Cuba

Walk through any city in the United States and you will come upon people sleeping on doorsteps, in parks and alleys—wherever they can find the slightest bit of shelter. I didn't see or hear of one such case in Cuba.

I mentioned earlier that I had taken what must have been a seven-mile walk through Havana. I had blisters on the bottoms of my feet the size of half dollars. Not once did I

Jesus Hernandez



Infant mortality is declining in Cuba—rising in the United States

mixed-generation women: How did they take it when the government granted women the right to divorce their husbands, live together without marriage and legalize abortions? The oldest woman answered:

She said that in the old days before the revolution only the middle class and rich had official weddings—the poor always lived together without the sanction of government or priest. Also, before the revolution, women had to stay married to a man no matter how she was treated. Usually a woman was afraid to leave because she had no one to help support her or her children.

Now, women were economically independent and were not forced to live with a man

see any sign of a homeless person on the street.

I did not even see anyone who gave the appearance of not having a home. What I did see was massive construction going up in all parts of Havana—most of it housing. And you pass by homes which were obviously once the homes of the wealthy who had left Cuba. These homes have been partitioned for use as regular housing.

For those who know San Francisco it would be like walking through Pacific Heights and seeing clothes hanging from lines and balconies; evidence that these homes are now being occupied by working-class families rather than by the rich and beautiful and their servants.

The FMC woman told me that there is, however, still a shortage of housing in Cuba. She said this was why families still have to share larger homes. She also said that some of the housing was dormitory-style but she said that no one in Cuba was without shelter. The rent in Cuba, by law, is held to just 10 percent of wages. It can go no higher.

Cuba has also developed "micro-brigades." These are self-help housing associations. Workers can take off from work, being replaced by other workers, while they build their own apartments. The government will give the workers all building supplies and the help of skilled construction workers.

The government builds high-rise shells and workers finish them off. In that way thousands of workers in Cuba have not only built their own homes but have also helped their fellow workers build theirs.

Unfortunately, because of Cuba's energy crisis and the new 1991 Soviet trade agreement, which is a sharp cutback from the 1990 trade agreement, Cuba will probably have to slow down its housing development.

#### Equal pay for equal work

The micro-brigades have also had the effect of placing more women into jobs they would not have done a few years ago. Women are working at trades, such as construction, that they had not been in before.

Two things that are illegal in Cuba are racism and sexism. Women and minorities receive the same wage as men when doing the same work. It is against the law to pay women and minorities less. While the poison of racism and sexism might still live on in the hearts and minds of a very few Cubans, they had better not practice it. It is against the law!

Women of the United States have been waiting and fighting for 200 years for the Equal Rights Amendment. In Cuba, women have full and equal rights. But it took a revolution to get them, and that's what it will take here.

However, women in Cuba still have a way to go, not because of the government but because of the history of oppression of women before the revolution.

Women are moving into leadership roles; there are more women in the universities than ever before. Women are working in increasingly diverse occupations formerly reserved for male workers; they are becoming doctors, plumbers, movie directors—getting into all phases of Cuban life.

Today in Cuba, women and Blacks are the majority in the institutions of higher learning. In the United States there are more Black males in prison than in school.

Most importantly, my impression is that the Cuban people are dedicated to a society based on the principles of socialism.

They are not inclined toward the Soviet bureaucrats' mad dash toward capitalism. They can see what capitalism has done to the people of underdeveloped countries and they want no part of it.

If the United States decides to invade, Cuba won't be a push-over like Grenada. The Cuban people are ready to defend their ideas and homeland with their lives.

As one 74-year-old Cuban woman said to me: "I would sink this whole island and me with it before I would let the United States take it." ■



The Cuban Revolution was carried out through mass, independent mobilization of the workers and peasants.

# The Cuban road to socialism: A path not taken in Nicaragua

By MALIK MIAH

In July 1979 the workers and peasants of Nicaragua led an anti-imperialist and democratic revolution against the pro-U.S. dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza.

Under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), the people of Nicaragua began to take their destiny into their own hands. The old army was smashed and a new Sandinista army was created.

The new government began giving land to the peasants and took other steps to enhance the political and economic power of the people against the old ruling class of big land owners and capitalists.

In response to these moves the Nicaraguan capitalists began to fight back with the support of the U.S. government. Decapitalization and other domestic sabotage was carried out. Washington organized a mercenary army, the *contras*, with the aim of overthrowing the popular government.

While much death and destruction occurred, the people of Nicaragua fought off the *contras*, and by 1987 the mercenaries were militarily defeated.

Yet imperialism continued its destabilization of the country. Finally the FSLN leadership opted for bourgeois elections in February 1990 where the pro-capitalist and counterrevolutionary Violeta Chamorro defeated FSLN leader Daniel Ortega for president.

That electoral defeat registered a process that had begun years earlier: the erosion of revolutionary power to the point that the new government now represents the interests of capitalism and imperialism. Chamorro in fact has proclaimed that her chief goal is the rapid implementation of a full market economy.

## Loyal opposition

The Sandinistas have responded as a loyal opposition. Strikes and demonstrations are used as a pressure tactic.

This is consistent with the policy they followed early in the revolution: seeking compromise with the internal counter-revolutionary opposition even if it meant not giving land to the peasants and not protecting fully the rights of the working class.

The FSLN leaders defended a "mixed economy" policy—an alternative strategy to that followed by the Bolsheviks in Russia in

1917 and the July 26 Movement in Cuba in 1959.

The FSLN top leadership continues to defend their policies despite the electoral defeat. (A debate is underway in the FSLN as it prepares for its first ever national convention in the spring of 1991.)

Bayardo Arce, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, went so far as to say that while the FSLN is pro-socialist it rejects the socialist "theorists of the last century"—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific socialism.

Is Marxism invalid today? Has it been outdated? Many pro-capitalist commentators say yes, pointing to the collapse of "communism" in Eastern Europe.

What happened in Eastern Europe, however, was the collapse of Stalinism. It was the anti-socialist policies of the ruling anti-worker bureaucracies that led to the depoliticization of the people and the economic decline of those post-capitalist societies. Genuine communism is based on workers' democratic rule.

What happened in Nicaragua was not inevitable. The shift in the relationship of forces and the return of openly capitalist forces in governmental power could have been prevented if a different strategy had been followed by the FSLN. It was a default in leadership that led to the victory of Chamorro.

Last month I discussed how a revolutionary communist leadership in Russia facing greater challenges destroyed capitalism and established a workers' state.

What was decisive then was the existence of a revolutionary workers' party, the Bolsheviks, that led the soviets (democratic councils) to power. The Bolsheviks were led by revolutionary Marxists.

## Lessons of Cuban Revolution

Some 42 years later the Cuban workers and peasants overthrew the pro-U.S. puppet government of Fulgencio Batista.

Led by figures from petty-bourgeois backgrounds, the July 26 Movement organized the revolution. Neither soviets or a mass workers party existed. Instead the revolution was organized primarily by a Rebel Army in the countryside that had broad sympathy in the cities.

The rebels main objective was to end colonial rule and establish a democratic government. Fidel Castro, the central leader and organizer of the revolution, initially did not



Fidel Castro

**'The Cuban Revolution was led by a revolutionary leadership based on the masses.'**

take a position in the new government.

Because the leaders of the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement were genuine democrats, they sought to implement their anti-imperialist democratic program after the old rulers and army were defeated.

The axis of their strategy was to appeal to the people and call on the toilers to defend and fight for their interests. They called for Cuba's complete national independence, breaking the political and economic control of U.S. imperialism.

Their democratic program called for sweeping land reform as well as providing housing, health care, and education for working people. Plans for industrialization were also made.

Such a radical democratic program was

opposed by the Cuban capitalists—those who backed Batista and those who wanted a new government. The latter included Stalinists who had opposed the July 26 leaders, calling them "petty bourgeois adventurers."

Although a revolutionary-workers' party of the Bolshevik-type did not exist in Cuba, the revolution defeated Batista, the Stalinists, and imperialism. It established the first free country of the Americas. The Cuban socialist revolution has survived for more than 30 years. How was that possible?

## What happened?

The Cuban revolution was led by a revolutionary leadership based on the masses. The Cuban leaders—like their Bolshevik predecessors and the Sandinista leaders 20 years later—faced intense pressure from imperialism. Like the Bolsheviks, the Cuban leaders marched forward against the capitalists.

A review of the revolution shows how they responded to imperialist attack.

After Batista fled on Jan. 1, 1959, a coalition government was set up. All important positions were taken by capitalist figures. Manuel Urrutia was named president. This was a bourgeois coalition government.

It did not last long, however. After a radical agrarian reform law was adopted May 17, 1959, giving land to poor peasants, divisions developed in the coalition government.

(Prior to the revolution, 75 percent of the land had been owned by 8 percent of the population. Seven of the 10 largest *latifundios* were U.S.-owned, as was 40 percent of Cuban sugar production, the main export crop.)

The National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) was established to oversee implementation of the program. INRA and the Rebel Army, (the old bourgeois army had been dismantled) backed by the workers and poor peasants, acted more and more as a "dual power" in relationship to the capitalist government.

Other steps were taken. Home and apartment rents were reduced by 30 to 50 percent. Taxes were reduced by two-thirds for most citizens. The books of major American companies were opened. These were companies that had paid little or no taxes previously.

These steps and others deepened conflicts between Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement and the coalition government. Imperialism stepped up its propaganda barrage against the revolution. Soon one by one the capitalist ministers resigned from their posts.

Real power was no longer in the coalition government's hands. By November 1959, revolutionary leader Che Guevara became head of the national bank and virtually all of the remaining capitalist figures had been removed from the government.

## Workers' and Peasants' Government

The demise of the coalition government was a direct result of the actions taken by the July 26 leadership, who were backed by the masses.

This shift occurred in November 1959. It marked a qualitative change in the nature of the government. It was now a workers' and farmers' government where the ruling power was in the hands of the working people themselves.

The new government organized a peoples' militia of a quarter million people. While the capitalist class as a class had not yet been expropriated it had no political power.

A contradiction now existed: A government led by working people was in political power but the economy was still in the hands of native capitalists and their imperialist partners.

What followed is very important. The Castro leadership team was under tremendous pressure from imperialism to make concessions to the native capitalists if it wanted "peace." Liberals and others urged such a course. Washington began demagogically calling for "free elections." They never made such an appeal when Batista was in power.

Castro said the Cubans would never sell their soul to imperialism. They refused to bend. They looked to the masses as the best defense of the revolution.

After Washington cut the sugar quota in January 1960, Castro announced: "As they cut our sugar quota pound by pound, we will seize their mills one by one."

The revolutionary government passed a law authorizing the expropriation of U.S.-owned property, saying compensation would

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be paid out of future income from sugar sold to the United States.

When the U.S.- and British-owned oil refineries refused to process Soviet crude oil (after Cuba signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Union in February 1960), the workers intervened and opened the companies' books. Workers' control was established, a first step toward expropriation.

On August 6, 1960, Castro announced the nationalization of all the U.S.-owned sugar mills, oil refineries, the power and telephone companies. Major holdings of the Cuban capitalists were expropriated. Castro said: "We will nationalize them down to the nails of their shoes."

By October 1960 virtually every major capitalist holding had become public property. With the expropriations came state control over foreign trade and the expansion of economic planning. A workers' state had been born. It was the opening of the socialist revolution in Latin America and the Caribbean.

#### Leadership decisive

These revolutionary steps were taken by a leadership with the support of the people. They were not administrative actions. Each expropriation and other acts were explained to the masses. The workers and peasants understood them. They were mobilized to carry them out and consolidate the political and economic expropriation of the old ruling class.

For the first time since the Russian Revolution a revolution succeeded because of the actions of its leadership. (This stands in sharp contrast to the overturns of capitalism in Eastern Europe and China after World War II.)

Since that time the Castro team has supported revolutionary struggles abroad (for example, sending troops to fight the South African racists and sending doctors and

healthcare workers throughout the Third World), understanding that it is their internationalist duty to do so.

The course Fidel Castro and the July 26 leaders took was not pre-ordained. It was not inevitable that a socialist revolution would occur. It was less likely in some ways considering the middle class origins of the leaders and the lack of a revolutionary workers' party in Cuba at the time Batista fled.

Their success was not because imperialism played soft ball. Washington organized the Bay of Pigs invasion and many times sought (and still does) the assassination of Castro and other leaders.

The U.S. government continues its economic blockade of Cuba. U.S. citizens cannot freely travel to or spend dollars in Cuba.

Why the revolution advanced toward socialism was because the leaders refused to compromise with imperialism. They sought to consistently implement their democratic program first proclaimed by Castro in the famous "History Will Absolve Me" speech published and circulated throughout Cuba while he was in prison after the attack on the Moncada army barracks on July 26, 1953.

When the native capitalist class and imperialism pushed for a retreat, the revolutionary leaders turned to the masses and pushed the revolution forward.

They rejected any version of "mixed economy" or a government of national unity that undermined the rule of the workers and poor peasants of Cuba.

They met each threat from imperialism with mass mobilizations and, ultimately, expropriation of the capitalist class.

It was this method of mass action based on the working people—which is in line with the basic views of Marx and Engels—that led to the first successful socialist revolution in the Americas.

The Sandinistas led the working people of Nicaragua against their Batista. They mobilized the people. They launched a major



Cuban workers at a May Day rally in Havana in 1961

campaign that upgraded the life of the Nicaraguan people. They organized the military defeat of the contras.

But they "gave back" the chance to expropriate the economic power of the capitalists because of their mistaken policy of "mixed economy" which meant political compromise with the native capitalists.

The defeat of the anti-imperialist government could have been avoided as the lessons

of the Cuban revolution show. The door was open to the socialist revolution.

The challenge for revolutionaries in Nicaragua is to draw the correct lessons from both the Russian and Cuban revolutions, as well as their own.

What's needed today in Nicaragua is the building of a revolutionary workers' party that can renew the battle against the capitalist class and fight for socialism. ■

## Castro failed to transmit Cuba's lessons to Sandinista leadership

By ALAN BENJAMIN

In an interview with the Spanish news agency EFE in late 1985, Cuban President Fidel Castro was asked the question, "Do you think the Sandinistas pursue or hope to create in their country a Cuban political and economic model?" Castro answered:

"Nothing could be further from the truth.... Nicaragua is a country with a much lower level of development than Cuba at the time of the triumph of the revolution.... Conditions are different. Economic development is the top priority for the Nicaraguan government, not the construction of socialism."

Asked if the construction of socialism was even their objective, Castro stated: "Actually, it's not their objective. It's not a short or even medium-term objective. If you want you can add that it isn't their current objective." And he continued: "I think the Nicaraguan plan—and I have no disagreements with it, neither theoretical nor practical, and I say that sincerely—is perfect, given the conditions in their country and in Central America."

Further on, Castro stated: "Nicaragua needs a series of structural changes and a program of economic and social development. That's what the Nicaraguans face, and it must be understood. This is not a fairy tale or an invention, a disguise to fool anybody. Their method is real and we fully agree with it in theoretical and practical terms.... Development is the main objective of that country since it is very difficult to have socialism without development."

Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez made this point even more emphatically: "The Nicaraguans themselves are proposing an open society in which they will have private enterprise in agriculture, industry, and trade. They are not going to socialism, least of all to the Cuban model. We don't believe that the Cuban model is to be exported either to Central America or to the rest of the world." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 11, 1984)

These views of the Cuban leadership only served to obstruct the course toward socialist revolution in Nicaragua. Instead of transmitting the lessons of their own victorious revolution to the Sandinista



Sergio Ramirez, Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega in 1984

fighters, these leaders were advising the Sandinistas to preserve the capitalist mixed economy. But their own history had demonstrated that (1) it was impossible to satisfy the demands of the workers and peasants and those of the capitalists at the same time, and (2) it was impossible to develop the economy in any meaningful way within the framework of capitalist property relations.

In January 1959 in Cuba, the revolutionary offensive of Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement and a mass insurrection toppled the Batista dictatorship. The immediate instruments of repression of the old regime—the army and police—were destroyed. The new government initiated an aggressive campaign of mass mobilizations that were designed to advance the class interests of the workers and peasants against those of their previous capitalist exploiters. The most sweeping land reform in the modern era was implemented. Landless peasants were deeded the property of their former masters.

Confronted with an imperialist blockade and direct threats against the revolution, the government armed the workers and peasants. In less than a year's time, it car-

ried through to completion the anti-imperialist struggle by expropriating the property of the Cuban capitalists as well as that of the imperialists. The major mines, factories, sugar and oil refineries, and other key elements of production were removed from the realm of private operation for profit. The nation's resources were returned to the people.

This occurred in the fall of 1960. A workers' state emerged based on central planning and the state ownership of the means of production. The new government had deepened its authority with the Cuban masses with each and every anti-capitalist measure. In fact, it was the armed people themselves who carried out the anti-capitalist revolution.

This is how Fidel Castro explained the lessons of the Cuban Revolution in a speech to the First Congress of the Cuban Communist Party in December 1976:

"Yet, in the conditions of a country like Cuba, could the revolution limit itself simply to national liberation while maintaining a regime of capitalist exploitation? Or was it not necessary to move forward to-

ward full social liberation as well?

"Imperialism could not even tolerate a revolution of national liberation in Cuba. From the time of the first Agrarian Reform Law, the United States began to organize a military operation against Cuba. They were even less disposed to tolerate socialism in our country. The simple idea that a victorious revolution in Cuba could provide an example for all Latin America, frightened the Yankee ruling circles. But the Cuban nation had no other alternative. The people could not be stopped.

"Our national and our social liberation were inextricably bound up. Moving forward became a historic necessity. Standing still would have been an act of treason and cowardice that would have transformed us once again into a Yankee colony and wage slaves."

Obviously, Nicaragua's level of economic development at the time of the 1979 revolution was much lower than Cuba's in 1959. Its resources, moreover, were heavily drained by the war, first against Somoza and then against the contras. But it was illusory for the Sandinistas—and their Cuban mentors—to believe that Nicaragua could develop economically within the confines of its national borders and on the basis of a regulated capitalist economy. Such a strategy required major political and economic concessions to the capitalist class, which only undermined the revolution.

The FSLN government needed to sever the ties of bondage to the world capitalist economy and take the road of the Cuban Revolution. It also needed to pursue a policy of extending the Nicaraguan Revolution to the rest of Central and Latin America.

Embarking on the socialist road was the only way to permit the Sandinista government to respond to the sabotage of the economy by the capitalists and to effectively address the distortions created by the mixed economy. It was the only way to permit the government to meet the needs of the masses rather than allow the dynamism of the revolution to be eroded—which, of course, is what ultimately occurred. ■

This article was excerpted and adapted from the book by Alan Benjamin, "Nicaragua: Dynamics of an Unfinished Revolution," (San Francisco: Walnut Publishing Co., 1989).

# ... Antiwar protests grow

Our readers speak out

(continued from page 1)

including over 500 in Seattle, 400 in Los Angeles, 350 in Minneapolis, and 250 in Cleveland. Taken together, the Oct. 20 demonstrations sent a powerful signal to the warmakers that a broad antiwar opposition is taking shape to oppose Washington's attempts to deepen the conflict.

Ten U.S. sailors died in an accident at sea on Oct. 30, bringing the death total to 43 American servicemen killed since August, when President George Bush began his saber-rattling against Iraq.

Moreover, the high political price of so many U.S. dead would hit home quick. Combined with a deep recession, the capitalist politicians would face great outrage. Some in Congress are already talking about "containment" of Iraq versus Bush's hypocritical call to overthrow the "new Hitler."

As one British military strategist put it: "You have to make it [war against Iraq] as clinical and efficient as possible. Were it to be a long protracted thing, this would present all sorts of problems in the political arena, and we would try to avoid that."

Yet Washington, London, and Paris have little choice but to prepare for war. The stakes are enormously high for imperialism. The fundamental issue facing Washington and their allies in the United Nations is simple: if Saddam Hussein's regime can withstand all their threats and survive, it will encourage other oppressed people to stand up to the Western

imperialist powers too. Such a development would pose a direct economic and political threat to their interests.

While Bush knows he can justify 43 body bags, it will be difficult for him to defend losing 20,000 American lives to keep the emirs in power. Thus while the president puts forth the "hostage" issue as a possible justification to attack Iraq, he also gives approval to the attempt of the Soviet government to seek a "peaceful" solution.

There is hope for peace, but on one condition: The U.S. and other European troops must immediately leave the Middle East. If this is done, the Arab people will resolve the crisis as they see fit. The issue of Kuwait will be decided by the Arab people themselves.

But as long as Washington has its police force on Arab territory and water, it will not be possible to end the crisis. The onus for war is on Washington, not Saddam Hussein.

It is the history of colonial domination of the Arab people and the imposition of pro-imperialist enclaves, including the settler state of Israel, which is behind the conflicts in the Arab East. It is not possible for the oppressors to protect the rights of the oppressed.

What's needed today around the world is a mass antiwar movement. Its central slogans must be: Hands Off Iraq! U.S., British, French, and other Western Troops Out of the Middle East! Self-determination for the Arab People!

## Jake Cooper

Dear editor,

When I received the October issue of *Socialist Action*, I was surprised and saddened to learn of the death of Jake Cooper. I was able to meet Jake and have lunch with him in 1989, when he came to Seattle to see the NCAA Final Four Basketball Tournament. During this visit, I heard first-hand some of his many experiences from the early years of the Trotskyist movement.

It impressed me deeply that Jake would remain unshaken in his commitment to socialist principles even though it had once cost him a stretch in Sandstone Prison during the 1940s and had meant his expulsion from the Socialist Workers Party—which he had helped to found and build—during the 1980s.

I asked Jake how he'd remained enthusiastic about the socialist cause despite the setbacks for our movement. He told me that his experiences in the Minneapolis labor movement of 50 years ago had convinced him of the truth and credibility of the socialist message. Seeing the working class in action, fighting and struggling together, is enough to convince anyone, he said, and will remove any lingering doubts that this class is more than capable of running all of society.

Jake Cooper's enthusiasm, dedication, and fighting spirit will surely be missed in our ranks—but won't soon be forgotten.

Rich Smith,  
Seattle, Wash.

reform? Ramirez argued that "these large farmers are still farmers. They will plant and harvest when they see a strong and stable government."

Ramirez then concluded that only a new coalition cabinet could represent a consensus of sufficient durability to carry out large currency reforms, provide aid to the peasantry, and gain the confidence of the large farmers.

I stated that I thought he was dreaming; the crooked big farmers were still crooks, and no significant portion of the UNO would support a program of such strength as to earn even the support of the peasantry—to say nothing of the big farmers. The disagreement was amiable. Never did Ramirez pull the "I'm the one who knows what's going on, not you" argument.

Rod Holt,  
Oakland, Calif.

## Twin Cities

Dear editor,

Spirits were high on Oct. 20, as 350 people here marched through a cold drizzling rain to demand an end to U.S. war moves in the Middle East. About half the cars and pedestrians we passed greeted us with clenched fists and the two-finger peace sign.

The first speaker at the rally was a Vietnam vet. Referring to the 56,000 U.S. soldiers who died in Vietnam, he said, "As I saw you marching over that hill, I could see 56,000 ghosts smiling."

Another vet at the demonstration said that "if the troops are still in the Persian Gulf by this time next year, we will have a demonstration of 30,000." This reflects a growing optimism that the American people will not accept a war and the casualties it would entail.

Steve Argue,  
Minneapolis, Minn.

## Born too late

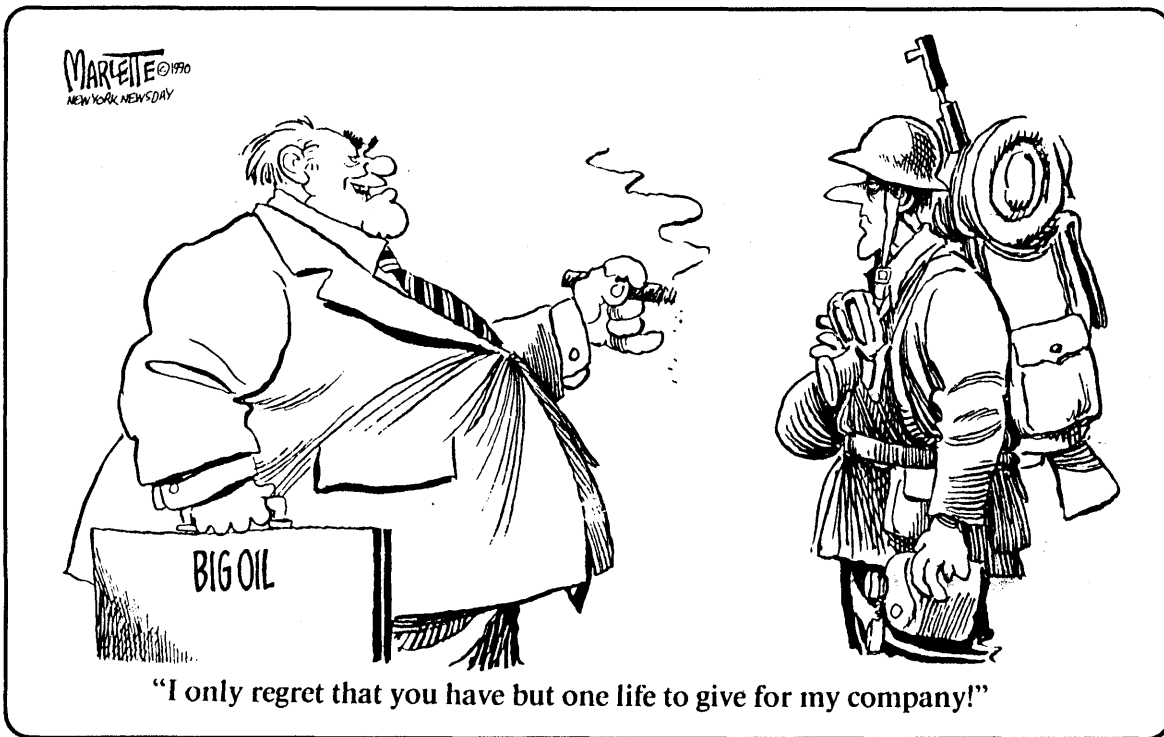
Dear editor,

The Petroleum Marketers Association of America (PMAA), which represents independent gasoline wholesalers, says that its members should "prepare for war" with the big oil companies. Small gas station owners complain that they sometimes have to pay more for wholesale gas than the big companies are charging through their own stations.

Now the independents are talking about "massing all the troops on the front line" in order to force the major companies out of the retail gasoline business. The PMAA will propose new legislation for Congress to consider.

The PMAA wants a free market, but they were born too late for that. The big companies want to own all the oil from the retail pump all the way back to the well, to own the land around the well, and to own the kings who sit on top on the land.

Don Simpson,  
Oakland, Calif.



# Affirmative action with quotas!

President George Bush's veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990 has brought howls from liberals. Senator Edward Kennedy, the Congressional Black Caucus, the NAACP, and top officials of the AFL-CIO point to Bush's action as proof that the Reagan era is not over. They urge working people and others to rally behind the Democratic Party so a veto-proof Congress is elected.

These crocodile tears, however, don't tell the whole story. The stance of the liberals, of all races, has

## Editorial

helped let Bush off the hook. Bush said he would not back a law that sanctioned quotas as the way to remedy racial and sexual discrimination in society.

The specific bill adopted by both houses of Congress would have effectively "overturned" five 1989 Supreme Court decisions that weakened existing civil rights laws. It would have allowed women for the first time to sue for punitive damages. Minorities can already do so.

But the liberal Democrats and Republicans in Congress told Bush he was mistaken. They also opposed quotas and said the new law would allow affirmative-action programs to continue as they have for 20 years before 1989. Bush didn't believe them. He said he'll write his own anti-quota civil rights bill next year.

After the vote little was said by the trade union or Black rights liberals. They reaffirmed their plan to elect more liberals to Congress. No protests were called. Nothing.

Of course this is not surprising. The Black, women, and union leaders have been retreating on civil rights for some time. The rightist direction of all capitalist politics over the decade has put them on the defensive. So much so that those who once advocated affirmative-action programs with teeth—meaning some type of quotas—don't do so anymore.

Yet quotas is the central issue of civil rights in a society based on discrimination. All economic and social indicators show the second-class status of Blacks and

the discrimination suffered by women. Race and sex discrimination is based on the conscious and deliberate actions by the government and employers—historically and to this day. Affirmative action without quotas is not very effective. The employers will do the minimum to prevent legal suits and public pressure.

As a result, while progress has been made since the overthrow of legal segregation in the 1960s, civil rights gains have been under attack and are eroding. The reactionary claim that we live in a "colorblind" society is a lie. The latter term is a code word for the status quo: discrimination.

The 1989 Supreme Court rulings put more of the onus on victims to prove that their employers consciously discriminated against them before winning their claims. It is almost impossible to prove intent; especially under the Bush guideline that it allows employers to do so for justifiable business reasons.

The liberals give away the moral high ground when they agree with Bush and the Supreme Court that quotas are discriminatory. It means the debate becomes: how much discrimination is legal and okay. The average white male working person is therefore miseducated that the affirmative action rights of minorities and women are discriminatory, whether there are quotas or not.

That's a sham defense of civil rights. It is more harmful than good.

The debate on the proposed bill exposes the bipartisan retreat on civil rights. The fight is no longer on how to protect and extend civil rights. It is now over how much to concede. Not surprisingly avowed racists such as Louisiana's former Ku Klux Klan dragon David Duke, now a leading Republican in the state, hailed the Bush veto and even sat in the Senate gallery when the veto was upheld.

Working people need to rally in defense of affirmative action with quotas. Putting them in union contracts would be one place to start. Demanding that the government and courts fully enforce all existing civil rights laws should also be a top priority of the trade unions, Black rights, and women's rights organizations.

## Sergio Ramirez

Dear editor,

In September, I had the chance to speak with Sergio Ramirez, the former vice president of Nicaragua and one of the top leaders of the FSLN.

Ramirez described the current situation as very serious. The peasants have planted only enough for their own survival—no surplus. The large farmers, many of whom have returned from Miami, are not producing a surplus either.

Managua continues to swell, Ramirez said, as unemployed agricultural workers and their families drift into the city. There is no industrial production of any kind. The mood is explosive.

In our conversation, Ramirez refused to consider expropriation of the large landholders. He would not even support government or worker management of the large estates.

But he joined the chorus in condemning the past behavior of these people: They accounted for the bulk of decapitalization. They bilked the government of hundreds of millions by not repaying loans, they diverted to U.S. banks their profits from government subsidies, and they smuggled out government-supplied farm machinery.

How could he hold this position of denying an extensive agricultural

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# 'Self-determination for the Middle East' —a just demand?

BY MALIK MIAH

"Self-determination for the peoples of the Middle East" appears at first to be a simple and just demand. Many opponents of Washington's aggression against the Arab people in the Middle East have raised this slogan at coalitions organized to protest the U.S. war preparations.

The Palestinian and other Arab people, Kurds, and other ethnic groups have all suffered under colonial or neocolonial rule. The Kurds in particular have suffered massive discrimination and death in countries such as Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. Why not a demand that includes all oppressed or nationally discriminated people in the region?

Yet this demand is not just or democratic. It will not aid the just fights of discriminated minorities in the Arab countries, Iran, and Turkey. Nor will it aid the Arab workers and peasants fighting brutal regimes in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, and other Arab countries.

Why? Because the situation in the Middle East is much more complex than people seeking their own nation-states or freedom from French, British, or American control.

The democratic demand of self-determination can be used as a diversion and turned into its opposite if not clearly defined as only for the oppressed. All people in the Middle East do not suffer from national oppression. Nor do those who face domination from imperialism face the same situation.

In the context of Washington's war drive, the general slogan for self-determination for all peoples of the Middle East can have only one meaning: return to power of the ousted Kuwaiti emir and his royal family. After all, President Bush claims that U.S. troops are supporting "self-determination" for the Kuwaiti people!

This slogan thus becomes, no matter what the intent of those who raise it, a justification for the U.S. war preparations. It is the figleaf for the United Nations-sanctioned aggression in the region.

In addition, the slogan gives *de facto* recognition to the settler-state of Israel, a country formed in 1948 with the support of world imperialism. Israel was created on the blood and bones of the displaced Palestinian people. The Israeli Jews are not oppressed as a nation. They are the oppressor nation sitting on top of the Palestinian and other Arab people's land.

## Nationalism of oppressed

There is a major difference between the nationalism of the Arab people (which Saddam Hussein has appealed to) and the nationalism or chauvinism whipped up by oppressor nations.

The former represents the interests and desires of an oppressed people to take control of their lives. It is entirely progressive. The latter is used to justify the control and division of the world's resources by big oil and other capitalist corporations. It is totally reactionary.

The Kuwaiti emir, the Saudi royal family, and their Washington

## Which Side Are You On?

By  
Malik Miah



backers oppose Arab nationalism. Imperialism hopes that the disunity of Arab heads of state will permanently undermine pan-Arab nationalism.

But this will not happen. Arab nationalism, like all nationalisms of the oppressed (including Black nationalism in the United States) is based on real oppression. It is fueled by that reality. It is created and recreated by that oppression and can only whither away when full equality of all peoples exists. That's only possible with the victory of worldwide socialism.

In the Middle East, the fraternity of free and independent nations can only be forged by recognizing the just and democratic demand of self-determination for the Arab people and oppressed nations. The slogans raised can be for self-determination for Palestine; self-determination for Kurdistan; etc. But it can't include oppressor nations such as the Israeli Jews.

The Israeli Jews already have self-determination and they use it to oppress Arabs. Israel's rulers are imperialism's main ally in the region. The Kuwaiti, Saudi, and other kings, emirs, and dictators also have "self-determination." They serve as the policemen for the European and American rulers to help dominate the Arab and other semi-colonial people of the Arab East.

## Consistent nationalism

At the same time, it is important to recognize that Saddam Hussein and other capitalist rulers of the Arab countries don't represent consistent and genuine nationalism of the Arab and other oppressed people. Consistent nationalism—fighting uncompromisingly for the rights of the oppressed Arab nation—is not possible by those defending capitalism.

Hussein is a pro-capitalist dictator. He has used his brutal regime

to keep down Iraqi workers and peasants and to slaughter Kurds fighting for their rights. Hussein launched a war in 1980 against the Iranian people after they threw out a U.S. dictator, the Shah.

Because Hussein and other capitalist rulers in the Arab world abuse nationalism for their own means does not diminish the dynamics of Arab nationalism. It's that powerful dynamic that frightens imperialism and the feudal princes—and Hussein, too, in the long run.

The emerging movement against Washington's war drive should focus on one slogan: Bring the Troops Home Now! At the same time, supporters of genuine self-determination for the oppressed people of the Middle East can and should educate around democratic demands such as self-determination for the Palestinian people (concretized in the slogan for a "Democratic and Secular Palestine") as well as "Hands off Iraq." ■

## St. Paul meeting salutes Jake Cooper

By CINDY BURKE

About 75 people gathered on Oct. 21 at St. Paul's Macalester College to celebrate the life of Jake Cooper, lifelong socialist and union activist, a founder of the Socialist Workers Party, the Fourth International, and Socialist Action.

Jake died on Sept. 8 at the age of 74. The audience included Jake's wife, Lillian Cooper, some of their children, and son-in-law, as well as leaders of the P-9 strike, fellow socialists, labor leaders, and students from the college.

All the highlights of Jake's life were touched on by the speakers: his participation in the historic Minneapolis Teamsters strikes and northwest organizing drives of the

1930s, his role as a guard for Leon Trotsky in Mexico, his frameup conviction and imprisonment by the federal government in 1944 under the notorious Smith "Thought Control" Act, his recent activity in support of the courageous strike of Local P-9 against the George A. Hormel Company, and his lifelong dedication to the movement for socialism and against the betrayals of Stalinism.

## "Meaning of solidarity"

The meeting was opened by Peter Rachleff, associate professor of history at Macalester and former chairman of the Metro Area P-9 Support Committee, who had worked closely with Jake on that strike and other projects.

One of the most moving talks was given by Kathy Buck, former financial secretary of Local P-9 during the strike. Kathy said, "Tons of food were delivered to Austin during the strike, but Jake did more than help feed our bodies. He fed our minds with challenging ideas. He gave us strategies to ponder, to consider, to think about to discuss.

"But most of all, he showed us the true meaning of solidarity. Solidarity is a commitment of standing behind someone that's fighting for the same thing that you are. Solidarity isn't hinged on political beliefs, religious beliefs—solidarity is a commitment to mankind."

V.R. Dunne, Jr., a longtime friend of Jake and the son of the great labor and socialist leader V.R. Dunne, described an incident he witnessed in the early '30s during the Depression in Minneapolis. The sheriff had evicted a family from their home and had moved all their belongings onto the street.

As the neighbors gathered around the weeping wife to comfort her, a truck suddenly roared up and a half-dozen members of the Federal Workers section of Teamsters Local 544, one of whom was Jake, piled out of the truck.

The unionists proceeded to move all the family's belongings back into the house. Then they took the family to the local relief office, where a demonstration was held demanding increases in rental allowances.

Bernie Hesse, a leader of his UFCW local who worked side by side with Jake during the P-9 strike, spoke for everyone at the meeting who knew Jake when he said, "I learned many things from Jake and one was loyalty. He was always loyal to the workers and he never forgot them."

Bud Schulte, a leader of the 1984

## Jake Cooper Memorial Meeting New York City

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strike in St. Paul against Iowa Pork by UFCW Local 4-P, told about how he first met Jake and other socialists during that strike and, through their influence, became convinced of the need to build a socialist society.

"I learned a lot from him," Schulte said. "My life changed in 1984 because of people like Jake. I was 36 years old at that time and most radicals would say beyond saving, beyond conversion, beyond being able to see another world. And Jake, along with others, taught me how to do that."

## "They'll be forced to fight"

Brian Schwartz, a young member of the Twin Cities branch of Socialist Action, had an especially close relationship with Jake from the time Brian joined the movement about four years ago. He said:

"Jake would reinforce my confidence in the working class and in Socialist Action. Jake would say, 'Our ideas are based on the fact that everything is changing. Capitalism's prosperity is coming to an end. The capitalists will attack the workers' living standards and the working class will be forced to fight. And Brian, haven't we always been there providing leadership and ideas for the workers?'"

Pete Winkels, former business agent of Local P-9, told the audience: "What we were undergoing in Austin with our strike was held together by a thin line of people like

Jake, myself, others that came down to Austin, retirees of our own union, people that were there at the founding, arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, passing this food which was our lifeline.

"And when the sunshine patriots and summer soldiers of the labor movement had gone home, Jake was still there a lot longer than anybody else that I can remember who gave so much of himself."

Al Eiden, who also spoke, was a conscientious objector to World War II and met Jake in Sandstone Prison. Al described his contacts with Jake over the many decades that followed. The gathering also heard from Dave Riehle, local chairman of United Transportation Union Local 650 and a former leader of the P-9 support committee, and from Lynn Henderson, a national committee member of Socialist Action.

The final speaker was Dave Cooper, Jake's brother, also a national leader of Socialist Action, who was recruited to socialism at the age of 15 and, with his brother, dedicated his life to the cause of workers' rights and socialism.

[On Oct. 27, over 60 people attended a memorial meeting for Jake Cooper in San Francisco. Speakers included Dave Cooper, Socialist Action Co-National Secretaries Nat Weinstein and Jeff Mackler, and Socialist Action members Cindy Burke and Carole Seligman.] ■

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# N.Y. Daily News strike symbolizes growing fightback mood of workers

By CHRIS BIELER

NEW YORK—In a strike that is being closely watched by working people in New York and around the country, 2600 workers struck the *Daily News* on Oct. 26.

The strike at one of New York's two largest dailies began when an injured worker was ordered to stand while doing his work even though he had been well able to perform his job while seated. The strike was the culmination of a 10-month battle characterized by harassment of workers by supervisors on the shop floor. This was coupled with demands for massive takeaways by management at the bargaining table.

*Daily News* employees have been working without a contract since March 31. They charge the company, owned by the infamous James Hoge of the *Chicago Tribune*, with trying to break the union.

The unions say they have been trying to guard against the newspaper boss's attempts to provoke a strike. But within hours of being locked out at the *News'* Brooklyn plant, a bus drove up with 60 scab "permanent replacements," forcing the workers out on strike.

"This is a declaration of war by management," said George McDonald, president of the Allied Printing Trades Council, as strikers mobilized to stop production and distribution of the struck newspaper.

On the night of Oct. 26, nine out of the 10 unions representing workers at *The Daily News* were honoring the picket line. This included the all-important drivers and newspaper reporters. Only the typographers refused to go out.

Popular news columnist Mike McAlary said, "New York City is a union town. People consider it a fundamental right to have them here, and I'm glad there's one at *The Daily News*.. I will not cross the picket line." Richard Brandt, one of the pressmen picketing the Brooklyn plant, said: "We're in this to the end. This stuff is going on now at all the newspapers."

## Labor movement scapegoated

A key management strategy, widely picked up and trumpeted by all the big-business newspapers, has been to claim that organized labor is to blame for *The News'* present financial difficulties. *The News* claims to be losing money in recent years despite the fact that it is the second-best selling daily paper in America.

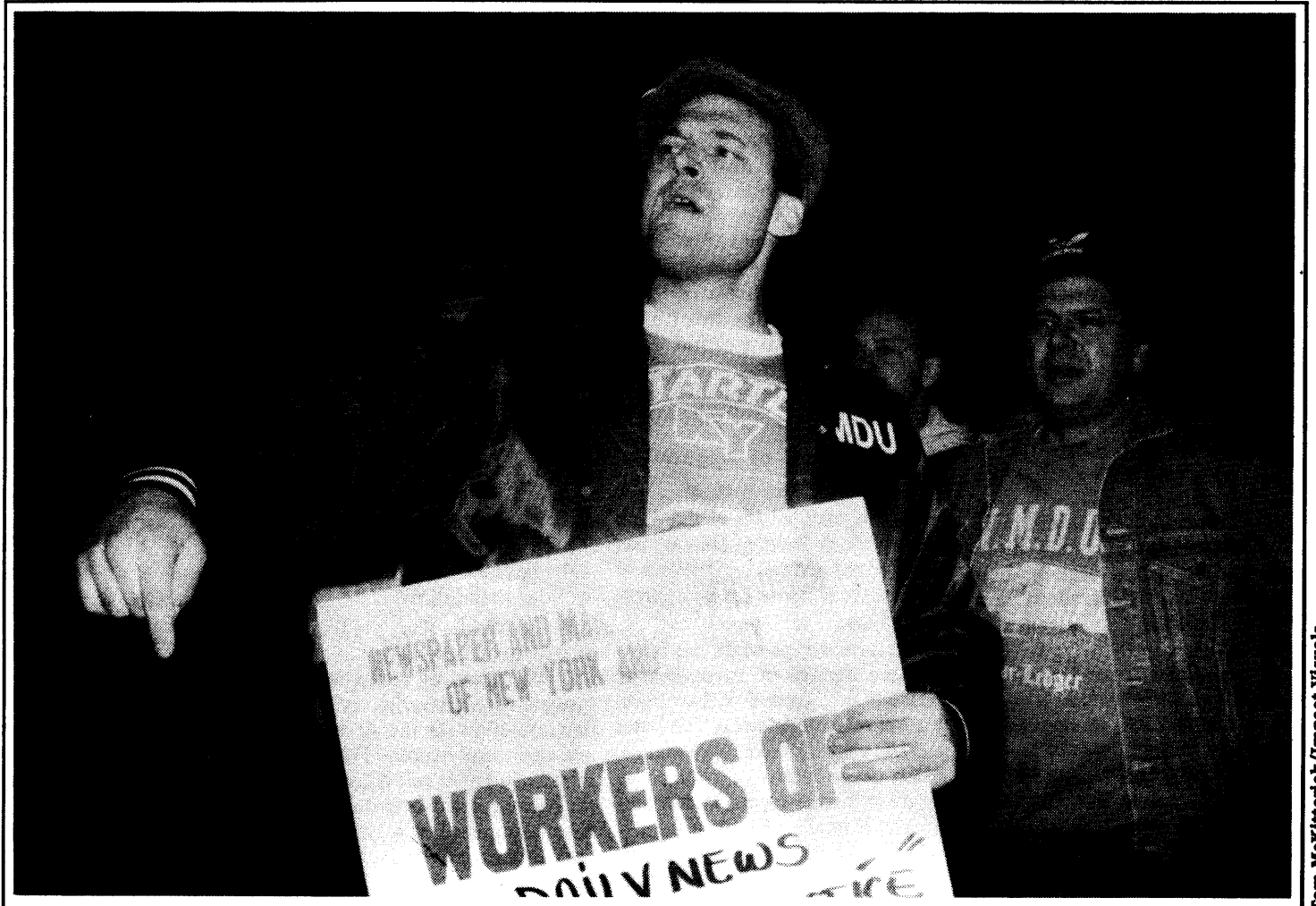
The owners refuse, of course, to open their financial books to back up their claim. Nor will they open the books of the associated *Chicago Tribune*, to which, workers suspect, profits from *The Daily News* have been siphoned in recent years.

But even if the claim that *The News* is losing money is true, this is a result of the sharpening competition between competing newspaper giants—not because wages are too high. The most important factor determining the outcome of the struggle among the media giants is which has the most capital to put into more productive technology that will enable it to sell a better product at the lowest cost.

The newspaper bosses' demand for more givebacks from the workers to reduce costs cannot save any competing enterprise from going belly-up in the never-ending war between capitalists for market shares.

Such attempts to scapegoat labor for what is essentially a capitalist crisis, is a deepening trend in recent labor battles. This charge is totally false. It was the bosses, and not the news workers, who didn't or couldn't find the necessary capital for investment in advanced technology such as a modern color press. Such capital investment is considered essential if the *Daily News* is to compete successfully with the other media giants in the 21st century.

Givebacks by the unions at the *Daily News* in 1987, as well as at the *Post* in



Daily News workers on the picketline Oct. 26. 'We're in this to the end.'

**'The New York City police have been mobilized to break the strike. When they are not busy escorting scab trucks, they are busy arresting strikers.'**

August 1990, have only emboldened the bosses to pursue similar concessions and advance their union-busting campaign throughout the newspaper industry.

Despite pleas of poverty, Hoge and Co. have invested \$40 million to recruit scabs and management personnel to police them. They have even bought a newspaper plant in New Jersey—dubbed "Fort Hoge," by the workers—specifically for the purpose of producing scab editions of the *News*. Using a non-union plant as backup after provoking a strike was inspired by fellow newspaper boss Rupert Murdoch. He used this tactic to smash the powerful London printers' unions a few years ago.

## True face of the cops

The New York City police have been mobilized to break the strike. When they are not escorting scab delivery trucks, they are busy arresting striking workers. So far 40 strikers have been arrested for the "crime" of defending their jobs, and a large number of those arrested have been charged with felonies.

Workers are paying taxes to finance this scab herding by the police. New York Mayor David Dinkins, the "friend of labor" Democrat, has sicced the union-busting cops on the striking workers. While there is always enough money for scab-herding, the capitalist mayor is preparing to fire 35,000 city workers, even though the city is already short of funds for schools, subways, hospitals and other essential services.

*Daily News* workers, many of whom have worked there all their lives, are digging in for a fight to the finish. A visit by *Socialist Action* to the Brooklyn plant found their mood to be resolute and determined. Few ex-

pect the strike to be short or easy.

"Flying pickets," modeled on the famous roving picket-squads of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes, are fanning out throughout the city. They are persuading news-stand workers not to handle the scab paper. Teamster union drivers have backed them up by not making deliveries of any kind to news-dealers selling the *Daily News*.

The New York dailies are giving their fellow capitalist a helping hand by giving a biased, anti-labor view of the strike. Newspaper Guild members are considering starting a labor paper with mass circulation, to tell the true story. This would be a powerful weapon for labor during this strike and afterward. Meanwhile they have announced a boycott of all businesses which continue to advertise in *The Daily News*.

On Sunday, Oct. 29, it was hard to find the struck newspaper on the stands, although management claimed they had printed 1.2 million copies. "The momentum is on our side," declared Newspaper Guild President Barry Lipton to his membership. He is dead right. The striking newspaper workers have met the union-busters head-on with militant strike tactics recalling the best days of American labor's proud history.

## An inspiring example

Already it has inspired the most conscious New York City union activists to come out in solidarity to a picket-line rally. On Nov. 1, well over 10,000 municipal and other workers came out in support of striking workers in a demonstration outside *The Daily News*. And this is just a beginning toward mobilizing all working people to help in a battle whose outcome will affect

all labor.

Striking newspaper workers have taken a big step in the right direction—toward relying entirely on their own independent power as a part of the New York working class. The response they have received only shows what's possible if they stay on this course.

But many pitfalls will be placed in the newspaper unions' path in the days ahead. The strikers will be told they can't win; that the bosses can't afford present costs; that if they don't accept takebacks, the owners will close the plant and they will be without jobs.

While, in general, such plant closings have occurred throughout the land, and more will occur as the economy continues to fall into a tailspin, it is unlikely that this newspaper with over a million readers will go down. But to accept further cuts in wages, conditions or staffing will only whet the appetite for more demands from all newspaper publishers, as well as owners of *The Daily News*, for more worker sacrifices.

But in the end, the more powerful media giants will swallow the weaker and there will be fewer jobs for news workers—at lower pay and worsened conditions.

But if this strike is victorious, the relation of forces in the industry and beyond will begin to change. When the labor juggernaut again begins to roll, real solutions will be on the order of the day. When that day comes, a shorter workweek with no reduction in pay for all workers will be the way to fight plant closings and will provide the next step in the struggle for the final emancipation of labor from capitalist anarchy, unemployment, inflation and war. ■

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