

## American Blitzkrieg— Bush's "New Order"

FEBRUARY 26—After five weeks of terrorizing the civilian population from the air, the U.S. launched its invasion of Iraq, billed as a "lightning strike" like Hitler's Blitzkrieg against Poland. Like Hitler, George Bush glories in the use of overwhelming military force against an outclassed opponent to impose the American Reich's "new world order" on the region and the globe.

From the outset, Washington cynically spurned every offer of negotiations with Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein. In the week before the ground war began—"on schedule" according to a timetable planned long before—the U.S. rejected outright Iraq's offers of withdrawal from Kuwait. Nothing less than Hussein's head would do—Bush wants scalps.

To secure their domination, America's rulers demand blood, the blood of tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians. And the U.S. president wants the American army bloodied as well, to turn it into a killer force and prepare the American population for grislier bloodbaths ahead.

While keeping up a constant barrage of made-in-Riyadh tales of Iraqi atrocities, and the putative threat of Iraqi chemical warfare, the Americans used napalm, white phosphorus and fuel-air bombs which create an enormous fireball. And U.S. spokesmen repetitively hinted they would use "tactical" nuclear weapons.

As we go to press, it's impossible to get a picture of the military situation from behind the thick fog of self-congratulatory Pentagon war propaganda. The airwaves are saturated with images of armor racing across the desert and Iraqi soldiers rounded up by the thousands with almost no American casualties. Disgustingly racist military videotapes show dark-skinned Arab POWs kissing the hands of their white captors. TV anchormen compete with each other in "Go team" cheerleading.

An Iraqi Scud missile finally hit a military target, landing on a U.S. barracks in Dhahran, killing 28 and injuring 100. There have been reports of "fierce" tank battles, including a daylong clash at the Kuwait City airport which left the Iraqis in place at nightfall. The U.S. claims to have 100,000 troops on the Euphrates River cutting off Republican Guard concentrations in southern Iraq.

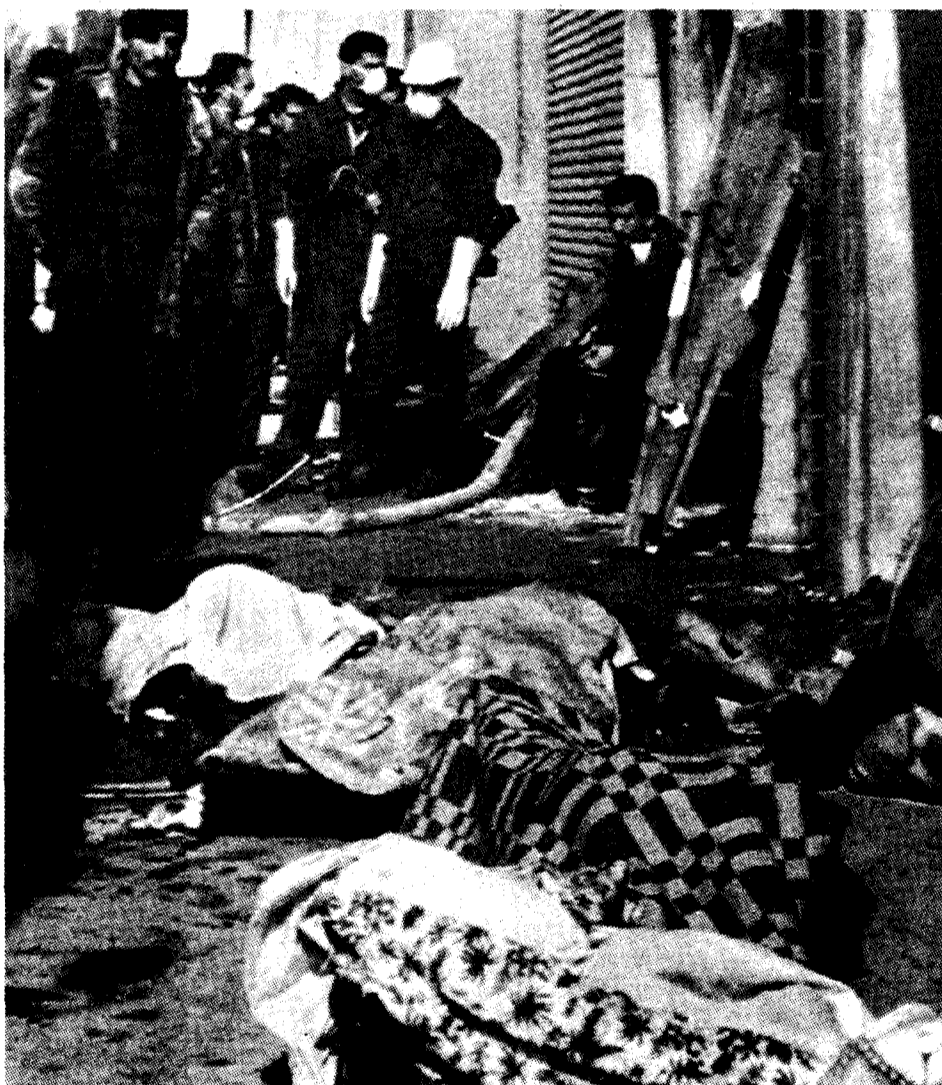
Bush declares that Hussein's order to pull out of Kuwait is irrelevant—the war

goes on, even against withdrawing units of the Iraqi army. This is hardly the "mother of all battles" that Saddam Hussein vowed to wage. But if the U.S. forces bottle up elite Iraqi units and demand a groveling surrender, there

people would be told nothing about the actual state of the fighting. The German population under the Nazis got more accurate news about World War II than Americans are getting today.

If George Bush has acted true to form

### George Bush, Baby Killer



February 13: Baghdad shelter massacre. See article, page 4.

could still be some bloody fighting.

Never has the U.S. media been so tightly controlled, and so willingly submissive to government *Diktat*. The first shred of truth to come out of the Pentagon in months was Cheney's announcement after the start of the ground offensive that the American

as an imperialist warmonger, first prize for perfidy must go to Mikhail Gorbachev, who turned his back on the Soviets' Iraqi client and wheedled and cajoled Hussein to agree to each and every humiliating ultimatum from Washington. When Baghdad agreed to the latest Soviet plan and the White House declared this

unacceptable, Moscow turned around and denounced the Iraqis. And after this treachery, they now have a triumphalist imperialist military juggernaut strutting its stuff a few hundred miles from the Soviet southern border.

It is not lost on the Soviet general staff that the Pentagon is now carrying out its AirLand Battle military strategy designed for an offensive strike against the Soviet Union. A worried *Pravda* writes, "The war is waged first of all to satisfy the ambitions of the U.S. to achieve sole leadership of the world." It dawns on the thick-skulled Stalinist bureaucrats in the Kremlin...a little late. We Trotskyists have been saying for months that the U.S. was intent on war to impose its imperialist hegemony.

The International Communist League took a clear stand from the outset against the imperialist attack and in defense of Iraq. We have no truck with the *rais* (chief) of Baghdad, Saddam Hussein, the killer of Kurds, Communists and oil workers. This former U.S. ally is getting the same treatment Washington metes out to all its lackeys who step out of line, from Trujillo to Diem to Panama's Noriega. And like in Panama, if Bush has his way, they'll just install a more pliant puppet ruler in Baghdad. But if the U.S. rolls over Iraq with impunity, it will make this world a much more dangerous place. The White House has its hit list ready.

A cocksure imperialist colossus on the loose, with a fresh taste of blood and its pumped-up "Top Gun" war machine, is a deadly danger to all humanity. Reagan and Bush set their sights on overcoming the "Vietnam syndrome"—in the process they could set off a chain of events leading to a nuclear World War III.

Hitler also was emboldened by his first Blitzkrieg successes but soon found himself overextended, and ultimately crushed. The American military colossus rests on foundations that cannot sustain it. Even a Henry Kissinger warns that "U.S. pre-eminence cannot last.... Nor can the U.S. economy indefinitely sustain a policy of essentially unilateral global interventionism" (*Los Angeles Times*, 24 February). It is up to the international proletariat, first and foremost the American working class, to bring down by revolutionary class struggle this imperialist ruling class bent on war.

#### Would-Be Rulers of the World

The Pentagon and White House war hawks can barely contain their jubilation at the course of events. But, as we asked earlier, if they win, what have they won? Do they slog through Mesopotamia to Baghdad, or slice off southern Iraq to be traded for "reparations"? Meanwhile, the slaughter of Iraqi civilians and soldiers has provoked fury from Arab protesters throughout the region. Already there have been three days of escalating protests in Cairo in which two students have been killed by police.

Among the first victims of the U.S. war are the Palestinian people. In the West Bank and Gaza they have been

*continued on page 11*



### The Hidden History of U.S. Terror Bombing

SEE PAGE SIX

# Free Sari Nusseibeh!

On January 29, prominent Palestinian spokesman and philosophy professor Sari Nusseibeh was arrested by the Israeli government on bogus espionage charges. With supreme *chutzpah*, the Zionists accused Nusseibeh of informing Iraq as to the location of its Scud strikes while he was under house arrest along with the rest of the Palestinian population of the Occupied Territories. When the espionage charges exploded in the Zionists' face, they labeled him a "security risk" and ordered him held for three months under the Administrative Detention Act.

This police-state measure was inherited from the British Mandate.

In January the Israeli government also arrested Taher Shriteh, an officially accredited journalist who works as a stringer for Reuters, the *New York Times*, CBS News, the BBC and Voice of America. Shriteh is one of at least 30 Palestinian journalists being held under administrative detention—without charges, trial or any rights. Shriteh was picked up for "assisting" the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas group by translating its leaflets to the international press—information which

**TROTSKY**

## U.S. Imperialism— Would-Be Dictator of the World

*In its drive to assert unchallenged control over global oil supplies and through that over the world itself, the bankrupt U.S. empire is waging a war of annihilation against semicolonial Iraq. In this conflict, the working people must seek the defeat of the imperialists and stand for the defense of Iraq. At the outset of the second inter-imperialist world war, Leon Trotsky laid out*

*the Marxist position on wars between imperialist powers and semicolonial countries.*

The industrial, financial, and military strength of the United States, the foremost capitalist power in the world, does not at all insure the blossoming of American economic life, but on the contrary, invests the crisis of her social system with an especially malignant and convulsive character. Gold in the billions cannot be made use of, nor can the millions of unemployed! In the theses of the Fourth International, *War and the Fourth International*, published six years ago, it was predicted:

"U.S. capitalism is up against the same problems that pushed Germany in 1914 on the path of war. The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of 'organizing Europe.' The United States must 'organize' the world. History is bringing humanity face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism..."

Official patriotism is a mask for the exploiting interests. Class conscious workers throw this mask contemptuously aside. They do not defend the bourgeois fatherland, but the interests of the toilers and the oppressed of their own country and of the entire world....

In the colonial and semicolonial countries the struggle for an independent national state, and consequently the "defense of the fatherland," is different in principle from that of the imperialist countries. The revolutionary proletariat of the whole world gives unconditional support to the struggle of China or India for national independence, for this struggle, by "tearing the backward peoples from Asiaticism, sectionalism, and foreign bondage,...strike[s] powerful blows at the imperialist states."

At the same time, the Fourth International knows in advance and openly warns the backward nations that their belated national states can no longer count upon an independent democratic development. Surrounded by decaying capitalism and enmeshed in the imperialist contradictions, the independence of a backward state inevitably will be semi-fictitious, and its political regime, under the influence of internal class contradictions and external pressure, will unavoidably fall into dictatorship against the people—such is the regime of the "People's" party in Turkey, the Kuomintang in China; Gandhi's regime will be similar tomorrow in India. The struggle for the national independence of the colonies is, from the standpoint of the revolutionary proletariat, only a transitional stage on the road toward drawing the backward countries into the international socialist revolution.

—Leon Trotsky, "Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution" (May 1940)

**LENIN**

Prominent  
Palestinian  
spokesman  
Sari Nusseibeh,  
imprisoned  
by Israeli  
government.



David Sillitoe

regularly appears in Israeli newspapers.

The government only announced its allegations after holding Shriteh for three weeks in a cell measuring 60 by 30 inches. At his bail hearing on February 18, Shriteh broke into tears as he described his Israeli prison hell: "They tortured me. They held me in solitary confinement for eleven days. They gave me no food for four days and wouldn't let me go to the bathroom." Military prosecutor Lt. Oded Savorey argued that "continuing the investigation" meant that Shriteh must be locked up indefinitely, so "he will tell us more things."

On February 21 the Partisan Defense Committee protested the arrests to the Israeli embassy, and pointed out that Nusseibeh's detention "under patently false espionage charges illustrates the government's intent to eliminate from public view even the most moderate spokesmen for Palestinian rights. This comes in the context of the Zionist state's gearing up for a genocidal 'final solution' of the Palestinian question by a forced population transfer from the Occupied Territories."

Also locked up in jail is Mordechai Vanunu, the courageous nuclear technician sentenced to 18 years in solitary for exposing the extent of Israel's deadly nuclear arsenal. As the Zionist butchers ready their Nazi-like resolution of the Palestinian question, they also may just plunge the world into a thermonuclear holocaust. Vanunu's service in warning the world's working people must not be forgotten. Free Mordechai Vanunu! Free Sari Nusseibeh, Taher Shriteh and all victims of Zionist state repression! Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!

For years the largely black MOVE organization has been the target of the most brutal cop terror and repression. The "American way of life" for which Bush ordered the massive bombing of the Iraqi peoples was epitomized by the barbaric bombing of the MOVE house on 13 May 1985—eleven black people burned to death, five of them children. That massacre, ordered by black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode and bearing the signature of the Reagan years, was a message to all who step out of line in racist, capitalist America.

Thirteen MOVE members remain in jail for defending themselves against racist terror. Ramona Africa has done six years for being the sole adult survivor of the May 13 holocaust. Repeatedly, the vindictive Pennsylvania Parole Board has refused to even consider parole to any MOVE member or supporter unless they first agree to the "special condition" to never associate with any other member of MOVE. On January 29, MOVE supporter Richard Garland asked to see a Parole Board representative in the hopes of obtaining a new hearing. His answer came the same day: "If you are willing to comply with the stipulation imposed on you by the Board, i.e., remain separate from other MOVE members, then we can schedule you for a board appearance." Garland declined.

But in a surprising turnabout, two days later the Board recommended parole for MOVE member Carlos Africa. Carlos was convicted in 1981 on charges stemming from the May 1977 "guns on the porch day" demonstration to protest the arrest of Chuck Africa. He is due to receive his "green sheet" authorizing release within weeks. We caution that Carlos is not yet free. State authorities have lied to and about MOVE incessantly. And we know that Carlos' only "crime," like all his MOVE brothers and sisters, was to defend their alternative lifestyles and dignity as human beings against racist cop attacks.

The workers movement must not forget that 12 MOVE members besides Carlos remain behind bars, that MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-Jamal is fighting for his life on Huntingdon Prison's death row. All opponents of racist terror and defenders of democratic rights must not rest until they are released from prison bondage. Free all the imprisoned MOVE members and supporters! Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

\* \* \*

For 20 years Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (David Rice) has been fighting for his freedom against a racist COINTELPRO frame-up. Mondo and Ed Poindexter, former leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism and Black Panther Party supporters, were framed on charges of killing a cop in a 1970 bomb explosion. Fifteen months ago a federal district court denied Mondo's *habeas corpus* petition challenging the legality of his frame-up conviction. On November 14, oral argument of Mondo's appeal was held in the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. No decision has been issued.

Mondo's appeal attacks the COINTELPRO frame-up. At least five volumes of FBI papers document the government's vendetta against this small Panther outpost in Nebraska, and confirm that the cops concealed from Mondo and Poindexter evidence favorable to their defense. As prosecutor Art O'Leary said 20 years ago, where Mondo and Poindexter are concerned, "it doesn't make any difference what the truth is."

Mondo recently wrote the PDC appealing for letters to be sent to the Court. On January 24, we wrote, "It would be a crime to make this innocent man spend another day behind bars. We join with many around the world who have called for David Rice's freedom." Send your letters to: U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, 1114 Market Street, Suite 511, St. Louis, MO 63101. Free Mondo and Poindexter!

\* \* \*

We encourage WV readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# Pentagon War Machine— Not “Our” Troops

Increasingly, many groups demonstrating against the Persian Gulf War have been at pains to say that “peace is patriotic.” A widely heard refrain is that, while opposing the war, “we support our troops.” Antiwar demonstrations on January 19 and 26 were awash with the stars and stripes. As we commented in our last issue, it’s sometimes hard to tell antiwar protesters apart from pro-war flag-wavers. Indeed, a Pennsylvania peace group unsuccessfully tried to speak at a right-wing Hero Day “support the troops” rally.

At the January 19 peace crawl in D.C., placards and banners proclaimed, “We Love Our Troops, Bring Them Home!” and “Respect Our Troops—Don’t Kill and Maim Them for Arab Oil!” The podium was draped with the soft-core version of this line, “Bring the Troops Home Now,” which is the common currency of the various squabbling pseudo-socialist groups. This is what Lenin called “social-patriotism,” expressing concern solely for the loss of *American lives* as the U.S. is raining death on the people of Iraq.

The ubiquitous red-white-and-blue bunting and talk of supporting “our” troops speak volumes, for the liberal/reformist leaders of the “antiwar movement” take as their framework what’s best for “American interests.” The Spartacist League put forward a sharply different program, of revolutionary working-class opposition to the war, in our signs and banners declaring: “Defeat U.S. Imperialism—Defend Iraq!” A sign carried by an SL demonstrator in Chicago said simply, “A Defeat for ‘Our’ Rulers Is a Victory for Us!”

It is a betrayal of every principle of socialism to refer to the Pentagon war machine as “our” troops. This is what Lenin was referring to when he lambasted the social-patriots during World War I for supporting their “own” bourgeoisie. He noted that the trade-union bureaucracy and the privileged layers of the labor aristocracy identified with the interests of the ruling class, and this viewpoint



WV Photos  
Spartacists call for defeat of U.S. imperialism, while liberals and reformists compete with Bush & Co. in “support our troops” rhetoric.

had been adopted by self-proclaimed socialists.

Many look back to the Vietnam “antiwar movement,” when groups like the Socialist Workers Party launched the slogan “Bring the troops home.” Sometimes they went even further, calling to “Bring our boys home” or “Bring the troops home and send them to Mississippi.” This slogan was doubly pernicious, implying that federal troops would protect blacks from the racists, when in fact FBI agents were beating up freedom riders, their “informants” were among the KKK nightriders, and U.S. troops were brought in to suppress black protesters.

While the liberal and reformist leaders see the Vietnam-era popular front as their halcyon days, many have bought the

right-wing lie that returning Vietnam vets were “spat on” by “peaceniks.” So they wrap themselves in the flag to prove that now they’re for “our boys,” they’re just opposed to sending them “over there.” The whole business is a Big Lie, a conscious rewrite of history like Hitler’s “stab in the back” myth, pushed by Rambo movies and the likes of Dan Quayle.

Far from showing contempt for Viet vets, antiwar activists reached out to them. There were underground newspapers, leaflets and coffeehouses for active-duty soldiers. And radicalized GIs came to learn that their enemy was the government at home. So many of them became antiwar protesters that it led to the popular joke about how Pat Nixon is looking out the White House window and

sees a horde of protesters advancing on the lawn. “Call out the 82nd Airborne,” says President Nixon, to which Pat replies, “But dear, that is the 82nd Airborne.”

Ironically, its slogans of yesteryear have come back to embarrass the SWP, which today presents itself in Castroite colors. Reporting on a leadership meeting in December, they note that at a meeting of their party members in the oil and chemical industries “there had also been a discussion around using the slogan ‘Support our troops! Bring them home now!’” When “antiwar activists” put up a placard with that slogan, they report, “Workers didn’t know what side the activists were on”

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## Gulf War Racist Hell for Harlem Regiment

In a rare glimpse of what is going on with troops in the Saudi desert, on the eve of the ground war blitzkrieg *New York Times* correspondent Chris Hedges filed a story on the famous 369th Transport Battalion, a National Guard regiment known as the Harlem Hell Fighters. These black troops, the majority of whom are in their 40s and saw combat in Vietnam, have faced hell since arriving in Saudi Arabia in September. Sgt. Ruben McCann, a Bronx postal worker, described their reception: “We have three strikes against us. We are from the Guard, we are from New York, and we are black.” As one of the 369th, who joined the Army in 1958, said:

“It was a Jim Crow Army then. We had a black water fountain and a black U.S.O. I get the same feeling being over here.”

—*New York Times*,  
23 February

Other members of the 369th told Hedges, “I don’t think we should be here,” and “The war is over oil.” The men angrily denounced the army’s racism: “We’re out here fighting two armies, the U.S. Army and the enemy,” said Corporal Theo Lewis. The 369th has been “broken up, stripped of much of its equipment and moved into front-line positions without proper preparation or training”...and attached

to the 101st Airborne! A wife of one soldier, a New York City transit worker, told WV: “It started out as a lie and it continued to be a lie.... They’re too old, if they go in, what’s going to happen? Are they sending them in to die? We feel it is a suicide mission for our husbands.”

The stark fact is that the United States Army is using this black unit as cannon fodder. This is a reflection of the war on black people at home, where the ghettos have been devastated and a whole generation of youth are left without hope of a job and a future. Grotesquely, in a Black History Month ceremony at the White House, George Bush praised the Pentagon as the “greatest equal opportunity employer around.” In fact, in the racist military machine black and Hispanic minorities have better than equal opportunity to die for the American empire. But as Vietnam showed, widespread disaffection among the troops can throw a wrench in the gears of the imperialist war machine.

What is needed, and what the Spartacist League fights for, is to link the struggle against racism and imperialist slaughter in the army with the power of the working class to make a socialist revolution to bring down the system that spawns that oppression and war.

## Letter

### TWU Bureaucrats and Wannabees Stand Up for War

22 February 1991

Dear Workers Vanguard:

We thought readers of WV might be interested in an incident at a recent meeting of the Car Equipment Division of the Transport Workers Union Local 100 in New York City. Not surprisingly, the bureaucrats of the TWU are marching in lockstep with the AFL-CIO tops’ support to the U.S. imperialists’ slaughter in Iraq. International president George Leitz uses the pages of the union paper to rail against the “terrorist tactics of Saddam Hussein,” the “Russian built Scud missiles” and the “unforgivable” oil spill in the Persian Gulf. But it is the bloody rulers of this country, who are trying to turn Iraq into a moonscape with massive terror bombing and napalm, who are the real war criminals!

So some of us were not surprised when our division officers tried to open the union meeting, which was called to discuss demands for the upcoming contract negotiations, with a little flag waving of their own. After the pledge of allegiance they asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence for our union brothers and sisters who have passed away (a tradition in meetings). But they slipped in “and to support our troops in Saudi Arabia.” One union brother, a supporter of the Committee for a Fighting TWU, interrupted and moved to

separate the issues, saying that while he was all in favor of paying respects to our departed brothers and sisters, he was not for the American troops in Saudi Arabia who were engaged in an imperialist war.

The room erupted in catcalls from the pro-war yahoos, egged on by the bureaucrats. The division chairman, Caputo, had the nerve to order the brother from the room. The brother insisted on his rights as a union member, pointblank refused and said he would sit down and pay his respects in his own way. I sat down in solidarity with his anti-war statement. After some hesitation, a supporter of the SWP’s *Militant* did as well. Naomi Allen, an executive board member of the union and a supporter of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, remained standing and silent. Joining her was a supporter of the Marxist-Leninist Party. It’s not surprising that these so-called socialists, who are all tailing after the pro-Democratic Party “peace movement,” won’t take on the Democratic Party hawks in the labor movement.

There are a lot of workers who aren’t fooled by the flag waving of the union tops. At an earlier Track division meeting, just after the terror bombing of Iraq started, black track workers applauded another transit worker, a Marine Vietnam veteran, who denounced the war on Iraq.

Frankly, we’re disgusted that the

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# Hundreds Killed as U.S. Deliberately Bombs Civilian Shelter

## George Bush—Baby Killer

As the two American F-117 "stealth" bombers homed in on Baghdad's Amiriya district on the night of February 13, they locked onto their target. With split-second timing, two laser-guided "smart" bombs tore into the air raid shelter, packed with hundreds of women and children sleeping there to escape the deadly rain of bombs falling on the city for the 28th consecutive night.

This really was "surgical" precision. The first of the 2,000-pound GBU-27 "bunker busters" was aimed right at the steel doors of the shelter, cutting off the only exit. The second went right down the air shaft, turning the shelter into a tightly sealed crematorium. *No one was meant to survive.*

Eight did, barely. Among them was 17-year-old Omar Adnan, who recalled from his hospital bed: "I was sleeping and suddenly I felt heat and the blanket was burning. I turned to try and touch my mother who was next to me, but I grabbed nothing but a piece of flesh."

Over 300 bodies were recovered, most of them charred beyond recognition. Many were decapitated. With some of the young children, among them babies barely a month old, nothing remained but the torso, as heads, legs and arms were sheared off by the powerful explosion.

Standing outside the shelter, ITN correspondent Brent Sadler described the "grotesque procession of incinerated people being brought to the surface" as "powerful supporting evidence" for Iraq's claims that the U.S. was targeting civilians.

Immediately, Washington's spin controllers set to work. "By mid-afternoon Riyadh time," reported the London *Sunday Times* (17 February) Insight team, "the official version of events was finalized: the shelter had been a legitimate military target and civilians should not have been there." The U.S. media snapped to attention, with editorials and headlines parroting Washington's line. Instant polls declared by the next day that Americans were overwhelmingly buying the lie.

Both the heinous atrocity and the media packaging to a population mesmerized by war propaganda are reminiscent of the Nazi "new order" and its Big Lie machine. The gang running the American government have the mentality of assassins and the state power to carry out their bloodlust.

It was "a well-planned crime," charged Iraq's health minister as he stood before the smoldering carnage. And like the Nazi war criminals tried at Nuremberg, U.S. spokesmen not only showed no remorse, but boasted of the technical proficiency with which they carried out their mass murder. "Both bombs landed right where they were programmed,"



AP



Gerhard Kromschroder

**Amiriya air raid shelter in Baghdad: hundreds of women and children wantonly murdered by U.S. leaders.**

bragged Pentagon spokesman General Thomas Kelly. Right up to the top, *America's war planners knew exactly what they were doing.*

White House mouthpiece Marlin Fitzwater grotesquely ranted that "Saddam

Another "tidbit," added Neal in Riyadh, "is that there was no air raid siren." But, as CNN's Peter Arnett pointed out, thousands of people in Baghdad, including Western journalists, have been routinely sleeping in air raid

points posted outside; even the television station is guarded by two tanks."

The U.S. *knew* that this was an air raid shelter, one of some 25 of similar design built during the Iran-Iraq War. And they were aiming at this one in particular. The Pentagon's "bombing encyclopedia," reported the *Sunday Times*, designated the target as "a 'leadership bunker' designed to protect senior Iraqi officials and their families."

When satellite reconnaissance supposedly showed "military trucks and leadership staff cars parked outside the shelter," it was put on the short-term "active" bombing list. It was then that visiting war secretary Dick Cheney and JCS chief Colin Powell gruesomely autographed two GBU-27s. Cheney signed his: "To Saddam, with affection."

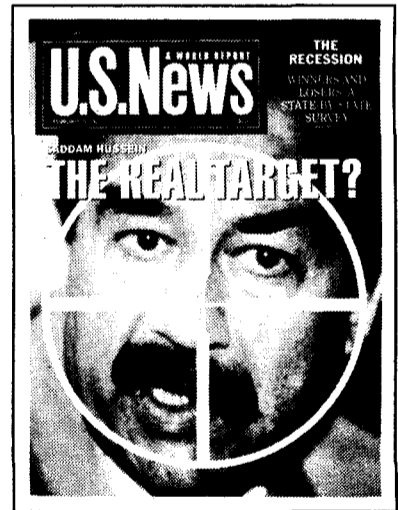
Washington claimed that, despite all its high-tech reconnaissance, there was no way of checking whether civilians used the shelter. But the London *Sunday Times* article reveals that "the allied command did not carry out any checks at all"—because they already knew. "The U.S. raid was aimed at Saddam's inner circle," says *Newsweek* (25 February) pointblank, quoting an anonymous "war planner": "You have to convince those around Saddam that, unless they stop him, they personally are at risk." Indeed, the whole notion of targeting "command and control" is Pentagonese for assassination. Jimmy Carter's 1980 Presidential Directive 59, which codified policy dating back at least to the Ford administration, made the "decapitation" of the Soviet leadership through a nuclear first strike a keystone of U.S. military strategy.

Now this policy is being carried out in Iraq, just as Air Force general Dugan laid out last September when he was sacked for saying too much, too soon. At least

**Ghoulsh war secretary Richard Cheney autographs "bunker-buster" bomb aimed at Saddam Hussein. Was this the bomb that landed on Amiriya shelter?**



Reuters



Hussein does not share our value in the sanctity of life." Washington's "value" on life is proven to be zero. The Pentagon claimed that Iraq had deliberately "insinuated" civilians into a military facility. But at the Riyadh central command, General Richard Neal admitted that the Iraqi ruler "has never had civilians, or allowed civilians, in even close proximity to any of his command and control facilities."

The government's cover-up was transparent. "We are sure that it was a military command-and-control facility," lied Kelly. What made them sure? The brass pointed out how "strange" it was to have a sign outside reading "shelter" in both Arabic and English—just like the bilingual sign identifying the baby formula factory bombed last month was evidence that it was really a biological weapons plant! Yet outside *all* the shelters in Baghdad are similar signs.

shelters every night since the U.S. terror bombing started. Besides which, the bomb was dropped by a "stealth" bomber, expressly *designed* to evade air raid detection.

The other supposedly incriminating "evidence" was that the roof of the shelter was reinforced with steel (how bizarre for an air raid shelter!), was painted in camouflage and had an antenna. Moreover, there was a fence around the building! As the *Sunday Times* summed it up:

"Close up, there was no evidence to support the American claims that the building was a key military command structure. On the roof was a single antenna with the appearance of an old-fashioned television aerial.

"The faded green markings were unlike camouflage painted on other Iraqi buildings in recent months.

"Nor was there any sign of the usual defences associated with government buildings, most of which have check-

three of Saddam Hussein's residences have been bombed. And American planes have been bombing the small town of Tikrit in northern Iraq from the first night of the air war solely because it is the hometown of Saddam and his close circle.

The *Sunday Times* claims that "the Pentagon is privately facing up to the likelihood that the bombing was a blunder." From Washington's standpoint, the only "blunder" was that Western TV crews were in Baghdad to report it. While the Pentagon ranted that Western reporters were "dupes of Saddam Hussein," the *Wall Street Journal* (14 February) ran an insidious editorial singling out CNN's Peter Arnett as one of "Saddam's Civilians."

And the same day as it reported the shelter bombing, the *New York Times* (14 February) ran an inspired story

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### Spartacist League Public Offices

— MARXIST LITERATURE —

#### Bay Area

Thurs.: 5:30-8:00 p.m., Sat.: 1:00-5:00 p.m.  
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# Socialist Action: Untrue in Small Things and Big

On the eve of the U.S. bombing of Baghdad, Socialist Action, a San Francisco-based outfit claiming to be Trotskyist, prophesied in its newspaper's front-page article by SA national leader Nat Weinstein that Bush and Saddam Hussein would make a deal without going to war. But on January 16 the bombs began raining down on Iraqis. With national antiwar marches scheduled for January 19 and January 26, the quick-change artists at Socialist Action rushed out another edition of their paper bearing the same date, same issue number and with most of the same articles.

But here yesterday, gone today was crystal ball gazer Weinstein's prediction that "President George Bush's objective is to achieve, if possible, a political settlement short of a shooting war." The second January issue replaced his analysis with Jeff Mackler's article "Protests Grow as U.S. Assault Intensifies." Clearly Socialist Action is embarrassed, but why resort to a crude cover-up to wipe the egg off their face? Their perfidy in this matter is a telltale reflection of their whole political profile of betraying every principle Trotsky ever stood for.

In the particular, it wasn't George Bush whose objective was to achieve a settlement without a shooting war but the liberal Democrats who claimed that a bloody war was "unnecessary" and "UN sanctions" would do the job. And Socialist Action's tailist social-patriotism led them to embrace these imperialist doves in a red-white-and-blue "peace movement." Thus they endorsed and built the January 26 demonstration sponsored by the "National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East" which demanded that Saddam Hussein get out of Kuwait and endorsed UN "sanctions."

This brand of pro-sanctions socialism has nothing in common with the politics of Leon Trotsky, who founded the Fourth International in 1938 to continue the fight for world revolution opened up by the Russian Revolution of 1917. Trotsky wrote in the Transitional Program:

"To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International."

In this revolutionary spirit, the Spartacist League calls for the defeat of U.S. imperialism—defend Iraq!

Not so with these fakers. Like the International Socialist Organization (see "ISO in the Antiwar Movement" in the *Young Spartacus* pages of our last issue), Socialist Action is after the yellow ribbon "patriots for peace" crowd. "Should antiwar activists organize blood drives?" asks an article in the February *Socialist Action*. An "interesting idea" and "admirable" sentiments, opines the author before reluctantly turning thumbs down to this proposal to turn their "antiwar" movement into candystrippers for the Pentagon.

It reminds us of all those articles in the Socialist Workers Party's *Militant* on the order of "Where Ayatollah Khomeini goes wrong on women's rights."

The "antiwar supplement" to the February *Socialist Action* is loaded up with photos of social-patriotic signs calling to "Support Our Troops! Bring Them Home!" An ad for their Persian Gulf pamphlet shows its cover—a remake of the well-known photo of the WWII Marine landing on Iwo Jima with the American flag "ironically" replaced by a gas pump. Another photo shows a

—Vol. 9, No. 1, January 1991



—Vol. 9, No. 1, January 1991...also



Will the real January issue please stand up?

placard reading "Viet Nam Is 56,000 Reasons Why We Need to Get Out of the Gulf!"

It's not just in the photos. *Socialist Action* writes: "For those who question the validity of the demand: Bring the Troops Home Now!, remember that nearly 50 percent of the 58,000 American troops who died in the Vietnam War were killed during the 1968-1973 Paris Peace talks." What about the *two million Vietnamese* who were wantonly slaughtered by carpetbombing, napalm and My

Lai-style massacres?! Today it's the people of Baghdad and Basra whose homes are reduced to rubble and bodies torn to pieces by bombs dropped by "our troops."

Untrue in big things as in small ones, Socialist Action has been pushing the liberal-reformist lie that mass demonstrations organized around social-patriotic slogans can end the onslaught against Iraq as allegedly happened in the Vietnam War: "The American people can stop this crime against the Arab nation and the

entire human race by way of a relentless series of peaceful and legal marches, demonstrations and protest meetings around the central demand: 'Bring U.S. Troops Home Now!'" Bullshit.

The leaders of Socialist Action hold up the Vietnam "antiwar movement" as the Holy Grail of "revolutionary politics." Back then they were SWP goons trying to keep their "peace coalitions" safe for Democrats like Senator Hartke. But while Weinstein and Mackler were chanting "peaceful, legal" as they tried to keep New Left radicals with NLF flags out of their peace crawls, it was the Vietnamese peasants and workers fighting for social revolution who defeated the U.S. army on the battlefield.

The American ruling class has spent the last decade and a half in the largest military buildup in world history to erase the "Vietnam syndrome" while targeting the Soviet Union for counterrevolution. The Spartacist League says: Vietnam was a victory! Two, three, many defeats for U.S. imperialism!

After Weinstein & Co. were expelled from the ex-Trotskyist SWP, their first act as an independent organization was to keep striking workers "in line" for the bureaucrats. At a union rally in SF to support the 1983 Greyhound bus strike, Socialist Action members acted as goons for the bureaucratic transit union sellouts attempting to prevent angry workers from shutting down the Greyhound terminal.

They haven't changed a bit. But what else can you expect from a group that adopted and still uses for its masthead the logo of CIA-financed Polish Solidarność, the only "union" that Ronald Reagan loved, which today is shoving capitalist austerity down the throats of hungry Polish workers? Little lies and big lies are the necessary stock in trade of these phonies.

The giant economy size is their claim to be Trotskyist. ■

Federico Pereira, an unarmed and defenseless 21-year-old Hispanic youth from Queens, was severely beaten and killed by five white cops who found him asleep in a car February 5. The young man's death was quickly ruled a homicide by the city Medical Examiner's office, contradicting the official police story that gave the cause of death as self-inflicted.

According to the killer cops, after they handcuffed Pereira's hands behind his back, he was forced face down on the sidewalk where "he began to pound his face against the sidewalk" (*Newsday*, 7 February). He died an hour later in the hospital.

The truth of the matter is Pereira was sadistically murdered by five cops, who according to the NYPD's "preliminary report" acted within departmental guidelines. Wanton street executions, you see, are official policy. The murderers were put on desk duty until things cool off.

However, two teenage witnesses, Thomas Zorobinski and Anthony Hickok, saw the killer cops do their dirty work and said in a televised interview:

"We saw cops beating him up pretty bad, hitting him with a nightstick and stepping on his head, cuffing his hands and feet together. He was coughing up blood...and one of the cops was laughing."

The coroner's office ruled the death "traumatic asphyxiation."

Pereira's stepfather, internationally famous salsa singer Tito Nieves, said after viewing the body, "They murdered him. The cops killed my son." In an interview with Juan Gonzalez on WNYC-TV (12 February), he said: "It wasn't he beat himself. He had some nightstick marks on his forehead, his right eye was bashed out. It was a brutal beating."

Laura Nieves, who lost her only son, responded angrily to the cops' claims

## Federico Pereira, Murdered by NYPD

Tito and Laura Nieves denounce police murder of their son Federico Pereira (inset).



that Pereira was caught sleeping in a stolen car and had an "arrest record": "The issue is what the police did to my son.... What has his past got to do with it?" She noted that Federico, who himself had a two-year-old son, had no history of violence.

The Pereira slaying recalls the 1988 cop execution of Juan Rodríguez, who was seized in his home but declared DOA at the hospital. On the *13 Alive* TV program, striking *Daily News* journalist Gonzalez noted that from 1987 through 1990, New York police shot and killed 51 blacks, 25 Hispanics and

8 whites. So far in 1991, 3 Hispanics have been slain by the cops.

With the decline of American industry, ghetto blacks and Hispanics have been declared "surplus population" to be preyed on by killer cops and "cannon fodder" sent to die as front-line soldiers in U.S. imperialism's Persian Gulf War for control of strategic world oil supplies. It will take proletarian revolution, led by an internationalist vanguard party, to avenge the death of Federico Pereira and countless other victims of the enforcers of Bush's racist "New World Order."



Shigeo Hayashi

U.S. atomic bomb incinerated over 140,000 people, Hiroshima, 6 August 1945.

# The Hidden History of U.S. Terror Bombing

Video images of laser-guided "smart" bombs homing in on their targets, generals talking of "precision bombing," vague references to "collateral damage": the Pentagon has worked up a cult of high tech as Washington's propaganda machine is spreading the lie that the U.S. air assault against Iraq is a "clean" war. And meanwhile Iraqi civilians are deliberately incinerated in a bomb shelter in Baghdad. The roads of Iraq have become killing fields, lined with the bombed-out wreckage of cars and trucks. In two recent atrocities, bombers targeted buses loaded with civilians, killing a total of 60 people. The "surgical strikes" are hitting hospitals where doctors perform surgery on mutilated women and children.

The orgy of destruction has leveled power plants, factories, warehouses, bridges, roads, phone installations—the entire infrastructure of the country. The city of Basra in southern Iraq, which has been singled out for special devastation, was simply declared by U.S. military authorities to be a "military town." Pentagon spokesmen classify any civilian target hit as "dual purpose," both military and civilian. According to our estimate the U.S. is dropping at least 16,000 tons of bombs a day, so after 40 days of air war, with 100,000 sorties flown, the U.S. has dropped on Iraq almost a quarter of the total tonnage dropped by all the belligerent powers in World War II!

Uneasy with the "bad press" that the bombing of civilians is getting, the *New York Times* (14 February) asked plaintively: "Why not stop bombing cities?" Liberals have often sought to distance themselves from the policy of strategic bombing, arguing that in any case it is "ineffective" in destroying a country's ability to wage war. This is the argument of economist John Kenneth Galbraith, who headed the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey in World War II. Galbraith writes that his study showed, "Germany's industrial production—weapons and munitions, in particular—continued to increase, with no visible halt until nearly the end of the war" (*Los Angeles Times*, 10 February).

What Galbraith leaves unsaid is that

## How Washington Perfected Hitler's *Schrecklichkeit*



AP

B-52s carpetbombed Vietnam, now rain death on Iraq.

the nose dive in production in those final months was because of the mass terror bombing campaign which deliberately targeted and massacred hundreds of thousands of industrial workers.

Colonel Harry Summers Jr., the Vietnam War historian and former professor of strategy at the Army War College, was blunter. In a column titled "'Collateral Damage' a Familiar, Often Intended, Part of War" (*Los Angeles Times*, 8 February), Summers noted that the deliberate targeting of the civilian population in order to break the will to resist "didn't start with 'We had to destroy the town in

order to save it,' the unfortunate remark of the young Army officer in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam war...." The carpet bombing of Vietnam only continued the U.S. forces' "scorched earth" policy in Korea, the firebombing campaign in Germany and Japan and the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In our last issue ("Terror Bombing Has Not Broken Iraq," *WV* No. 520, 15 February) we noted that "in World War II, Hitler adopted a policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, deliberate terrorizing of the 'enemy' population," but "the Allies outdid the Nazis in this department." The "democratic"

imperialists in fact had a preference for mass slaughter through air power, which kept the horrendous casualties at a distance.

The Allies pursued the policy of mass terror bombing of civilians with increasing ferocity throughout World War II, raising it to unspeakable dimensions. Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki are among the many cities which were transformed into fiery crematoriums for their working populations. In Germany, Allied bombers deliberately massacred some 600,000 civilians; in Japan hundreds of thousands died under U.S. bombs. In sum, almost one million civilians were deliberately massacred by Allied terror bombing.

### *Schrecklichkeit* U.S.-Style

In the *Dictionary of Historical Terms* (1983) by Chris Cook, *Schrecklichkeit* is defined as the "deliberate policy of committing atrocities to subdue a subject people." *Louis L. Snyder's Historical Guide to World War II* (1982) writes that "The bombing of Warsaw early in the war made it clear to the Allies how Hitler intended to fight his war. It was to be *Schrecklichkeit* ('frightfulness') with no regard for the civilian population." The Luftwaffe began the *Blitzkrieg* (lightning war) by destroying the Polish Air Force on the ground, and for six days 400 German bombers battered the city day and night.

The next year, the Germans put an end to the *Sitzkrieg* (sitting war), the period of inactivity on the Western Front between September 1939 and May 1940 called the "phony war" in English, by employing the same policy against the Dutch port of Rotterdam. In an act of gratuitous cruelty (the city had already surrendered), Stuka dive-bombers leveled the center of the city. In repeated attacks on London's civilian population throughout 1940, German bombers killed some 30,000 people as they tried to bomb the population into submission. Later that same year, when Hitler's plans for an invasion of Britain were frustrated, he took out his revenge on the city of



Coventry, killing over 500 people in a ten-hour bombing raid.

The policy of terror bombing civilians in order to undermine the ability to wage war was first systematically developed by the Italian general Giulio Douhet. His ideas on air war had a decisive influence in shaping American military doctrine. Colonel Summers refers to Douhet's 1921 treatise, *The Command of the Air*, reprinted by the U.S. Office of Air Force History in 1983, as a "masterwork." And a recent U.S. Air Force publication calls him a "prophet of the air" (Thomas Greer, *The Development of Air Doctrine in the Army Air Arm 1917-1941* [1985]). What they fail to mention is that this "prophet" was commissioner of aviation in Mussolini's fascist regime. Here is Douhet's strategy for waging air war:

"What civil or military authority could keep order, public services functioning, and production going under such a threat? And even if a semblance of order was maintained and some work done, would not the sight of a single enemy plane be enough to stampede the population into panic? In short, normal life would be impossible in this constant nightmare of imminent death and destruction...."

"A complete breakdown of the social structure cannot but take place in a country subjected to this kind of merciless pounding from the air. The time would soon come when, to put an end to horror and suffering, the people themselves, driven by the instinct of self-preservation, would rise up and demand an end to the war."

—quoted in Edward Earle, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (1952)

From the start, U.S. air commanders embraced Douhet's policy of terror bombing as a way to limit their casualties and win wars "on the cheap." His ideas were taken up almost word for word—and rendered even more brutal—by "Billy" Mitchell, one of the first chiefs of the U.S. air service in the '20s. Mitchell wrote that instead of destroying cities it might be preferable to eliminate the civilian population with "a few gas bombs." Decades later, this same concept was behind the neutron bomb, a particularly "dirty" nuclear device designed to maximize deaths through radiation and minimize bomb blast damage to structures.

Douhet's doctrine was incorporated in the official Air Force textbook used until World War II which, according to Greer's official Air Force history, "established national morale and industry as more crucial objectives than enemy armies. The easiest and cheapest way to win a war was thought to be by air attack upon the enemy's population and production facilities." Military historian John Keegan correctly pointed out that this policy "depended ultimately upon class bias—the judgment that the latent discontents of the proletariat were the Achilles heel of an industrial state" (*The Second World War* [1989]).

Class hatred of the industrial proletariat is so pervasive in the documents of Allied military and political leaders that it is impossible to cite more than a fraction of the documents which explicitly affirm that the target of strategic bombing was to be the workers themselves. The future British chief of air staff John Slessor summed it up with imperial snideness:

"In air operations against production the weight of attack will inevitably fall upon a vitally important, and not by nature very amenable, section of the community—the industrial workers, whose morale and sticking power cannot be expected to equal that of the disciplined soldier."

—quoted in Max Hastings, *Bomber Command* (1979)

And the official British history of the air war cites the February 1942 bombing directive which notes that the "primary object" of the bombing "should now be focused on the morale of the enemy civil population and in particular, of the industrial workers" (see Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offense*

*Against Germany: 1939-1945* [1961]).

There is a widespread myth that, unlike the British who engaged in indiscriminate "area" bombing against civilians, the U.S. carried out "precision" bombing against military and industrial targets. This myth is rooted in what was essentially a division of labor between the two Allied imperialist powers. The British, saddled with antiquated bombers and without long-range fighter protection, were forced to limit themselves to night raids. Their notorious inaccuracy is highlighted in Len Deighton's novel, *Bomber*, which details the horrendous destruction inflicted on a German town by British bombers who got lost on a night raid.

One could hardly pretend that these raids were anything but indiscriminate terror directed against civilians, and British military leaders openly extolled the supposed efficacy of mass terror bombing. U.S. bombers, less vulnerable and (starting in early 1944) protected by a fleet of long-range fighters, were able to carry out daylight bombing raids. Drawing German fighters into a head-to-head air war of attrition, they eventually depleted Germany's home defenses (while most of the Luftwaffe was on the Eastern Front facing the Soviet Army). This permitted the Allies toward the end of the war to bomb German cities with virtual impunity.

Most often it made scarcely any difference to those on the ground whether they were being subjected to U.S. "precision" bombing or British "area" bombing, since most U.S. bombs missed their assigned targets anyway and fell on surrounding working-class residential areas. Then as today, U.S. commanders generated a cult of high-tech arms, claiming that U.S. bombers equipped with the "top secret" Norden bomb sight could drop a bomb "into a pickle barrel." In reality, an estimated one-half of U.S. bombs were dropped through cloud cover or at night where the average bombing error was about *three miles* off target. And of those bombs dropped in daylight under clear conditions, at most half fell within one-quarter mile of the target point (John Ellis, *Brute Force: Allied Strategy and Tactics in the Second World War* [1990]).

The myth that U.S. air strikes did not target civilians has been reinforced by a concerted whitewash by U.S. officials which started during World War II, keeping military memos "clean" of any hint of targeting civilians. In an important study, historian Ronald Schaffer notes:

"High-ranking officers sent official messages to one another which caused the record to suggest that AAF [Army Air Forces] practice fitted with the official policy. Yet these officers knew this was not the case.... [U.S. deputy air commander] Anderson and his colleagues were protecting the image of the AAF from historians and other investigators."

—"American Military Ethics in World War II: The Bombing of German Civilians," *Journal of American History*, September 1980

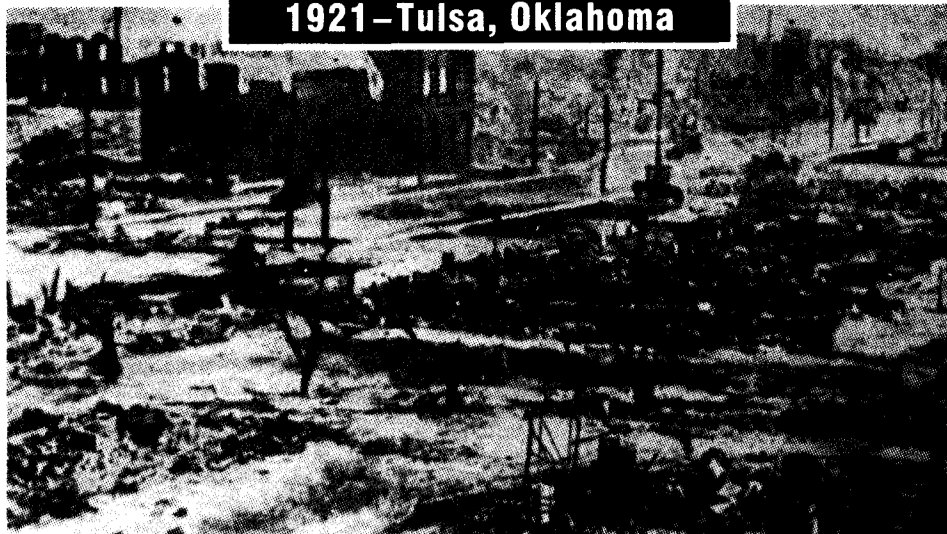
Schaffer reveals that when the British and U.S. Combined Chiefs of Staff met to approve the terror bombing attacks on Berlin, Dresden and other cities, FDR's representative intervened to advise not to "record" such a decision.

This concern for prettifying the historical record was the cause of a cynical "doublespeak" in U.S. military documents. After preparing a series of daylight raids with incendiary bombs against densely built-up sections of German cities, U.S. commander Arnold informed the Air Staff in Washington: "the way to stop the killing of civilians is to cause so much damage and destruction and death that the civilians will demand that their government cease fighting. This doesn't mean that we are making civilians or civilian institutions a war objective...."

Favorably contrasting U.S. military censorship in World War II with the Pentagon's "arrogant" but "so far successful" control of the press in the Persian Gulf

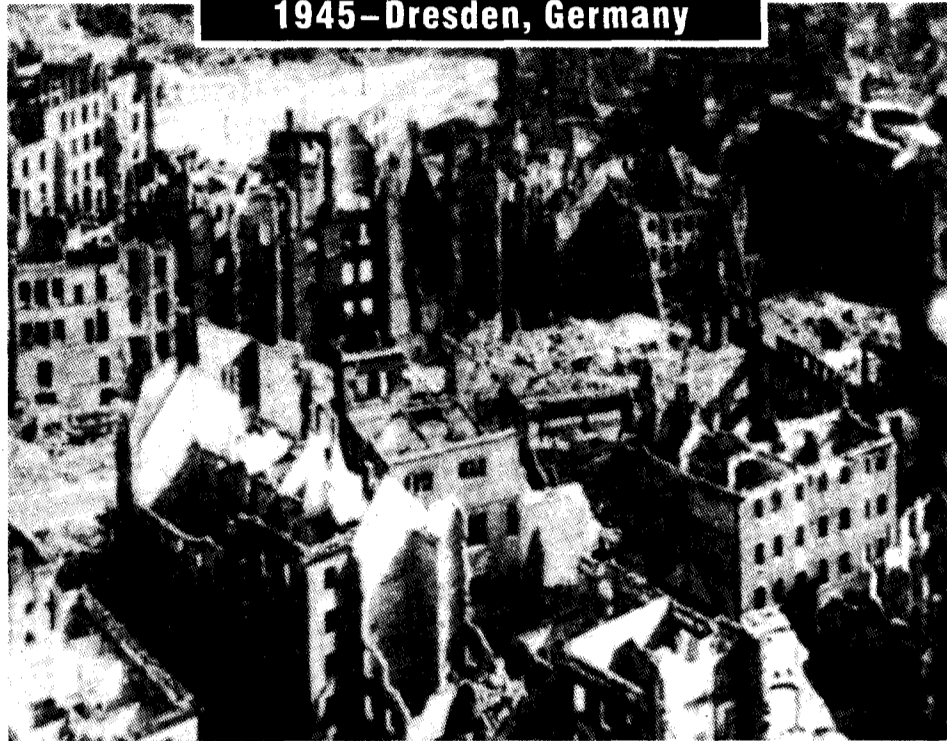
*continued on page 8*

## 1921—Tulsa, Oklahoma



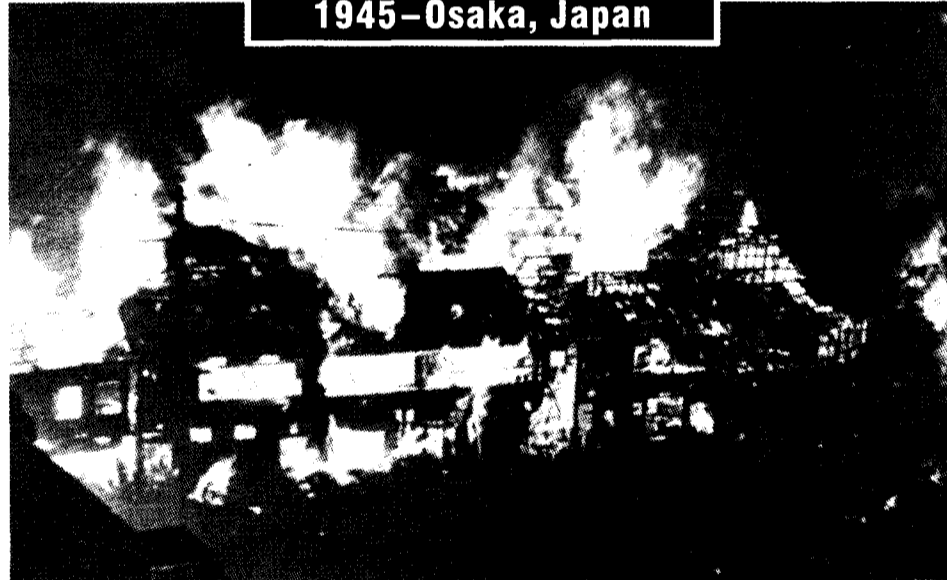
Literary Digest

## 1945—Dresden, Germany



Wilhelm Heyne Verlag

## 1945—Osaka, Japan



Mainichi Shimbun, Tokyo

## 1985—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



UPI

**At home and abroad, U.S. rulers have repeatedly used mass terror bombing to maintain their oppressive rule. Workers and non-white peoples are consciously targeted for destruction.**

# Terror Bombing...

(continued from page 7)

War, Walter Cronkite wrote that army censors in Britain "held up my report that the Eighth Air Force had bombed Germany through a solid cloud cover," since supposedly "we were practicing only precision bombing on military targets." The Luftwaffe knew the reality, Cronkite pointed out: "The truth was not being withheld from Germans but Americans" (*Newsweek*, 25 February).

## Incinerating the German Proletariat

In their drive to raze entire cities, the Allies eventually succeeded in provoking through incendiary bombing a horrible new phenomenon in warfare, the firestorm. They discovered that by concentrating sufficient fire in one area they could create an infernal microclimate in which an entire city was transformed into a blast furnace, enormously multiplying the bombs' murderous effects. The areas which were chosen for immolation were invariably the working-class districts.

The first firestorm took place in Hamburg, which the Allies bombed in July 1943, targeting the most heavily built-up and densely populated area. As in subsequent firebombings, both incendiary and high-explosive bombs were dropped; the latter were used to destroy metallic roofs and windows and expose the building interiors to the conflagration: "People died within seconds of being subjected to the unimaginable heat, dying from oxygen-lack, carbon monoxide poisoning, even incandescence" (Chaz Bowyer, *Air War Over Europe* [1981]). Some 50,000 civilians died in Hamburg. In the civilian bomb shelters the intense heat melted metal pots and pans. Photos taken when the shelters were opened show piles of grey ash outlining where the bodies had lain.

Allied bombers continued to wage an escalating war of extermination against Germany's cities. Toward the fall of 1944, as the Allies achieved supremacy in the skies over Germany and could concentrate their fire undeterred, they succeeded with regularity in provoking firestorms—in Kassel, Würzburg, Darmstadt, Heilbronn, Wuppertal, Weser, Magdeburg, and culminating in the incredible butchery of Dresden. The Allies experimented on the best way to provoke the desired effect. Different bombing patterns were tried to give the deadliest concentration of incendiary bombs (the optimum was found to be a "fan" pattern which was then used on Dresden).

The Allies' firebombing of Dresden was the most terrible of all air raids on Germany—possibly the greatest single massacre in history. Prime Minister Winston Churchill berated British air minister Archibald Sinclair to get him to target "Berlin, and no doubt other large cities in East Germany." In February 1945 British bombers, virtually unhindered by fighters or anti-aircraft fire, dropped thousands of blast bombs and almost 650,000 incendiaries on Dresden, provoking a firestorm which was visible for 200 miles. The next morning 300 U.S. bombers blasted the still-burning city through the smoke and cloud cover (U.S. authorities would later present this as "precision" bombing of the rail yards). Escorting U.S. fighters strafed bombed-out survivors huddled on the banks of the Elbe.

The horrendous level of civilian casualties has been a subject of controversy for years. The city was swollen to twice its peacetime size by refugees fleeing fighting in the East, and these were concentrated in the railway terminal area which was ground zero for the bombs. For many years the figure of 225,000 was the standard estimate of the number of dead. The Americans and British have tried to reduce the figure to 60,000, which is absurdly low, while "the German Federal Bureau of Statistics in Wiesbaden claims that it was 600,000" (Janusz Piekalkiewicz, *The Air War: 1939-1945* [1985]).

The grisly destruction of Dresden (which contained no important military or even industrial targets) provoked a wave of revulsion. In response to an AP story on "deliberate terror bombing," U.S. air commanders, after consultation with General Eisenhower, issued guidelines for officers on how to answer questions:

- "A. That there has been no change in bombing policy;
- "B. The United States Strategic Air Forces have always directed their attacks against military objectives and will continue to do so;
- "C. The story was erroneously passed by censor."

Identical guidelines must have been issued by the Pentagon "spin doctors" on how to respond over the criminal U.S. bombing of the Baghdad shelter.

Histories of the air war in Europe generally explain the destruction of Dresden as an effort to facilitate the Soviet advance by blocking German reinforcements headed to the Eastern Front. In reality, the reason for extending the campaign of terror bombings to Dresden and other cities in eastern Germany was, as General David Schlatter, Eisenhower's deputy chief of air staff, noted at the time in his diary:

"I feel that our air forces are the blue chips with which we will approach the

post-war treaty table, and that this operation will add immeasurably to their strength, or rather to the Russian knowledge of their strength."

## Firebombing and A-Bombing Japan

At the very moment that American authorities were cynically denying wanton attacks on civilians in Dresden, they were preparing for the firebombing of Tokyo and other Japanese cities. In the hysterical climate of anti-Japanese racism, U.S. officials felt less compunction than in Germany to camouflage the massacres. U.S. bombers launched massive firebomb raids on Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and Nagoya, destroying a total built-up area of 50 miles square. The most horrendous bloodletting came in Tokyo where in a single raid in March 1945 some 100,000 people perished as "canals boiled, metal melted, and buildings and human beings burst spontaneously into flames" (John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War* [1986]).

By August 1945 fully 58 cities had been destroyed by firebombing. General Curtis LeMay, who commanded the raids, was forced to temporarily check his bloodlust after three weeks because he had run out of his entire supply of 10,000 tons of incendiary bombs. This was the same LeMay who as head of the Air Force at the outset of the Vietnam War called for bombing Vietnam "back to the Stone Age." In their savage attempt to crush a social revolution, they dropped unthinkable quantities of napalm, cluster bombs and high explosives, carpetbombing from Saigon to Hanoi—before they were driven out by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants.

On 6 August 1945 the U.S. dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima and, three days later, on Nagasaki, slaughtering over 200,000 people. Untold thousands were left suffering from excruciating burns, radiation sickness and genetic defects. In choosing these cities, Secretary of War Henry Stimson said there should be a "war plant employing a large number of workers closely surrounded by workers' houses" (see our article "Racism, Anti-Sovietism and Atomic Holocaust," *WV* No. 459, 12 August 1988). In addition to the Japanese working people killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, over 10,000 Korean—and many Chinese—forced laborers died. Yet President Truman cynically claimed that Hiroshima was a "military base" which was targeted "because we wished in this first attack to avoid, insofar as possible, the killing of civilians" (*Truman Speaks* [1960]).

As we wrote a decade ago:

"With racist calculation the already defeated Japanese were chosen as the human testing ground to prove to American imperialism's opponents—especially the USSR—that the USA will stop at nothing to maintain world domination."

—Hiroshima Day: To Remember Is Not Enough!  
*WV* No. 263, 5 September 1980

## Air War Against the Workers

World War II closed as it had opened with the indiscriminate bombardment of civilians, but the bourgeoisie had pushed its criminal massacres to a truly monstrous scale. The 1937 terror bombing of Manchuria by the Japanese and the German blitz of Coventry and London were among the war crimes for which Japanese and German leaders were executed by the victorious Allies. (The latter were considerably less offended when German bombers sowed terror in Spain while fighting in support of Franco—the horror of which was captured in Picasso's mural *Guernica*.) Rarely has the stark hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie been more patent. Allied prosecutors sat amid the ruins of Nuremberg and Tokyo as they condemned their vanquished foe for killing "men, women and children alike."

In reality, all the imperialist bourgeoisies had seized upon air power, from the earliest days of its development, as an effective instrument of mass terror for keeping their subject peoples in place. From the early '20s, the British used fre-

quent air strikes in Iraq to terrorize rebellious Kurds and others. In India, British bombers killed thousands in smashing the 1942 "Quit India" movement. The French sent their bombers against Damascus in 1926 to crush a nationalist revolt. In 1945 they massacred tens of thousands of Algerians as an incipient colonial revolt was drowned in blood. The Italians used the horrors of aerial bombardment in the '30s in conquering Ethiopia.

The U.S. bourgeoisie distinguished itself by carrying out terror bombing against its own population, against black people. In May 1921, in Tulsa, Oklahoma a group of 75 armed blacks showed up at a jail to defend a young black man (arrested after falling against a white woman) from a lynch mob. A report at the time describes how "the white mobs, numbering by then more than 10,000, invaded the negro section, the colored men resisting determinedly" (*Literary Digest*, 18 June 1921). The heart of the segregated black community of Tulsa was set on fire and allowed to burn to the ground as police dropped dynamite from commandeered private planes against blacks who had taken up arms to defend themselves against white racists. Dozens of people were killed, mostly blacks, and thousands of blacks were locked up in concentration camps (see "The Day They Bombed Blacks in Tulsa," *WV* No. 380, 31 May 1985).

And then, six years ago, on 13 May 1985 the home of Philadelphia MOVE was bombed from the air by a police helicopter, with the approval of black Democrat mayor Wilson Goode and the aid of U.S. officials going right up to Ronald Reagan's White House. The resulting fire incinerated five black children and six black men and women and destroyed entire blocks of the black neighborhood. This heinous crime, symbol of the harsh brutality of the Reagan years, was intended to be a threatening message to blacks, workers and all oppressed (see "Philly Inferno: Racist Murder!" *WV* No. 380, 31 May 1985).

From the time it was developed, air power has had a special attraction for the bourgeoisie as a weapon which can inflict unimaginable devastation at a distance, anonymously, and "on the cheap." And the principal victims have always been the workers, oppressed minorities and colonial peoples. Historian John Keegan quotes British military strategist B.H. Liddell Hart to the effect that bombing attacks would provoke "the slum districts maddened into the impulse to break loose and maraud." The aim was to "stampede" the working people into rising up against their rulers, as General Douhet advocated. This reflected, wrote Keegan, "the ruling classes' prevailing fear of insurrection, perhaps leading to revolution, which the success of the Bolsheviks in war-torn Russia had rekindled throughout Europe after 1917" (*The Second World War*).

Certainly the bourgeoisie expected its bombing campaign to provoke chaos and social breakdown—in their class-limited view, this is no doubt how they summed up the Bolshevik Revolution. But sheer terrorization of the population does not lead to rebellion, nor did the terror bombing by either imperialist coalition in World War II succeed in breaking civilian will to fight. Allied "strategic bombing" didn't work in Germany. The 900-day-long German siege of Leningrad, reducing the population to starvation, didn't break the will of the people of Leningrad, who rose fiercely to defend the gains of their revolution against the Nazi invaders. And in the extreme case of the Jewish ghettos of East Europe, Hitler's genocidal destruction inspired the relative few who survived to become hardened, heroic fighters against the Third Reich.

As the U.S. imperialists rain hideous death and destruction on the working people of Iraq, we Trotskyists reaffirm our dedication to leading a true Bolshevik Revolution—to working-class power—which can put an end to imperialism and its ghastly wars. ■

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# Soviet Union...

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not only of the Baltic republics and the USSR, but for all of Europe." A Sajudis activist who negotiated with the Kremlin leadership reported that Aleksandr Yakovlev, then Gorbachev's chief lieutenant, "kept talking about the colossal pressure they were feeling from the Army."

Ever since, the pressure on Gorbachev from the armed forces has intensified, especially with U.S. imperialism flaunting its power in the Persian Gulf War. This fall, the Soviet president originally wanted to cancel the traditional November 7 parades commemorating the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution to avoid trouble. The mayors of Moscow and Leningrad declared there would be no celebrations. But the military high command insisted that the Revolution Day parades be held, and so they were (see "Soviet Union: Winter of Decision," WV No. 515, 30 November 1990). When a week later Gorbachev addressed 1,000 military officers, he met with undisguised hostility.

Of all sections of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, the military cadre most keenly feel the loss of Soviet power and influence in the world. A junior officer at the elite Lenin Political-Military Academy in Moscow, Major Yuri Laskin, told an American journalist: "The Communist Party made our country a great state—a superpower, as you call it" (*Washington Post*, 20 November 1990). Major Laskin no doubt deeply believes, because he has



**Perestroika produces economic chaos: Muscovites clamoring outside bank after government scraps large-denomination ruble notes.**

of conciliating imperialism. The difference today is that Stalin's heirs, both in Yeltsin's Russian parliament and in the army, have jettisoned even deformed "socialist" elements of Stalinism and keep only the Great Russian nationalism. Whereas Stalin spoke of defending "the socialist Fatherland," the Soyuz leaders speak of defending "the Fatherland." Whereas Stalin called for "building socialism in one country," the "red colonel" Petrushenko offers "the future of a great Russia":

"The sustenance of the liberals, the so-called 'democrats,' has been Western propaganda. We have two camps now in this country: the democrats and the

military service alleging that they are physically weak and lacking in character. General Filatov was planning to reprint that notorious forgery of the tsarist bureaucracy, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," as an authentic religious document "like the Bible or the Koran"! That such anti-Semitic filth appears in a journal of the Soviet armed forces should scandalize and infuriate genuinely Soviet-patriotic officers.

While many officers would be embarrassed by such patent ravings of obscurantist racialism, the Russian Orthodox church—the strongest bastion of medieval obscurantism—is now addressing appeals to the military, seeking to subvert the army formed to defend the workers state. The German imperialists, who strove to carve up the Soviet Union in 1941 through Operation Barbarossa, now send columns of demobilized Soviet Army trucks home loaded with German care packages. According to the nightly news program *Vremya*, these were handed over to the Soviet Army as a gift to the Russian Orthodox church!

Appeals to Great Russian chauvinism have led to the undermining of the multinational Soviet Army, inciting ethnic blood feuds among soldiers, and between soldiers and officers, and played a large part in the rise of pogromist "national militias" in the republics. The fact that Alksnis (with Gorbachev) spearheads the ideological campaign against the Baltic restorationists with the Russian monarchist Nevzorov's reportage plays right into the hands of the Baltic separatists, who slanderously identify the Soviet Union with the tsarist empire. Military officers who want to defend the Soviet Union on a socialist basis must take as their model the communist internationalists of Trotsky's Red Army, not the Stalinist criminals who usurped power and murdered the earlier revolutionary generation.

At present the military hardliners have a conservative attitude toward economic change because the "democrats" link capitalist restoration to the breakup of the USSR and global appeasement of Western imperialism. However, anti-Western Russian nationalism can also serve as an ideological basis for capitalist counterrevolution. The ideology of the tsarist autocracy was Russian nationalism

in its most obscurantist, medieval form. Slavophile reactionaries like Dostoyevsky denounced the soul-destroying materialism of the Western bourgeois world. This in no way prevented the tsarist bureaucracy from promoting capitalist development under the direction of West European financial centers, especially the Paris Bourse. (To this day French rentiers still expect to cash in on their tsarist bonds.)

Particularly after the Revolution of 1905, the weak Russian bourgeoisie came to see it needed the knout of the tsarist autocracy to protect capitalist property. In this period the prime minister Stolypin consciously fostered the development of wealthy peasant smallholders (*kulaks*) as a counterweight to the revolutionary and socialist proletariat.

In many respects the "red colonels" of Soyuz are similar to Slobodan Milosevic, the hardline Stalinist boss of Serbia, the dominant national republic in Yugoslavia. Milosevic is a rabid Serb chauvinist who is threatening war against the secessionist republican governments of Slovenia and Croatia. At the same time, he is carrying out a Polish-style economic "shock treatment" dictated by Western bankers. Over half a million Serbian workers are to be thrown into the streets as thousands of "unprofitable" enterprises are shut down. New laws in Yugoslavia allow for the wholesale privatization of socialized property. A regime of "patriots" like Petrushenko and Filatov in Russia would act in much the same way as their Serbian counterparts.

## A Return to Stalinist Order?

General Filatov ranks Gorbachev with Lenin and Stalin as the three brilliant Soviet leaders of the century. But he says that Gorbachev "should find another Beria. Now we have means of persuasion, but no means of compulsion, and one cannot exist without the other. That is nonsense. Gorbachev has a carrot, but no whip." General Filatov and his friends may long for a return to the Stalinist order. But the conditions which underlay the Stalin regime of the 1930s-'40s and the very different conditions underlying the Brezhnev regime of the '70s do not exist in the Soviet Union today and cannot be recreated.

The hardline military man Filatov, like the pro-Western "democrats," reduces the Stalin regime to police-state terror personified by Beria. However, Stalin appealed to and exploited the enormous reservoir of *socialist idealism* created by the October Revolution. Even staunch anti-Stalinists who lived through the 1930s, such as the humanistic writer Anatoli Rybakov, recount the enthusiasm with which workers, poor peasants and leftist intellectuals threw themselves into the industrialization drive and collectivization of agriculture. "Socialism in one country" was a lie, but it was a lie deeply believed by Communist militants at the time. Nikita Khrushchev, who typified the worker turned party functionary of the 1920s, recalls that in 1930:

"As Stalin was speaking, I thought to myself, 'Here is a man who knows how to direct our minds and energies toward the priority goals of industrializing our country and assuring the impregnability of our Homeland's borders against the

*continued on page 10*



**Soviet veterans of Afghan war left out of May 9 World War II victory parade. Gorbachev's abandonment of Afghanistan has emboldened U.S. imperialism.**

been so taught, that the goal of the October Revolution was to transform backward Russia into a global superpower on a par with the United States. The underlying vision of the Bolshevik Revolution outlined in Lenin's *The State and Revolution* is quite alien to the Lenin Political-Military Academy. Lenin, Trotsky and their comrades saw the Russian October as the first act of an international proletarian revolution which would lead to a global communist society through the withering away of the nation-state.

This vision was shared by the officer corps of Trotsky's Red Army. Marshals Tukhachevsky, Blücher and their comrades were fighting for a strong Soviet state as a bastion of international proletarian revolution. They were not seeking to make Soviet Russia into just another world power, peacefully coexisting for decades with the imperialist powers. Stalin sought to exterminate the internationalist traditions of the Red Army by killing Tukhachevsky, Blücher, Gamarnik (the brilliant Jewish chief political commissar) and the other Red commanders from the Civil War, just as he killed the surviving leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution. In this blood sacrifice to "peace" with imperialism, Stalin criminally sabotaged the defense of the Soviet Union and vastly facilitated Hitler's invasion.

Then, as now, the Stalinist bureaucracy used Russian nationalism in the service

patriots. The democrats have had their day. We, the patriots, will now dictate the future direction of the country. We are people who don't rush off to the U.S. to read lectures or open foreign bank accounts. We stay at home and think through our plans for the future of a great Russia."

—*Washington Post*,  
28 December 1990

Petrushenko is here echoing the famous declaration of the tsarist minister Stolypin following the suppression of the Revolution of 1905: "What you want are great upheavals. But what we want is a Great Russia!" This cry of reaction is now emblazoned word for word on the banners of today's ultra-nationalistic "Fatherland" group. Petrushenko's fellow "red colonel" Alksnis recently went on television with the popular pro-tsarist TV journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov, where they jointly attacked the Baltic separatists. Alksnis openly proclaims, "I find more in common with Nevzorov the monarchist than Comrade Yakovlev the Communist."

If Petrushenko echoes Stolypin, some of his fellow "patriots" sound like the tsarist Black Hundreds or their spiritual heirs of today, the Russian fascists of Pamyat. Major General Viktor Filatov, editor of the influential *Military-Historical Journal*, reprinted a 1910 book in praise of the Russian army which recommended that Jews not be taken into



Keller/NY Times

**Russian-nationalist hardline Stalinists: anti-Semitic Major General Viktor I. Filatov (left) and Soyuz spokesman Colonel Viktor Alksnis.**



Guardian (London)

# Soviet Union...

(continued from page 9)

capitalist world; the well-being of the people is obviously in firm hands."  
—Khrushchev Remembers (1970)

During and after World War II, Stalin was able to mobilize the Soviet patriotism of the masses. In the late '40s the workers and collective farmers dedicated themselves to rebuilding their war-devastated country. The prewar level of industrial output was restored within five years.

However, after Stalin died in early 1953, the Kremlin oligarchy could no longer rule through a combination of mass political mobilization and police-state repression (i.e., totalitarianism). The attempt to do so would have led to a popular revolt such as occurred at the time in East Europe (East Germany in 1953, Poland and Hungary in 1956). Under Khrushchev and even more so under Brezhnev, the Soviet leadership based its popular appeal on consumerism. During the 1970s the Soviet Union was governed by a tacit social contract. The people were guaranteed employment without having to work hard, a stable cost of living and a level of consumption substantially higher than a generation earlier. In return the people were expected not to meddle in politics, allowing the *nomenklatura* to run the country as it saw fit.

However, during the late 1970s the economic conditions underpinning the Brezhnevite social contract rapidly eroded. The one-sided concentration on heavy industry during the Stalin era made it relatively easy for his successors to rapidly increase the output of consumer goods by shifting the direction of investment. But beginning in the mid-'70s the Brezhnev regime cut back the rate of industrial investment in order to keep up with the American arms buildup without reducing living standards. By 1980 the Soviet industrial plant was relatively more antiquated by world standards than it had been a decade earlier.

Until around 1970 the Soviet Union still had a large pool of surplus labor in the countryside. Thus the transfer of young people from rural villages to urban factories or Siberian mines in itself raised the overall level of labor productivity. However, during the 1970s the continuing exodus of farmers' sons and daughters weakened and unbalanced the Soviet economy. The rapidly shrinking and aging workforce on the collective and state farms is the main reason why the enormous agricultural investments of the Brezhnev era failed to produce a comparable increase in crop yields.

The inflationary boom in the world market price of oil, natural gas and gold in the 1970s provided a major windfall for the Soviet economy. The inflow of petrodollars enabled the Brezhnev regime to maintain a relatively high level of investment, military spending and consumption. In particular, large quantities of feed grain for cattle were imported so that Soviet citizens could eat more meat.

No small part of the external stability enjoyed by the Brezhnev regime was

Moscow, February 23: over one-quarter million Soviets demonstrate on Army Day. Poster demands that Bush stop bombing and killing Iraqis.



paid for by the heroic revolutionary war of the Vietnamese, who took the heat of American imperialism. (Today, children of these heroes toil in unspeakable poverty as immigrant workers in the Soviet Union.) The collapse of the world oil-price boom in the early '80s signaled the collapse of the Brezhnevite Stalinist order.

The "red colonel" Petrushenko blames the rise of the "free market" intellectuals to positions of influence on the pernicious doings of Western propagandists. However, the generation of party first secretaries represented by Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Shevardnadze were not somehow seduced by the intellectual arguments of Milton Friedman or Friedrich Hayek (whom they doubtless never read). The drive toward a "market economy" was a reactionary response to the *objective impasse* of the Soviet economy after six decades of bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement in the name of "building socialism in one country."

Dominant elements of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia saw no other way to increase productivity and efficiency than the whip of market competition (the whip of another Beria wouldn't do it). This was clearly stated by the economist Nikolai Shmelyov, who in 1985 was the first to openly advocate unemployment as a means of improving labor discipline:

"Today it is, I believe, clear to everyone that we owe disorderliness, drunkenness, and shoddy work largely to excessively full employment. We must discuss fearlessly and in businesslike terms what we could gain from a comparatively small reserve army of labor.... A real danger of losing your job and going onto a temporary allowance or being obliged to work wherever you are sent is a very good cure for laziness, drunkenness and irresponsibility."

—quoted in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Gorbachev's Economic Plans* (1987)

Formerly married to a daughter of Khrushchev, Shmelyov is here speaking as a bona fide member of the *nomenklatura*, not some out-of-the-way "dissi-

dent." Today, such opinions are rampant throughout the intelligentsia.

Naturally, Soviet working people dread the prospect of a transition to a "market economy." The most hated and despised class of people in the USSR today are the price-gouging petty capitalist entrepreneurs ("cooperativists") and the "Sovbour" party bureaucrats who are now looting everything they can from the collective economy to finance their buy-in to the new property-owning class. A poll, reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (2 January), indicates that only 5 percent of the Soviet population supports allowing the market to determine prices, while 75 percent want to preserve controls on at least some consumer goods and services. Soviet working people desperately want to preserve their jobs, maintain a stable cost of living and restore consumption to pre-perestroika levels.

However, they do not want to return to the bureaucratic commandism and police-state controls of the Brezhnev era. The "red colonel" Petrushenko may believe that "We, the patriots, will dictate the future direction of the country," but that will not be so easy. It is not only the intellectuals who have utilized the freedoms created by the disintegration of the old Stalinist order. In the summer of 1989 coal miners went on strike in the

Donbass of the eastern Ukraine and Kuzbass in Siberia and effectively took over these regions.

Since then there have been numerous strikes and job actions, many of them organized by official trade unions which are no longer under tight bureaucratic control. In December a conference of 3,000 enterprise directors in Moscow called for a three-year ban on strikes. If the army and police move to suppress striking workers and their unions, the "law and order" hardliners will lose much of the public sympathy they now have as a reaction against the prevailing political and economic chaos.

Soviet working people must understand that both the "democratic" intellectuals and "patriotic" colonels are products of the terminal degeneration of the reactionary and parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy. Both are enemies and oppressors of the proletariat in the interests of world capitalism, the "democrats" of Yeltsin's camp more directly and consciously so. It is high time that the multinational Soviet proletariat comes forth in its own defense, against the forces of capitalist restoration, in the process sweeping away all wings of the bureaucracy.

It is the ghastly legacy of this bureaucracy that the gains of the October Revolution, chiefly the planned collectivized economy—which represents the greatest victory for the proletariat in history—lies in shambles. The privileged *nomenklatura* has plundered and undermined the Soviet economy for decades. Now they are preparing the death blow: the parasites are ever more openly sabotaging the economy so as to paralyze working-class resistance and are looting everything to buy their way into the top of a new order of direct imperialist exploitation and mastery over the Soviet peoples. Soviet workers: every position must be defended against the parasitic bureaucracy and the gathering forces of bourgeois mafias.

The Stalinists committed monstrous crimes, demanded great sacrifices of the Soviet working people and told endless lies, all in the name of "Communism." But in the coming class battles in defense of the working people, it is the internationalist program of Lenin's Bolsheviks, carried forth by the Trotskyist Left Opposition in the 1920s and the Fourth International founded in 1938—and the International Communist League today—that must point the way forward.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

## "Our" Troops...

(continued from page 3)

(*Militant*, 11 January). Big surprise!

The article concludes that this slogan "bends to the pressure of the right wing," that it "obscures" the key questions and "disarms vanguard workers, who above all need clarity on which class benefits from this war and which class loses." And they even say, "The army is not 'ours'" but instead it's "the army of the imperialists." Just how the SWP's approved "Bring the troops home" slogan provides clarity on which class benefits from the Gulf War, they don't explain.

But they'll sure have a lot of explaining to do if any of their members should remember the picture of SWP leader Fred Halstead carrying the sign "Support Our Boys—Bring Them Home NOW." On the SWP's "antiwar" work in the '60s and '70s, he wrote the book, literally. As Malcolm X said, "The chickens come home to roost."

When reformists like the SWP refer to "our" troops, or "our boys," they are expressing political support to their bourgeois masters. Proletarian revolutionaries take an opposite view. Leon Trotsky wrote in *My Life* (1929) about how Lenin showed him around London when he arrived there in 1902 after escaping from Siberian exile: "This is their famous Westminster, and 'their' referred of course not to the English but to the ruling classes."

During the first imperialist world war

he denounced the leaders of the Second International for their "act of treachery against socialism by voting for war credits, by reiterating the chauvinist ('patriotic') slogans of the bourgeoisie of their 'own' countries, by justifying and defending the war." But it was not just the open supporters of war who adopted this stance. Lenin wrote:

"The standpoint of social-chauvinism is shared equally by both advocates of victory for their governments in the present war and by advocates of the slogan of 'neither victory nor defeat.' A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, and cannot fail to see that the latter's military reverses must facilitate its overthrow."

—V.I. Lenin and G. Zinoviev, "Socialism and War" (July-August 1915)

And again in September 1915, a resolution submitted by Lenin and Karl Radek on behalf of the left wing at the Zimmerwald conference declared:

"In Germany, both the openly patriotic majority current, made up of former Social-Democratic leaders, and also the party's 'Center' current around Kautsky, which merely postures as an opposition, have gone over to social patriotism and social imperialism.... A ruthless struggle against social imperialism is the first prerequisite for the revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat and the restoration of the International."

For Lenin, as for all revolutionaries, class-conscious workers and fighters against imperialist war, clarity about what really is "ours" and what is "theirs" is key. ■

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# Blitzkrieg...

(continued from page 1)

under house arrest for five weeks while their jobs are given to the 200,000 Soviet Jewish immigrants who have arrived in Israel in the last year. The Zionist rulers are pushing for a "final solution" to the Palestinian "problem," preparing for bloody mass expulsions from the Occupied Territories.

Other indirect targets of the chiefly Anglo-American Gulf War are the U.S.' chief imperialist rivals (and World War II enemies), Germany and Japan. Washington wants to counter their more modern and productive economic apparatus by militarily controlling the flow of oil from the Middle East. The German business magazine *WirtschaftsWoche* (8 February) headlined, "Gulf War: Germany the Loser." But Germany has its own options. Having hooked up to Soviet pipeline terminals as a result of its annexation of East Germany last year, the German Reich is already looking to the USSR for oil supplies. And with Moscow increasingly on the outs with Washington over the Gulf War, Bonn and Tokyo may be dreaming of an alliance with the resource- and population-rich Soviet Union.

## For Class War Against Imperialist War

The Democratic "doves" in Congress, who earlier wanted to starve Iraq into

submission through "UN sanctions," more recently called for continuing the murderous air war in order to "save American lives." Lining up behind them are the reformist "antiwar" organizers who in the name of "unity" with flag-waving liberals have become red-white-and-blue, yellow-ribboned "socialists." All their "support our troops" appeals only fuel the patriotic war hysteria which sent half a million troops to the Saudi desert to kill and be killed. And the American rulers want to see dead American troops. As former CIA agent John Stockwell said in an interview shortly after the bombing began:

"The fascinating thing about this war is that they promised us, they being Mr. Reagan and Mr. Bush to a lesser sense in the 1980s, and especially the military establishment, they promised us since the Vietnam War that we would have another war in which we would erase the Vietnam syndrome. "...the Bush administration clearly wanted this war and steamrolled the opposition, but I don't think they want it over in the first day. It won't be a sufficient pageant. In fact, a certain amount of struggle will be useful to their purposes...."

—"U.S. Policy: The Need for War" (January 1991)

Under the banner of Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade, continuing through Reagan's terrorist "proxy wars" against Soviet "surrogates" during the 1980s, U.S. imperialism has been preparing for a war like this for 15 years. As Stockwell points out, this time Wash-



Coskun/Sipa

## U.S. "precision bombing" flattens shops in Baghdad.

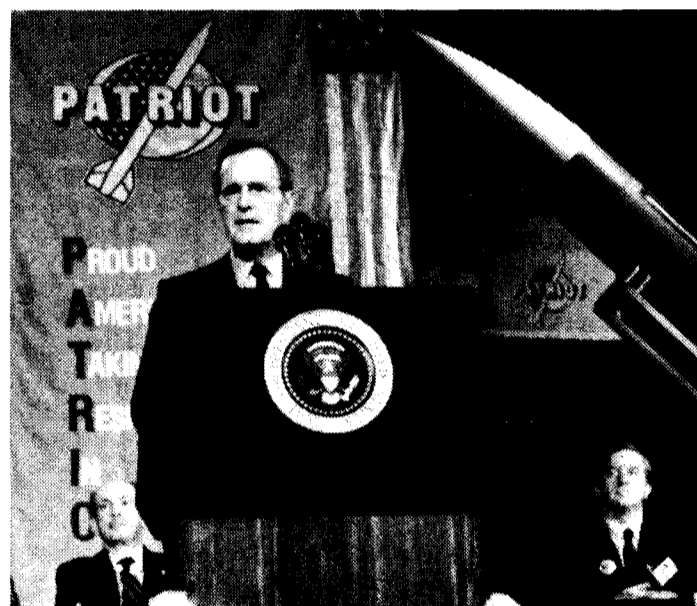
ington "picked an enemy very carefully." After encouraging Hussein to invade Kuwait, the U.S. turned around and declared all-out war to the death against him. The *New York Times* (23 February) quotes a national security review ordered by Bush when he first took office: "In cases where the U.S. confronts much weaker enemies, our challenge will be not simply to defeat them, but to defeat them decisively and rapidly." This war was made to order from the start.

Washington is grooving on its military prowess, but the Pentagon war machine has an Achilles' heel: the high percentage of black and Hispanic troops in a "volunteer" army whose recruits are driven by desperation to escape rampant poverty at home. And more than at any time in recent memory, the racial division over Washington's war is dramatic. Even at the height of the chauvinist hysteria, with five out of six whites favoring the war, half of all blacks polled opposed it. The understanding that "our

war is at home" is widespread.

Homelessness, a wave of epidemics of diseases of poverty (AIDS, TB), permanent unemployment, and more young black men in prison than in college—this is the "American Way of Life" in the ghettos and the barrios. No wonder many of those condemned to live it aren't too hot about dying to defend it. Minorities are overwhelmingly hit by escalating budget cuts, including those ordered by liberal Democrats such as New York's governor Cuomo. And the black Democrats and labor bureaucrats are working overtime to make sure that the discontent remains passive.

From the start, the Spartacist League insisted that a defeat for U.S. imperialism would be a victory for the working people of the world. We have called for defense of Iraq and for labor strikes against the war. Today more than ever what's urgently needed is a revolutionary leadership to organize working-class struggle against war-crazed imperialism at home and abroad. ■



Profits rising, proletarians falling: Raytheon, manufacturer of Patriot missiles, salutes its commander in chief.

# Letter...

(continued from page 3)

bosses' lackeys in the TWU cheer on the war from the comfort of the posh offices on West End Avenue while thousands of Iraqis die and our union brothers in the army and Guard face death for Bush and his oil buddies. TWUers are among the Harlem Hell Fighters, the black troops of the National Guard 369th Transport Battalion, the unit which has been abused, broken up, stripped of equipment and set up like sitting ducks in front-line positions on the Iraqi border. After this racist treatment, a lot of these brothers have vowed to quit the Guard when they return. Let the Pentagon's lieutenants in union office try to order them out of a union meeting for speaking their mind!

The bureaucrats have aided and abetted the bosses' war on the unions. But we're the ones taking all the "collateral damage." Because of these labor traitors, the likes of Frank Lorenzo and "Boss Hoge" of the *Daily News* walk away from busted unions with a pocketful of unearned wealth while union members walk away jobless. It was all meant to streamline the country for war—and now we're in it. The rulers of this country are willing to fight to the last drop of our blood to defend their way of life.

But the enemy of working people in this country is not in Baghdad...it's here at home, in Washington, on Wall Street. Our fight is here. And it's crystal clear that if we want to fight to stop the attacks on our unions, on black and His-

panic communities, and stop the carnage of war in the Middle East and elsewhere, we've got to fight to take back the unions and build a class-struggle workers party that can lead those fights. The junior bureaucrats-in-training who stand for racist U.S. imperialism will be an obstacle to that task.

Mary Jo Marino  
New York

## Baby Killer...

(continued from page 4)

citing Pentagon officials' claims that the Al Rashid Hotel, where Arnett and other Western journalists in Baghdad are based, was also a secret military communications node. "The good news," Ted Koppel told ABC reporter Bill Blakemore in Baghdad, is that the Rashid would not be bombed "for the time being."

The cynicism with which this blood-drenched ruling class proclaims the "sanctity of life" is breathtaking. "We would never put, ever put, civilians in a military communications facility that we knew was an apt target for the enemy," declared Kelly. Tell that to the families of the over 200 people killed aboard Korean Air Lines Flight 007, which was sent on a spy mission over some of the most sensitive Soviet military installations.

The Amirya bombing is of a piece with Hiroshima, Nagasaki, My Lai and countless other U.S. war crimes aimed at terrorizing an "enemy" population

into submission. In the Vietnamese village of My Lai in 1968, as many as 400 unarmed men, women and children were massacred. The psychopathic junior officer who ordered the slaughter was court-martialed, slapped on the wrist and held up as an exception.

In fact, My Lai was the rule, as Washington drummed it into the heads of its Lieutenant Calleys that the only way to defeat a "people's war" was by annihilating the people. And the CIA method-

ically executed 100,000 Vietnamese in its Operation Phoenix mass assassination program.

George Bush is a certified war criminal and baby killer. And when he and his fellow war criminals in Washington are finally brought to justice this premeditated mass murder will be Exhibit A. But war crimes tribunals are carried out by the victors. In order to try Bush and his gang of cutthroats, the American working people have to take state power. ■



Haerberle/Life

My Lai massacre in Vietnam, March 1968. Mass murder of civilians is nothing new for U.S. imperialism.

# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Pro-Imperialist "Democrats," Hardliners and Gorbachev

# Where Is the Soviet Union Going?

Responding to an appeal by a spokesman for the armed forces calling on "all Muscovites to come into the streets" on Soviet Army Day, February 23, several hundred thousand gathered in Manege Square near the Kremlin under the slogan "the party and the army are one." The demonstration was also called by the "Soyuz" (Union) grouping of parliamentary deputies of Russian-nationalist Stalinist hardliners. In the crisis atmosphere engulfing the Soviet Union, Soyuz spokesman Colonel Viktor Alksnis declared that "Our offspring will curse us if we let the union collapse," warning of the danger of "civil war." Denouncing those who say "Down with the empire," Alksnis openly appealed to reactionary Russian nationalism, invoking the "forefathers [who] died on the battlefields of Borodino" fighting in the tsar's army against Napoleon.

The square and the adjoining streets were a flood of people with red banners. In response to Russian Republic leader Boris Yeltsin, the darling of the pro-Western "democrats," who last week provocatively demanded on nationwide TV that Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev resign, signs declared "Traitor Yeltsin Resign" and "Yeltsin Equals Civil War." There were also signs denouncing the U.S. war on Iraq, including "Bush! Stop the Bombing and Don't Annihilate the Citizens of Iraq." But alongside "Hands Off Lenin" banners there were monarchist emblems, and the demonstration was permeated with outright anti-Semites, with signs putting the Star of David next to the word "Enemy."

The Army Day mobilization comes only days after a group of 29 organizations—including Soyuz, the Russian Communist Party and the United Front of Toilers (OFT)—issued an appeal in the Soviet Army paper *Krasnaya Zvezda*: "The country has reached a critical point after which come anarchy and chaos, the collapse of the state, poverty and bloodshed." Saying that "fascist-type forces" whose aim is the destruction of the USSR have taken power in parts of the country, they set up a "working conference to consolidate all patriotic and internationalist forces" (*Financial Times* [London], 18 February). With the prospect of draconian price rises on basic consumer goods in the offing, the situation in the Soviet Union is explosive.

Increasingly, military men have put themselves forward as leaders of the "conservative" Stalinist forces. Many Western observers now consider that Gorbachev has become a captive of the hardliners in the military. Speculation over and even the expectation of a military coup to restore order have become commonplace in Soviet political life, from the Kremlin to the factory floor. In

## Part 2: Rise of the Military Opposition

his bitter resignation statement as foreign minister in December in which he spoke of the spectre of "dictatorship," Eduard Shevardnadze lashed out at the "boys in colonels' epaulets" who accused him of selling out to the imperialists. He was

of the factors leading to Gorbachev's taking over the Kremlin in 1985 and introducing perestroika (restructuring). The military wing of the bureaucracy had no desire to perpetuate the consumerism and lax labor discipline of the later Brezhnev



Retired Soviet Army officer confronts anti-Communist demonstrator at last year's May Day celebration in Red Square.

referring to the so-called "red colonels" Alksnis and his fellow Soyuz spokesman Vladimir Petrusenko.

It would, however, be wrong to think that the military cadre were from the start hostile to Gorbachev's perestroika and longed to return to the "good old days" of Brezhnev. In the late '70s the Brezhnev regime, facing an economic slowdown, cut back on military procurement, much to the dissatisfaction of the generals and admirals. A section of the high command, led by then chief of staff Nikolai Ogarkov, publicly campaigned for a sweeping modernization of the USSR's weapons systems, especially its conventional (non-nuclear) arsenal. Brezhnev defended his economic priorities against Ogarkov and his military colleagues by arguing in 1981: "What we are talking about—foodstuffs, consumer goods, the services sphere—is a question of the daily life of millions of people.... It is according to how these questions are answered that people largely judge our work" (quoted in Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989* [1990]).

The military's dissatisfaction with the effects of economic stagnation was one

years, and was willing to experiment with market-oriented measures as a promised means of accelerating economic growth. In the initial period of the Gorbachev regime, official military journals, like *Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil* (Communist in the Armed Forces), ran articles by prominent "reform" economists advocating decentralization, enterprise autonomy and a greater role for profitability. Writing in 1986, the American Sovietologist George Weickhardt commented:

"...the armed forces have not taken the lead in economic reform, but have become part of a coalition backing the Party on the limited measures it has attempted so far. No military dissent from the Party's reform program has yet appeared in the numerous references to current measures in the military press. Neither has any military leader criticized the Party's reform measures as too limited or too far-reaching, at least not in the open way that Ogarkov criticized the Party's allocation of national resources."  
—"The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex and Economic Reform," *Soviet Economy*, July-September 1986

Military opposition to Gorbachev was not provoked by his market-oriented economic policies but rather by the ef-

fects of his "new thinking" in foreign policy, i.e., appeasement of the NATO powers, and its domestic repercussions. To prepare the Soviet public for the unilateral pullout from Afghanistan, Gorbachevite propagandists deliberately fostered pacifistic and anti-military sentiments. In 1987 General V. Serebriannikov lashed out at "certain writers and publicists" for expressing "decadent and cowardly thoughts which sow the seeds of pacifism."

The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan at the beginning of 1989 enormously emboldened Western imperialism and set the stage for the subsequent collapse of Soviet power in East Europe, reversing the historic effect of the Red Army's victory over Nazi Germany. The final step was when early last year Gorbachev gave the green light to the capitalist reunification of Germany, leading to the establishment of a powerful Fourth Reich dominating Europe.

The abandonment of East Europe also led to material privation for the Soviet troops who had been stationed there. Army chief of staff Mikhail Moiseyev exclaimed last spring: "We will bring the troops home, but no one has clearly thought what it will cost. Families will find themselves without apartments or work, children without schools" (*Time*, 9 April 1990). Some units brought back from East Europe have been forced to live in tent cities. And with the economy in chaos, there are no jobs available for demobilized soldiers or officers.

Gorbachev and Shevardnadze promised that the abandonment of East Europe would mean the end of the Cold War and a new era of peaceful collaboration with Washington, Bonn and the other NATO capitals. Instead, American imperialism, perceiving that the Soviet leadership has lost its will to fight, launched its greatest military power play since Vietnam—the invasion of the Persian Gulf oil fields and war against Iraq. Five years ago Washington would never have risked carpetbombing Iraq, a Soviet client state, for fear of igniting World War III. Patriotic Soviet officers and soldiers are rightly appalled by the catastrophic developments from Central Europe to the Near East.

The military's increasing anger crystallized and came to the surface when the Lithuanian nationalists declared "independence" last March. Here, finally, the military cadre were determined to draw the line against further retreat. Deputy chief of staff General Vladimir Denisov wrote in the trade-union newspaper *Trud* that "the carrying out of the policy of the present Lithuanian leaders for secession is pregnant with danger for the security

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# Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky! For a Socialist Union of Soviet Republics!