

Clinton lied — who will bring about change?

Bill Clinton seems to be bringing unprecedented depth to the notion that a promise means nothing when it comes from the mouth of a politician. Why, even before he set foot in the White House, Clinton has given up more promises than he plans to keep.

Remember when Clinton promised that creating jobs would be the first priority of his administration? Well, forget that one. Clinton has suddenly discovered that the federal government is deeply in debt, and cutting the budget deficit has become his "number one priority."

Or remember Clinton's talk of "tax fairness" and cutting the taxes for those who make less than \$80,000 a year? Don't wait around for this one either. Clinton is not only shelving the tax cut but, as well, he is considering whether to raise taxes that hit working people the hardest — such as hiking the tax on gasoline.

And what about Clinton's pledge to create a universal system of health care? Well, perhaps some day. But right now he says the issue is to get medical costs under control by cutting coverage — like, for example, raising the age limit when old people can begin receiving Medicare.

And what about his pledge to end Bush's cruel policy of shipping Haitian immigrants back to Haiti? Flushed down the toilet.

Clinton vowed to sweep the "special

interests" out of Washington and bring "change" to the nation. But his first act has been to put together a cabinet of establishment insiders tied to Wall Street and the corporate billionaires. Clinton's promise of change seems to be only spare change. His liberalism on the cheap will bring only those changes which cost little or nothing and which don't upset the powerful vested interests. Meanwhile, Clinton's cabinet is chattering that the ordinary people must get prepared to "sacrifice."

Today the hope for change does not rest with Clinton. He is only proving that the Democrats are just another tight-fisted party of the capitalist moneybags, little different than the Republicans.

If there is going to be progressive change it will have to come from emergence of a new movement of the working masses. A movement that says to hell with the Democrats and the Republicans. A movement that fights against the capitalist establishment and seeks a socialist alternative to it. Today Clinton's aides are begging that the new president be given a "honeymoon," a period when he is allowed to act without opposition or criticism. But the problems of joblessness and poverty, the growing racism and bigotry, can't wait. It's time to step up the criticism of Clinton and the Democrats in order to launch a real struggle against the festering ills of the exploiting system.

U.S. intervention in Somalia Humanitarianism is not the motive

Over 20,000 U.S. troops have been sent to Somalia. Washington has declared their goal as providing security to open ports, land routes, and distribution points for famine relief. The U.S. military is supposed to hand things over to a U.N. force which will maintain the relief operation and set up other basic services, as a political settlement is sought among the armed groups contesting for power in Somalia.

There is no doubt Somalia was in desperate need of humanitarian assistance from outside. The government had totally collapsed there, and war, chaos, and violence became the order of the day. As many as 350,000 people may have died of starvation over the last few years, and many more were threatened. A number of relief operations have been set up there. While they appear to have had some success, they were plagued with serious problems of transport and security because of continuing violence.

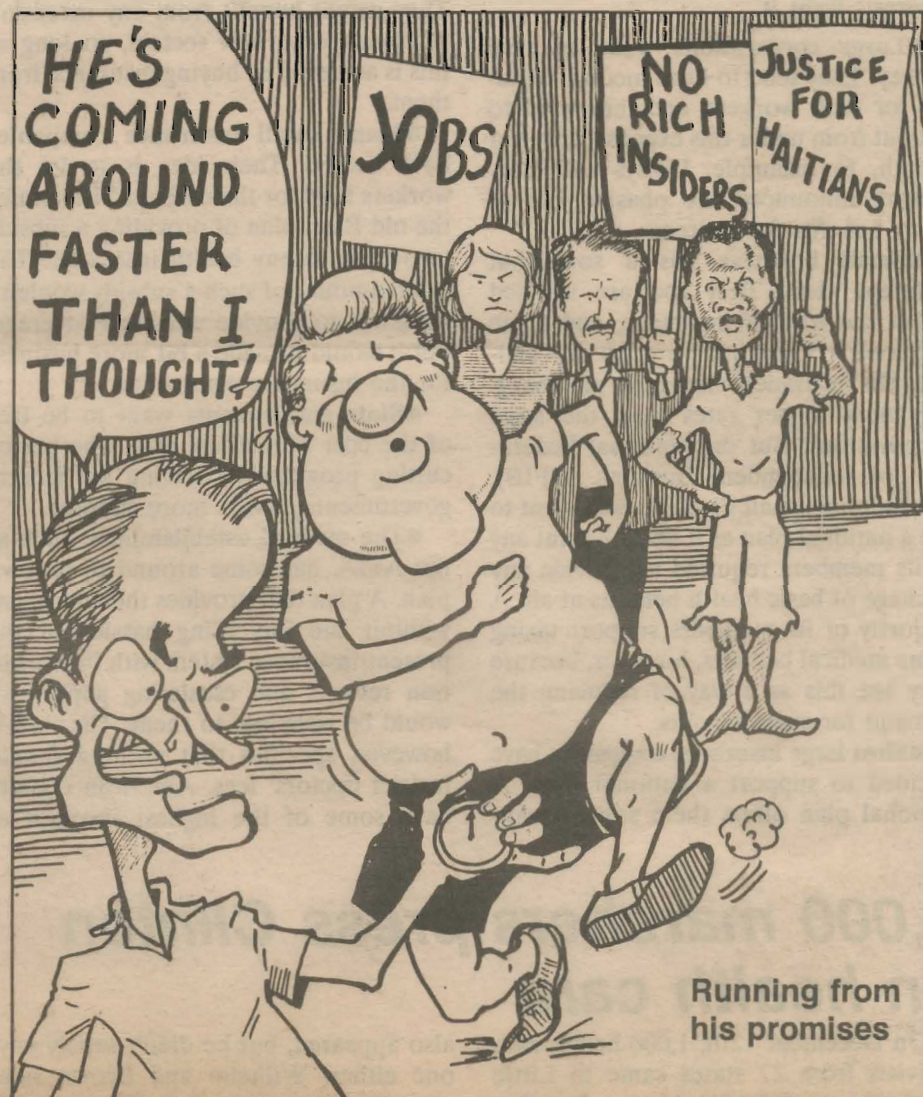
Somalia thus needed more food aid and transport, as well as some way to improve the security of food shipments

and distribution. It would have been vastly preferable if things had not been allowed to reach such a state — and for that both the U.S. and U.N. are culpable. Then Bush launched Operation Restore Hope as a *fait accompli*, rubber-stamped by the U.N. without much exploration of the problem or the solution being proposed.

The U.S. military machine has long been an instrument of Third World oppression. Progressive people have good reason to be skeptical of such a force being trotted out for a relief mission to a poor African country. It is unfortunate that we live in a world where the international workers movement is not strong enough to provide genuine humanitarian aid, and that there are no progressive states which could have offered a preferable alternative to the bloodstained U.S. military.

Nevertheless, the people of Somalia were in such a desperate situation that they did not have much choice but to accept the food relief brought to them by

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Blockading Haitian refugees

Surprise, surprise. The candidate of change has turned out to be the president-elect of continuity. Perhaps the most dramatic — and to date the most outrageous — turnaround has been on policy towards Haitian refugees.

During the election campaign, Clinton had denounced Bush for "a cruel policy of returning Haitian refugees to a brutal dictatorship without an asylum hearing." He had said that if elected he would reverse that policy. He had promised that he "would — in the absence of clear and compelling evidence that they weren't political refugees — give them temporary asylum until we restored the elected government of Haiti."

Now it turns out he treated the Haitian people, and any others who believed him, as suckers.

Perhaps they should have seen it coming when Clinton announced Ron Brown as his choice for Secretary of

Commerce. Brown used to be paid \$150,000 a year in the early 80's by the former Haitian dictator "Baby Doc" Duvalier to lobby the U.S. government for the Haitian tyranny.

Clinton has been working hard with the Bush administration to keep Haitians out. First he told Haitians not to come, and added that he would be maintaining Bush's policy of picking up refugees at sea and returning them.

But what is worse, Clinton has joined hands with Bush to make things even tougher for Haitian refugees. On January 15, the Bush administration announced that it was setting up a Coast Guard barricade around Haiti to return any Haitian boat people. There won't even be a pretense of hearing Haitians' pleas for asylum on the Coast Guard vessels; the Haitians are simply to be returned. Clinton's people have said that this new

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No more bombs on Iraq!

Bush and Saddam are at it again. And once again, the U.S. government shows that it will resort to massive military force over piddling conflicts. The Iraqi people as usual pay the price with their lives and continued suffering under a cruel economic embargo.

U.S. warplanes recently hit several targets in southern Iraq, and as we go to press, it appears that another round is following — this time even near Baghdad. As during the Persian Gulf war, the

Pentagon spoke at first of surgical strikes on military targets, only to admit a few days later that their strikes had not been so precise and yes, things other than military installations had been hit. Over a dozen civilians have been reported killed.

These bombing raids come on top of an intolerable economic embargo the U.S. and UN have placed on Iraq. The war is long over, and the U.S. won that.

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No more bombs on Iraq!

Why some businesses want a federal health program

Health care is rapidly increasing in price. Almost one-seventh of the entire economy is now devoted to it. There will probably be some type of national health program. It is not just the working people who want it; what do the politicians care about the common people? But many business and commercial interests want it.

■ **Large corporations** want to save money. They tend to have medical benefits for their workers, and they want to get out from under this expense. Just last month, for example, Unisys and Burroughs announced the phasing out of many benefits for retirees.

■ **Small business** has a somewhat different view. They too are worried about the cost of insurance, and some may look to a national program, especially as the insurance companies are charging them higher rates than the large corporations. But the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), representing small firms, doesn't want to see a national plan as it doesn't want any of its members required to provide any package of basic health benefits at all. A majority of its members support taxing some medical benefits, however, because they see this as a way of reducing the demand for such benefits.

■ **Most large insurance companies** have decided to support a national plan. A national plan offers them some advan-

tages: it could extend their market, and they could squeeze out smaller competitors who would have a harder time dealing with the government bureaucrats running a big program. They hope to be the organizers of "managed-care" works and the recipients of big regional contracts under "managed competition." They would benefit from any extension of coverage to new sectors, so long as this is achieved by buying insurance from them.

■ **Many small insurance companies** have balked. Their idea is to let the workers fend for themselves. They prefer the old Bush plan of providing a subsidy to people to buy health insurance. The small amount of such a subsidy wouldn't do much to provide universal coverage, but it would provide a bit more business for the insurance companies.

■ **State governments** want to be free of the cost of medical care, whether by cutting programs or having the federal government provide more support.

■ **The medical establishment**, such as the AMA, has come around to its own plan. A plan that provides them payment without the increasing hassles of the present insurance system with its utilization reviews and escalating paperwork would be welcome to them. The AMA, however, specifies that nothing should restrict doctors' fees. American doctors have some of the highest incomes of

doctors anywhere. They average almost \$120,000 a year, which makes their incomes five times higher than that of the average American. (*Scientific American*, Nov. 1992) Note that national health care plans such as that in Canada were only established and maintained in the face of doctors' strikes.

Cost control

Most of the commercial sectors involved have a common interest: cost control. Even the insurance companies have an interest in cost control: given the pressure on them by the government, they want freedom to impose their own cost-cutting measures on patients. They are not worried about the health of their employees and plan holders, but about the health of their balance sheet. But the workers have a different interest. Their central interest is for immediate universal coverage.

A universal system, and a radical improvement in care

The workers are interested in obtaining treatment, which is getting harder and harder to do. It is harder to get insurance coverage and to keep it; the courts are even allowing "self-insured" companies to renege on their promises and deny coverage when the workers get sick; and the insurance companies raise their premiums and force many people with medical needs off of coverage. It is harder even when one has coverage due to cost-cutting in "managed care" plans, utilization reviews from insurance companies, and other cost control plans.

For the working people, a different type of cost control would be preferable. The huge profits of CEOs in the health industry, drug companies, and insurance

companies are suspect. Such profits not only result in extravagant prices, but distort decisions on the treatment of illness. Drugs are prescribed, for example, due to the expensive advertising and influence-peddling of the drug companies.

On the other hand, the streamlining of the administrative paper shuffling through the elimination of the insurance companies and replacement by a single national system would be an advance. But Clinton's plan of "managed competition" would preserve the insurance companies.

Moreover, the workers need a radical change in health care. The mechanical system of just medicate or cut is not proper care. And such a hit-or-miss approach is of little value in the face of modern environmental and work place problems. Changes in medical treatment require the stimulus of input from the patients, and the elimination of the system of doctor elitism.

Watch out!

Don't leave things on the level of generalities. When you hear talk of a national health plan, ask what kind of plan.

Does cost control come by restricting administrative expenses and eliminating the insurance companies, or does it come from restricting worker access to health care? Is it a universal system of quality care for all? Or are the workers just being subjected to new taxes in the name of a universal system in the years to come? Does it improve care? Or does it spout fine words about preventive care and managed care and health maintenance organizations while the reality is no care. ■

1,000 marchers press Clinton on health care

On December 12th, 1,000 health-care activists from 27 states came to Little Rock, the capital of Arkansas, for what they called a town meeting on health care. They were advocating a national health care system with a single-payer system replacing the insurance companies (for example, as in Canada), and the activists wanted to talk it over with President-elect Clinton. After all, Clinton has been promising that health care is among his top priorities, and he makes a show of consulting with everyone, from the man in the street to the "Big 3" auto chiefs.

The activists met at the Convention Center, expecting Clinton to show up. Instead Clinton sent his advisor, David Wilhelm. But Wilhelm was drowned out after he admitted Clinton wasn't coming, with shouts of "we want Bill" and slogans on health care. Clinton's nominee for Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown,

also appeared, but he didn't satisfy anyone either. Wilhelm and Brown sidestepped around any definite statement on health care.

Then the activists decided to march 15 blocks to the state capitol building where Clinton was, and they held a rally there. Hundreds stayed for three hours, after which Mr. Clinton finally came out of hiding. He smiled and shook hands and left, but never dealt with health care.

Clinton found health care a popular vote-getter, and most of the activists at Little Rock hoped that his election meant the Democrats were going to do something for the people and against the health profiteers. But now that Clinton is about to take power, he has turned a cold shoulder to advocates of health care for the people. At the same time Clinton advisors are lavishing praise on the self-serving proposals of the wealthy insurance corporations. ■

Activists protest Church anti-gay bigotry



Protesters denounce Catholic Church hierarchy for anti-gay bigotry outside St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Cardinal O'Connor had launched a campaign against new school proposals which advocated tolerance towards homosexuals.

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then President Richard Nixon. This scandal didn't just bring the Republican administration of Nixon into ill-repute, but shook many government institutions and brought out too much dirty linen. The politicians didn't want to go through it all again. So the Democrats didn't want to push things too far. They just wanted to use the Iran-contra hearings to put a bit of pressure on Reagan and Bush to work a bit more closely with Congress. The crimes would be all forgiven — after all, one doesn't maintain a

world empire without breaking a few eggs, or heads as the case may be — if only Reagan and Bush would be a bit more diplomatic.

This is why the Democrats could never find the "smoking gun" even while they were inspecting warehouses overflowing with hot and dirty weapons. This is why they gave immunity right and left to Reagan and Bush officials, and helped obstruct Walsh's investigation. And this is why they weren't that upset by Bush's pardons, with prominent leaders like Speaker of the House Tom Foley approving them in advance consultation with the White House. ■

The Workers' Advocate

Theoretical-political newspaper of the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA



Letters, orders and subscriptions:

The Workers' Advocate
P.O. Box 8706
Emeryville, CA 94662

From distributor: 25 cents
Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1 for single copy
Subscription: \$6.00 for 6 issues; \$11.00 for 12 issues
ISSN 0276-363X

El Estandarte Obrero

Spanish supplement to *The Workers' Advocate*

By mail: 50 cents for single copy From distributor: 25 cents
Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues, \$6.00 for 12 ISSN: 0276-4954 954

Order from: The Workers' Advocate

The people will suffer from Clinton's budget cutting

Throughout his election campaign Clinton promised that his number one aim was to create jobs and get the economy moving. But only two months after winning the elections, and even before his inauguration, Clinton changed his mind. He suddenly discovered that the budget deficit was much worse than had been predicted, and cutting the deficit became his first priority.

On January 6 the Bush administration announced new projections showing much larger deficits than he had previously predicted. Clinton decried what he called "the unsettling revelation" of a \$400 billion deficit by the end of the decade. And he declared, "This endless pattern of rising deficits must stop." (*New York Times*, Jan. 7) Soon after, his budget director Leon Panetta announced, "Our first priority is to develop that deficit reduction plan." (*New York Times*, Jan. 12)

Surprise at deficit a lie

But Clinton's surprise at the size of the deficits is just so much play acting.

Back in August the Congressional

Budget Office had already increased its estimate of the 1996 deficit by \$100 billion. But the Clinton campaign simply ignored the CBO predictions because the revised figures would have discredited Clinton's promises for jobs and other reforms.

Slashing social programs

And who will pay to cut the budget deficit? Under Bush and Reagan cutting the deficit was just another name for carrying out cutbacks against the working masses. And it looks like with Clinton it will just be more of the same.

Leon Panetta says Clinton will seek savings from cutting federal entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, unemployment compensation, and veterans benefits. "Everything is on the table," Panetta said. (*New York Times*, Jan. 12)

Regressive taxes

Meanwhile, Clinton also plans to raise taxes.

During the elections he talked about raising the top personal income tax rate.

Now Panetta says Clinton is also considering increases in consumption taxes, such as a gasoline tax or a national sales tax. Although Clinton campaigned for "tax fairness" these are the kind of taxes that hit at the masses the hardest.

Backtracking on promised military cuts

Even with such measures, Clinton says he probably won't be able to cut the deficit in half as he had promised during the election campaign. This is not only because the projected deficit is bigger than his earlier predictions. It is also because he is backtracking on promises to make other cuts.

Clinton aides are saying, for example, that they are unable to cut 25% of the White House staff as was promised during the elections. If Clinton can't even cut back his own staff, how is he going to slash the "waste" from the bureaucracy as he has promised?

And what about the overbloated military spending? Clinton only promised to cut an average of about \$10 billion a year from Bush's six-year military budget.

But now even that measly amount of cuts is being questioned. Les Aspen, Clinton's Secretary of Defense, says that Bush over-estimated military savings and under-estimated weapons costs. And the General Accounting Office said a "peace dividend" is doubtful since the additional costs might run up to \$100 billion. (*New York Times*, Jan. 8) Instead of cuts we could end up with increased spending on the war machine. After all, Clinton has always held that the U.S. must be maintained as "the strongest country in the world." (*New York Times*, June 16, 1992)

Make the rich pay!

Clinton is proving that he is just another servant of the wealthy capitalists. For years the rich have gotten richer still from tax breaks, and interest payments on the federal debt, and the bailout of the S&L's, and more. There is no reason that the working people should be the ones to suffer from budget cutbacks. It's time to make the rich pay to balance the budget!

Bush pardons his own:

Laws don't apply to imperialists

On December 24, Bush pardoned six former Reagan administration officials involved in the Iran-contra scandal. Thus Reagan's Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, and the CIA's Duane R. Clarridge were saved from facing trial on charges related to their lies to Congress. The four others pardoned had already been tried and convicted although the punishment they faced amounted to little more than a slap on the wrist. This includes ex-Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams, Reagan's National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane, and CIA officials Clair George and Alan G. Fiers Jr.

Remember the Iran-contra affair?

So the travesty continues. The Reagan-Bush administration organizes a plot to sell arms to Iran to fund a secret, illegal network to support the contra army in Nicaragua. At that time the contras are waging a war against the people of Nicaragua, seeking revenge on the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictator Somoza. The operation is run right out of the White House by Colonel Ollie North who tramples any law that gets in his way.

When the scandal comes to light, investigations were begun by the White House, which cleared itself of any wrongdoing. Then there were more investigations by Congress, and finally by independent prosecutor Lawrence Walsh. Charges and trials take place. But although tons of evidence point in their direction, Reagan and Bush are left alone. North winds up having his conviction overturned on appeal on absurd technicalities. Others have charges dismissed or get sentenced to probation. Only one of the 14 indicted on charges has yet to see a day in jail. Now Bush has put the crowning touch on this spectacle.

The Bush doctrine: any crime is OK for "patriots"

In explaining his pardons, Bush announced that the Iran-contra criminals should not be punished because "their motivation — whether their actions were right or wrong — was patriotism." In other words, Bush declared that he and his cronies should be able to get away with anything — and this "anything" just

happens to include funding arson and murder inside Nicaragua and printing a manual on how to commit sabotage and assassination — in the name of patriotism. If the policy happens to be illegal, so what — carry it out in secret.

Of course, this is nothing new for the White House and the Pentagon. It is business as usual. But Bush's pardons expose the fairy tales about being "a nation of laws." Bush has declared the real principles that guide the ruling class.

Meanwhile, Bush and his pals are crying that any charges brought by the special prosecutor Walsh amount to "the criminalization of policy differences." What twisted logic! Reagan and Bush carry out a policy of arming contras to kill those Nicaraguans who disagree with them. And then they complain of the "criminalization of policy differences"?

Of course, Bush and his pals are only referring to policy differences among the American politicians. No one else is supposed to have any right to a policy of their own. But even here, the hypocrisy is evident. How can Bush complain that the "policy differences" should have been debated, rather than being the subject of court proceedings, when the whole point is that Reagan and Bush kept these dirty deals secret?

Is the special prosecutor a tyrant?

To hear Bush and his cohorts tell it, the special prosecutor is a powerful tyrant bullying his helpless "patriots." Why an ordinary Republican like Walsh should have a vendetta against a Republican White House is something Bush doesn't bother to explain.

For that matter, the public was told over and over that the law on special prosecutors was created to restore confidence in the government; the special prosecutors are supposed to investigate criminal activity in the executive branch. The special prosecutors date back to when the Watergate scandal concerning the crimes of then President Richard Nixon were fresh in everyone's memory. But now, during the contragate scandal, Bush's complaint is that the special prosecutor actually showed a bit of energy in going after the wrongdoers. What a devastating criticism.

Actually, if the pardons show anything, it is how easy it is for the high and mighty to turn the special prosecutor's office into a joke. Even when Walsh was able to overcome all the White House's obstructions and get a few convictions, Bush could undo it all with a wave of his

pen. And take the ongoing refusal of Bush and Weinberger to turn over to Walsh those parts of their notes which reportedly refute Bush's lies about being "out of the loop" while the illegal acts were taking place. This is another example of how top administration officials have been able to keep covering up their role in the scandal for years on end.

Why Reagan and Bush could get away with murder

Why is it that after six years of investigations, the cover-up continues and top officials escape punishment?

Yes, Bush did his best to obstruct them. But the truth is Congress too didn't want the full truth revealed. The Congressional investigations gave the Democrats a chance to show their stuff. But rather than let the chips fall where they may, the chairman of the Senate investigation, Senator Inouye (D-Hawaii), confessed that the committee's "first priority was to make sure we didn't get into Reagan-bashing."

The politicians still remembered the Watergate scandal that had brought down

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Strikes and workplace news

Drywall strike continues

As reported in the last issue of *The Workers' Advocate*, the Mexican drywall workers' strike in Southern California has won significant victories -- 51 of the region's 90 contractors have signed agreements with the strikers. However, in San Diego, the struggle continues.

The situation in San Diego is intense. The repression is greater. San Diego has the only Drywall Police Task Force which follows the strikers 24 hours a day and escorts scabs. There have been shootings, pickets have been run over, and instead of arresting the drivers -- they arrest picketers!

Community support has strengthened the strike. Organizations such as the Service Employees' Justice for Janitors campaign, machinists and teachers' unions, Canadian workers and the AFL-CIO California Immigrant Workers Association have all assisted the strikers. MECHA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlan), an organization based at San Diego State College, has organized support committees, marches and food

drives.

On July 2, police arrested 153 picketers and charged them with kidnapping, trespassing and vandalism. When word spread of the arrests, over 100 women gathered and volunteered to take the place of their husbands on the picket lines. Women and children have held rallies in front of police stations demanding the release of the strikers.

There is one woman drywall worker in the San Diego area and she is on the picket line every day at 4:00 a.m. Her name is Encarnacion Sandolval and she has faced violence, shootings and police beatings but she continues to fight. Because of her strength and courage, her fellow workers have nicknamed her "La Adelita," after the legendary women of the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

"La Adelita" does whatever is necessary to further the struggle -- including getting arrested. "I always tell the men to stay strong," she says. "If we take one step back, the repression will be worse." ■



Southern California drywall workers in a mass picket.

Solidarity in Las Vegas

Over 20,000 workers shut down the glitzy Las Vegas strip the night of December 5. The protesters came out in support of the 550 workers from Frontier Hotel who have been on strike since September 21. Workers from Texas,

Minnesota, Florida, and as far away as Hawaii and Alaska swarmed the Las Vegas streets to show their support. Not one striker has crossed the picket line since the strike began. ■

Three year strike won in Ohio

After three-and-a-half years on the picket line, workers began to return to work at Midland Steel Products Company in mid-December. The Cleveland, Ohio company produces truck and bus frames.

In 1989, Midland Steel locked out its employees in an attempt to break the union. After posting 14 consecutive quarterly losses and losing two of its three major customers, the company gave up the struggle.

The workers won a three-year contract which provides improved pensions and health care benefits for retirees and full health coverage for employees, except for a small co-payment in the third year of the contract. Union members were reinstated with full seniority and pension benefits for the time they were forced to strike. As part of the settlement, all of the 110 scabs were fired. ■

USW bureaucrats prepare sellout

Contract talks are beginning covering 36,000 workers at four steel corporations -- Bethlehem Steel, Inland Steel, National Steel, and Armco Inc. But workers had best watch their backs.

The leaders of the United Steel Work-

ers union declared at the beginning of January they want "a completely new direction in collective bargaining." This is to include such things as "early bargaining" contracts that last up to "nine years," helping companies cut health care

costs by using "managed-care" systems, and a willingness for "restructuring the work force" and "reorganizing the way work is done" to help companies cut jobs and costs.

In return for these huge concessions, the USW leaders are asking that job cuts take place only through attrition or early retirements and that present wage-levels

be maintained.

USW president Lynn Williams declared, "The industry has needs and the U.S. economy has needs. Now is the time to move forward." But the workers also have needs, and these kinds of enormous concessions hardly protect them. The USW hacks "new direction" is just a new name for sellout. ■

Los Angeles teachers vote to strike

As we reported in our last issue, L.A. teachers are up in arms over massive cuts in pay and working conditions being proposed by the Los Angeles Unified School District. Other public school workers, parents and students are also upset about the years of school cutbacks. And some activists have had enough of the backroom dealings of the union leaders and have formed groups like SCAN (School/Community Action Network). The activists in SCAN face various questions of orientation such as to rely on the rank-and-file workers, or the lower-level union officials? But such initiative of rank-and-file workers and activists is one of the reasons why the potential for struggle is building in the Los Angeles schools.

Meanwhile the leaders of the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) themselves aren't so enthusiastic about a struggle. They prefer lobbying politicians and complaining that the cuts should come from other workers. The November 20 *United Teacher*, the union paper, says "In a strike no one really wins."

Divide and be conquered

On December 7, the substitute teachers committee meeting of the UTLA discusses an alleged copy of a draft plan by the school board. (Substitute teachers pay half dues to UTLA, and are a regular bargaining unit of UTLA.) The board plan calls for firing over 2,000 substitute teachers. This is to be accomplished by eliminating most District-funded teacher substitute time for illness, personal necessity, workers' compensation and bereavement. Moreover, regular teachers are themselves to cover the classes of absent teachers through additional unpaid work. The school district would then offer to split among the teachers some

of the saved money, provided the teachers had no more than three absence days per semester. Thus the district is preparing to try to play the regular teachers versus the substitutes.

Unite and fight back

On December 10 Los Angeles teachers voted overwhelmingly to go on strike on February 22 rather than accept the last contract offer from the school district. 21,194 teachers voted, and 78% say 'strike!'

On December 16 a meeting of the UTLA House of Representatives takes up sub issues. A number of subs had gotten together prior to the meeting and formed a caucus to push a resolution to oppose the school board's divide and conquer scheme. They talk and argue with the 300 UTLA House members to take a determined stand against cutting subs and forcing teachers to take forced unpaid coverages. Special Order #3 is moved, which calls for UTLA's leadership to reject any contract offer that eliminates day-to-day substitute teachers and required unpaid coverage, or that cuts sub pay more than that of other bargaining unit members. Furthermore, Special Order #3 calls for UTLA to direct its members to refuse to do unpaid coverage. The UTLA union leaders succeed in watering down this last point to refusing to do unpaid coverage unless ordered in writing to do so, in which case UTLA will then file a grievance. This resolution passes.

So the rank-and-file union members are successful for the time being in getting UTLA to stand up against the scheme to play off subs against regulars. This is important preparation for a united struggle. ■

Coal contract expires Feb. 1

The contract between the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the coal operators -- which covers 60,000 working and 160,000 retired miners -- expires February 1. In the negotiations that are currently underway, job security is becoming a major issue along with retiree health care.

Currently 55% of the electricity used in the USA is produced by coal (up from 46% twenty years ago). Yet all this coal is being produced by 127,000 miners -- both union and non-union -- 100,000 less than ten years ago. 10% more coal from 44% fewer miners. At the same time, coal prices are falling and competition has increased. Coal mine operators are looking for ways to cut costs -- including establishing non-union subsidiaries, a practice known as "double breasting." The last coal contract in 1988 was supposed to have dealt with the issue of "double breasting." But the coal operators soon found loopholes so that they would not have to comply with the agreement.

Usually the coal negotiations focus on the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) -- whatever the BCOA agrees to is usually adopted by another 300 companies. But in 1984 and 1988 individual operators refused to sign. This led to fierce strikes at A.T. Massey in '84 and at Pittston in '88. This year another group of coal operators has formed a second bargaining organization -- the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance (IBCBA). This further complicates attempts to maintain a coalfield-wide agreement and increases the possibility of another year of confrontation.

Vance International, the thug security firm, is hoping for a confrontation. (Vance worked for both Massey and Pittston.) As the contract talks neared, Vance sent promotional packets to coal operators offering to "help...through this difficult period." ■

DOWN WITH RACISM!

Detroit protesters demand justice



About 25 people picketed outside the courthouse in Detroit, Michigan on December 14. It was the first day of a pre-trial hearing for the four cops charged with beating to death the unemployed black worker, Malice Green. The demonstrators opposed talk of moving the trial out of Detroit and demanded the jailing of all the policemen involved.

The picketers were joined by another 15 people at the courtroom door. A number had come from the neighborhood where the murder took place. But they were barred from the courtroom on the claim that there were not enough seats. Only after protests were members of Malice Green's family even allowed in. Nevertheless, policemen supporting the murderers came and went from the hearing whenever they pleased.

Protesters remained outside the courtroom door for some time, denouncing the racist system and making plans for further demonstrations. Two days before, about 50 protesters demonstrated through downtown Detroit demanding justice for Malice Green.

During seven days of hearings, wit-

nesses detailed the murder of Mr. Green from 14 blows of police flashlights and his continued beating even after his head was already bashed in and medical units had arrived to take him for treatment.

Despite the evidence, the judge eventually decided to reduce the charges against a black police sergeant to only a misdemeanor charge of neglect of duty. He was the only supervisor at the scene, and he failed to stop the other policemen from murdering Malice Green. Nobody questioned the fact that the sergeant stood by while Green was savagely beaten. But since he wasn't present for the entire beating, the judge claimed it could not be determined whether the fatal blows were struck before or after the sergeant arrived.

Meanwhile, the other three white cops were held over for a trial in April on stiffer charges — Larry Nevers and Walter Budzyn are charged with second-degree murder and Robert Lessnau is charged with assault with intent to commit great bodily harm. Anti-racist activists are planning further protests to keep up the pressure. ■

Activists tear down KKK cross in Cincinnati

About 200 people marched on December 20 against the KKK in Cincinnati, Ohio. The racists had planned to erect a cross in the downtown area that day. But fearful of the demonstrators they postponed their plans.

Early the next morning the Klansmen did set up the cross in the city square. The Klansmen and their cross were protected from anti-racist activists by the police. The city government claimed the Klan has "religious freedom" to put up their cross based on a court ruling that

had allowed a Jewish menorah to be displayed for Hanukkah.

But the KKK is not a religious group, and their putting up of crosses has long been a symbol of hatred for blacks and Jews. Protesters were not about to allow the racists to get away with this. On three occasions during the course of a week, activists were able to tear down the racists' cross. Several anti-racists were arrested. After re-erecting the cross several times, the Klansmen took it down at the end of the week. ■

L.A. cops rampage

The Los Angeles Police Department tested its new plans for riot control in mid-December.

About 50 people were marching through L.A.'s South Central area on December 14. They were protesting the high bail set for four youth accused of beating truck driver Reginald Denny during the rebellions after the police were acquitted of the beating of Rodney King. Although the beating of Denny cannot be condoned, many people are angry that the black youth were thrown in jail with tens of thousands of dollars in bail while the cops who beat Rodney King have still never spent a night in jail.

When the protesters reached the site of the Denny beating, police suddenly descended on them and demanded they disperse. As protesters began to

denounce the cops, they were attacked. Stones were thrown at the cops. And the police sprayed the crowd with a newly developed 37-millimeter cannon that fires hard foam rubber bullets. Police began arresting demonstrators and also snatching up some residents off their porches. About 55 people were arrested.

But this was only the beginning. A tactical alert was called for the entire LAPD, the L.A. County Sheriff's department, and the Highway Patrol. A command center was established and a special force of 300 riot police carrying assault rifles sealed off the neighborhood. Ten-man squads were assigned to sweep the entire neighborhood street by street where they screamed abuse at residents, threw some in their homes, and randomly arrested others. Although TV crews

taped the outrages, the films were kept off the news on the claim they might have provoked people to take the streets against the police.

A few months back, a commission that studied the L.A. riots issued its report. Headed by ex-CIA and FBI head William Webster, the commission's main conclusion was that police response to the uprising was too slow and disorganized. It recommended more efficient coordination between city officials and the police and more detailed plans for harsher repression against the masses.

The newly-installed black police chief, Willie L. Williams, has taken the Web-

ster Commission's conclusions to heart. As one spokesman for the LAPD declared, the operation was a "good test of what we are doing and what we are preparing for early next year" when a new trial for the cops who beat Rodney King is to take place. (*Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 16, 1992)

Such a huge, savage response to only a small, peaceful demonstration brings to mind the words "police state." Obviously replacing the notorious chief Darryl Gates with a new, reformed police chief has not ended racist repression by the police department. It has only made them more organized and efficient. ■

Police-state measures in the name of 'fighting drugs'

On the 21st of December, residents of a four-block area in Lawrence, Massachusetts couldn't get to their homes without going through a police checkpoint. Police issued passes to the residents and took down the license plate numbers of all non-residents who went into the area.

Once again the poor and working people are being subjected to harassment under the guise of "fighting crime."

Twelve years of Reaganism have shown that all the police measures and prisons won't solve the problem of crime and drugs. It is the fundamental lack of decent jobs, housing and education that is at the heart of the problem. More police, more prisons and more checkpoints will do nothing but create more terror against the masses. ■

Racist cops beat up one of their own

Another example of racist police attitudes towards the masses came up in December, but this time they beat one of their own.

Reggie Miller is a black cop in Nashville who was on an undercover operation in an unmarked vehicle issued by the police. But the truck had expired tags and uniformed police tried to pull Miller over. Trying to protect his cover, Miller

drove three blocks to get out of the area. After he stopped the truck the white officers called for backup. And asking no questions, they dragged him from the truck and beat him. They let up only after other undercover policemen showed up and told them Miller was a fellow officer. Who knows how far it would have gone if it had been just an ordinary citizen with expired license plates? ■

Taming Malcolm X

The surge of interest in Malcolm X is evidence of a new generation coming up that is fed up with the racist establishment and tired of the lollygagging of the "respectable" black leaders. But we are also seeing a huge campaign by the capitalist ruling class to tame Malcolm X and make him into a harmless monument to the very establishment he sought to tear down.

Witness the clamoring of a bunch of black conservative Republicans. "Malcolm X would have to be a black conservative today," declared Alan L. Keyes who was the Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate in Maryland this year. Meanwhile, Tony Brown, the TV talk-show host and businessman who recently joined the Republican party, announced, "I think Malcolm X was essentially a black Republican by today's standards." Similarly, other black Reaganites like Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas have claimed they are the true heirs of Malcolm X.

How can these reactionaries lay claim

to the heritage of Malcolm X? Well, they say that just like them Malcolm X stood for self-help for the black community and condemned the liberals. But they completely cover up the fact that Malcolm X was, above all, a revolutionary.

Where Malcolm X condemned the racist system and reached out to help the black masses organize themselves to overthrow it, the black Republicans condemn the black masses for their problems and reach out to accommodate the racist establishment. Where Malcolm X denounced the liberal Democrats and "respectable" civil rights leaders for accommodating the racist establishment and forgetting the plight of the masses, the Afro-American Reaganites claim that the liberals put too many demands before the government instead of demanding discipline and sacrifice from the ordinary black people.

True, Malcolm X did have a name for the likes of the black conservatives. But it was not "friend," oh no, it was "Uncle Tom." ■

Chicago public housing: Cure worse than the disease

In the wake of the tragic shooting death of seven-year-old Dantrell Davis, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley ordered a massive police occupation of the Cabrini Green Housing project in Chicago.

In the name of dealing with gangs and

drugs, hundreds of police swept through buildings, searching unit by unit even if residents weren't present. Hundreds of residents were evicted for not having their names on the leases. Lockdowns —

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U.S. intervention in Somalia Humanitarianism is not the motive

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U.S. troops. And despite some disruption of existing relief operations, the U.S. military presence seems for the time being to have helped break some of the security logjam that had blocked relief shipments at the ports and along the roadways.

But does this mean that the Pentagon has suddenly become an angel of mercy? Does this mean that U.S. foreign policy is now oriented towards humanitarianism? Hardly so. No matter what one thinks about whether Somalia needed some type of outside intervention and what that ought to have been, the claims of the U.S. government to humanitarianism need to be challenged. Working people need to know what the real interests of the U.S. government are in this mission and what the consequences of such an intervention are likely to be.

Claim of humanitarianism is suspect

If the U.S. intervention is motivated simply by the noble goal of humanitarianism, then why did Bush wait so long before he took any initiatives towards helping Somalia?

The Somalia tragedy did not emerge in December when Bush decided to intervene. It unfolded over at least the last two years. Only last summer did the U.S. authorize an emergency airlift of food, and this was a pittance.

What's more, the U.S. government shares a big part of the blame for the Somali crisis itself. Today the news reports may focus on local warlords, armed gangsters, and such, but how did Somalia get to such a state? The truth is, Washington had backed the Siad Barre dictatorship since the late '70s after it fell out with Moscow. The guns ravaging Somalia today come mainly from these two superpowers. (The background to the Somali crisis is explored in greater detail in an accompanying article.)

If not humanitarianism, then what are the interests behind this latest U.S. action?

This isn't really about Somalia

The fact that people are being fed in Somalia today by U.S. troops is because in current world conditions, that act fits some larger interests of the ruling class.

But this isn't a case of immediate interest in Somali territory.

Somalia did have strategic importance during the Cold War, but no longer. Then the Horn of Africa was caught up in rivalry between the Soviet Union and the U.S., and Somalia was an outpost for one first, the other later. But with the Cold War over, there is no big power rivalry currently in this region.

Some who are distrustful of U.S. motives have argued that Somalia would provide bases for the U.S. for its imperial shield over the Persian Gulf region. But the Pentagon already had base facilities in Berbera, Somalia. In the recent Gulf War, it turned out that these facilities were not needed by the Pentagon planners. When they have so many other bases in the region, does it mean Somalia is hardly a prize being hungared for.

In fact, the policy of neglect over the last few years showed that Somalia as a country is not of much interest to U.S. imperialism today. There are more global interests at stake here.

Public relations for the Pentagon

To begin with, this is a huge PR campaign for the Pentagon.

Launched under the high-sounding goal of humanitarianism, the Somalia mission is designed to paint up the U.S. military machine as a noble outfit that Americans and the whole world should be proud of. Only two years ago, this war machine killed over a hundred thousand Iraqis in U.S. imperialism's battle with Iraq over control of oil in the Persian Gulf. Now we are being treated to pictures of Marines feeding starving children.

In particular, the Somalia intervention is used as one more rationale to convince us that the government must maintain a worldwide military apparatus. This is seen as especially important because — with the collapse of the Soviet Union — many people, even among the ruling class, have called for scaling back the military budget.

In a recent article in the establishment journal *Foreign Affairs* on "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," General Colin Powell supports "humanitarian missions" as one of the key tasks of the future, and he notes that, "...the American people are getting a solid return on their defense investment even as from all corners of the nation come shouts for imprudent reductions that would gut their armed forces." (Winter 1992/1993 edition)

"Humanitarian intervention": a new policy for the post-Cold War world

Many areas of the world are in dire straits. Some countries and states have collapsed or are near such a fate. Some of this has to do with the fallout from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some has to do with wars set off elsewhere during the Cold War, such as in Africa. Some has to do with the brutality of superpower-backed local despots. Much has to do with how world capitalism has squeezed many poor countries with draconian economic policies, such as the demand for interest payments on huge debt burdens. The result is many spots of instability around the world.

The rich powers do not care about the suffering of so many millions of people. But such problems do not remain self-contained within this or that border. They set off large refugee movements, such as those within Africa and Europe. They have a destabilizing influence on neighboring countries. And graphic pictures of starvation and misery do not exactly embellish capitalist propaganda at the end of the 20th century. They expose that the triumphant global victory of the capitalist free market is not exactly all that it is made out to be.

These problems require economic and political solutions. But imperialism won't address those issues. Instead, it wants to deal with eyesores through measly offers of charity and the club of interventionist police actions.

The big powers of world imperialism do not yet have a consensus on how to carry out these police actions. Many ideas are today being debated, such as whether the U.S. should be sole world cop or not, what the responsibilities of the U.N. and other powers are, where action should be taken, and even whether or not a new kind of colonialism is needed. The fact that in the discussion of world problems, militarism — and even a return to colonialism — are overriding themes underscores the bankruptcy of world capitalism. As here at home, the solution of social problems is to be ignored in favor of repression as the fundamental solution.

U.S. leadership of world capitalism

With his intervention in Somalia, George Bush wanted to leave behind a



A large U.S. Marine kicks a small Somali kid who was allegedly throwing rocks. The militarist outlook and humanitarianism don't mix well.

demonstration of some of his key ideas on this new policy of the post Cold War world. This forms a cornerstone of his "New World Order."

The instrument: military intervention in regional hotspots. Accompanied perhaps by charity. The method: working in concert with other powers, big and small, but keeping control in the hands of the U.S. government. Sharing the economic costs as well. This is the Bush doctrine of "humanitarian intervention." And given Clinton's eager support for such ideas, it is also going to be part of the new president's agenda.

Thus Bush sought U.N. approval for the Somalia operation, as well as mobilizing military forces from other countries, but he demanded control in the hands of the U.S. In this way, George Bush bolsters U.S. imperialism's claim of global leadership of world capitalism in the era in which the fight with the Soviet Union is over. The U.S. may be declining economically relative to its German and Japanese competitors who are seeking to catch up, but Bush is determined to show that it is military superpower status which really counts.

There were no major powers urging the Somalia operation. But a number of small African countries were concerned with the worsening situation there. Somalia thus proves somewhat useful for U.S. imperialism getting goodwill from such governments. Several African countries had grumbled about the U.S. and U.N. policy of benign neglect. Meanwhile, many Muslim countries have been critical of Western non-intervention in Bosnia. Somalia is a much easier case than Bosnia to buy some goodwill on the cheap.

How will the militarist mentality deal with Somalia's problems?

What are the prospects then for the "humanitarian intervention" in Somalia?

The U.S. troops may be providing some emergency relief in Somalia, but there are serious problems with a U.S. military-based humanitarian mission as the solution to Somalia's problems.

For one thing, the U.S. military isn't known for its kindly attitude to the people of other countries. It has long been an oppressor force victimizing the people of Third World countries. This has reinforced all sorts of racist and domineering attitudes. So while the U.S. forces appear to have restrained themselves so far from any major acts directed against the Somali people, there have been reports of many small incidents

where they have displayed the imperial arrogance that U.S. troops have long been notorious for. Some black soldiers, for instance, have been pained to see white troops play cruel, racist games with Somalis, such as demanding they dance in exchange for food, water, etc. The longer the U.S. military presence stays on, the more such incidents are likely to grow into worse outrages.

Beyond this, the militarist mentality itself may turn out to be a bigger problem.

An exclusive focus on using the military to secure relief distribution means that the social focus of the intervention is at best relief. But Somalia needs more than relief. For instance, if seed is not provided to farmers and help given to them, there will be no harvest next season and the food crisis will fester, or worsen. As well, the collapse of veterinary services has already led to an outbreak of rinderpest which threatens disaster on a wider scale to the country's livestock, which millions depend on for their livelihood. So far these kinds of problems have not been addressed, the military being an unlikely vehicle for that.

But the key question determining whether the Somalia operation turns out to be a total fiasco or not is whether there is real progress in a political settlement. Otherwise, the likelihood is that once the foreign troops leave, the situation may return to the previous chaos or worse.

However, disarming and a political solution are delicate matters, in which a militarist approach is likely to worsen things.

Take the question of disarmament. Besides the organized factions and outright bandits, many others have had to become armed simply to survive. In the conditions of anarchy and violence, armed force is the difference between survival and death by starvation. It is one thing to seize the arms caches of the warlords. But if others have their weapons simply taken away, they have to be replaced with something else: with food and income. This requires the restoration of some kind of economy that can provide jobs. If you don't, people will be left to again turn to desperate measures. This underscores the inherent limitation of trying to solve the Somalia crisis by police action.

Moreover, there are also other dangers in the effort to disarm. Which of the armed factions will be disarmed? Will the

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Background to the Somalia crisis

A Cold War tragedy

The hunger and death stalking Somalia is not the product of nature, but a result of the evil that men do in their thirst for power and wealth. However, this isn't just the creation of Somali tyrants and warlords and their lust for power. Decades in the making, the tragedy in Somalia is also the creation of the world's biggest warlords of recent times, the U.S. and former Soviet Union.

True, nature has brought a drought to Somalia. But that would not have wrought such a destructive fate had it not been for the civil war. It is the massive disruption of the food supply by war — and the resulting collapse of the social fabric — which has killed perhaps as many as 350,000 poor Somalis.

What are the roots of that war? Who brought it into being?

Somalia is awash in weapons. How did it get those guns? This poor country neither makes weapons nor could it afford to buy too many of them. The truth is, those guns were brought into the country until not so long ago by the Soviet Union and the U.S. as the superpowers successively wooed the former Somali government for the cynical game of Cold War geo-politics. One holding aloft the banner of the "free world," the other posturing in the name of socialism, the two superpowers were simply looking for economic and strategic advantages in worldwide spheres of imperial influence.

It is this combination which is at the heart of Somalia's tragedy. Coming to power in a world divided by superpower rivalry, the Somali elite sought to expand its wealth and power through money and guns flowing in from abroad. And like greedy drug traders, the superpowers were all too eager to expand their influence in the region by providing this deadly "fix."

Once the Cold War wound down and Somalia descended into desperate chaos, it was abandoned to its fate. For nearly two years, the country fell into a deeper and deeper hole. But the U.S. and other great powers showed little interest. Now the U.S. military has gone in there with charity and a global police action. They want to be congratulated for the nobility of their humanitarian concern. Pardon us if history makes us skeptical of this cynical claim.

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weaker factions be left at the mercy of the bigger ones? Can any of that be done without progress in a political settlement? And if such a settlement is not worked out, there is even the possibility of U.S. troops being drawn into the civil war itself, either one side or another, or against all the armed groupings.

In short, the return to any semblance of normal life and stability in Somalia depends on whether the armed factions and clans can work out a reasonable compromise among themselves. Whether this is possible is hard to predict in a situation when no clan trusts another.

Prospects?

If this does not succeed, Somalia is looking at continued civil war, unless the big powers decide on military occupation — and that may bring on a new round of war. Those are the worst-case scenarios.

But even if the search for a political deal is successful, this may mean the

A plaything in the Cold War

Somalia is a very poor and undeveloped country in the Horn of Africa. It was conquered by European colonialists in the 19th century. Somalia was drawn into the world market, and commercial relations grew, but little economic development took place. When it became independent in 1960, the people were largely semi-nomadic pastoralists, organized on a clan and tribal basis. The Somalis did speak a common language and were followers of Islam, but in the absence of much economic development, national ties were weak.

Those who took the reins of the Somali Republic were largely from the tiny urban elite. They adopted as their main goal their personal enrichment from the government treasury, which was drawn from taxes on the masses and foreign aid programs. From very early on, foreign aid and loans made up a large portion of government revenue. To get their hands on this money, the Somali rulers recognized the effectiveness of playing on the world rivalry between the U.S. and Soviet Union.

In 1969, the military took over under the leadership of Siad Barre. He proclaimed a revolutionary regime, but there were only minor reforms. Very little was done for the development of agriculture and livestock production, the main economic activities of the Somali people.

Meanwhile, Siad Barre increased the stakes in playing the Cold War chess game.

First he lined up with Moscow

In neighboring Ethiopia, U.S. imperialism was heavily involved in backing Emperor Haile Selassie. Selassie's regime provided the U.S. with facilities for Washington's telecommunications spying network aimed against the Soviet Union.

Siad Barre decided to forge an alliance with the Soviets. He allowed them naval base facilities. In return he got Moscow's help in arming his regime. Siad Barre used this aid to launch a nationalist crusade against Ethiopia using old grievances over the territory of Ogaden, a Somali-populated area in Ethiopia. At the altar of this expansionist war, he further sacrificed Somalia's economic

restoration of a Somali state (perhaps two if the north insists on sticking to secession), but what would such a state look like? Many people have expressed concern that the outside intervention will set up a regime dominated by the warlords. The problem is real, but unfortunately there is no other likely prospect. In one way or another those groups with the guns in their hands will dominate Somalia's immediate future.

We cannot expect a government favorably inclined towards the majority of the Somali people. The saddest fact about Somalia is that during all the political upheavals of the last several decades, no democratic movement standing above narrow clan interest was able to develop. There are indeed many well-intentioned people in Somalia who are guided by the desire to help their people, but they are not organized and have little clout. The best hope for Somalia today is that with the restoration of some semblance of normalcy, a compromise between the warring sides may allow some space for democratic and progressive-minded people to organize. ■

development.

But soon the power balance in the Horn of Africa shifted. In 1974, a revolution swept away Haile Selassie. Siad Barre used the ensuing turmoil to launch an all-out war to seize the Ogaden. Out of the Ethiopian unrest, however, emerged a military regime there which sought a close alliance with Moscow. Ethiopia was a much bigger fish for the Soviet Union, and they immediately poured in military aid to that country. With Soviet and Cuban help, the pro-Soviet Ethiopian despot Mengistu drove the Somali military out of the Ogaden.

Siad Barre now turned to the U.S.

Then he became Washington's friend

He was warmly received, and now it was Washington's turn to shower Siad Barre with money and guns. In exchange, Somalia allowed itself to be used as a U.S. base for the Pentagon's Rapid Deployment Force in the Middle East. Through both the Carter and Reagan-Bush years, Siad Barre was rewarded with nearly \$800 million in U.S. aid.

The guns you see in Somalia today are largely the product of two decades of arming of the Siad Barre regime, first by the Soviet Union and later by the U.S.

The collapse of the Siad Barre regime

Siad Barre ruled through bribing his loyalists while repressing his critics. Despite his national pretensions, he favored his own clan over others. This repressive and divisive policy rent the social fabric.

It also helped ensure that when organized opposition grew, it organized largely on a clan basis. Many ordinary Somalis joined the growing guerrilla movements out of genuine hatred of tyranny, but most of the leaders were members of the wealthy strata who sought control of a post-Barre government largely as a means to fatten their own wallets. The inability of a democratic opposition to emerge on a non-clan basis would only worsen the next chapter of Somalia's agony.

Once the opposition grew, Siad Barre embarked on a brutal scorched earth policy against the population. In 1988, he decimated two northern cities which had been captured by rebel forces. At least 5,000 civilians were killed between May 1988 and May 1989.

We should not forget that Siad Barre's war against his own people was supported by the U.S. military. Even as late as June 1988, the Pentagon supplied \$1.4 million in lethal aid, including 1,200 M-16s and 2.8 million rounds of ammunition.

Soon however, the geo-political picture shifted. With Gorbachev in power in Moscow, the Soviet Union decided to cut loose its clients in Africa. Mengistu in Ethiopia was left in the lurch. This helped rebel armies move closer to power in their long war against the Ethiopian regime. In this situation, Somalia became a low-priority item for U.S. imperialism. While the Pentagon wanted to continue supporting their traditional client, Congress and the State Department decided that Somalia was no longer important to U.S. interests. U.S. aid dried up.

Opposition forces in Somalia began to close in on Siad Barre's regime. He was forced to flee in January 1991. But the opposition soon fell upon one another. The group based in northern Somalia declared its secession from Somalia. The southern forces could not agree on forming a new regime. The Somali central government had thus collapsed and nothing emerged to replace it. The

warlord-commanded guerrilla armies began to contest one another and the country was engulfed in all-out civil war.

In the ensuing fight of all against all, arming oneself became the basic means of survival. All sorts of militias were formed. Some were outright bandits, others did it for survival. In this situation, a relatively minor drought wreaked much wider havoc.

Benign neglect from the U.N. and U.S.

Siad Barre had fled. And what about his erstwhile backer the U.S. government? It wasn't to be seen.

Even though the rebel Somali armies were eager to preserve close ties with the U.S., Washington didn't even attempt to mediate a deal among the opposition. This stood in contrast to intense diplomatic efforts made by the State Department at the same time in neighboring Ethiopia. But their mediation in Ethiopia had been aimed at ensuring that the formerly radical forces who had taken power had really given up their radicalism. In the case of Somalia, where there were no radical forces involved and where U.S. mediation may perhaps have forestalled a descent into civil war among the armed pro-Western forces, no efforts were made at all.

Meanwhile, the U.N.'s relief machinery also decided to abandon Somalia, under the excuse that things had become too dangerous. The task of feeding the Somali victims of war and famine was largely left to the International Committee of the Red Cross and various smaller aid agencies, assisted by various Somalis who wanted to do something for their people.

The Somalia crisis continued to deteriorate for a year before talks began in the U.N. about returning there and perhaps setting up a U.N.-authorized peacekeeping force to back up relief efforts and broker a political deal. Notably, when the issue first came up, the U.S. stubbornly opposed a U.N. peacekeeping force for Somalia. For this Washington came under criticism from various African governments.

The U.N.'s actions were slow and largely ineffective. Eventually a U.N. peacekeeping force was authorized, but its ineptness even came under criticism from the person in charge of U.N. operations in Somalia. Somalis themselves were even more upset at the U.N.

Meanwhile, the U.S. continued to ignore the Somali tragedy. Only last summer did Bush come around to authorizing the first airlift of food, shortly after the U.N. Security Council had finally called for a relief airlift. The European Community also agreed to send emergency aid.

This long policy of benign neglect underscores that there is more to Operation Restore Hope than humanitarianism. The U.S. and European governments sit on huge stores of surplus food. They have the ability to mobilize huge forces on quick notice when it comes to what they consider their vital interests — as we saw during the Gulf War. But even an emergency food airlift to Somalia was not considered until very late in the game.

Today the U.S. government acts as if it is guided by humanitarian goals in Somalia. But yesterday it ignored the Somalia crisis, and before that, it helped create the tragic scenario itself. The starving people of Somalia have no choice but to accept food distributed with the help of U.S. troops. But they ought to be wary of falling for the propaganda of the U.S. military wearing a Santa Claus outfit. History's lessons are too important to be forgotten. ■

Defend women's rights!

20 years after Roe v. Wade

Where do we stand? Where do we go?

The *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973 legalized abortion. Yet today, 20 years later, more and more women are denied the right of choice. The Supreme Court has just said abortion may be legal, but it's also OK to taunt and humiliate women who seek abortions (see accompanying articles). Fewer and fewer doctors and clinics are performing abortion, less and less funds are available to disadvantaged women, more and more humiliations are imposed on women seeking abortions.

Surely in this society, progress is not inevitable. The faster the pace of life, the more this society seems to run backward. And the further backward it will go until the workers and poor have something to say about where things are going.

The Freedom of Choice Act

But wait! Clinton has just been elected!

Expectations are high that the Freedom of Choice Act will be passed. But this act allows the states to impose restrictions on abortion, from parental consent regulations to fetal viability rules. What? You never heard about that? Your local Democratic politician failed to mention it? And so did NOW and NARAL? But why should they spoil the surprise? For isn't the giving of constant little surprises like this the surest sign of



Mass demonstrations in Buffalo, New York last spring stopped the "pro-lifers" cold and showed how to fight Operation Rescue.

the true feelings the ruling class and the bourgeois-oriented organizations have for the workers and the poor? And the Clinton administration will be one surprise after another.

In fact, the Freedom of Choice Act has a certain similarity to the stand of the Supreme Court: abortion will be legal, but so are restrictions on abortion. This act will prevent a complete ban on abortion, but preserve the situation of state by state battles on abortion rights.

The Democrats are also promising

legislation to reverse the recent Supreme Court decision hindering federal intervention to defend clinics. But even if the Democrats make good on this promise, the federal courts and marshals will be no more keen to defend clinics than they have been in the past. They rarely show much energy.

It will be up to women's rights activists to defend abortion clinics now as in the past. Where matters are left to the federal marshals or local police, as they were in Wichita in the summer of '91, women's rights suffer a setback. Where the pro-choice activists come out to defend the clinics themselves, as in Buffalo last spring, then the cause of women's rights is strengthened.

And beyond the defense of clinics, what about the massive cuts in funding for women's health clinics? Is it likely that Clinton will do much about this when belt tightening in the name of cutting the deficit is becoming his top priority?

The cause of women's rights is linked closely to the condition of the working people as a whole. When wages are being cut, schools closed, and social programs gutted, women bear the brunt. And it is when working women and men rise up at the place of work, in the communities, and the schools, it is then that real relief will be at hand.

One step forward, two steps back

Indeed, why is a technically advanced country like the U.S. retreating into religious harassment of women at clinics? Why does the yearly increase in workers' productivity show up as a yearly decrease in wages and benefits? Why are the hopes for social progress always frustrated by long years of backlash?

These are the signs of a society divided against itself. They are the signs of a society based on the rich lording it over the poor. They are the signs of a society where production by large numbers of

people is governed by the private property interests of the few.

This is not the result of listening to the wrong think tank or selecting the wrong candidate in the primaries. It is a general feature of capitalist society. It is seen all over the globe, in countries ruled by the most diverse politicians. So long as society is divided into rich exploiter and working mass, there sooner or later we will find the backlash of religious bigotry and chauvinism, and unemployment and suffering in free-market "shock therapy." It is seen in the tyranny of the remaining state-capitalist societies falsely calling themselves communist, and in the growing intolerance and racist bigotry in the free-market societies of Europe.

Let the slaves unite to turn society upside down

On the 20th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* let us pledge to keep up the struggle for women's right to choose. But let us also pause to consider what it takes to end the division of society into master and slave, rich and poor. Can we leave it to the politicians of the master class to do this? Or won't they always be disposed to blame the problems of this society on the supposed lack of values, failure to go to church, and lack of obedience of the poor?

No, the workers and the poor had better have the audacity to take upon themselves the task of changing society. Let working women and men unite to defend themselves against bigotry, anti-women harassment, and social backlash. And let us also take upon ourselves the task of social transformation: let us embark on the long road to building up a revolutionary unity strong enough to overturn the vast interests of private greed and ownership.

Women's right activists! Let us defend the clinics. The Democrats won't do it for us. Nor will the pro-capitalist leaders of the trade unions, with their bloated salaries rivaling CEOs. So defend the clinics by relying on the rank-and-file workers, students and activists. Let us reach into the factories and working class communities and schools to develop political discussion and initiative. Bring as many workers and disadvantaged people as possible into the struggle around the clinics. And let us rally them to take up action against the capitalist offensive on all fronts — whether for abortion rights, or for health benefits; whether against racism or against imperialist war; whether for wages or for better conditions for the youth.

On the 20th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, it is clear that the Supreme Court has not and will never be the guarantor of women's rights. It is up to the working class to organize itself to be the shield that the ruling courts will never be. ■

Clinic defense in Puerto Rico

On November 7, pro-choice activists in San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico, organized what is reportedly the first active defense of the Ladies Medical Center, a clinic that has been under attack there. About 30 anti-abortion zealots were blocking the entrances when the pro-choice activists arrived on the scene. The pro-choice forces set up a picket with about 30 people in the grass median of the street in front of the clinic.

There was a court order prohibiting the leader of the anti-abortion group, Reverend Welch, from blockading the clinic. But the authorities weren't keen on enforcing it. They told the clinic director, Ana Gonzalez Davila, to go to court and talk to a judge. Meanwhile the cops did nothing until Ana Gonzalez returned from the court with a summons for Welch to appear before a municipal judge. Welch was then removed and taken to court. But he was released less

than an hour later, and returned to the clinic.

Meanwhile, as the hours passed, the pro-choice forces were losing their patience. Despite police pressure, they began to move from the median closer to the clinic and the clinic blockaders. Finally, after Welch returned to the clinic, the police began to arrest the anti-abortion mob, five hours after the blockade began. But apparently no charges were laid.

Abortion rights are under attack in Puerto Rico, with anti-abortion blockaders backed by many local politicians. The last Puerto Rican Secretary of Health, Jose Soler Zapata, went so far as to use various pretexts to shut down all but seven of the island's abortion clinics. The recent clinic defense shows that progressive-minded Puerto Ricans are standing up against this anti-women offensive. ■

Abortion rights set back in Poland

Women's rights suffered a setback in Poland in early January when the lower house of parliament passed a restrictive new law banning most abortions. Parliament's upper house is sure to pass the bill also, and President Lech Walesa is a supporter of the bill.

So it appears that the reactionaries in Poland, particularly the Catholic church hierarchy, will achieve a partial victory in their drive to push women backwards.

The law bans abortions except in case of incest, rape, or when the mother's life is in danger. Mass protests against the original bill that had been pushed by the church hierarchy considerably softened the law. The original bill would have

banned all abortions without exception. The church intends to still push for the broader law, and they have a valuable ally in President Walesa.

Women have been particularly targeted in Poland's transition to private-market capitalism. They lost free day care, three years' paid maternity leave, and liberal leave to look after sick children they enjoyed under the old state-capitalist regime. They also lost their jobs; the majority of workers who have lost their jobs under capitalist "shock therapy" are women. To wage a struggle against free-market shock therapy, the working people of Poland must also stand up for women's rights. ■

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Supreme Court encourages anti-abortion violence

On January 14, the Supreme Court voted 6-3 that the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871, which granted federal protection for various rights, can no longer be used by federal judges to grant injunctions banning anti-abortion clinic blockades. This post-civil war law prohibits conspiracies to deprive "any person or class of persons of the equal protection of the laws." It was aimed originally at allowing federal protection for newly-freed slaves and other black people against KKK violence, seeing that many state and local governments failed to do so.

The Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Bray vs. Alexandria (Virginia) Women's Health Clinic* overturned a District Court decision that used the 1871 law to issue an injunction against clinic blockades planned by Operation Rescue (OR) in the Washington, D.C. area. OR was joined in its fight to overturn the District Court ruling by none other than Bush's "Justice" Department. As always, Bush thinks that violence in pursuit of his policy aims is no crime.

EGGING ON THE CLINIC BLOCKADES

Today, anti-abortion fanatics terrorize women at clinics, spray clinics with chemicals, riddle them with bullets, and stalk clinic personnel. And how does the highest court in the land, these guardians of "law and order," respond? They say the federal courts should stand aside.

The ruling puts in doubt a number of injunctions against anti-abortion protests that threaten access to clinics.

It is well-known that the anti-abortion bigots are often assisted in their violence against clinics by a friendly reception from conservative state and local officials. They are repeatedly allowed to trespass, assault women, and violate local ordinances while police watch them for hours without doing anything. This is one reason why pro-choice lawyers often went to the federal courts.

THE FEDERAL COURTS ARE NO REPLACEMENT FOR MASS CLINIC DEFENSE

This doesn't mean that the federal courts were cracking down hard against clinic blockades. The federal courts are loaded up with a majority of Reagan-Bush appointees, so finding a judge who would consider protecting the clinics is no easy task. But even when a judge consents to act, this is no panacea.

Take the massive clinic blockade in Wichita in 1991. The local and state authorities let OR shut down the clinics. Enter Federal Judge Patrick Kelly and his federal marshals. The marshals were

about as uninterested in protecting the clinics as the local cops. Eventually, Kelly prodded them to act. But this took a couple of weeks. And even Kelly's threat of big charges against the OR goons proved empty.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) and other pro-establishment women's groups worked in Wichita to discourage pro-choice activists from coming out to the clinics to defend them against the blockaders. Instead they relied on the police and courts. And the result? Wichita became a byword for what should not be allowed to happen. The threat of another Wichita became a rallying cry for clinic defense across the country.

JUSTICE SCALIA SAYS ORGANIZED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN'S RIGHTS IS NO CONSPIRACY

Still, the federal courts did provide some obstacle to the clinic blockaders. And the majority of the Supreme Court thought that nothing done in the name of opposing abortion could be so bad; Justice Scalia, in his majority opinion, held that the violence against clinics could not be labeled anti-woman or a product of hatred or even a conspiracy.

Take the question of conspiracy. Scalia admitted that the anti-abortion blockaders, who were petitioning the Supreme Court to throw out the injunctions against them from lower courts, aimed at denying the right to abortion. And he admitted that he was discussing the denial of this right by trespass and obstruction. So he was not talking about anti-abortion forces simply expressing their views, but their forcible attempts to prevent other people from exercising their right to get care at the clinics. But Scalia didn't think denial of this right to abortion was of any importance for federal law, and no conspiracy to deny this right really counted as a conspiracy. He wrote, in his intricate legal prose: "Whereas, unlike the right of interstate travel, the asserted right to abortion was assuredly 'aimed at' by the petitioners, deprivation of that Federal right ... cannot be the object of a purely private conspiracy." (*New York Times*, Jan. 14)

Why doesn't this count as conspiracy? Well, for one thing, Scalia likes the arguments against abortion. He asserts that "there are common and respectable reasons for opposing it." Thus, in Scalia's view, violence on behalf of opinions he finds respectable are not a conspiracy in the federal sense. Just as Bush pardons all those "patriots" who committed crimes in pursuit of the Reagan-Bush war

against Nicaragua, so Scalia exempts all those with respectable opinions from federal laws against beating up their opponents.

WHO WILL DEFEND THE CLINICS?

While the Supreme Court majority was cozying up with the right-wing kooks, a number of pro-choice politicians in Congress announced they would come to the rescue. They are promising legislation to give federal judges the authority to issue restraining orders against clinic blockades.

If they carry through, this might return the situation to about what it was before the Supreme Court ruling. But it would still be no guarantee that access to the

clinics will be safeguarded. Neither federal nor local courts have ever guaranteed that.

The fight against the anti-abortion bullies must center on organizing the mass of pro-choice activists to come out and defend the clinics themselves. Clinic defenses and other mass actions are what has really put a spoke in the wheels of the anti-abortion bullies. It is mass action in defense of women's rights, and not legal mumbo-jumbo in the courts, that punctures the anti-abortion fanatics' claim to be the real representative of the common people. The Supreme Court decision has the anti-abortion thugs huffing and puffing again. Now is the time to meet the new challenge by building up the clinic defense networks. ■

MISSISSIPPI RESTRICTIONS UPHeld Supreme Court is an 'undue burden' on women

In the last two months the Supreme Court has continued its policy of forbidding an outright ban on abortion while encouraging the states to place one restriction after another on abortion rights. This is the policy set out in its June 1992 ruling in the Pennsylvania case. The court says that it accepts the *Roe v. Wade* decision guaranteeing abortion rights, but it is allowing those rights to be stripped away in practice through one restriction after another. Below we discuss two rulings on state laws, and in an accompanying article we discuss the decision encouraging violence against health clinics.

OUTRIGHT BAN IN GUAM REMAINS OVERTURNED

A lower court had earlier overturned a 1990 Guam law that forbid almost all abortions; the law only allowed abortions when two doctors found that the pregnancy was a grave threat to the woman's health or might kill her. The lower court ruling was appealed to the Supreme Court. But on November 30, the court refused to hear this appeal. Thus the ruling of the lower court stands, and the Guam ban has been struck down. Outright bans are still not allowed.

UPHOLDING MISSISSIPPI'S RESTRICTIONS

But a week later, the justices refused to hear a challenge to a Mississippi law limiting abortion rights. This law requires a woman who goes to an abortion facility to be subjected to "counseling" which consists of state-mandated lies. Then, if the woman is determined to go through with the abortion, she has to wait 24 hours for another appointment in order to have the operation.

The Supreme Court's decision not to hear a challenge to the Mississippi law is in line with their June 1992 decision which allowed Pennsylvania to impose anti-abortion "counseling" and a waiting period similar to Mississippi's. In addition, Pennsylvania was allowed to have "parental consent" restrictions which banned women under 18 from getting abortions without approval of a parent or a judge.

"UNDUE BURDEN" STANDARD IS AN UNDUE BURDEN

The justices allowed the Pennsylvania restrictions on the grounds that they allegedly did not place "substantial obstacles" in the way of women seeking an abortion and therefore were not an "undue burden." The Supreme Court encourages states to place burdens on women seeking abortion, but they are not

supposed to be "undue" burdens.

The idea that such restrictions as waiting periods, parental consent, and false medical advice are not cruel obstacles, especially for poor or otherwise disadvantaged women, is a fraud.

Just look at the mandated waiting periods. They are a real hardship for the many poor women who do not live near a clinic, and there are less and less clinics all the time. In Mississippi, for instance, there are only three abortion clinics, and almost half the women in the state live over 100 miles from a clinic. So a waiting period may require either a protracted stay, or a costly second trip; it may involve the loss of pay, or even of a job, or difficulties in arranging care for one's family during one's absence, or the loss of privacy in making the trip. Abortion has dropped by half in Mississippi since the law went into effect.

And the parental consent law denies a young woman's right to choose for herself whether to have an abortion. She must either secure the consent of a parent, or expose her private life to a court and hope the judge is not a conservative moralist.

For some Supreme Court justices to contend that these are not serious burdens to women shows how detached they are from the problems faced by workers and poor people.

COURTS REFUSE TO CONSIDER EVIDENCE OF "UNDUE BURDEN"

Moreover, the Supreme Court doesn't really want to hear whether the anti-abortion restrictions actually deny these abortion rights in practice. In the Mississippi case, the Supreme Court was being asked to review the decision of a federal appellate court which refused to even allow evidence that the Mississippi law posed an undue burden to women because of the few clinics in Mississippi. By letting the appellate court ruling stand, the Supreme Court signaled the courts didn't need to look at the facts behind the fiction of "no undue burden."

Mind you, some lawyers think that the Supreme Court didn't totally exclude looking at the evidence. Instead, the Court signaled that the law must be allowed to go into effect and deprive women of rights for a number of years before it can be challenged in court. Why, if most poor women in a state are denied abortion rights for several years on end, then the Supreme Court might concede that there has been an "undue burden" placed on them. Maybe.

The courts have not overturned *Roe v. Wade* decision directly, but they are strangling it step by step. ■



Hundreds of thousands of pro-choice activists flooded the streets of Washington, D.C. in April 1992.

Another crime by U.S. capitalists Bangladesh farmers given toxic waste 'fertilizer'

Last year, Bangladesh farmers unknowingly used some 1,000 tons of toxic waste "fertilizer" on their rice fields.

This was no accident. In fact it was a deliberate plan. Stoller Chemical Company of South Carolina decided to make some extra money, and dispose of its waste free, by cutting a Bangladesh fertilizer order with toxic copper-smelting furnace dust.

Stoller shipped out over 3,000 tons of this mixture, which the Bangladesh government purchased with loan money from the Asian Development Bank.

In June, the companies involved in the scheme were indicted by the U.S. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), and the Bangladesh government said it had stopped distributing the fertilizer. However, a third of it was already in circulation. As of November, it was still being used throughout the country. Two thousand tons are still being stored there.

Tests showed the mixture contained hazardous levels of lead (which causes neurological damage in children) and cadmium (which causes kidney damage and cancer).

Environmentalists in the U.S. and Bangladesh are campaigning with the demand that the toxic waste be "returned to sender."

Unfortunately, this atrocity is not an isolated case, but part of a larger trend.

Imperialist "aid and development" poisons

Bangladesh and other less developed countries are susceptible to deals such as this recent "fertilizer" sale. One reason is they are subject to the policies of the international financial agencies (IMF, World Bank etc.) and development agencies like the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. Bankrolled and dominated by the rich powers, these organizations exert control over less developed countries by dictating the terms on which they can receive loans, aid, investment

and technological assistance.

For instance, the governments of India, Bangladesh, and many other largely rural countries have entered into aid agreements where they must develop agricultural methods which are heavily dependent on the products of Western corporations (besides being non-renewable, and devastating for that reason). These countries are then obligated to import seeds, farm machinery, pesticides, chemical fertilizers, etc., from companies like International Harvester and Stoller Chemical Company.

Though middlemen and government officials in these countries may benefit from such arrangements, this "development" scenario results in disaster for poor farmers. Just one of the problems is pollution and poisoning. Usually, the fertilizers and pesticides themselves cause damage, even without toxic waste being added. Multinational corporations habitually sell inappropriate, unsafe, and inferior products in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and avoid dealing with the issue of safety precautions or restrictions.

Toxic waste "trade" mushrooms

Another factor behind Bangladesh's toxic fertilizer scandal is the toxic waste crisis in the major industrial nations. This has resulted in an international toxic waste trade where the waste flows from the rich nations to the poor nations.

The heavily industrialized nations now produce millions of tons of hazardous waste per year. (The U.S. alone produces about 260 million metric tons per year.) Seventy percent of it comes from the chemical and petrochemical industries. This category of waste, containing heavy metals and carcinogens, is difficult and expensive to dispose of safely (\$250-\$300/ton in the U.S. and Western Europe). It is frequently dumped illegally in poor areas inside these nations, where it causes disasters.

More and more, hazardous waste producers are looking to the less developed nations to receive their poisons. Often, they dump there in secret. As well, unscrupulous cash-starved regimes and businesses will accept the waste for as little as \$40/ton. Typically, they dump it, unprotected, right in population centers.

In 1988, for example, the city of Philadelphia exported 13,000 tons of toxic municipal incinerator ash to a company in Haiti, run by friends of "Baby Doc" Duvalier. The barge *Khan Sea* piled 3,000 tons onto a Haitian beach under a permit to unload "fertilizer," before the government intervened. The ash, which contained dioxin, lead and cadmium, was never cleaned up. Even if an effort had been made, Haiti, and most of the waste-receiving countries, are simply not equipped to properly dispose of hazard-

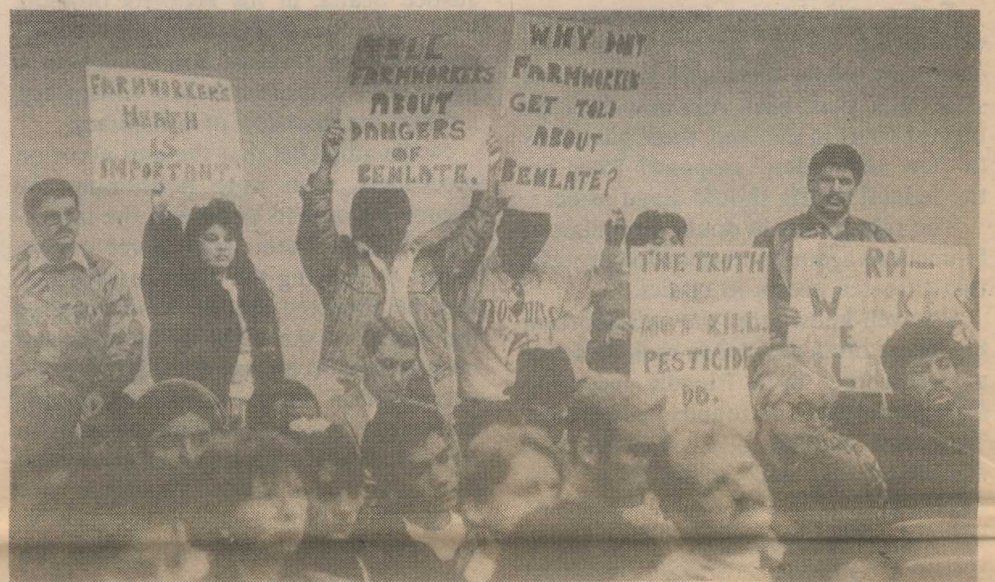
ous waste.

Although 83 countries have banned waste imports and a 1989 U.N.-sponsored treaty regulates waste traffic, as much as three million tons still cross international borders each year. While much of it is smuggled, the toothless 1989 Basel Pact permits virtually all shipments as long as there is notification by the exporter and consent by the importer.

Movements have emerged in both the dumpsite and waste-producing countries to ban international trade in toxic waste, dispose of it responsibly at home, and reduce the amounts that are created.

Since this death trade is so convenient for the importing and exporting governments, and lucrative for the dealers, it will be up to the workers and poor of all countries to join together to put a stop to it.

Florida farmworkers protest Du Pont



Workers protest the lies of the Du Pont company about the pesticide Benlate. At a Dec. news briefing Du Pont tried to deny that Benlate caused the ailments workers complained of. Workers, farmers and environmentalists demand compensation from Du Pont and further investigation of Benlate.

CHICAGO Continued from page 5

where only people with ID cards issued by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) are allowed in — were extended to the whole project. And four buildings were completely closed down. Meanwhile, nothing was even mentioned about dealing with the unemployment, poverty, deterioration of education and lack of hope that has spawned the problem of gang shootings in the project.

The *Chicago Workers' Voice* (CWV) denounced the mayor's plan to "clean up" public housing. The December 1 issue pointed out, "CHA residents certainly need safety from drug dealers and snipers, [but] the sweeps and raids and lockdowns are nothing but persecution of CHA residents. People are thrown out on the street while cops ransack their apartments, and the poor are supposed to be grateful for this extra attention from the police! The 'war on drugs' never seems to touch the drug dealers, it's really just a war against the poor."

CWV also condemned the Chicago Housing Authority for allowing public housing to deteriorate and gradually

evicting tenants so that many buildings are almost empty. "It doesn't take a genius to see that fixing up the apartments and keeping the projects fully occupied will be a major stride towards guaranteeing their security." But CHA Chairman Vince Lane is on record as favoring the demolition of high-rises. And attempts by organizations of the homeless to occupy and rehabilitate vacant apartments have been treated viciously by the city government. "Activists and laid-off workers who repaired CHA units and made them livable were arrested. The homeless who moved into the rehabbed apartments were evicted and some were arrested." It seems that Lane and Daley's idea of "cleaning up" public housing is to "cure the cancer by killing the patient."

The poor do need affordable, decent and safe housing. But that will not be achieved through more police, more lockdowns, and more closings of public housing. No, the masses must build up a struggle against joblessness and poverty; a struggle that must take on the wealthy capitalists and their police-minded politicians like Mayor Daley. ■

HUNGARY Continued from page 11

deep recession. Working class living standards have been driven down, with wages and pensions worth just a fraction of what they used to be. Workers see their former state-capitalist elite, so-called "communists," transformed now into investment bankers and rich busi-

nessmen. The country is splitting into the very rich and very poor.

Hungary is a country which was ruled by a state-capitalist tyranny wearing Marxist clothing. The Hungarian people justly rejected that old order. But the hoped-for new order of prosperity and well-being for all has not been delivered by the free-market capitalists who took over. The lower sections of working

people have been hit especially hard. In this situation, ideas of class struggle and worker solidarity are desperately needed by the masses, but the current influence of such Marxist ideas has been undermined by the practices of the previous phony communist regime. Into this confused situation comes Istvan Csaruka, ultra-nationalist demagogue.

Csaruka denounces the International Monetary Fund and rich Hungarian-Americans not on class grounds but because they are "foreign influences." He denounces the country's president as a sellout and calls on "patriotic Hungarians" to fight for *szocializmus* (living space) for "greater Hungary." Meanwhile Csaruka also scapegoats Jews, Gypsies,

and other minorities.

Despite his denunciations of the president, Csaruka is maintained on the presidium of the Democratic Forum Party. Party leaders excuse themselves for coddling this fascist by saying they don't want him to split off and form an opposition party. In other words, they like him too much to let him go.

Csaruka's demagogic politics are tailored to appeal to the young, frustrated skinheads as well as old-style ultra-nationalists. But scapegoating other nationalities will do nothing for the Hungarian working class except divert them from the task of fighting their capitalist exploiters. ■

FLIGHT Continued from back page

tions between economic and political refugees, as they are fond of repeating when Haitians are concerned.

Indeed, when the recent Cuban refugees on the hijacked plane were asked by the press why they came to the U.S., none of them mentioned being jailed or repressed in any way. All they mention is the rationing going on in Cuba and the promise of "the good life" in Miami. Yet

the government routinely classifies all of these people as "political refugees" to ensure they are able to stay in the U.S. indefinitely.

Why the double standard? Cuba is considered to be an "enemy" state, and the U.S. wants to strangle it so that Castro's regime is overthrown. But the Haitian military has long been a friend of the U.S., and despite the current U.S. Washington maintains normal relations with their dictatorship. ■

The fight against racism in Europe

Anti-racist actions press ahead in Germany



Anti-racist activists marching in Stuttgart, Germany.

Large anti-racist demonstrations have continued in cities across Germany. Among the largest: a quarter-million people marched through Hamburg in mid-December; and a similar number rallied in Essen on New Year's Day. Defense of refugee hostels also continues. In a recent incident in Neustadt, neo-Nazi attackers were driven away by Kurdish and Yugoslav occupants, who came out brandishing clubs.

The growth of mass actions against racism helped spur the German government to quit making excuses and take some steps against fascist violence.

In December the government began a crackdown against neo-Nazi organizations. A few fascist groups were banned. Police raided homes, confiscating weapons and fascist propaganda. The federal police set up a new bureau to deal with the rightists, and federal prosecutors

stepped into the Mölln case, where three Turkish people were burned to death; they quickly nabbed two suspects.

These actions highlighted how lax the government had been before. Suspects arrested in racist attacks are now being charged with serious crimes such as attempted murder instead of being charged with disturbing the peace, as previously.

Other worries

But there appears to be more than mass pressure in explaining the stronger policy against the ultra-right. It looks as if the authorities became alarmed about the wider implications of the neo-Nazi revival.

Raids on fascist groups turned up details of neo-Nazi plots against the state. And the Ministry of Defense came out and admitted that army officers and

enlisted men are suspects in some cases of racist murder. There had been reports before of fascist firebombers being organized inside army training camps. Now the government itself is admitting there is some substance to these reports.

This indicates how far things had gone, and what direction they were going.

Coddling the racists continues

The few police actions the government has taken against the neo-Nazis does not however signify that the capitalist authorities are now going to seriously confront the racist drive. German ruling circles continue to coddle the racist drive, especially by scapegoating immigrants and promoting German nationalism — the very issues which the ultra-right focuses on.

This is shown by newly proposed laws against constitutional protection of asylum seekers.

In November the opposition Social Democrats approved party leader Engholm's demand for anti-refugee laws. So in December the Social Democrats and ruling Christian Democrats began drafting new laws to restrict political asylum. A draft amendment to the constitution confirms the right of asylum but would allow border guards to turn away "manifestly unfounded cases." Some less harsh measures have also been suggested.

All kinds of excuses are given to justify this crackdown on victims of persecution. Some are just lies, some are openly coddling of reactionaries. The only justification that may seem reasonable is that supporting refugees costs money. Then why not allow the refugees to work to support themselves? To that it is replied, "No, that is impossible, especially during a recession." But why? Because then

working people would see the limitations of capitalism, that it cannot provide jobs? Or because it would violate the principle of coddling the fascist scapegoating?

Contrast this tight-fisted reasoning to the fact that the German government is wooing tens of thousands of people in east Europe and the former Soviet Union to settle in Germany on the basis that their ancestors came from German lands — hundreds of years ago. These immigrants are warmly welcomed, and are able to get immediate German citizenship. In contrast, foreigners have exceptional difficulties in being eligible for German citizenship. Because of such problems, only 1% of the 1.7 million Turks in Germany have applied, though 60% have lived there for more than 10 years.

Given these double standards, the issue of financial limitations is a flimsy excuse behind which the bourgeois politicians preach hatred of foreigners, German chauvinism, and ethnic scapegoating to the masses. Despite this being officially sanctioned ideology, the German authorities then turn around and blame the masses who get infected by the anti-foreigner poison, saying that it is the masses who want to keep foreigners out. Their hypocrisy knows no bounds.

The growth of anti-racist demonstrations in Germany shows that there is widespread opposition to racism among the German people. But the poison of German nationalism and anti-foreigner prejudices have to be solidly confronted if the working people are to effectively fight the neo-Nazi revival. This requires standing up to the "respectable" bourgeois establishment forces who coddle the racist drive even as they wring their hands in mock horror at the violent assaults of the neo-Nazis. ■

Africans in Paris demand housing

In a demonstration for decent housing, 237 families of African immigrant workers camped out at a chateau in Paris for five months in 1992. All of the families are eligible for public housing, and many are employed by the city of Paris. The workers are forced to live in squalid slums even though many of them have lived and worked in Paris for over a decade.

The National Front, the fascist party

led by Jean-Marie Le Pen, organized weekly counterdemonstrations against the Africans calling on the government to ship the immigrants back where they came from. And on October 29 riot police finally broke up the encampment.

But since then there have been a number of demonstrations in Paris supported by many workers in support of the Africans' continuing fight for decent housing. ■

Swedes protest ultra-nationalists

1,000 people turned out in Stockholm November 30 to counterdemonstrate against a rally of right-wing nationalists. November 30, marking the assassination of a Swedish king centuries ago, is celebrated by ultra-nationalists in Sweden as a kind of national holiday. This year a few hundred of these reactionaries came out to celebrate, and their fascist character was expressed more openly than before. They showed up with Nazi symbols and Hitler salutes. Some of the

thugs beat up a woman on the street, denouncing her as a "Jewish swine" as they did so.

Counterdemonstrators were held back by throngs of riot police who came out to protect the Nazis. But the anti-fascist activists did force the police to shut down the Nazi rally and evacuate the right-wingers by bus convoy.

The same night some 2,500 anti-fascists prevented a march by fascists in the town of Lund. ■

Belgian activists get organized

In Belgium anti-racist activists have been getting organized to defend immigrants against discrimination by employers, as well as against racist harassment

and violence. In the fall there were some large anti-racist demonstrations of over 10,000 people in the large cities of Antwerp and Ghent. Out of these dem-

onstrations permanent committees were formed to react quickly to attacks from racist thugs. Activists have successfully defended immigrants recently.

There are many immigrant workers in Belgium — from Morocco, Turkey, and Albania. There are 100,000 Moroccans in Brussels alone. Immigrants are forbidden employment in the public sector, and big

companies refuse to hire them. They get the leftover, low-paid jobs: seasonal fruit pickers, meatpacking, garment industry, construction, hotel labor. A neofascist anti-immigrant party has had some representatives elected to parliament. But now progressive elements in Belgian society are making themselves heard. ■

Racism in Britain

On the surface it appears that Britain has escaped the kind of racist revival sweeping the rest of Europe. Appearances, however, are deceptive.

According to the most conservative count, the official figures reported to the Home Office, there were 7,780 racially motivated attacks last year. The total has climbed by about 1,000 a year over the last three years. Anti-racist activists figure that the real total is 3-10 times higher. Nine blacks have been murdered in 1992 in racist attacks.

One of the reasons there is not a

larger outcry among the ruling circles in Britain over immigration is that Britain imposed stiff controls on immigration from outside the European Community several decades ago. The main anti-immigrant hue and cry made by bourgeois politicians is over undocumented immigrants.

Britain also takes in very few refugees escaping from persecution. Recently it deported a number of Bosnian refugees fleeing the civil war in former Yugoslavia. ■

Fascists coddled by Hungarian government

In Hungary, throughout 1992 there was almost daily news of skinhead attacks, nationalist rallies and swastikas daubed on doorways and gravestones. These events took place at the same time as the ugly right-wing incidents in Germany. They started with occasional violent assaults on foreigners — students, diplomats, etc. — living in Hungary. But by year's end they had escalated into orga-

nized ultra-rightist political demonstrations.

Conditions for fascist politics are created by the political and economic upheaval Hungary has gone through the last few years. Under the banner of "capitalist democracy" the ruling Democratic Forum has driven Hungary into a

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See HUNGARY

Clinton lied Blockading Haitian refugees

Continued from front page

policy was worked out with their approval.

Imagine that. The U.S. has supposedly had an embargo to pressure the Haitian military to restore democracy. But this embargo in fact does not exist; it was token at best. We never saw the U.S. discuss a blockade to force such an embargo. But when it comes to blockading human beings fleeing Haiti, it is a different story.

Clinton has offered the flimsiest excuses in defense of his new policy. He says he is concerned only with the safety of the Haitian boat people. But that was also Bush's justification for sending Haitians back. It was a lie then, and for Clinton it is a double lie because he had

claimed to reject Bush's argument. And Clinton offers the same doubletalk about how most Haitians are economic and not political refugees. (Such fine distinctions do not appear to hold when it comes to Cuban refugees, as we note in an inside article.)

To sugarcoat his turnaround, Clinton says that he will step up diplomatic efforts to return Haiti to democracy. But there has been no explanation as to why Haitians should expect anything from this when to date the Haitian military has shown no inclination towards democracy.

Continuing the Bush policy toward Haiti's generals

Moreover, Clinton hems and haws when it comes to the issue of returning

Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the Haitian presidency. Instead, his team says that Aristide would have to be "part of the solution."

Aristide was a former radical priest who was elected with an overwhelming majority by the Haitian people. In power, he had trimmed his sails considerably to reassure the Haitian elite and U.S. imperialism that he would not push for any radical policies. But even his minor reforms upset the Haitian elite and military, and Haiti's poor had continued to press for improvement of their miserable conditions. He continues to be very popular among Haitians.

Though the Bush government opposed Aristide's ouster, it has been lukewarm to him returning to power. They were disturbed by his attempt to keep up the hopes of the Haitian poor. Instead, diplomatic initiatives have sought to find ways in which perhaps Aristide could be

returned but would be a mere figurehead behind which business-as-usual would continue. Aristide has been willing to take part in this kind of sordid diplomacy, but the Haitian establishment has stubbornly refused so far to have him back.

By equivocating over whether or not Aristide would even be returned to the presidency, Clinton continues to trail in Bush's wake.

Clinton's policy towards Haiti is an outrage. His turnaround shows that you can't trust the Democrats to reverse the right-wing agenda of the Reagan-Bush years. If we are to have justice for Haitian refugees, we must fight for it ourselves. And if the Haitian people are to have democracy, they have to organize and fight for it themselves through a revolutionary movement which uproots the military tyrants and their wealthy backers. ■



10,000 Haitians marched on the United Nations HQ in New York City this fall to oppose the military dictatorship.

A double standard The plight of Haitian and Cuban refugees

Haitians being held at Miami's Krome detention center staged a protest on December 31 against their continued imprisonment. Detainees staged a hunger strike which was simultaneously supported by a rally outside by their supporters within the Miami community. The protest dramatized the difference between the way Haitians are treated and the privileged treatment accorded to Cuban refugees.

200 refugees are being held at Krome. They are mostly Haitians, with a few Dominicans. They have been imprisoned there for long periods of time. Contrast this with the way refugees from Cuba are treated.

On December 29 a Cuban airlines pilot hijacked a Cuban plane by overpowering the co-pilot and flying to Miami.

On arrival there most of the plane's passengers asked for political asylum in the U.S. They were sent to Krome to be processed. But immediately right-wing Cuban groups in Miami protested against this treatment, and within 36 hours all the Cubans were released.

Government lawyers are looking for loopholes in a U.S.-Cuban treaty that requires prosecution of plane hijackers, and government insiders predict that the Cuban pilot will never be charged with anything. Contrast this with the treatment given to two Haitians who hijacked a plane to the U.S. in 1989; they were sent to prison and eventually died there.

In the case of Cuban refugees, the establishment does not speak of distinc-

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HIV-infected Haitians detained

Another ominous feature of U.S. treatment of Haitian refugees is the indefinite imprisonment of those infected with the HIV virus. 264 Haitians are imprisoned at the U.S. base in Guantanamo Bay. These are leftovers of Bush's 1991 policy, when he decided to temporarily detain Haitians at the naval base there. At one time it held some 12,000 Haitians crowded into shacks behind barbed wire. In 1992 many of the detainees were allowed to enter the U.S. as political refugees. But those with HIV were detained.

The government admits that these are people with legitimate claims for political asylum. And they are not charged with

any crime; they are simply charged with being sick, or potentially being sick (since many of them have not actually developed AIDS, but have simply tested positive for the HIV virus).

The camp sets an ominous precedent as the first concentration camp for people with HIV. Prisoners point out that if they can do it to Haitian refugees, the same tactic may be used on others later on. Prisoners are not even allowed to go to independent clinics or doctors for tests to confirm the government findings of HIV. They are simply stuck in what amounts to a POW camp, and their families are stuck with them — apparently until they die. ■

No more bombs on Iraq!

Continued from front page

But even after slaughtering over a hundred thousand Iraqis, Bush has continued to seek revenge. The economic embargo allows only a narrow range of supplies to come in, and prevents Iraq from selling any oil so that it could get funds for reconstruction. As a result of the embargo, it is not Saddam and the Iraqi military-political elite who suffer, but the masses of ordinary people. They face hunger, disease, malnutrition, and continued insecurity.

What has prompted the latest round of military confrontation? Yes, the Iraqi regime has chafed against some of the demands made by the UN and U.S. — though some of this has been exaggerated by the Western powers. But these have been relatively minor issues. Nevertheless they have become an excuse for Bush to order a final round of military action against Iraq before he leaves the White House.

The U.S. claim of enforcing UN resolutions is especially hypocritical. When it comes to UN resolutions, Washington is highly selective. Only a few weeks ago, the UN condemned Israel for its arbitrary expulsion of over 400 Palestinians who are now freezing miserably in a no-man's land between Israel and Lebanon. The UN demanded that Israel take these people back. Here is a case where human beings are suffering in a situation where a UN resolution is violated. But we have seen no sign of the U.S. saying that it will bomb Israel.

It is hard to believe that the violation of any UN resolutions is involved in the conflict with Iraq. Indeed, it doesn't appear that the particular differences are really at the heart of the present round of military confrontation. Both Saddam and Bush are acting for broader, domestic politics.

For his part, Saddam has been willing to sacrifice the well-being of his people in a continuing quest to expand his power through military capabilities. For that he had marched into Kuwait, and for that he is willing to play brinkmanship with the U.S. And though Iraq is suffocating under the embargo, Saddam is determined to maintain his military ambitions and not back off and have the embargo lifted. However, a military confrontation — especially one in which he can look the victim — allows Saddam to shore up any cracks that may appear in his support within the political-military establishment in Iraq. A periodic

standoff with the U.S. is useful in consolidating his hold on power.

Meanwhile, the Bush government has sought a policy of keeping up military and economic pressure on Iraq in the hopes that eventually someone within Saddam's coterie will oust him. With a change coming in the U.S. presidency, the Bush administration was determined to set a course that the new Clinton administration would be compelled to follow. Clinton had signaled his willingness to keep up the Bush policy, but this apparently wasn't enough. They have now worked together to carry out this latest game of military confrontation.

The war games over Iraq serve no interest other than the jockeying for a bit more or less power over the oil-rich Persian Gulf region. The workers of the U.S. have no stakes in these military adventures. We say, *Enough is enough! No more bombs on the Iraqi people! No new war in the Persian Gulf! U.S. imperialism out of the Middle East!*

Protests around the U.S.

In a number of cities across the U.S. the new attacks against Iraq have been replied to with small but spirited demonstrations.

In Chicago, on January 13, a regular weekly noontime vigil against U.S. warmongering vs. Iraq, which is normally just a handful of people, swelled to about 30 to 40 people as the news of the American bombing of Iraq was released that morning.

The "day after demo" at Chicago's Federal Plaza saw about a hundred people turn out in freezing weather. The demonstrators rallied in the plaza, then marched around shouting slogans. The most popular slogan was: *Bush, Clinton share the blame, no more killing in our name!* Some also took up a variation of this: *Bush, Clinton both the same, genocide is still the game!* The protest received a good reaction from young black people on Dearborn Street, and several office workers appeared to like it too.

On the evening of January 13, Seattle demonstrators rallied at the federal building downtown. There were about 75-100 anti-war demonstrators. Eventually demonstrators poured into the street to block traffic. Police initially fell back and started diverting the tail end of rush-hour traffic. When more police arrived, demonstrators, having held the street for 20 minutes or so, returned to the plaza in front of the federal building. ■