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forward motion



RESISTING

**THE NEW
WORLD
ORDER**

with

Berndardine Dohrn

Camille Odeh

Abdul Alkalimat

Joe Iosbaker

**POPULAR
POWER IN
HAITI**



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Economic Market. So although the U.S. only imports eight percent of its oil from the Middle East, it needs to be in the Middle East to control the resources for international reasons.

The issue of the war was the issue of intervention, and the New World Order is an order built on racism. Look around the world. What Bush means is the U.S. is playing policeman of the world, and Third World people, people of color, cannot be strong. That's exactly what this war said to us. The Iraqi regime was crushed because they became strong militarily. Look around the world: the Middle East, Africa, Central America or Latin America. Look right here in this country. In 1991 the Civil Rights Act is vetoed, and people are quiet about it. In 1991 you go down to the neighborhoods of African Americans, Latin Americans and it's like being in Kuwait, like being in a Third World country. Inside the United, it's racism. That's what it is, an increase in racist culture,

fascist culture, and at the same time, a challenge to the peace movement, because if the New World Order means that there's just one world order, there's no space for us to be divided.

We have to look at the challenges, because if we think that we're going to win as Third World people, through conventional war, we won't. We need all of our different efforts, all over the world, and in particular here in the United States to affect U.S. policy. Because if we can stop the U.S. from giving Israel five billion dollars a year, it makes a difference. It makes the Intifada stronger and allows it to continue. So, it's very important that the whole struggle here is united, that the peace movement remains focussed on the issues, and in particular—just as the U.S. was so intent on ending the occupation of Kuwait—we have to rise up to end the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. ■

The Black Response To The Gulf War *by Abdul Alkalimat*

I'd like to focus on three things: the war in the Gulf, the war at home, and the war in the movement, in the context of the Black experience. In this regard, January 15, 1991 was a very important moment symbolically because it illustrated what a deep change has taken place since the sixties. It was the day of the annual King March in Atlanta, the day that Coretta Scott King had asked Colin Powell, a Republican general, to be the Grand Marshall, and the day that Bush chose to launch the Gulf War. Of course, Powell didn't end up marshal, but still the incident reflects how quickly and aggressively a small group of Blacks like him have come forward since the Reagan era and gained influence.

While the aggressive emergence of this group is new, the conditions for its existence go all the way back to the Civil War when the Black middle class led the Black liberation movement in the fight for democracy. During the sixties, this class element was able to move into some sections of the American mainstream, but

because the private sector has always been so thoroughly and uncompromisingly racist, the Black middle class could never gain access there. So they moved into the Federal Government. In fact, this has been U.S. ruling class policy, since the establishment of the Freedman's Bureau. By now, 70-75% of Black women and 60% of Black men with college educations work in government. So, obviously this is not a group of people who are going to resist the way they did in the 1960's.

But there is a second group, which also works in government but is more difficult to categorize. These are the "good guys" who still represent the vast mainstream of middle class Blacks: the loyal opposition, the Congressional Black Caucus. On the one hand, during the Gulf war these elected officials were loyal because you can't be an elected politician without being loyal. There's no social basis for it. Like their liberal white counterparts, these elected officials opposed the war for two reasons: because their con-

stituents opposed Bush and because they stood to cash in on the Peace Dividend. If you're in state or local government, the question is: where are you going to get money for your budgets? So you oppose the expansion of the Pentagon's slice of the pie. Those were the reasons this group opposed the war: to be reelected and to get some money. That's really the terrain where most liberal efforts were targeted, and perhaps rightly so. They're the growing section of the Black middle class.

The third element in the Black response to the Gulf War was the militant opposition. Most of that was latent but nevertheless real. Part of what was going on is re-Africanization, Third World identification, not only in the anti-War Movement, but in the Black Liberation Movement generally. As the Gulf War was winding down this spring, Black militants took over the headquarters of the City University of New York, an action that has almost become a custom in New York in recent years. Most of the students in the leadership were from the Caribbean: Jamaica and Trinidad, and the Dominican Republic. In fact, the person who negotiated with the chancellor was from the Dominican Republic and negotiated in Spanish. These students' politics come from anti-imperialist struggles in the Caribbean, a dimension of Black politics that doesn't exactly correspond with the politics in the Midwest and in the South. It reflects the changing composition of the American population which the 1990 census reveals. It's a new working class, a new inner city. Out of this is emerging a new group of militant students.

Now, the main thing about the war in the Gulf is that it started as a war at home. Everything that everybody was so outraged about in the Middle East in fact started here. Much like with the Vietnam conflict, people had grown so depressed and demoralized that there was a sense that: "there's nothing we can do." The Liberal Dilemma: What do we do with the chemical warfare at home—the drug crisis? What do we do with police action against the poor? What do we do with the inability of poor people to find a political voice? All of the academics have

taken it up: what to do with the underclass?

There's this malaise distorting our ability to see that what happened in Kuwait City is what happened in Chicago. If you drive around the South Side of Chicago, you see exactly what people will show you in the Middle East: a bombed-out, destroyed city, a population armed to the gills, drug shoot outs, etc. A slightly different scenario, but the same basic reality. There's a very interesting debate and discussion that's begun, and it's this: do we have a philosophical and revolutionary perspective to approach the crisis that we face? For the first time since the 30's, discussion of class struggle is no longer academic.

At Howard University a while back, we were discussing the working class and class struggle and the slogan "Black workers take the lead." Somebody stood up and wanted examples of where white workers had risen up to defend Black people and had demonstrated this class struggle. "It's clear when you see Black people, but what about this white struggle?" and so on. Well, people gave examples as best we could, but you know, it wasn't as if we could point to the front page of the newspaper or anything. It wasn't as if there were a whole lot of white people around that you could raise up and say, "We mean John Brown over here." But today it's a bit different. There's a polarization going on and there really is impoverishment that's extending into the white sectors of the working class. There really is a question of survival, of people being ground down "...with nothing to lose but their chains." This situation is not academic. The problem is that it's academic for most of the Left.

The question now, the real issue, is the Left. Their perception of the world they live in is what they get on television and the newspaper. We have a bookstore on Muddy Waters Drive. That's 43rd Street. There are people on the Left who ask me, basically, "If I come to your bookstore, am I gonna be mugged, is somebody gonna steal my car?" Well, if these are the demons in the heads of the Left, we're in trouble. Because when those people rise up, they're likely to see them as criminals and thugs, and people who

act inappropriate to the theory, as opposed to the emerging spontaneous struggle of the oppressed that should be celebrated and united with if we have a hope of any kind of serious change.

In this context, the figure that emerges in the concepts and political ideology of young Black people is Malcolm X. Here you've got an interesting problem. Probably the most exciting revolutionary voice in America in the last 20, 30 years, if not more than that, is Malcolm X. The problem is not many people see Malcolm connected to the kind of revolution we need in this country. Black people see Malcolm as a symbol of great resistance and struggle, but young Black people haven't yet grasped that Malcolm is a revolutionary symbol for the entire country. This is partially because of the extent to which racism is force-fed every day, and Black people are terrorized every day by it. Even worse is the fact that young white radicals, and white people generally, still react to Malcolm as a

response even among people who served in this war.

So that leads me to my last point. The real option we face increasingly (and this is not something being discussed just in the United States; it's something being discussed everywhere in the world) is socialism or barbarism. On the world scene, it's the influence of the IMF and the World Bank and the debt crisis, and the fact that the Third World is now sending money to the First World, is now financing the First World. We're in a situation where poor people in the Third World are paying for the refinancing of the First World.

With regard to the Gulf region, we've got to think not only in terms of oil, but something much more basic. The US dollar was at stake in the Middle East, partially because of the extent to which the Petro-Dollar from the region was invested in this country. Kuwaiti money was invested in England. Saudi Arabia's money was invested in the

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threatening symbol, as someone who advocated violence as opposed to self-defense. As someone who was un-American, as opposed to someone who actually put forward American values of honesty, of self-respect, of telling the truth.

It seems to me that we have to affirm the possibility that the basic American person is going to become an agent of social change in the period to come. While the person who was wearing a yellow ribbon, the person who had a relative in the war, or those two million people in the military establishment and their circle of family and friends could not be changed immediately, they can change. Had they instituted the draft, students would have been in motion immediately. Had the body bags come back, people would have turned immediately. And the troops who come back not to jobs but to disrupted lives and to a Veteran Administration hospital system which is nothing, you're going to find there the beginnings of a radical

United States. If that money went, the dollar would go. And that's one of the main reasons why, when Saddam Hussein was lured into the invasion of Kuwait, Bush moved unilaterally. It wasn't simply a matter of oil. It was a matter of the survival of this economy.

We have to start thinking about how deep this crisis is, the extent to which they're not simply a secure superpower. They're a superpower that's running scared and is prepared to do really disastrous things. So we will continue to face the possibility of barbarism and fascist repression which exists today in most Third World countries—the West Coast of Africa, Central America, much of the Caribbean. We will continue to face the attack on democratic rights, the destruction of trade unions, the decline of the standard of living, the export of food to the First World, making it difficult for people to get the basic food staples for their diet.

But the main point I'm trying to make is

this: with this class polarization and new technology, the possibility also exists for a new level of revolutionary struggle. So the question we confront is: as progressives, can we find the basis, not just subjectively but in material analysis, for claiming history on our

side? Can we find the basis for asserting that the New World Order coming into being can be for the liberation of humanity, and not for the maintenance of the blood-sucking crew that Bush represents? ■

Carry On The Struggle *by Joe Iosbaker*

I'll begin by stating that Freedom Road Socialist Organization is an organization of revolutionaries committed to the destruction of imperialism and its most evil manifestation, imperialist war. We've been with all of you, in the streets and in struggle for these past eight months during this latest conflagration.

The first point I want to make is that I think there really is a New World Order, in the sense that this is a new period in the development of imperialism. The stage for the New World Order was set by the collapse and the shambles of internal economic and political life in the U.S.S.R. Though U.S. imperialists are contending with Japan and Europe, world contradictions are now primarily being played out along North-South lines. And the pace and the level of attack characterized by this Iraq War is new.

The Iraq War was essentially a war between imperialism and the Arab people. If you look at the response to U.S. aggression against Iraq from the Arab and North African masses and the Islamic people of Asia, it's very clear that they saw this as a war between the Arab people, a Third World people, and U.S. imperialism. It doesn't matter where you look from Mauritania in the West to Pakistan and Malaysia in the East, wherever people could speak, they rose up in tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions in some countries to make known their support for Iraq's resistance to the United States. The only places that this didn't happen was in Egypt, where if you spoke out you'd be jailed, or in Saudi Arabia, where if you spoke out you'd probably have your head chopped off.

For me, the most vivid imagery was on Cable Network News about a week into the war. They had footage of an auction in the

streets of Amman, Jordan. Pieces of a downed American plane were being auctioned off. Here you had a crowd of Arab people, thrusting their dinar into the hands of the auctioneer, to give whatever they could to the Iraqi resistance. According to CNN, they raised \$30,000.

Another point I want to make is that I don't think we should overstate the terms of the U.S. victory in the Persian Gulf. What you have here is proof that the mightiest army in the world can defeat a poor country one tenth its size in a conventional war, on open terrain. This should not be a surprise to anybody. But this does not mean that the U.S. can destroy the revolution in El Salvador in forty days. This does not mean the U.S. can wipe out the New People's Army in the Philippines in forty days. They cannot do this against a people's struggle.

Still, the U.S. victory is a terrible thing. One of the main reasons is that the American people have learned a lesson which is just horrifying: that the U.S. can wage a war and intervene without sustaining large numbers of casualties. Domestic opposition to war has been seriously undermined. This is the meaning of Bush's claim to victory over the Vietnam Syndrome. It bodes terrible things for the period to come.

The last point I want to make is about the movement here. Demoralization has set in among people who were active in resistance to this war. This demoralization is based on people having too high hopes. The *Guardian* put out a sticker that said, "We can stop this war." We need to face facts: the last anti-war movement to end its country's involvement in a major war was the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1917, and we aren't quite at that stage yet. The anti-war