

People's Organization for Progress

Stop the war against Iraq

How War with Iraq would affect Newark Citizens

Declaring war on Iraq would have a devastating affect on the citizens of the United States. The families, institutions, and the economy of inner cities like Newark would suffer the most. The war would cost hundreds of billions of dollars, maybe trillions.

Families would suffer major losses (fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, etc.) at a time where an intact family is most needed. Unemployment will increase even more, placing further strain on our community. Business will suffer because household incomes will fall rapidly.

More people will become homeless. Funds misdirected to a senseless war will cause elimination of many vitally needed services like job training programs. The standard of living of Newark's citizens is too low already and the war would do it much further damage.

What the war is NOT about

The Bush administration's "case" for war is a pack of distortions and lies. Bush says the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, is a madman with weapons of mass destruction. The Bush administration says Saddam Hussein purposefully used chemical weapons on his own people. The administration says he will use these weapons again on countries like Israel and the United States, and any other country he imagines is an enemy. Bush says Saddam Hussein has biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction; therefore he must be stopped by "preemptive war."



POP at Newark City Hall, Dec. 7 Peace Train against the war.

There is no evidence Iraq has "Weapons of Mass Destruction"

Iraq has little or no capability of developing any such thing. Scott Ritter, who headed the last UN weapons inspection team in Iraq, says "Iraq had been fundamentally disarmed," and "Iraq had not access to the technology... (nor) the funds required to significantly rebuild a meaningful weapons of mass destruction capability." If weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were the real reason for starting a war, why doesn't Bush want to invade North Korea?

What about Israel, which has hundreds of nuclear weapons? It repeatedly violates UN human rights standards in terrorizing Palestinians. Instead the world needs to fear the WMD of the Bush administration, which has developed a nuclear warhead called the "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator." Bush has openly

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stated his willingness to use it. If Bush wants to see a madman with weapons of mass destruction he should look in the mirror.

About the U.S. claim that Saddam Hussein “gases his own people”

This story traces mainly to an incident in a Kurdish town of northern Iraq called Halabja. In 1988, during the late stages of the Iran-Iraq war, there was a battle near Halabja between Iraqi military forces opposed to Iranian forces and Iraqi Kurdish forces. The Kurdish forces belonged to the warlord Barzani family, which had allied itself with Iran.

A U.S. Army study written in early 1990 says that both Iranian and Iraqi aircraft took part in the battle. Both dropped poison gas bombs. The Barzani forces holed up in Halabja. There was a night bombing attack by poison gas, which killed a large number of civilians. Casualty reports vary widely.

Blame for the attack has always fallen on Iraq. To this day there has never been a thorough investigation to determine responsibility, however. It is an ugly story of a type common in war. It does not put the government of Iraq in a category by itself. It does not compare to Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Least of all does it justify the crimes of U.S. imperialism against Iraq.

The United States uses chemical/biological weapons against Iraq

Depleted uranium (DU) is a radioactive byproduct of nuclear weapons production. Because it is extremely heavy it is used to make armor-piercing shot. It burns on impact and disperses tiny contaminant particles in the air.

Medical evidence proves exposure to nuclear radiation causes cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma. These are the most common cancers suffered by Gulf War veterans. The government denies there is a connection. However, wherever DU is present, as in the island of Vieques where the Navy runs bombing practice, there are similar problems and syndromes.

The United States used hundreds of tons of DU ammunition in Iraq in 1991. One third of Iraq, in the south, is contaminated with it. Iraq has seen a sevenfold increase of childhood leukemia, and an epidemic of other forms of cancer in the south.

The evidence is overwhelming: the United States used the chemical/biological weapon of depleted uranium in 1991. If there is an invasion no one knows how much more will be used.

The real story: Bush is an imperialist

Bush wants to take Iraq's huge oil resources for the tiny elite of the super-rich who put him in power. He wants the territory of Iraq, which borders eight countries, to keep the Persian Gulf in line at gunpoint. He wants continued exclusive payment of oil from the Gulf in U.S. dollars, which balances a large part of the enormous U.S. trade deficit.

The U.S. rulers want to pursue unrestrained imperialist wars abroad such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan (territory to move Caspian Sea oil) to control access to oil. They want to put a stranglehold on rival imperialists in Europe and Japan and secure the U.S. as the top imperialist power. Bush is setting in motion events that raise a great danger of another world war.

U.S. bosses are using the “war on terror” to impose domestic fascism

Legislation like the USA Patriot Act and the Homeland Security Act criminalizes political dissent. These acts legalize racist profiling and detention. They expand surveillance and law enforcement capacities. Since 9/11 thousands of Arab and Muslim immigrants have suffered racist state terror in the form of deportation or detention. These things can happen to almost anyone.

These powers push an agenda of “labor discipline,” i.e., lower wages and higher unemployment, disintegration of benefits, vanishing of pensions, healthcare cutbacks, erosion of social services and education. The ruling class needs fascism to force the burdens of its wars onto the backs of the working class.

**POP meets every Thursday night, 6:00 PM
Abyssinian Baptist Church
224 W. Kinney St., Newark**