

# facts for working people

A Publication of Labors Militant Voice

The Anti-War Issue \$1

Building a Democratic Socialist Alternative to the Dictatorship of Capitalism

## The Bush Plan for America's Youth

### The Choices



	McDonald's	WAL-MART	U.S. ARMY
<b>Annual Pay</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
<b>Healthcare</b>	NO	NO	YES
<b>Dental</b>	NO	NO	YES
<b>Meals</b>	YES	NO	YES
<b>Housing</b>	NO	NO	YES
<b>Education</b>	NO	NO	YES
<b>Uniform</b>	YES	YES	YES
<b>Death*</b>	NO	NO	YES

\* Death: 3,000 troops killed in Iraq since war began with an additional 21,000 disabled

### a message to the troops

Regardless of what branch, battalion or unit you are in, you did not join the service to fight a bloody war without justification. Maybe you joined for the benefits and training the service claimed to offer and a genuine devotion to your community and country. No matter how you found yourself in uniform, the truth about this war is becoming more obvious every day. With each passing moment its justification becomes further from any common soldier's reasons for entering the military.

It is not surprising. The people that pushed us into Iraq have their own reasons for doing so. They are the reasons of people who will never know want, and whose wealth and power are, in their minds, permanent. They are the people who will never take a gun into combat and who will never see the real costs of war. They did not declare war on Iraq for you. They did it for themselves.

You do not need to surrender yourself to this. Soldiers are speaking the truth about this dirty war and are increasingly organizing to build an opposition to the continued bloodshed. They are doing so out of loyalty to their families, their communities, and the understanding that the reasons for going to war have nothing to do with the regular, working people of either Iraq or the U.S.

We need to struggle for a world where the genuine needs of regular people are not thrown aside for the lies of the rich and powerful. We need to fight to bring the troops home and end this war.

Please contact LMV to lend your voice and experience to the growing movement that is doing just that.

Our Socialist Alternative:  
Money for Jobs not War  
\$15/hour Minimum Wage  
Troops Home Safely Now  
End the economic draft  
Free college education now



### Children of Billionaires in Iraq

The following is a complete list of the children of America's elite currently serving in Iraq:

[www.laborsmilitantvoice.com](http://www.laborsmilitantvoice.com) (510) 595-4676

# Capitalism's Case for War : The Costs and Who Pays

The invasion of Iraq by the US government and its corporate backers, otherwise known as US Imperialism, is now in its fourth year. The real purpose of the war was and is for the US corporations to get a tighter grip on the Middle East and its oil, to put down deeper roots through more US bases in the Middle East and Central Asia and in this way to increase their efforts to encircle China. Every day the US corporations' own propaganda media fill peoples' heads with lies as to the real reason for the invasion of Iraq. We must not be fooled.

With the weapons of mass destruction and the threat of terrorism exposed as lies justifying the invasion, a resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the threat of Iran and its potential nuclear program are now cited as reasons to stay on and escalate. Yet the US continues to work with Pakistan

which is a nuclear state and has actually sold nuclear technology internationally, the US has given increased nuclear aid to India as a possible bulwark against China and continues to back Israel—a country with nuclear technology—in whatever it does. It is okay to be a nuclear power if you do what you are told.

No, the invasion of Iraq was not about weapons of mass destruction or so called terrorism. It was simply to increase the power, wealth and control of US Imperialism over the globe. When Bush came in he said his foreign policy was "full spectrum domination." By this he meant full control over everything including labor, the earth and what is below it, the sea and what is below it, and the sky above. US Imperialism was going to tolerate no interference.

Look at the cost in terms of savagery of Bush's policy and the US corporations. For the purpose of this article let's leave out all the other slaughters in other lands and the destruction of the environment that is going on worldwide. The country of Iraq, whose culture goes back thousands of years, is virtually destroyed. Look at the available figures about the suffering of the Iraqi people.

According to the Iraq Body Count Group, from the start of the invasion in March, 2003 through September, 2006 between 43,269 and 48,064 Iraqi civilian men, women and children have been killed. Two-thousand-fifty-nine Iraqi cops have been killed. Of US and other "coalition" troops, mostly young working class kids who have been conned into joining up or have joined up for economic reasons, 2,618 have been killed. Tens of thousands more have been physically and psychologically shattered for life.

This is a human catastrophe that was consciously decided upon by the US corporations and their government in the White House. These degenerates knew tens of thousands were going to die for their profit and power and they went ahead.

But the cost of the war is not only in the immediate human cost that we can see around us, terrible as that is. It is also in the wasted resources that the cost of this war represents and how this money could have been otherwise used.

By the end of May 2006 the cost of the war to the US taxpayer was \$284 billion. It is estimated to go to \$315.8 billion by the end of the year. The \$284 billion could fully fund the Global Hunger program for eleven years; fully fund the AIDS program world wide for 28 years; and immunize every child in the world for 94 years. The UN estimates that by increasing aid to poor countries by between \$40 billion and \$60 billion per year this could bring clean water and enough food to all so that the 20,000 people a day who now starve to death from hunger would live. The cost of this war could fund this increase in aid for approximately six years.

Let's look at where the average federal tax dollar of the median family—your family—goes. Out of the total Federal Tax intake, military spending and interest on the debt to the banks for military spending comes way above anything else at \$1,558 billion. That number is almost twice what is spent on health care: \$843 billion. Next is non-military debt to the banks at \$411 billion. Then education comes in at only \$170 billion and Veterans at only \$150 billion. This country is run by and sucked dry by the banks and the military.

This war must be stopped. The priorities of US Imperialism which puts profit and war first, destroys the environment and peoples' lives without the slightest thought, must be changed. The ruling class that is in control is degenerate and depraved and addicted to profit and power. They have to be removed.

We stand for an end to the private ownership of the planet's wealth by the privately owned profit addicted corporations. We stand for

collective ownership and control of the earth's wealth and the world's economy to be organized collectively under working peoples' collective control and collective management. Please contact us. We have to stand up and fight. We have to increase our networking and discussion about dedicating our lives to the struggle against capitalism and for a world where the wealth is owned collectively and run in the interests of all.



## **Bush's Iraq Goals:**

- 1. Create stable regime**
  - 2. Create friendly regime**
  - 3. Build 14 military bases**
- ....one for three ain't bad**

# How things went all wrong

## From Saddam to Civil War: Was it Inevitable?

In the 1970s, Iraq was home to the best hospital system, one of the best social welfare systems and the best university system in the Arab world. Iraq's economy was booming with an exchange rate of \$3 to one Dinar.

Today, not only are these social systems in shambles, but also hundreds of thousands of Iraqis are fleeing neighborhoods where Sunni and Shiite once lived together peacefully in fear of sectarian killing and the oncoming civil war. Currently about 200 people a day are being killed either by suicide bombings or sectarian torture.

Ten ways US capitalism contributed to this destruction:

**TEN** In the early 1980s, Reagan helped fund Saddam Hussein in a bloody war with Iran, bankrupting the country and leading to 1 million Iraqi and Iranian deaths.

**NINE** Bush Sr. bombed all electrical power stations, oil depots, and infrastructure in the first Gulf War. US depleted-uranium-plated bombs are still blamed for the radically high incidence of cancer among Iraqi children.

### Capitalism's Other Party



playing poker face over Iraq

- 1998: Clinton signs into law the Iraq Liberation Act
- 2001: Democrats overwhelmingly support War in Afganistan
- 2002: Democrats overwhelmingly support War in Iraq

the facts

**EIGHT** Clinton bombed water treatment plants and strengthened economic sanctions against Iraq. This prevented any significant repair of the country's electrical, phone, and other infrastructure.

**SEVEN** The 2003 invasion and occupation, coupled with the sieges of Fallujah, Tal Afar and Najaf, are estimated to have killed from 30,000 to over 100,000 Iraqi civilians.

**SIX** The US encouraged the arrival of 25,000 private security contractors who now run wild in armor-plated SUVs. Despite these mercenaries' role in Abu Ghraib and other crimes, not one private contractor has been convicted for breaking any laws since their arrival.

**FIVE** The US occupation has failed to restore water treatment plants, allowing diarrhea to continue to be the number one killer of children. At the same time, 3,000 registered doctors have fled Iraq in the first two years of occupation.

**FOUR** During the initial weeks of the occupation, the desperation of Iraq's population and the US disbanding of the Iraqi police and army, led to the mass looting of all government offices, museums, oil refineries, and electrical plants.



Situation Normal: All F\*\*\*ed Up

**THREE** The wholesale privatization of Iraqi industry has led to hundreds of thousands being unemployed. The initial dream of the Bush regime of opening the Iraqi market to Wal-marts, Home Depots, McDonalds, etc. has fallen flat on its face.

**TWO** The US banned Ba'ath Party members from getting public sector jobs, increasing sectarian divisions and contributing to the insurgency.

**ONE** The US has failed to provide electrical power to Baghdad for more than 4 hours a-day during the entire occupation. Under Saddam, electricity was not only free, but Baghdad had power for 20 hours a day. With summer indoor temperatures often reaching 130 degrees, many Iraqis are convinced they were better off under Saddam.

## What America could be imagine

According to the former Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Linda Bilnes, if the US stays in Iraq for the next four years, it will cost the country a total of one trillion dollars. (That's one million million dollars!) This is looking more and more likely. Even if the upcoming election shifts things in the Democrats' favor, the US will likely stay embroiled in Iraq. Only if the current pro-capitalist Democrats and Republicans are dumped in favor of a government for working people, can we hope to really put that money to good use.

Each year for the last 3 years Corporate profits have surpassed \$1 trillion, money that remains essentially untaxed under the two-party system.

As an anti-capitalist, John Lennon didn't "Imagine" a reality of huge profits from war and the hefty "reconstruction" contracts that make the rich even richer. That already existed in Vietnam in his day. It's not too late to imagine what we could do with all the war money out there.

*The US Federal Government's trillion dollars could:*

- \* Pay the cost of quality health care for every American for 18 months
- \* Build 10 million decent homes for low-cost public rental
- \* Massively invest in alternative energy use and turn back global warming
- \* Give every family 12 months parental leave for their newborns for 10 years
- \* Create jobs for 20 million teachers, reducing all class sizes to 8 for 1 year

**\$1 trillion = \$1,000,000,000,000**

# Who's Getting Rich off of the Dead in Iraq?

The United States has a long tradition of privateers profiting from war. In fact, many of the wealthiest "elite" families in the US are descendants of private businessmen who profited off of both the revolutionary and the civil war. Businesses are always looking for a way to increase their profits, and not only do they profit from war, but they also influence the policies that get the government involved in these wars in the first place.

The current US involvement in Iraq is not only an attempt to control access to that region's oil supplies, but it is also a boon for private contractors. Halliburton (of which vice-president Cheney was CEO from 1995-2000) has \$22 billion in federal contracts for Iraq.

Bush Sr., with Cheney as his Defense Secretary, reduced the armed forces from 2.2 million to 1.6 million troops. This does not mean that the military became more efficient, or that the government saved money and cut the Defense budget. Instead, a large amount of the support work around the military was outsourced to the private sector. In fact, Halliburton was a major beneficiary of this change. The company is just one private contractor that has major contracts in Iraq to provide support services—this in addition to their reconstruction contracts.

In the current occupation of Iraq there is 1 private contractor employee to every 2.6 soldiers. This compared to 1 civilian worker to every 20 soldiers at the front during World War I and the 1 to 6 ratio in the Vietnam War.

Within Iraq there are now 14 permanent US bases. These are little suburban enclaves built in the desert with cine-plexes and Pizza Huts. There are no more Army cooks or troop-built housing. Instead, contractors increase their profits by exploiting Third Country Nationals (TCNs) who work for as little as a dollar an hour to cook and clean toilets on these bases. Many of these workers paid brokers' fees of more than a year's pay to get their jobs, in essence becoming indentured servants

## What Halliburton charged the Pentagon for these items in Iraq:

**\$1.2 million per month to clean 12,000 bags of laundry: \$100 per bag**  
**\$617,000 for soda pops for 25,000 soldiers: \$247 per soda**

to the private contractors and living in very substandard conditions with no provisions for their safety. Over 500 of these workers have been killed in Iraq, many while driving private trucks for the army. Employment of TCNs by contractors not only boosts their profits, but it also makes the US casualty picture look rosier, as the US public never hears about TCN deaths in the casualty tallies.

### CONTACT US

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## LMV – WHY WE ARE AGAINST CAPITALISM

We are against capitalism because it does not work. More than half the world's population are in want or outright starving. The United Nations Development Program estimates that everybody in the world could have access to basic social services, clean water, food, housing, health care, education, for \$80 billion per year. The seven richest people in the world have \$1.54 trillion between them. Capitalism cannot transfer the tiny fraction of the wealth of its richest few that would be necessary to provide everybody with the necessities.

But it is not only a question of taking the ill-gotten wealth of the billionaires. It is having a system which allows the working people of the world to have access to ownership and control over

capital, machinery, land, water, energy and power so that we can plan production and plan distribution throughout the world. Capitalism cannot allow this. As the Argentinean worker said last year when he and his fellow workers had occupied and were running their factory: "They are terrified of us because we are showing we can run the factory and because we can run the factory this shows we could run the country".

Capitalism does not work. We are for a new system where working class people work together and use the resources of the world collectively to create a sustainable economy and where what is produced is equitably distributed. This is a democratic socialist system. This is what we are fighting for. Contact us and we can work together.

## Workplace Resistance Inside Iraq

After the fall of the Ba'athist regime, Iraqi workers began to openly organize unions in order to keep their heads above the flood of private contractors who were invading their country and immediately exploiting resources and the working class. One of the strongest and most militant is the General Union of Oil Workers, which now has 25,000 members.

One of the first fights the union took on was resistance to Order #30. The order, introduced by the provisional government, established a monthly pay cap for non-management workers in the Iraqi public sector. Set at \$35 a month, this was a poverty wage even in Iraq. Because a substantial amount of the utilities were nationalized prior to the invasion, this pay cap affected large numbers of workers in oil, electricity and other industries.

In August 2003 Halliburton, was given the contract to restart oil production in Iraq. Halliburton refused to recognize and negotiate with the General Union of Oil Workers. In response, the union organized occupations, strikes, and road blocks. For two days all oil exports were shut down. Halliburton had no choice but to come to the table, and the workers were able to win a salary of \$100 per month. Politically, the union actively opposes privatization and stands for working class unity throughout the country and international solidarity with workers outside Iraq.

The Iraqi oilworkers are fighting US Imperialism with tactics that our unions in the US can learn from. Rank and file links between unions internationally can be a step in that direction.

Contact the union at  
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