

break down with loss. In the Civil War, and in other wars, U.S. troops have been able to recover from such early reverses because of political motivation and morale factors. What are they to fall back on if they find themselves using nuclear weapons in a campaign to restore the degenerate, slave-holding Emir of Kuwait to his feudal throne? Under such circumstances, the cohesion of U.S. forces simply cannot be guaranteed.

A hecatomb

On Sept. 16, then-Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael J. Dugan summarized U.S. strategy in an interview with the *New York Times*. He indicated that the centerpiece of U.S. utopian air power strategy will be the massive bombardment of Iraqi civilian population centers and cultural assets. Until two weeks earlier, Dugan stated, U.S. planners were eyeing a list of targets including Iraqi air defenses, airfields, warplanes, missile sites, and related military assets. "That's a nice list of targets," said Dugan, "and I might be able to accept those. But that's not enough." Dugan said that the "cutting edge would be downtown Baghdad. This bombing would not be nibbling at the edges. If I want to hurt you, it would be at home, not out in the woods someplace." Dugan said he had been asking academic consultants about "what is unique about Iraqi culture that they put a very high value on. What is it that would make an impact on the population?" He said that his goal was to identify "centers of gravity where air power could make a difference early on." Dugan was fired not because of his intentions, but because he had made them too public. If the Karabala shrine fulfills the criteria for a cultural asset of great importance, then warfare or irregular warfare on the part of all Shi'ite Muslim populations against the U.S. will be the result.

In the light of these facts, estimated Iraqi casualties among civilians and military personnel start at 500,000 killed and wounded. Nuclear bombardment of civilian population centers would increase these losses astronomically.

For U.S. forces, casualty estimates start at about 70,000 killed, wounded, and missing for a month-long war. Some estimates for the duration of hostilities in a ground assault go from six months to eighteen months.

These estimates can be compared to the following historical bench marks:

- In October 1942, a 200,000-man British and American army under Field Marshal Montgomery engaged and defeated the 100,000 men of the Afrika Korps of Gen. Erwin Rommel. This battle lasted for 12 days, with 31,500 German and 13,500 British and American casualties.

- In the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Israeli Army, which had the twin advantages of fortifications at the outset (the Bar-Lev Line) and air superiority, suffered 20,000 casualties. As General Odom points out, "Iraqi forces are larger, possessing more modern equipment . . . and have been battle tested in eight years of war with Iran."

Coalition against Gulf war forms in France

A cross-party anti-war coalition has formed in France against President François Mitterrand's alliance with Anglo-American policy in the Gulf. A group of 30 prominent individuals, ranging from the Communists to the extreme right and including Gaullist and Socialist influentials, signed their names to an advertisement appearing in the press on Dec. 6, demanding "the withdrawal of French troops that were sent to the Gulf," and calling for "the immediate opening, under the aegis of the United Nations, of international negotiations for the global settlement of the problems of the Middle East."

Signers include former Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson, Socialist Party European Parliament member Max Gallo, former presidential adviser Régis Debray, former Foreign Minister Michel Jobert, Communist Party bigwig Charles Fiterman, and New Right ideologue Alain de Benoist.

The fact that the statement was signed by two high Socialist Party figures, Cheysson and Gallo, has created an uproar in France's ruling party. They have been ordered by the Socialist Party to withdraw their signatures or leave the party.

Alain de Benoist, one of the signers, wrote a commentary in *Le Monde* on Dec. 6, denouncing the "hypocrisy of the West." He cites the silence of the West when the United States "massacred the civilian population of Panama" under the phony pretext of a "war on drugs." He also stresses that Iraq's occupation of Kuwait is not the only illegal occupation today: Even aside from Lebanon, what about the British in Northern Ireland, Gibraltar, and the Malvinas?

One key purpose being served in the Gulf, he argues, is to seek a remedy for U.S. economic problems, through war. The Bush administration wants to transform the U.N. into "the embryo of a world government, and at the same time a new source of international legality, and to install a world order which would marginalize the countries of the South, placing the political under the juridical."

But, warns De Benoist in conclusion, "the West will win all the wars, except the last. And if we see one day a third world war, it will see the United States and continental Europe on opposing sides."