



same time, they reaffirm their promises to deliver a military victory by the Iranian New Year on March 21st. This only means that the coming days and weeks will witness more fierce fighting and casualties, in a way that brings about very dangerous consequences.

## IMPERIALISM BENEFITS

In 1980, then US President Carter said that an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Gulf would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the West. Since then, the US has established an option for military intervention in the region (the Rapid Deployment Force, now the Central Command).

On January 29th of this year, the US ordered two aircraft carriers to remain on station in the eastern Mediterranean, and moved its warships in the Gulf further north in an apparent «gesture of support to Arab countries alarmed by Iranian success in the Gulf war» (*Financial Times*, January 30th). The escalation of the political and military situation in the Gulf, along with the intimidating US warships' movements, constitute a source of grave concern for the progressive and nationalist forces in the region. Ever since the Iraqi regime's unjustified ignition of this war, and Iran's continued unreasonable demands and rejection of peace efforts, the progressive and nationalist forces have called for an immediate halt to this destructive war.

The Iraq-Iran war, entering its seventh year, constitutes a destructive and tragic direction, conducive to a Camp David type of settlement in the eastern region. It is a qualitative deviation from the main battle, for it replaces the fight against Zionism and imperialism with a secondary battle. Both Iraq's and Iran's capabilities are directed in a wrong and unjustified direction. The continuation of this bloody war would ultimately lead to US hegemony in the whole region.

Unfortunately, calls to end the war have not yet materialized. Thousands of innocent Iraqi and Iranian people are being butchered in this human inferno, with no hope of ending the suffering in sight.