

NO WAR FOR OIL



What this war is NOT about:

- ☛ **"Weapons of Mass Destruction":** No doubt Iraq had at some stage WMD at its disposal – it is the US, Britain and Germany's arms industry who armed Saddam Hussein to the teeth throughout the 1980s! But since the Gulf War the country has been bombed to bits by the US. The biggest supply of WMD is in the hands of the Bush regime, a right wing fundamentalist government in the US.
- ☛ **"Democracy in Iraq":** Bush has numerous times stated this war is about "leadership change", i.e. getting rid of Saddam and replacing him with a more compliant US crony. When the Iraqi people rose against Saddam in the wake of the Gulf War, it was Bush Snr. who helped Saddam to suppress the rebellion. Bush jnr. himself got to power by rigging (buying) the US presidential elections and received the lowest vote of any US president in history.
- ☛ **"Saving the Iraqi people":** According to a leaked UN report a US war against Iraq will put more than 10 million people at risk from malnutrition and diseases such as cholera and dysentery. More than 500,000 children have died since the Gulf War because of the UN sanctions on medicines and food. It is the people of Iraq, not Saddam, who will get killed and see their houses and hospitals destroyed in a war.
- ☛ **"Stability in the Middle East":** A war on Iraq will cause chaos in the Middle East and will lead to a further escalation of the conflict in Israel/Palestine. If anything, it will strengthen reactionary political Islam in the region.
- ☛ **"Popular support for war":** millions of people across the globe have taken to the streets to voice their opposition to war. Public opinion in all European countries is overwhelmingly against this war. According to the *Economist's* opinion poll (Jan 12) only 26% of US citizens support war in all circumstances.

What this war IS about:

- ☛ **Control over oil:** Iraq is the second most oil rich country in the world after Saudi Arabia, the US is the biggest oil importer in the world.
- ☛ **US power in the Middle East:** historically, the US has always relied on client regimes to remain in control in this strategically important and oil-rich region. They are fearful about the future of the dictatorial regime in Saudi Arabia and want to secure control of the Iraqi oil fields.
- ☛ **US prestige and power in the world:** Bush wants to clearly establish that the US is the "police man" of the world. They want to intimidate people around the world who don't want to comply with Bush & Co.'s neo-liberal capitalist agenda. Therefore war is inextricably linked to the capitalist system. The anti-war movement and the anti-capitalist movement need to be linked to the workers' movement in order to really challenge US imperialism around the globe.

A socialist point of view on why we should oppose a war on Iraq and how the anti-war movement in Ireland and internationally can be built.

Produced by the Socialist Party

Contact us @ 01 6772592 – e-mail info@socialistparty.net

US military out of Shannon

Through its role in the UN and by allowing Shannon Airport to be used by the US military, the Irish establishment has placed itself firmly in the pro-war camp. This is consistent with Ireland's drift into military alliances as borne out in recent EU treaties such as Amsterdam and Nice.

The wilful negligence of the authorities here in allowing aircraft carry firearms has been highlighted. This government has ducked a debate on this issue knowing that even by its own laws this is a breach of its so-called military neutrality. Fine Gael if anything is even more vocal in the advocacy of war.

The Irish establishment is clearly out of step with the majority of ordinary people on this issue. Their foreign policy is just an extension of domestic policy. It's certainly the case that this government's disregard for workers, students and the sick in Ireland matches their contempt for the ordinary people of Iraq.



Joe Higgins, Socialist Party TD for Dublin West, speaking at the January 18 protest at Shannon airport.

"The government should be aware that in the event of an attack on Iraq, we will hold them accountable"

Take the anti-war movement into your trade union

The last opinion poll on the war, conducted by the *Irish Times*, showed a clear 60% of those questioned to be opposed to war.

Similarly in Britain, France and Germany public opinion is clearly against the war. However passive opposition will not by itself affect a u-turn of governments' policies.

Protests, media campaigns and public meetings will help turn a lot of that passive support into active support and arm people with the arguments to convince their friends, relatives and workmates to come over to the anti war side.

But what will it take to seriously impede Ireland's support for this war, particularly the use of Shannon? We have an indication of what the role the organised working class through their unions can play. Train drivers in Scotland have already refused to transport armaments in line with their union's anti war policy. Longshoremen in the east coast of the US have participated in anti war demonstrations. In Shannon there have already been reports of a mood for a boycott of the US military amongst workers.

Model resolution

- * That this executive/branch/trades council opposes the drive towards war in Iraq by the Bush administration and the United Nations.
- * We are opposed to war with out without a UN mandate and to that end demand that the US military be given no facilities at Shannon airport
- * That the economic sanctions on Iraq which have contributed to the deaths of over one million people should be immediately lifted.
- * That the task of regime change in Iraq is one for the Iraqi people.

SIPTU have already passed an anti war resolution at Executive level and should give every backing to their members in Shannon. Mass mobilisations and industrial action against the war can hamper Bush's drive for war and cut across the Irish government's actions.

Global conflict

No corner of the world is left untouched by the demands of global capital. The 1990s were characterised by soaring profits coupled with massive debt and decimated public services in the so-called third world. Such are the consequences of capitalist globalisation that many have had enough. The beginning of the 21st century is now characterised by defiance on the part of the world's masses. Throughout Latin America and the Arab world there is seething discontent that has shaken many regimes to their foundations.

The world's main imperialist powers can no longer rely on pliant stooges to "keep order" nor institutions like the WTO or IMF to ensure globalisation goes on unopposed so they must return to some more traditional colonial measures. That means a permanent military presence in the like of the gulf and Afghanistan to ensure the flow of oil as well as the active destabilization of countries like Venezuela where some basic reforms to protect the poor were brought in. The fig leaf of the UN and "international law" is casually cast aside when it suits the world's powers.

With the backdrop of a world economic slowdown and likely recession these "old style" imperialist policies are the music of the future but so too is growing resistance on the part of the world's workers and poor.



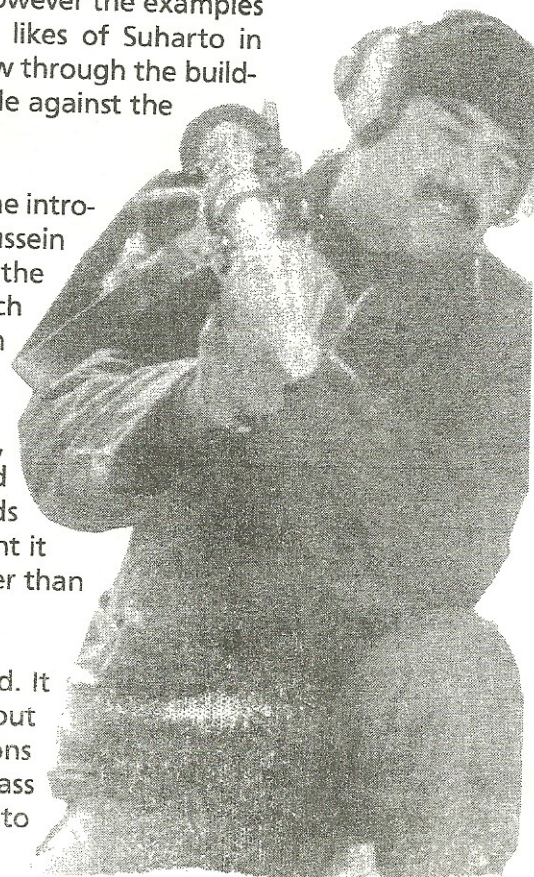
"Regime change" and the masses

The Socialist Party and the CWI seek regime change everywhere. However the examples of regime change we look to are that of the overthrow of the likes of Suharto in Indonesia and Milosovic in Serbia, in other words change from below through the building of movements that organise ordinary people in a united struggle against the system.

There are no examples of positive regime change from above, only the introduction of new tyrants that are more pliant to the west. Saddam Hussein was once such a western stooge. As can be seen in Afghanistan, the promise of stability and democracy are hollow indeed. The much promised funds to rebuild the country have long been forgotten about.

The US establishment have no care for democracy as people in Chile, Pakistan, Nicaragua and many other countries would confirm. Indeed when in the wake of the last Gulf War there were uprising of the Kurds in the north and Shia Muslims in the south of Iraq Bush senior taught it better to take a step back and allow Saddam re-impose himself rather than let the idea of successful mass struggle take hold in the region.

This war goes right to the heart of how capitalist society is organised. It is an indication of how rotten the system is that they are talking about "war for 50 years". Politically, socially and economically, the conditions for working class people get worse. These conditions will force mass struggles back onto the agenda and will create big opportunities to build a new mass movement for socialist change.



How a powerful anti-war movement can be built

There is a big and growing mood of opposition to a war on Iraq. When *Time*, a right wing political magazine, organised an internet poll asking who was the biggest threat to world peace, Bush or Saddam Hussein, the choice was 87% Bush, with Saddam a very distant second.

The challenge now is to turn that mood into an active opposition. The demonstrations in Dublin and Shannon have been quite successful so far and have been instrumental in exposing the Irish government's involvement in this war. Now we have to build momentum for the international day of action on 15 February. Postering, leafleting, stalls, local protests and stunts - anything that will help to get the word out about the importance of that protest - are now on the agenda.

Mass demonstrations are important in that they build the confidence of people that they are part of a powerful mass movement and they send a clear warning to the government. But in order to really build up political pressure the movement needs to be active on a daily and weekly basis in the workplaces, communities, schools and colleges.

Bringing the anti-war movement into the workplaces and communities is now on the cards. The trade unions have to play an important role in this, not just by opposing the war in principle, but by standing by their members if they take action. Civil disobedience, including strike action, has proven to be a very effective way to hurt the establishment where it hurts.

The two Scottish train drivers who blacked all army transports related to the war, found a very effective way to create enormous complications for the British government in their efforts to prepare for war. Similar activities could be prepared for here in Ireland in regard to Shannon. But the only way for them to be successful is if they are backed by public opinion and by a mass campaign of opposition to war.

**Join the protest on 15 February, bring your friends, workmates and neighbours along:
Sat 15 Feb, 2pm, Parnell Square, Dublin.**

Do you want to help us build a powerful anti-war movement along the programme and tactics outlined above? The Socialist Party, and its affiliates through the Committee for a Workers' International, is the socialist wing of the anti-war movement in Ireland and internationally.

**Contact the Socialist Party today at (01) 6772592
or e-mail info@socialistparty.net**

OPPOSITION TO WAR IS INTERNATIONAL

The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), a socialist international organised in 40 countries. The CWI is active in the campaigns against this war around the world. For more info on what's going on in other parts of the world and more socialist analysis of developments, visit the CWI website @ www.worldsocialist-cwi.org

YOUTH AGAINST WAR

Socialist Youth, the youth wing of the Socialist Party, has established the Youth Against War campaign to organise school students around the country, with the aim to organise opposition to the war in schools. On the day the war starts, YAW plans to organise protests up and down the country. Want ideas on how to get going in your school/college/...? Ring Matt @ 087 6684616

- I want more info on Socialist Youth
 I want to join Socialist Youth

- I want more info on the Socialist Party
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Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

Send back to Socialist Party, PO Box 3434, Dublin 8. Phone 01 6772592

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