

# For international working-class solidarity – against the US "globocop" and against Saddam

Oil. That is why the USA wants to attack Iraq. US policy-makers reckon that their easy victories in the Gulf (1991), Kosova (1999), and Afghanistan (2001) show they have the ability, and give them a window of opportunity, to tidy up the Gulf.

By massive military firepower, they can end their stalemate with Saddam and establish a friendly and strong regime in the heart of an ultra-strategic region which holds over 50 per cent of the world's oil reserves. Or so they hope.

For them, human life, human rights, and democracy all come a poor second to economic calculations. They come second to the USA's drive to be "globocop", policing a world of ruthless free trade dominated by the giant multinational corporations and international banks.

## The United Nations

If the USA gets a favourable United Nations resolution, that will change nothing in the real nature of the war drive. It will mean only that the USA has twisted enough diplomatic arms in the den of thieves that is the UN Security Council. However desirable a democratic world government, the UN is not it.

As his contemptuous reaction to Iraq's promise to readmit weapons inspectors shows, for Bush UN resolutions are to be used when convenient, ignored when not.

## Solidarity with Iraqi people

Socialists have opposed Saddam's dictatorship for many years. We were campaigning against that dictatorship while the USA was aiding it in its war against Iran between 1980 and 1988 and its slaughter of thousands of Iraq's long-oppressed Kurdish minority. Yes, Saddam Hussein's regime is a threat, to its own people, to Iraq's oppressed Kurdish minority, and to neighbouring peoples, such as those of Iran (attacked in 1980), Kuwait (attacked in 1990), and Israel (targeted with rockets in 1991).

It is for the people of Iraq and the region to overthrow Saddam. Iraqi socialists like the Worker-communist Party of Iraq say: "No to the fascist regime of Saddam" – but also "No to war, no to US policies". We stand with Iraqi socialists and working people in their fight to win democracy in Iraq, with the Kurds in their fight for freedom – and against the US "globocop".

## The Middle East

The US is out to replace Saddam by another Saddam, essentially different only in that he will be more pliant to US wishes. Along the way it claims the right to kill as many Iraqi children, women and men as it finds necessary to secure its aims.

And, after all the bloodshed, will the USA's "other Saddam" be less vicious and aggressive than Iraq's present regime? Not necessarily. The USA already supports a vile dictatorship in Saudi Arabia, where alleged adulterers are routinely beheaded, basic human rights are trampled on daily – but oil profits are safe!

The USA's close ally, Turkey, has already said that it will tolerate no independence for the Kurds in the event of Saddam's regime being overturned. The Turkish government fears that its own long-oppressed Kurdish minority could be aroused to revolt. It smugly asserts that "of course the Americans understand our position".

Iraq may have chemical or biological weapons. US/UK war against Iraq is the move most likely to trigger the use of those weapons. Bush's war may set the whole Middle East aflame, breed new Al Qaedas, and cost many lives outside Iraq.

There is nothing democratic or progressive in an "anti-Zionist" stance by Saddam which effectively scapegoats the Israeli Jews – most of them children or grandchildren of refugees, many of them opponents of Sharon – for all the evils of imperialism and capitalism. Anti-semitic myths about the world being run by a "Zionist-imperialist" conspiracy are poison.

The Palestinian people deserve our solidarity against the Israeli occupation in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. But the way forward in Israel-Palestine is consistent democracy – the right to self-determination for both nations, Palestinians and Israeli Jews; two nations, two states – not the futile and backward-looking of seeking Arab or Islamic "revenge" by way of conquest and suppression of Israel.

## Fighting for democracy

Until the Tories complained, King – sorry, Prime Minister – Tony Blair refused even to allow Parliament to meet to debate the war. He still can and does refuse to let elected MPs take a straightforward vote for or against war. When an anti-war member, Mark Seddon, tried to get a vote

on war at Labour's National Executive, the New Labour hierarchy told he couldn't. They are doing all they can to stop any real debate on this issue at Labour's conference which starts on 30 September.

The people should be able to decide on war! The labour movement still needs to fight to win democracy. In the first place we must challenge the effective disenfranchisement of the working class by Blair's de-labourised "New Labour", and re-establish an independent voice in politics for working-class people.

In the second place, we must get rid of the Tory anti-union laws, and establish by law a workers' right to organise, to strike, to picket, and to take solidarity action.

Thirdly, we must fight for a democratic parliament, kept accountable by frequent elections and report-backs, which will elect the government – rather than having the Prime Minister, chosen by the Queen, then construct his Government and his "payroll" vote to control Parliament.

### **The unions**

Even now we can make it untenable for Blair to continue backing Bush. The force that can do that is the organised working class.

Facing strikes by firefighters, Tube workers, and local government workers at the same time that it wants to go to war, Blair's government may respond by pushing emergency legislation to ban industrial action in essential services.

If unions follow up their strong protests against war at the TUC, and their support for the 28 September anti-war march, by insisting on their right to strike whatever undemocratic legislation Blair attempts, by bringing their pay disputes together in coordination and solidarity, and by supporting further demonstrations and civil disobedience against war, then Blair can be stopped.

Stop the war! Join us in fighting to win the trade unions to the cause of peace, international solidarity, and democracy!

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**Two Nations, Two States  
Socialists and Israel-Palestine  
New edition of this pamphlet, revised  
and expanded, now out. 48 pages,  
£2/£1 post free from AWL, PO Box  
823, London SE15 4NA**

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### **What sort of anti-war movement?**

We believe that it was a mistake to merge a demonstration against the war on Iraq with a

demonstration about Israel-Palestine whose organisers (the Muslim Association) are linked with the fundamentalist right-wing Jamaat-e Islami party in Pakistan and promote slogans like "Zionists out of Palestine", and "Zionists, Zionists, you should know/ Back to Palestine we'll go".

War can best be fought by a movement based in the organised working class and the trade unions, founded on simple internationalist and democratic principles, and free from all taint of Islamism. The movement must welcome Muslim workers and youth, but mobilise them as workers and youth, not as Muslims.

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### **Building on the rank and file revival**

**A day school for socialists in the trade unions**

**Saturday 26 October, 11 to 5,  
University of London Union, Malet St,  
London. Speakers include Mark  
Serwotka (PCS) and Steve Godward  
(Birmingham firefighter), both in a  
personal capacity. More: 020 7207  
3997 or office@workersliberty.org.**

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### **Letter from an Iranian socialist to the Stop the War Coalition**

As a socialist Iranian, who blames Islamic fundamentalism in power in Iran for the death of tens of thousands of communists and socialists, notably in prison massacres of 1981 and 1988, I find your choice of calling a joint demonstration with Muslim Association of Britain deplorable.

They, like any other political, religious or social group could have supported your demonstration if they wished to do so. By giving a special place to the Muslim Association you are denying the rights of tens of thousands of secular Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Iranian, Iraqi, Palestinian, Lebanese and other citizens in the UK, many of whom are socialists and your natural allies in an anti war campaign.

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### **Imperialism:**

**What it is. How it has changed. How to fight it.**

**London Solidarity/ Workers' Liberty forum**

**Wednesday 16 October**

**7.30pm, ULU, Malet St, London W1.**

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**Workers' Liberty, P O Box 823, London SE15 4NA.  
020 7207 3997. Email office@workersliberty.org.  
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