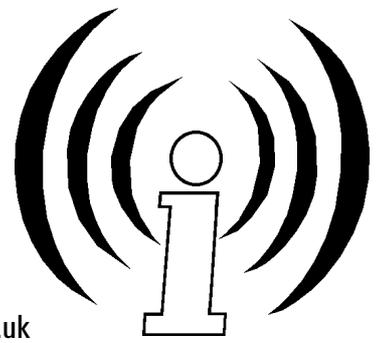


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Widespread Calls for Civil Disobedience

The growing involvement in civil disobedience by broad elements of civil society (i.e. NGOs, social movements, trade unions, concerned citizens), traditionally areas outside of both the immediate power structures of political and market spheres, can serve to also reveal obscured social and political contradictions entrenched in society and government. At the People's Assembly, Chris Nineham of Stop the War Coalition said, "They say it's a war for democracy, but in the very conduct of the war they are negating democracy. We need to reinvent democracy, to give a voice to the anti-war majority. The resurgent peace movement has never been stronger. Championed for years by groups like CND, the current peace movement has benefited from the new sense of international solidarity and communication networks established by the recent anti-globalisation movement. Anti-militarism was

always a theme within that movement, now it has moved centre stage."

Now, as Blair commits to a war against Iraq and dismisses a 2nd UN resolution and Robin Cook resigns, the unprecedented level of calls for direct action and civil disobedience continues to grow with actions occurring daily across the country.

* Following an international meeting of anti-war groups from 26 countries, a national student day of action has been called for Wed 19th March.

* A week of action and disobedience 'Obstruct

and Resist' supported by several groups will take place from for 17th-23rd March (likely encompassing the start of war), with mass protests at USAF Fairford, Menwith Hill Listening Station, as well as Flyingdales, Chetwynd Barracks and at Plymouth Dockyards.

* Campaigners are planning further protests at military bases throughout the country during the weekend of the 5th-6th April under the banner 'Reclaim The Bases'.

In addition to plans from Stop The War Coalition groups and others around the country for immediate widespread civil disobedience on the day war is declared, there will also be actions in London the following day called by the Disobedients, as well as mass protests the following Saturday. Meanwhile almost 4,600 people have now signed the ARROW Pledge of Resistance to take action when war starts.

Reporting Resistance To War:

Indymedia is committed to reporting resistance to the war. We encourage everyone to participate by publishing your own reports of protests and actions (text reports, pictures, audio and video). Do Indymedia!

International Women's Day says – Invest in Caring not killing



This year's March 8, International Women's Day was dedicated to the anti-war movement and took particular recognition of the recent war preparations and increases in military budgets. Women all over the world added their voices to the consensus global priority - to reclaim these budgets for, and demand a change in, the priorities of the global economy.

The changes fought for include paid recognition to carers, rights to resources such land and water and justice against inhumane treatment and unacceptable living standards exacerbated by poor working, economic and cultural conditions. Women's strikes and actions happened in over 70 countries across every continent. As more women come together, breaking the divisions of race, ethnicity, nation, religion, language - which divide us to deprive us - the more grassroots women's needs are visible and their demands heard.

On the eve of International Women's Day, approximately 25 women and men stormed the construction site of Ashford Women's prison in Middlesex as part of an International Women's Day solidarity action with female prisoners. Banners

reading 'You Build Your Own Cages' and 'Women Fight Prisons' were hung from machinery. The group escaped after a significant amount of disruption had been caused, three people were however arrested for suspicion of criminal damage regarding 'No More Prisons' written on an office door. But were later released without charge.

On the actual day of the 8th, a women's day march assembled at 11.30 am at Parliament Square. A group of 100 that later grew up to 250 people marched from there to Victoria, then Hyde Park Corner and Grosvenor Square. They stopped in front of the U.S. Embassy where a group of women from Argentina, Nigeria and Iraq, described the atrocities and exploitations in their countries and the resistance taking place.

Elsewhere in London the Rhythms of Resistance London samba band took to the streets of London's West End to support the NoSweat Campaign protests against the exploitation of their predominantly female workforces by the high street clothing brands. They visited Niketown, Puma and Disney stores followed by a large contingent of police, helpfully blocking people going into these



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Continued from front page...

exploitative stores. In Scotland there were various events, in Edinburgh 60 people protested against Gap's use of sweatshop labour with speeches made by women from the FBU, Amnesty, Stop the War Coalition and the Workers Left Unity-Iran organisations. In Aberdeen, up to 2,500 marched against war on Iraq on International Women's Day. The protest, organised by the 'Aberdeen Coalition for Justice not War' was attended by a wide range of people from political, religious, campaigning and trade union groups, as well as concerned individuals. In Sheffield Nosweat held a 'Sweatshop Shame Awards Ceremony', presented to stores selling Puma and Nike products and handed out the latest update on the Matamoros Garment workers' struggle. International Women's Day in Derry was celebrated with a march against the war. Despite terrible weather and a paint bomb attack, the march across the city was lively, confident and successful.

A few days before International Women's Day actors staged a global anti-war protest, with readings from the play *Lysistrata* held in almost 60 countries, and with over 1,000 events worldwide. The play depicts how Greek women organised a sex strike to convince their men that war must end. In London, extracts were read out opposite Parliament with actors and supporters wearing white gags to show how Blair and the government are not listening to the people.

Check out these facts regarding the inhuman waste that war creates here at home aside from the killing abroad:

- \$100 buys either 11 hand grenades for killing, or 11 blankets for caring
- \$40,000 buys 1 Hellfire missile for killing, or 2 home health aides for caring of the elderly and disabled.
- \$145,000 buys 1 Bunker Buster bomb for killing, or Associate degrees for fifteen nurses for caring.
- \$586,000 buys 1,000 M-16 rifles for killing or rent subsidies to care for 1,000 families.
- \$46,000,000 is the estimated cost of 1 hour of war on Iraq, while that sum can also completely renovate 20 schools
- \$494,000,000 is the annual military aid to the extremely repressive regime of Columbia, while that same amount can provide 7,000 units of affordable housing
- One single stealth bomber with a devastating cost of \$2.1 billion can provide the annual salary and benefits for 38,000 teachers.
- US military spending is \$400 billion. \$80 billion would get rid of the world's worst poverty. Women and children are the majority of those killed and 80% of refugees worldwide."

Women and children make up the majority of the casualties of war as well as 80% of the refugees from armed conflict. 75,000 body bags were recently sent to Persian Gulf region. I have no figures to estimate that cost!

Recent UK Anti-war Actions



March Against the War

The month of March has seen a flurry of anti-war activity as Bush and Blair continue their US-UK campaign for military action against Iraq.

UK: Disgrace the Bases:

On the 17th March in the Midlands, peace activists closed the Trident Refit Factory. The seven Midlands peace campaigners were arrested after successfully closing the Rolls Royce site at Derby for over an hour. The company was targeted for its crucial role in the manufacturing of fuel components for nuclear submarines. The activists from Trident Ploughshares, who use a direct action campaign to peacefully disarm the British Trident nuclear weapons system, closed the Raynesway site just before 7.00 am. They locked themselves to the entrance gates with a variety of chains, padlocks and thumb locks, closing the factory just as employees were arriving for work. A traffic jam ensued and some employees were sent away. All seven were charged with breach of the peace, taken to St Mary's Wharf police station in Derby and later released without charge.

At RAF Fairford, on the 17th March, over 100 women, many of them grandmothers, blockaded the main entrance to Fairford airbase causing disruption to the normal operation as the USAF prepares for war. This followed an action on March 14th where two Trident Ploughshares peace activists disabled around 30 vehicles that provide essential support to the US B52 bombers stationed there. In a news update the two Trident Ploughshares protesters who gained access to HMS Vanguard in November were given conditional discharges last Friday. An update on Fairford, as of 8th March, for 28 days Fairford (and Gloucestershire and Wiltshire) is subject to stop and search powers under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000. This is the first time these powers have ever been used. Make sure you

check out Fairford legal briefings on their website.

In Portsmouth, 600 people marched through the streets and proceeded to 'Disgrace the Base' by blockading Unicorn Gate, the main access to Portsmouth naval base and the junction adjoining the base. There were three arrests reported for obstruction of the highway. At a Leeds Anti-war Demo on the 15th March, thousands marched through the streets of Leeds to oppose war and lend support and solidarity.

Ireland:

Companies stop using Shannon Airport for military transports. The Irish airport Shannon was one of the major bases for the US to fly soldiers and material to the Middle East. Now three of the four US companies that undertake those flights, have stopped all traffic through Shannon for safety reasons. On three occasions in the last weeks, activists got on to the airport runway and into the hangars, and demolished planes with hammers and colour, making them unfit to fly. Flights will now continue via Frankfurt airport in Germany. On 1st March, about 1,000 peace protestors attempted a mass trespass, but a newly erected razorwire fence now protects the grounds. A St. Patrick's Day protest, ranging from suggestions of leprechauns for peace and cursing the shamrock, to wearing black on St. Patrick's Day, the idea has some official sanction in Ireland after Dublin City Council voted to fly white flags for peace along the Liffey over the Festival weekend. In an attempt to influence American public opinion in advance of the 17th March deadline, a diverse group of Irish peace activists issued a call for people around the world to wear or display white during St. Patrick's Day activities as a symbol of peace. The St. Patrick's Day Peace Group is also calling for the Irish peace process to be used as a model for conflict resolution in the Iraqi crisis. Celebrated in the United States since 1737, St. Patrick's Day has a profile extending well beyond the 40 million politically

powerful Irish Americans and has long been used for political purposes. For more info see: <http://www.indymedia.ie/>

Scotland:

1st March saw action in all corners of the UK. In Edinburgh claimants destroyed army recruitment material from their local job centres in resistance to the threatened war with Iraq. Group spokeswoman Ethel MacDonald said, "The army and other armed forces try to take advantage of unemployed people's poverty. They produce glossy brochures, portraying exotic locations. The reality is killing and being killed." She continued, "And what's it all for? Protecting the interests of the rich - like safeguarding the oil in Iraq for the western multinationals." The protesters removed a large quantity of army, navy and RAF recruitment material from a city job centre. These were shredded and returned through the letterbox to Leith Walk Job Centre on 26th February. On Monday 17th March activists, including many students and school children stormed Edinburgh Castle, which is not only a main tourist attraction, but also a military garrison. After blocking the entrance for about an hour, the demonstration moved on to the front of the Scottish parliament, and then, further to Princes Street, where the traffic was blocked and a sit-down took place. Later, the protesters tried to raise their opposition in front of the US consulate, but police hemmed the protesters in and allowed them to leave in small groups.

Wales:

Meanwhile in Wales, a group of anti-war campaigners gained entrance to a major munitions plant in Glascoed, South Wales during a 'civilian weapons inspection' that saw 50 people protesting. The plant is run by BAE Systems (the UK's largest arms company) and is not so much a factory, as a huge complex of buildings and bunkers, producing everything from bullets and grenades to depleted uranium shells. The protest was part of the Campaign

Against the Arms Trade's Site Unseen, which has scheduled protests at 40 sites belonging to BAE Systems or its subsidiaries throughout the year.

A group from Cardiff Anarchist Network used a home-made rope ladder to scale a seven foot spiked fence and bolt cutters to get through chain link fencing. The action lasted several hours and activists gained access to sensitive areas despite the best efforts of security guards and police. There was one arrest for criminal damage, although BAE Systems declined to press charges. On Tuesday 18th March, in another action by Cardiff Anarchist Network, activists occupied the chamber of the Welsh Assembly in protest at the impending illegal attack on Iraq. Five activists leapt from the public gallery and staged a sit-in in front of the speaker's podium in the main debating chamber, bringing the assembly's business to a complete halt. At the same time, two more attempted to climb the truss inside the assembly's foyer, and the last tried to D-lock himself to it. All were released without charge and the group's action even garnered support from two assembly members, who came out of the building to congratulate the protesters, saying that as Tony Blair had ignored the wishes of the people of this country and the will of the United Nations, he was no longer in any position to lecture anyone on illegalities.

Students Against the War

Students have shown massive initiative and political radicalisation as they make their contribution in the recent anti-war protests. Students at Atlantic College in South Wales joined in a Global Peace Vigil on Saturday 16th March, as part of a worldwide show of opposition to War. Elsewhere members of University College, London Stop The War Coalition dropped a banner reading 'NO WAR FOR OIL' and 'END THE OCCUPATION' in Oxford Street during the previous Friday lunch hour. During that same week, six pupils from Hove who walked out of school to take part in an anti-war demonstration were suspended for two months and not allowed back till their GCSE

examinations. 18 students at another school in Herts, have been excluded for participating in an anti-war rally.

Police also refused to monitor an anti-war demonstration by more than 500 children in Oxford and blamed their schools and parents for allowing it to happen. The pupils brought chaos to the city centre after storming out of schools at lunchtime.

This follows the thousands of children that have walked out of their schools across Britain. Many of these student anti-war demos coincided with the 'Books not Bombs' campaign. This also leads up to a National Student Day of Action Against War on Wednesday 19th March, called by Student Stop The War Coalition.

For more information on these actions see:

Edinburgh Claimants Union - <http://www.j12.org/lothian/ec/>

Campaign against the Arms trade: <http://www.caat.org.uk/>

Trident Ploughshares - <http://www.tridentploughshares.org/>

International Citizens' for Peace: <http://www.icwi.org>

Reclaim the base: <http://www.reclaimthebases.org.uk>

Stop the War Coalition: <http://www.stopwar.org.uk>

Students Stop the War: <http://www.studentstopwar.org.uk>

IMC Scotland-

<http://uk.indymedia.org/index.php3?resist=scotland>

IMC Ireland: <http://www.indymedia.ie/>

Die-in to Prevent War on Oil

Monday 17th March was called by ARROW (Active Resistance to the Roots of War) as a 'National Day Die-In's'. These happened in town centres, government offices and military bases across the country, against war on Iraq. In London, staff arriving at the MoD office in Whitehall were met at the entrance by ARROW protestors on the steps, covered in fake blood painted and with 'No War' on the MoD pillars. They later went to Downing Street, where they staged another 'die in'.

Elsewhere in London that same day, twenty people disrupted the trading floor of the International Petroleum Exchange in the city, while others outside held a banner reading 'Oil Fuels War'. Two people barricaded them inside an office till the police removed and arrested them.

YOUR LOCAL VOICE

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Step One: All you need do to start is hit the 'PUBLISH' link on the front page of the site (www.indymedia.org.uk).

Step Two: Follow the instructions on the 'Publish' page (they're easy to follow) - you have to enter some information about the report you are uploading - a 'Title' for your report and your name, which can be anything you like. There are also other spaces on the form for your email and telephone number, etc. but you don't have to fill them in.

Step Three: You then just need to select what it is you want to publish on the site.

Text: If you are submitting a text report then simply type straight into the part of the form called 'Text Stories - the article', and then hit the 'Publish' button at the bottom of the form. That's it! Your report will now be added to the website.

Photographs: If you are submitting a photograph you need to select the picture from your hard drive using the 'Browse' button in the 'Multimedia Stories' box, then select from the drop down menu what type of picture it is (either jpeg/jpg image or gif) and then hit the 'Publish' button at the bottom of the form. That's it! Your picture will now be added to the website.

Audio/Video: If you are submitting either an audio or video file select it from your hard drive using the 'Browse' button in the 'Multimedia Stories' box, then select from the drop down menu what type of file it is (either mp3 or realaudio for audio files or realvideo for video) hit the 'Publish' button at the bottom of the form. That's it! Your sound or video clip will now be added to the website.

It really is that easy! There are some guidelines covering what type of reports should be uploaded on the publish column, where to post announcements, current debates and a mission statement in the making.

Upcoming events:

- March 22: **Fairford National Demo** - <http://www.gwi.org.uk>
- March 22: **Menwith Hill** - <http://www.now-peace.org.uk/events.htm>
- March 22: **London: Seat of Power** - <http://www.stopthewar.org.uk>
- April 5-6: **Nationwide Reclaim The Bases** - <http://www.reclaimthebases.org.uk/>
- April 22: **Faslane Base - The Really Big Blockade** - <http://www.banthebomb.org/rbb/index.htm>
- April 24: **Carnival Against Oil Wars and Climate Chaos**. <http://www.burningplanet.org>
- May 1st: **UK-wide Mayday 2003** - <http://www.ourmayday.org.uk/>
- Europe:**
- March 24-26: **Milan InterAmerican Development Bank** - www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/mexico/
- April 7-9: **Barcelona European Consulta** - <http://www.consulta europea.org/en/guia-en.html>
- April 6-18: **Vienna International Antiprohibitionist Action** <http://www.vienna2003.org/>
- June 1-3: **Evian G8 Summit** - <http://www.evian-g8.org/>
- June 20-22: **Thessaloniki EU Summit** - <http://www.action-salonika2003.org/>

World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, World Economic Forum in Davos

27th January, 2003

Whilst civil society gathered in Porto Alegre for the 3rd World Social Forum to debate alternatives to neoliberalism and economic globalisation, world finance 'leaders' and CEOs of the main global corporations met behind closed doors for this year's summit of the World Economic Forum in the Swiss city of Davos to further implement economic globalisation policies.

The WSF presents itself as a space for diverse activities, workshops, debates and lectures about alternatives to the current economic and political state of affairs, as well as a space for the exchange of ideas, experiences and struggles.



The activities of this year's WSF began with a 'March for Peace Against the Militarization and the War'. At the same time in parallel to the main march, another anti-capitalist demonstration took part in the streets of Porto Alegre. The workshops of 24th January included a 'Conference Against the Militarization and the War' and a debate on 'Communication for the Exertment of the Citizenship'. On the same day, Greenpeace organised an anti-nuclear action against the installation of Angra III's Nuclear Plant in Rio de Janeiro. 25th January saw a conference of the People's Global Action as part of the event 'Life After Capitalism' debated issues of participatory democracy and notions of consumption and income. A meeting of the global network of Social Youth Movements also took place. At the same time, different marches and demonstrations took place in the streets of the city.

For latest updates see <http://brazil.indymedia.org>

At the same time, in the Swiss city of Davos another type of forum was taking place. The summit of the World Economic Forum (24-28 Jan) met in secretive talks whilst fences and hundreds of riot police protected the 'global economic leaders' from up to 5,000 anti-capitalist demonstrators that took to the streets of Davos and the nearby city of Fideris

On Sunday 26th, people returning from the mountain city of Davos were met with hundreds of riot police in Bern and clashes ensued.

More info: <http://switzerland.indymedia.org>

No-Nato Days of Ation in Munich

6th/9th February 2003

25,000 people demonstrated against the 'security' conference in Munich today, where the heads of NATO,

defence ministers and the war industry met to plot upcoming military aggressions. The demonstration that took place in the city was peaceful and cheerful, despite continuous provocations by large numbers of riot police.

A pink and silver inspired demo also took place on Thursday in downtown Munich. A speaker was arrested for calling for desertation to war.

At about 11.00 pm on Friday 7th February, the Bavarian police (USK) entered the convergence centre in Munich, where the anti-war demonstrators gathered. Demonstrators and journalists were arrested by the police - a terrible attempt to criminalise the protest against war. Late reports inform that the police arrived with over 40 minibuses and raided the centre (www.no-nato.de). Video footage was taken of all persons present without their permission and all identities were checked and registered.

The legal team stated that no motive was given by the police for the raid. Journalists present at the scene were not allowed access to the convergence centre. Reports vary also in the justification of the raid - according to the protest organisers it seems the whole operation was planned long time beforehand. For more information: <http://germany.indymedia.org>

40 Million Under Threat of Famine

12th February, 2003

Whilst the richest nations of the world are preparing to spend millions on attacking Iraq, 40 million African people are in danger of starvation. The famine has been developing since last year and is expected to reach a peak in spring of this year and continue until 2004. Although the immediate cause of the famine is a widespread drought, the famine has been exacerbated by the actions of the IMF and World Bank including pressuring Malawi to sell its remaining stocks of maize. More info: <http://southafrica.indymedia.org>

Palestine Activist Freed After International Phone-in Campaign

17th February, 2003

The International Solidarity Movement (ISM) is a Palestinian led movement of Palestinian and International activists working to raise awareness for Palestinian freedom and an end to Israeli occupation.

On 14th February, 2002 ISM faced two almost simultaneous crises in Rafah and Nablus. The first incident involved peace activists trying to stop the bulldozing of several Palestinian homes in Rafah. The activists were fired at with warning shots and engaged in a stand-off with a tank in the area. IMS contacted the US Consulate to inform them of the presence of its nationals at risk. However it was the first time a consulate has stated explicitly that it will take no responsibility whatsoever for the welfare of its nationals performing peace work in the Occupied Territories. The activists were forced to retreat to safety, the homes were destroyed.

Elsewhere 12 ISM activists were trying to deliver chocolates to detained families in East Nablus. As the activists approached the house, they were confronted by Israeli soldiers who seized Hussein Khalili, a Palestinian member of the ISM, before firing warning shots at the rest. Khalili was threatened with detainment, very roughly treated and verbally abused. When a brave attempt to intervene by an Israeli ISM activist failed, the combined efforts of ISM Media Centre, the Hamoked and Gush Shalom human rights organisations were able to alert global support to Hussein's plight and issued an

appeal to phone the District Coordination Office of the Israeli Army in the Nablus area to demand Hussein's immediate release. Several hours later he was released, calls continued to flow in till the early hours.

ISM activists have come under increasing pressure from the Israeli Occupying Forces in an effort to intimidate them. It is testament to the desire of Palestinian, Israeli and internationals to work together for peace in the Middle East that ISM volunteers continue their amazing work. Read the full report.

For further info <http://palestine.indymedia.org> and <http://israel.indymedia.org>

World Summit on Information Society preparatory conference opens in Geneva

19th February, 2003

On Monday 17th February, Adama Samassekou opened the second preparatory conference for the WSIS - Prepcom 2. The aim of the conference is to achieve a better understanding about content and themes of the summit. During the coming two weeks, the final declaration of the WSIS as well as the action plan will be drafted. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) will be the first UN summit to focus on issues of information and communication. The first part of the summit will take place in Geneva in December 2003.

Several fundamental lines of conflict already became apparent during the opening event; for example between those who propagate technology as a solution of all problems and those who would like to extend the summit agenda to cultural and fundamental communicative issues. Diverse groups and organisations of civil society are participating in the summit preparations and will use the Prepcom to create networks, develop their own ideas and influence the agenda in a positive way. At the same time a counter-summit is being discussed and campaigns around WSIS are already being developed.

Italian Protesters Stops Military Trains

25th February, 2003

Activists opposed to a probable war in Iraq took advantage of a national train strike to start a series of blockades of trains in several northern Italian cities. On the night of Friday 21st February, about 120 Disobbedienti protesters stopped a train in Padova that was moving US military equipment from Vicenza to the US base of Camp Darby near Pisa, forcing the train to take a different route. The protests continued on Saturday with organisers stating that thousands of activists were involved in the actions across the country. Some of the actions and blockades that took place include Padova, Brescia, Verona, Bologna, Fornovo, Monselice, Ferrara, Empoli, Tomolo, and Pisa, with reports that the protests are rapidly spreading across Italy. Meanwhile the British consulate was also occupied in Torino. Other actions are also expected in Ferrara, where police attacked a crowd of 1,000 people, as well as in Udine. At Magdalena Isle near Sardinia, another 1,000 activists were roughly cleared out by police. For breaking news and updates in English language see Global Radio feature and IMC:Italy Trainstopping feature.

At the same time, since 23rd February, the train personnel has been defined as 'military personnel' by the Italian government. Although so far the train workers do not get much support from their official labour union, the dock workers' union has announced that they will not load military equipment on the ships.