

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION #8

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US/UK OUT OF IRAQ! There is No "Democracy" Under Occupation!

No matter who you vote for, 160 000 troops still get in!

In January 2005 George Bush and the entire US war machine stood before the cameras of the world and pronounced that the US would be granting Iraqis their first "free election" in fifty years. These words, calculated to justify the entire invasion and occupation of Iraq, including the wholesale murder of an estimated 100,000 Iraqi people, held more meaning than the elections themselves ever could.

In public the war mongers have counted the carrying out of these elections as a great victory for the occupying forces, for the Iraqi people, and for "democracy." In the privacy of their war rooms they are not so certain. Their problem? The "success" of the imperialist's "democratic process" does not survive translation from press statements into everyday life for people living in Iraq. Alongside their suffering is the daily evidence that the US is not planning to go anywhere, certainly not without leaving a "stable" colonial government and army behind anyway.

Imperialists boast of a 59% voter

turnout and limited disruption of the actual elections, with only 2% of the 5,000 ballot box locations around the country facing attack on January 30th. But this picture, like all portraits painted by the occupiers, is a thin veneer covering a very ugly reality including mass voter abstention throughout much of Iraq, the desperation of suicide bomb attacks, and a resistance that has not faded in the slightest since this election "victory".

The limited participation in elections must not be seen so simply. The Iraqi people are not against elections, per say, they are against the occupation. For people in Iraq the elections represent colonial occupation and its local administrators and at the same time, the distant and desperate hope that something might change. The idea at the forefront of these hopes of change was that the election of an "Iraqi Government" could result in an end to the occupation. Unfortunately, although this proposal has been taken up by almost all parties both within and



US troops in Baghdad, with elections billboard in the background.

outside of the new "government," the US is not listening.

All elements of life in Iraq are shaped by the conflict between the occupiers and the interests of the Iraqi people. In this context elections are a vicious scam that decide nothing. The January 30th elections had nothing to do with sovereignty but were part of a campaign of imperialism to win legitimacy for their occupation and buy time against the Iraqi resistance.

Democracy was not brought to Iraq

by the occupiers, it has been brought out against them. Democracy is lived everyday in Iraq in the form of rallies, strikes and all acts of resistance for self-determination. It is despite the best efforts of imperialism that Iraq is one of the most democratic countries in the world in this regard. All of us in the world who stand for justice and self-determination against imperialism, war and occupation must learn from them.

Haiti for Haitians! Canada / US / France / UN Out of Haiti Now!

On February 28th 2004 the government of Canada, partnered with France and the US, invaded Haiti, overthrew the country's first ever democratically elected president and installed a puppet dictator. The occupation that followed this invasion has done what many in the poorest country in the western hemisphere thought impossible: it has made life in Haiti unimaginably worse.

The United Nations instituted their "Stabalization Mission in Haiti" to back up and "stabilize" the puppet dictatorship of Gerard Latorture with more than 5,700 troops and 1,622 civilian police. This campaign of "stabalization" has included such notable acts as: eliminating the ministry of literacy, cutting the minimum wage, rounding up and arresting members of Lavalas, the overthrown governing political party, and slaughtering opponents of the occupation.

The situation in Haiti has deteriorated so severely under occupation that the police forces have sealed off poor neighbourhoods and are not even allowing ambulances in to treat people attacked by death squads. Canada's contribution to the



US Soldier confronted by Haitian people at a demonstration calling for the return of Aristide.

occupation today is in providing these police forces training under the tutelage of RCMP officers well schooled in the art of colonial policing.

The invasion and occupation of Haiti was important for the Canadian government because it allowed them to open the era of war and occupation in Latin America – particularly against Haiti's neighbours Venezuela and Cuba – and to push their imperialist agenda and open space for Canada "on the world stage." The invasion and occupation of Haiti is equally important for the anti-war movement and for all people committed to the pursuit of justice in the world in Canada. We must take advantage of this criminal anniversary to declare clearly that we stand with the people of Haiti against Canadian imperialism and for their right to unconditional self-determination.

Celebrate March 8: International Women's Day

Throughout this century women all over the world have won many rights by sacrificing their lives. International Women's Day (IWD) is a recognition of these sacrifices and an opportunity to celebrate women's achievements. International Women's Day is the story of women as the creators of history. It is rooted in the centuries of women's struggles to participate in society on an equal basis with men.

On March 8, 1857 women working in clothing and textile factories in New York City, staged a protest. They were fighting against inhumane working conditions, low wages and for a shorter work week. In August 1907 the idea of an annual demonstration in support of working women and women's rights was first proposed by Clara Zetkin at a caucus of socialist women prior to the Second International annual meeting in Germany. On March 8, 1908 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter work hours, better pay, voting rights and an end to child labour. In 1910 the proposal by Clara Zetkin, at the International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen, designated March 8 as the annual International Women's Day. This was decided in recognition of

the 1908 demonstration by New York needle trades workers. It was on March 19, 1911 that Alexandra Kollontai helped organize the first International Women's Day in Germany and Europe. Meetings and demonstrations were also held in several other European countries. March 8, 1917 Russian women became the vanguard of the changing of history and of human kind by marching on Petrograd to



demand bread and peace. With the half a million Russian workers already on strike, the demonstration by the women forced the resignation of Czar Nicholas II and sparked the Russian Revolution. On March 8, 1968 Chicago women revived the celebration of International Women's Day in the USA. And finally on March 8, 1975 the United Nations recognized March 8 as International Women's Day.

Hands Off Iran! Stop the Attack on Iran!

While pressure on Iran grows, the US is having to maneuver and deal with a possible intervention in Iran. Currently the US administration is involved in negotiating a strategy of intervention in Iran with the European Union (EU). One thing is clear through these discussions: whether it's the EU or the US, imperialists are preparing to intervene in Iran. The US Government and media have portrayed this pressure as a response to Iran's nuclear program and the "possibility that Iran is developing nuclear weapons."

The US, EU and Israel have all agreed that Iran "poses a threat to the security" of the region. The US and Israel have both spoken to the media about the possibility of a pre-emptive attack by Iran. From history though we see that the US and Israel have been the forces engaging in pre-emptive attacks, like the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, or Israel's 1981 attack on an Iraqi power plant.

Ruling class Analysts within the US claim that if Iran develops nuclear weapons it will destabilize the Middle East. However, the main force within the Middle East that would destabilize the region is US, Israel and other imperialists. The occupation of Iraq and the resistance of the Iraqi people have led to a very difficult situation for the US government, and their position is weak as a result.

Currently the European Union (EU) is considering offering "economic rewards" to Iran if they abandon their nuclear program. One aspect that is "on the table" and being considered by both the US and EU is that of sanctions. The UN and US have been



March in Iran against US imperialism, February 2001.

known to push sanctions as a means of achieving economic and political ends. As we saw in Iraq, UN Sanctions have a much more devastating effect on working and oppressed people within the countries they are imposed on, than they do on the local ruling-class.

The significance of the increasing pressure on Iran for the antiwar movement is not over whether or not Iran has or is creating nuclear weapons. This does not create instability for working and oppressed people globally and in the Middle East any more than the Israel having nuclear weapons. The importance of Iran for the antiwar movement is that its right to self-determination be defended and that Iran be allowed to remain a country politically, economically, and militarily independent of US and EU imperialism. Iran must be defended against these attacks on the basis that

all oppressed nations and countries see fit, without intervention, and free have the right to govern how they from the greedy hands of imperialism.

WAR ABROAD, WAR AT HOME! Anti-Poverty Committee Demonstrates Against Throne Speech at the BC Legislature

On Feb 15, 2005 inside the BC legislature, the provincial budget was tabled. The Liberal government attempted to present it as a positive reflection of their work over the past four years, with the largest-ever surplus, anticipated at 2 billion dollars. However, joblessness, low wages, lack of access to employment assistance, skyrocketing tuition and gutted social services are all testaments to the human cost of this surplus.

The rally, which was called for Feb 15, 2005 was organized by the Anti Poverty Committee (APC) of Vancouver and brought 3 busloads of poor and working people from Vancouver to join with their brothers and sisters in Victoria.

As unemployment steadily increases and inflation rises, the attacks of the last four years will not lessen, but will instead become more and more severe. Internationally, the Canadian government is fighting these problems through the



Anti-Poverty Committee Rally against throne speech, February 15th 2005.

economic plundering of third world counties. At home, both federally and provincially, poor and working people face a similar fate, of being exploited, attacked and robbed. By mobilizing on Feb 15 the Anti Poverty Committee's march and rally motivated other groups and individuals to join them in opposition to the BC Liberals throne speech and claims of economic progress. This demonstration was an important part of building a movement in BC of poor and working people and was supported by Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO).

STOP ATTACKS AT HOME AND ABROAD!

MAWO in Action for Change!

Part of the International Days of Action on the Second Anniversary of the US Invasion of Iraq
ANTI-WAR ANTI-OCCUPATION CONFERENCE

Featured Speakers:
Tim Louis, Vancouver City Councillor
Roger Annis, Haiti Solidarity BC
Shannon Bundoock, Co-chair MAWO
Ivan Drury, Youth-Third World Alliance

**THE 21ST CENTURY:
THE CENTURY OF WAR,
OCCUPATION, AND RESISTANCE**

**Building the
Anti-War Movement:
Why There is No Other Option**



**FREE EVENT
SUNDAY
MARCH 20th
12-6PM**

**BRITANNIA COMMUNITY CENTRE
(1661 NAPIER ST. & COMMERCIAL DR - VANCOUVER)**

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION - MAWO

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SATURDAY APRIL 23

STOP

THE

**U S
WAR
MACHINE**

RALLY and MARCH

1 pm @ Vancouver Art Gallery (Georgia St + Howe St)

US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!

HANDS OFF SYRIA AND IRAN!

BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

**END THE OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ, PALESTINE, AFGHANISTAN,
HAITI AND INDIGENOUS NATIONS IN CANADA!**

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR AND OCCUPATION
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GET INVOLVED WITH MAWO!

**Meetings Every Wednesday 6:30pm Britannia Community Centre
(Commercial Dr. at Napier St.) ALL WELCOME!**

Mobilization Against War and Occupation

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