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 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 themselves ever could.

The limited participation in elections has not been 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 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. It has made life in Haiti unimaginably worse.

The United Nations instituted their “Stabilization Mission in Haiti” to back up and “stabilize” the puppet dictatorship of Gerard Lartourre with more than 5,700 troops and 1,022 civilian police. This campaign of “stabilization” has included such notable acts as: eliminating the ministry of literacy, cutting the minimum wage, rounding up and sealing off poor neighbourhoods and arresting members of Lavalas, the overthrowing governing political party, and recruiting 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 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. It was the first proposed by Clara Zetkin at a caucus of socialists and the campaign for women’s and workers’ 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, 1919 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.

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.
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 and its 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. Imperialists are preparing to launch a major attack on Iran.


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 it is 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 have the right to govern how they see fit, without intervention, and free from the greedy hands of imperialism.

Hands Off Iran! Stop the Attack on Iran!

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 busses 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 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

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

FREE EVENT
SUNDAY
MARCH 20th
12-6PM
Britannia Community Centre

Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO

www.mawovancouver.org / info@mawovancouver.org / 604-322-1764

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MAWO organized by: Nasim Sadegh, Ivan Drury, Tamara Hansen, Kit Walsh, Kasia Machalak, Mike Christensen, Luke Lynch, Mike Freitas, Shannon Bundock

Hands Off Iran! Stop the Attack on Iran!