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## Anti-war insurgency fights for peace

In seeking to divert domestic populations on both sides of the Atlantic from the forecoming socioeconomic crisis, and growing grassroots dissent; increasingly aggressive positions are taken against designated "outside enemies", such as Iraq, together with a voracious criminalisation of immigrants the new "enemy within".

At street-level, people are made to feel some enormous threat to their existence, which then can be rebuffed by an all-encompassing "War on Terror". The desired effect of the manufacturing of social fear is one of compliance to reactionary policies and authoritarian practices -- from the legal "disappearance" of Muslims in USA, to the stealth surveillance system embedded in London's congestion charge cameras. However, in relation to Iraq, the US/UK axis seem to be applying a different tactic, not even attempting to show clear evidence of danger - "there is no need for a smoking gun", is constantly repeated by hawks in London and Washington. Here the aim seems to be to stifle real public debate, while confusing citizens with a continuous barrage of portentous speeches, reports from "unnamed intelligence sources", blurry satellite pictures, etc. The fact that most of those come into question at deeper analysis does not leave the average person any clearer about the right thing to do. Responsible people therefore are meant to follow those who know best: their governments!

However the recent emergence of a reinvigorated anti-war movement questions the dangers perceived from attacks by outside agencies and also takes another look at selfish domestic agendas. An ever increasing number of the global populace wake in the realisation that the momentum for war can also be seen in the light of a combination of corporate interest, state-dominant ideology, personal pique and political profitability. The anti-war movement is increasingly important in light of the dire prospects that might follow in the absence of



dissent especially when the Bush/Blair governments appears to be bent on steamrolling saner voices urging caution.

The plethora of recent anti-war campaigns, marches and protests has raised the level of social interaction with the people posing a social threat, one that may shake the governments confidence in their ability to manipulate their electorate. As historian Eric Hobsbawm, recently put it: "[the anti-war] march very much goes against the theory that people are not interested in politics anymore... It will show them that popular protest is very much alive."

### Taking the Picasso

A tapestry version of Pablo Picasso's powerful anti war picture "Guernica" hangs, appropriately, in the United Nations headquarters in New York, right outside the Security Council chamber. However on Feb 7, when delegates arrived to hear Hans Blix's weapons inspection report it was a surprise to see that the picture had been covered by a blue banner with the UN logo on it. Abdellatif Kabbaj, the UN's PR person explained "It's only temporary. We're only doing this until the cameras leave," apparently it's more 'appropriate' for people planning a war to be photographed in front of a neutral background, ahem!  
<http://www.art-for-a-change.com/News/guernica.htm>

## Human Shields Leave For Baghdad

On Saturday 25 January the first of a series of Human Shield Action convoys left London. Two double-decker buses carried a dozen human shields all the way to Baghdad. The convoy, comprising volunteers from Britain and around the world, will drive through Europe and into the Middle East picking up more human shields en route. It planed to arrive in Baghdad on 8 February where the volunteers will stay until the imminent threat of war has passed. The convoy, led by former US Marine and Gulf War veteran

Ken Nichols O'Keefe, has attracted volunteers of all ages and backgrounds. They state that a massive civilian presence in Iraq has the potential to create the pressure needed to stop western governments from pursuing "a criminal war" and that "our so-called democracies have failed us. If we as people are going to stop wars we must act"). On the their arrival to Turkey, (8th Feb) Ken Nichols O,Keefe was refused entry into Turkey and was detained in Italy and finally deported back to the UK on the 8th February.

There have been two important calls for coordinated global mass action: the first on January 18, anchored in the U.S. anti-war movement and another on February 15 that is anchored in the European movement. On January 18th a massive anti-war protest was held on Saturday in downtown San Francisco. The crowd stretched continuously from the foot of Market Street and filled the Civic Center to capacity, with estimates of crowd size ranging from 200-350,000. A radical anti-capitalist breakaway march militantly

marched through the financial center smashing windows and graffitng the San Francisco Chronicle building, the British Consulate, CitiCorp, the Immigration & Naturalization Service building, and Starbucks. Up to 500,000 people rallied in Washington DC where speakers at the event evoked the memory of Martin Luther King in calling for a world without violence. Speakers also said that Bush was killing the American way of life in this war for oil. The event in DC was organized by the International ANSWER coalition.



For further information on what is happening on the ground in palestine:

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk>

# Massive global anti-war protests mark Gulf war anniversary

On the 18th January, massive opposition to war was demonstrated in 38 countries worldwide, and over the weekend of Jan 21 that marks the anniversary of the Gulf War. Throughout America there were many anti-war events, illustrating the ongoing decline in support for Bush and his policies.

In Canada tens of thousands of people joined marches, demonstrations, rallies and over 30 events, the larger demonstrations across the country included 15-20,000 persons in Toronto, 20,000 in Vancouver, 25,000 in Montreal, 15,000 in Halifax, and 3000 in Ottawa, with smaller demonstrations in locally.

In Mexico, there were mobilizations against the war and the embargo against Iraq in Mexico City and at the international bridge between Mexico and the U.S. near Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua, with U.S. groups meeting them from the other side of the border.

In Argentina, a march of 1,000 people led by the Mothers of the Plaza del Mayo went to the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires on Jan. 16. There

were also mobilizations in other Latin American countries including Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala and Brazil.

In Europe, over 10,000 people demonstrated on Sunday, 19 January in Brussels. At the end of the demonstration, the police arrested Karim Hasoun of the Arab European League (AEL), who helped handle security at the peaceful protests. There were also protests on 13 January against US military transports in Antwerpen, the main harbour used by the US military in Europe for transport to the Persian Gulf region.

In the Netherlands about one hundred civilian inspectors gained access to the grounds of Volkell military base. They cut through the perimeter fence in several places most of them were arrested, but released later throughout the day. A Martin Luther King memory march against the plans for war against Iraq was held in Leiden, while another action was held in Rotterdam.

Over 3,000 marched in Tokyo on Saturday, January 18. Marchers also came out in Osaka, Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Okinawa on Jan. 18-19.

More than 2,000 people rallied against war in Christchurch in New Zealand. Demonstrators called on their government to take a stand against war and sever its links with the US war machine. This was probably the largest antiwar event in New Zealand since the Vietnam War.

In Turkey the main demonstration took place in Ankara where people gathered in front of a cinema showing the latest James Bond film. There was also a demonstration in Istanbul. In most of the Middle East, as in Turkey, protesters faced an army of heavily armed riot police. Thousands of Syrians marched through Damascus, blocking traffic for hours, to protest against what they saw as a pre-set U.S. plan to attack a fellow Arab state. The Damascus marchers carried banners reading: "Iraq: a history and a civilization, not an oil well."

Near Islamabad, hundreds of children, women and men formed a human chain and chanted slogans against an attack on Iraq. Their banners read: "No blood for Oil" and "U.N.: Stop America from attacking Iraq."

## Continuous anti-war direct actions - United Kingdom & Ireland

As opposition to the War continues, all over Britain almost daily actions and demonstrations take place. The most recent reports received inform of a demonstration on 3rd February at Marchwood Military Port (Southampton), where an anti-war activist spray-painted a large number of military vehicles lined up inside the Port "No War" messages. She was arrested and charged with criminal damage. On the 1st February at the same site, a number of protesters repeatedly stopped convoys of military vehicles on their way into Port, again 1 protester was arrested and charged with willfully obstructing the highway. Jan 28th in Colchester where 500 people marched on the barracks of the 16th Air Assault Brigade and also held a brief peace camp. In Brixton 300 people blocked the entrance of Lambeth Town Hall where Geoff Hoon was due to address the Lambeth Labour group. In Southampton on Jan 27 the Greenpeace flag ship, the Rainbow Warrior,

entered Marchwood Military port and blocked the departure of UK military supply vessels heading for Iraq. A civilian arms inspection took place on 26th January at the United States air force base at RAF Fairford. The protest coincides with the last day of inspections for the UN inspectors in Iraq before Hans Blix reports to the Security Council on the 27th. The protests have been supported recently by Ann Pettit one of the initiators of the Greenham Common anti-nuclear peace movement.

Coinciding with the 12 year anniversary of the Gulf war on the 21st January, in the UK and Ireland, around 2,000 protested at Shannon airport, Ireland which is being used by the US military. 2,500 protested in Liverpool, 1,500 in Cardiff, where people locked on and blocked roads, 2-3,000 in, 250 in Glasgow, and Cambridge, while campaigners blockaded Northwood military base in and a candle lit vigil was held at Trafalgar Square.

On 19th January Northwood Military Base, the Permanent Joint Headquarters of the British Armed Forces was blockaded for 8 hours by up to 400 protesters. At 9.15am six peace activists locked themselves together at the main gates of the base with steel tubes covered with giant purple pants, with the slogan "War is Pants", they were finally cut out of the lock-ons after several hours. The protest officially started with a multi faith service outside the main gates. The main bulk of the anti-war protestors (young and old) marched from Northwood tube station towards the base with a samba band and a bicycle powered sound system. There were over 70 arrests mainly from a mass non-violent direct action sit-down. On Saturday, the previous day, around 200 people participated in Operation Internal Look, a mass breach of the official secrets act at Northwood.

Meanwhile around 3,500 in Britain have now signed the ARROW Pledge of

Resistance committing themselves to taking part or supporting acts of civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance to an attack on Iraq, should it take place. In Scotland the Scottish Anglican Episcopal Church joined the international initiatives by celebrating in its 50,000 parishes in more than 320 cities and towns religious meetings against the war on Jan. 19.

As Geoff Hoon, announced the mobilisation of Armed Forces for the war on Iraq war resisters all over the world called for conscientious objection to the war. A statement by War Resisters' International (<http://wri-irg.org/en/>), signed by more than 800 people urged all soldiers to refuse to take part and to apply for conscientious objector status. They also urged those involved in preparations for war, in administration or in arms factories to refuse to co-operate and called on journalists and the media to insist on writing and broadcasting the uncensored truth.

## offline

THE INDYMEDIA NEWS SHEET

Offline is a monthly publication bringing the highlights of the IndyMedia website news back onto the streets. IndyMedia is a global network of news websites that encourage the public to report their own stories to the world uncensored. Aiming to providing background stories the corporate media continuously ignores. We would encourage you to photocopy this and spread it far and wide. For more info and latest copies download a PDF from the site or send an SAE to: PO Box 587, London, SW2 4HA, UK

Most of the information in this leaflet can be found on the [www.indymedia.org.uk](http://www.indymedia.org.uk) site. For global news check [www.Indymedia.org](http://www.Indymedia.org). Other useful resources containing a wealth of information can be found below:

Act Together: Women Against Sanctions on Iraq: <http://www.acttogether.org/>  
Active Resistance to the Roots of War: <http://www.jn-v.org/docs.htm>  
Anti-war.com: <http://www.anti-war.com/>  
CAAB Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases [www.caab.org.uk](http://www.caab.org.uk)  
CAAT Campaign Against the Arms Trade: [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk)  
Campaign Against Sanctions in Iraq: <http://www.cam.ac.uk/societies/casi/>  
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: <http://www.cnduk.org/welcome.htm>  
Greenpeace - Stop Star Wars: <http://www.votenowar.org/>  
Human shield mission to Iraq: <http://www.humanshields.org/>  
International Answer: <http://www.internationalanswer.org/>  
International Citizens' Weapons Inspectorate: <http://www.icwi.org/>  
Iraq Journal: <http://www.iraqjournal.org>  
Iraq Action Coalition: <http://www.leb.net/IAC/frames.html>  
Media Workers Against the War: <http://www.mwaw.org>  
Muslim Association of Britain: <http://www.mabonline.net/>  
No War on Iraq: <http://www.nowaroniraq.org/>  
Not in Our Name: <http://www.notinourname.net/>  
Our World Our Say: <http://www.ourworldoursay.org/>  
Peace News: [www.peacenews.info](http://www.peacenews.info)  
Protest.Net: <http://www.pax.protest.net/>  
Schnews: <http://www.schnews.org.uk/archive>  
Stop the War Coalition: <http://www.stopwar.org.uk/>  
United for Justice and Peace: <http://www.unitedforpeace.org/>  
Voices in the Wilderness UK: <http://www.viwuk.freeserve.co.uk/>

VoteNoWar.org: <http://www.votenowar.org/>  
Women in black: <http://www.womeninblack.net/>  
Znet anti-war resources: <http://www.zmag.org/antiwarres.htm>

MAP FOR TODAY: There will be two routes for the march today, as well as many direct actions along the way... This might help you find your way home!

