



# South Tyneside Stop The War Coalition



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**Build The Movement To End  
The Crimes Against The Peace!**

**Bring the Troops Home!**

**For An Anti-War Government!**



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# Preface

This issue of *Silence is Shame* is being published following the preparations we made over the last year and the stand taken by our stop the war coalition in the May General Election to block the plans for another pro-war government. Summing up this work is an important task of this present issue. Since the start of the new Millennium increasingly the people have gathered their own opposition to intervene in the General election to end the dominance of the cartel of Westminster pro-war parties. Yet the forces of the alternative candidates made up by worker politicians and democratic and progressive forces were not yet strong enough to make any serious headway. But the question is to learn from this and take up the new challenges and build the peoples movement against war.

As we publish the people are raising the level of the mass movement against the war in Afghanistan in confronting those political leaders who commit crimes against the peace. That Tony Blair was accused by the people as a war criminal in Dublin and London and had to cancel his book signings in London and his “private” book party at the *Tate Modern* is a significant development that shows that now and in the future the people are going to challenge these warmongers, including Prime Ministers, and they will hound them until they are brought to justice for their crimes.

Ordering the invasions and occupations of other sovereign countries has long been recognised as the most serious war crime of all. There is a growing recognition that from such decisions of

Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, David Cameron, Nick Clegg and the former foreign secretary David Miliband that to order an invasion of Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries, or maintain the illegal occupation of a sovereign country as the present government is doing, that from such decisions stem all the deaths and destruction and further war crimes.

Today the people are recognising that it is these leaders who are responsible and should be brought to book. In his arrogance and self delusion Tony Blair has also been particularly outspoken in his call for the invasion of Iran. This has meant that in particular everywhere people are stepping up their efforts to bring about his arrest as a dangerous war criminal.

The election of Ed Miliband as Labour Party leader is a confirmation that the anti-war movement, and indeed our own work to confront the ruling elite on these wars in the General election, meant that they had to go with Ed Miliband and not David Miliband. In fact the vote of the Labour party members reflected that opposition to war and the concern over their party's collaboration in torture that David Miliband has tried to distance himself from. Whilst David Miliband was smug and arrogant in his election victory over other candidates and as a part of the whole conspiracy of the ruling elite to keep the war off the agenda it is our movement that has prevailed in keeping Iraq centre stage as a crime against the peace. The election of Ed and not David Miliband is not a victory for the people because this is the completion of a new arrangement for the pro-war opposition, but its significance is that this new arrangement is forced to draw a line on Iraq as an illegal war. Whilst, of course the pro-war policy continues with Afghanistan and threats against Iran, DPRK, and other countries.

*Silence Is Shame* is a forum for thinking South Tynesiders and others who wish to join in building the anti-war movement into a powerful political and social force for peace.

*Build The Movement to End the Crimes Against the Peace!*  
*Bring the Troops Home!*  
*For An Anti-War Government!*

**General Election 2010:**

## **Reflections on the Experience of the Fight for Anti-war Government Candidate**

*by Roger Nettleship*

The space for change exists objectively. Today there is the demand for democratic renewal of the political process so that the working class and people are empowered to make the decisions. At the same time, the decisive issue is the aim for society. The aim of any force has to be judged by whom that force serves. Does that force serve the interests the working class and people for a society and economy that meets their needs and well-being, or is the aim to serve the interests of financial oligarchy in charge of the global banks and monopolies who make society and working people who produce the wealth and services, pay tribute to them. Clearly the General election raised these issues in sharp relief.

It soon became very clear in the General Election that the whole programme of this financial elite, their monopoly media and the big three parties was to maintain the anti-social offensive, the pro-war consensus and to make that the aim. Yet this had to be presented in the election as “real change” and even “democratic renewal”. This was clearly the case during the election and the aftermath with the formation of the coalition of the Liberal Party with the Conservatives and the minor changes to the electoral

system that they are talking about which still leave the dominance of the big party system over politics. At the same time, the content of this change and the aim is the deep anti-social measures and cuts of the social economy that threatens continued and more wars, privatisation, attacks on rights and financial disasters for the people.

As has been the case since the start of the new Millennium increasingly the working class and people have gathered their own forces to intervene in the General Election to end the dominance of this Westminster Cartel and for their aims. The aim is to build the workers and peoples opposition to the dictate of the monopolies and the big party system. There were more genuine alternative candidates than ever before to challenge this dictate in the May 2010 general election. At the same time more people than the previous General Election in 2005 went to the polls to try and influence the outcome of the election. Yet the forces of the alternative candidates made up by worker politicians and genuine democratic and progressive forces of the people were not yet strong enough to make any serious headway in the demand for democratic renewal and the pro-social and an anti-war direction for society. At the same time, the constant propaganda against immigrants by the government state and media, with their immigration racism has been used to divert people away from the genuine alternative candidates and to float openly racist parties in their pay to unleash on our communities. In such a situation people were left without leadership to try and limit the damage so that none of the Westminster Cartel emerged with an overall majority and that the open fascist organisations were not elected.

Amongst the working class and peoples forces who could have provided that leadership there was still too many caught up in the old politics. Also many in the various movements of the working class and people drew back from taking up the whole fight into the election and remained largely on the sidelines.

Nowhere was that more true than in the anti-war movement itself, which in spite of our fight over two years in the national stop the war conference and in the anti-war movement many leading forces drew back from taking up the whole fight for and anti-war

government into the election. This left the field open to the Westminster Cartel of parties and the mass media to impose their conspiracy of silence to maintain their pro-war consensus. And of course to cover up the fact that they were about to get British soldiers to join in an further bloody offensive in Afghanistan after the election and to further threaten Iran, the DPRK, Somalia and other countries.

Yet we were not silenced! We did take them on in many places and we took on the former Foreign Secretary David Miliband in South Shields. We achieved this with relatively small forces working over months to form an anti-war alliance among the alternative candidates under the title of our two forums to *Block the Plans for Another Pro-War Government*. This gave rise to myself as a candidate from our South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition and Shirley Ford a candidate for the Green Party taking up the anti-war agenda together.

The ruling elite are frightened of being confronted by the people on this issue. Nowhere was this more clear than in the hustings during the election campaign. About 50 people attended and David Miliband was confronted by a united front of a number of candidates opposing the government's unjustifiable support for the continued occupation of Afghanistan. Our Coalition candidate spoke out particularly against the pro-war consensus of all three big parties and their justifications for the continued occupation. People in the audience said David Miliband seemed surprised that there was an uncompromising alliance against the war between a number of opposing candidates on the platform but particularly from Shirley Ford and myself. He even tried to grab the microphone to have the last say. This one example represented and revealed the whole arrogance of the ruling elite that they can impose a conspiracy of silence in a General Election to stop discussion on the illegal and bloody wars of occupation that they have conducted in Sierra Leone, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq over the last decade. That all the main parties can have a pro-war consensus just like any dictatorship that they claim is so reprehensible to them. Yet, the idea that the people can form their own anti-war block against them in such a modest forum as this hustings alarms them. What this reveals is a glimpse at the truth

and that it is the ruling class and their pro-war, anti-social and and-people system that is weak. What it shows is the anti-dote is to unite and build the workers opposition and the movements of the people.

Another example of the weakness of the ruling class is how they attempted to ignore and sabotage the peoples alternative candidates and try an marginalise them. Many alternative candidates had to fight to get a mention that we were even candidates let alone coverage on their stand in the election. Then they claimed that the votes these candidates received were insignificant and did not compare with the big parties, or their fascist stooges.

In spite of the election declaration on April 6<sup>th</sup> by the government, the BBC refused to include my name and other candidates in their list of candidates in South Shields until Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April. They used the excuse that they were "checking the data". Then they ignored my official nomination and included my nomination as RCPB(ML) aimed at causing maximum confusion for the stand I was taking and whose candidate I was. Because New Labour had removed the right of an independent candidate to put on the ballot paper what he or she was standing for and had changed the law so that only a political party could register a description on a ballot paper we had decided that the party I was a member of would nominate me as a "Fight for an Anti-War Government candidate". This was decided by the South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition, which of course is a coalition of different political affiliations and none. This was the only description given on the official nomination form. Yet again the BBC acted in devious manner and ignored the official nomination presumably to try and implicitly accuse myself of deception. Having served them with notice of the nomination they belatedly corrected the nomination.

The struggle against the BBC was certainly a small victory against the attempts of the ruling class to further marginalise worker politicians, or anyone else, from using a description on a ballot paper when they manage to circumvent the laws imposed to marginalise them from politics. At the same time, it shows that the ruling elite have no intention of easily allowing a challenge to their

domination of the political process and will stop at nothing to disrupt the genuine democratic renewal of the political process and to divert an aim for society that challenges the owners of the banks and big companies in favour of the interests of the working class and people.

The issue that came to the fore in the election was that the only way forward for the working class lies not in working to re-elect the Labour Party, but to build a genuine workers' opposition that fights for the pro-social programme of the working class regardless of the political party that a worker may support. I chaired the May Day rally in South Tyneside during the election where one of the Trade Union and Socialist candidates standing in Redcar among the Corus steel workers spoke. In summing up I said that regardless of workers political views it was important to support worker politician candidates that were taking up their agenda against the Westminster parties. That was the issue not which party they happened to be in. It is a sign in an area that has been most dominated by the Labour Party that I could say this there and in fact a number of workers said afterwards that they would vote for the alternative candidates.

Over the coming months and years the fight for a pro-social and an anti-war government will assume an even greater importance and here the way forward is not confined to grilling MPs that they should be anti-war, nor in becoming obsessed with some mythical "left unity" which has become fashionable now. What these times call for is serious unity in action amongst the people and nurturing the consciousness and organisation of the alternative to the anti-social and pro-war consensus.

The hospital worker that proposed my nomination said that our programme was very good and he agreed with it. After all the programme was for the thinking worker and democratic person. He tried to persuade others to vote for me but even when they agreed with the programme he said the prevailing mood was that they were frightened by the return for the Tories. His argument was that if you don't vote for what you believe in how will you ever get what you want? This for me said at work at 7 am in the morning after the count in the early hours left a deep impression. It really

empathised what our project was all about to present an alternative and take a stand against the whole anti-social and pro-war consensus and this had set some people in South Tyneside thinking!

We have had so many comments like that. It showed that this project had been something special and proved the importance on intervening in their political process even though we knew from the start that the odds were stacked against us. That we could not influence the whole movement, or make a break through was disappointing and frustrating for those involved in this fight. But the question now is to learn from this and continue to take up the new challenges of the new arrangements we are facing. We need to continue to organise and build the workers' opposition and the people's movement against war. We need worker politicians so that we can continue to develop this opposition and its tactics of intervening in the political process to place the working class and people with their pro-social and anti-war agenda at the centre of the political life of the country.

***Occupation Is Not Liberation! Bring the Troops Home!***

***Build the Working Class and Peoples Opposition and Fight for an Anti- War and Pro-Social Government!***

July 8, 2010

# What is the Role of Musicians?

*by Rachel Nettleship*

This is really a question of who do you as a musician serve? Throughout the period of the last general election, many musicians made it their concern to support anti-war candidates and worker politicians, by themselves playing benefit concerts and upholding the stand of “not a single youth for Imperialist war’ by supporting the candidates that stood to ‘Fight for an anti-war government’.

One such event was an evening held by *South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition (STSWC)*, at the Office pub in South Shields, where four musicians making up the relatively new band called ‘the Panic Report’ played to a small but committed crowd. Because the band had taken up the call of the anti-war movement in South Tyneside to support candidates of the alternative, the quality of the evening was listening and enjoying music and poetry that was serving the community, supporting the just stand of the people of South Tyneside. Many of the songs were anti-war but even those that weren’t were politicised by the very nature of the event.

This stand of musicians is directly against the pressure posed by the Bourgeoisie, that in order to be a ‘successful’ musician or band, you must uphold the status quo and invest your time in promoting a parallel universe where only a handful of rich businessmen decide

what is good music, and what they wish to promote 'what sells'.

'What sells' is really about what values can the ruling elite force feed the British people. This parallel universe where naive young singers put their voice to a pro-war 'help the heroes' campaign is what these programmes like X factor are all about. Whilst people think they are watching a large scale talent contest they are being exposed to the 'values' of the elite. It is these values of consumerism, big business and Imperialist war that musicians like 'the panic report' are standing militantly against by standing with humanity alongside the worker politicians who are fighting in a real concrete way for an anti-war, pro-social government.

By initially participating with the anti-war movement, these musicians have taken on the principles of STSWC, that Britain should not be occupying or bombing any other sovereign nation, that anywhere in the world occupation is not liberation. From this stand they have affirmed themselves as part of humanity, and continued this stand through their music, listing Britain's war crimes, singing anti-war songs, and allying themselves with workers who enjoy their music and spirit. This is the role of musicians.

September 4 2010

# Iran Sanctions, or Shake Down?

*by Nader Naderi*

Considering that progress; is a fundamental human pursuit, and a prerequisite for the said progress is the associated change, and or a desire for this change. Furthermore observing that change although an indivisible facet of nature itself; also is reflected in all human activities, and is manifested across all human societies. However any changes in social, economic, scientific spheres normally meets resistance from social inertia, and those vested interests bent on preserving the status quo.

Therefore, it is a given that; the constant of change associated with progress, opposes, and redefines the existing power structures, social constructs, class relationships, and the power matrix in place. Hence, those vested interests, whom have invested in the existing power constructs, and the resultant pecking order thereof, are inherently hostile to any new changes, and fearful of any change, and view any steps in the direction of change with suspicions, and their heightened sense of insecurity prompts these vested interests to offer resistance, by mobilizing their agents to stop the change and progress that could inevitably upset the arrangements that ensure the advantages to remain within the circles of plutocrats, whom have become accustomed to enjoying

the benefits of the said advantages; an unrivalled and unopposed environment, cocooned and isolated from the actualities, and the realities of lives of billions of souls across the planet.

The vehement opposition of the forces of reluctance, to any change, and progress, customarily is never debated, and or reflected in the daily torrent of propaganda that we all have come to accept as our daily diet of “news”, “views”, and “analysis”. Furthermore, as is customary, all data made available by these sources reject any changes that could or would upset that apple cart of the existing order, which these plutocrats have become so used to, and so bent on ensuring its’ longevity these readily attempt to preserve the existing pecking order by investing oodles of funds; the proceeds of their ill gotten gains, to keep, and maintain the existing “balance of power” as these would claim.

The concept of “balance of power” is then sold as the nostrum that would promote stability and prosperity for the constituents whose consent is sought after, in the way of ensuring the acquiescence of these target masses, for garnering their aid and succour to enforce the “balance of power” paradigm, through “force projection” ie beating upon, and warring upon the out of step societies, organisations in an effort to compel these to toe the line that is drawn and set in place by the same plutocratic arbiters in the way of maintaining the “balance of power” doctrine.

The primitive notions of use of force and violence, having been dressed-up as acceptable, logical, and necessary tools of the trade to maintain the existing pecking order ie the “balance of power”. Furthermore, the language then is deployed to reinforce the notions of application of force, through the daily peppering of phraseology; “carrot and stick”, “audacity to defy”, “defiant .....”, “regime”, etc. to cover the crudity of application of force complimented with bribes, to coerce, and dissuade the target society whom seeks progress, from such dreams. The message that is spread by the always “helpful” agents of the plutocrats, is the dressed up version of the crude notions of bullying and coercion in the way of using a language acceptable to the target audience whose sense of fair-play and justice would be greatly offended, and outraged by the simpler and more to the point explanations of

plans for bullying, and demanding goods, and services with menaces, from weaker, and or perceived weaker nations, and societies.

The constructs that maintain, and promote the consensus among the target audiences, have a subsequent and secondary side effect, by insulating, isolating, and shielding the forces of conservatism, ie the plutocrats, and their agents from actualities, which in turn leads to the current situation, in which the said plutocrats drowned in their own self importance, and self aggrandisement; having left their senses, and armed with their hubris alone, then attempt to fight progress and change, without paying any attention to the universality of the laws of nature, which abhors stagnation and constant states.

These agents of forces of inertia, failing to thwart progress and change, then resorting to primitivism; proceed to application of force, and further failures on their part to arrest the process of progress and thwarting change, compel these to apply even more of the same nostrum, which is application of greater force, and even more force. The lunacy of trying in knocking down a brickwall with head butts, over and over again, somehow never dawns on these forces of inertia and decay, that are all too busy protecting their own interests, at the expense of all of the humanity. This facet of the conduct of the “great and the good”; is historically recorded as sufferings of mankind, further history; attributes greater parts of these sufferings to be caused by men whom have remained invisible, locked behind closed doors turning public affairs to their own private gains.

Furthermore; pointing out that history tells us that the greater part of the sufferings of mankind were caused by men whom worked behind closed doors and turned public affairs to their own private gains, dependent on the time and place will be considered “conspiracy theories”, in an aid to erode any blame being apportioned to the plutocracies that have promoted such abhorrent behaviour.

In addition considering that historians openly admit to writing the history from “stand points” (fully subscribing to the artificially

promoted and maintained myths, and stories of the time) , in effect admitting to exercises in lack of impartiality and objectivity, and bent on corruption of the records of the actualities of events in an attempt to stifle any lessons that could be drawn upon to avoid the repetition of mistakes that have belied the catastrophes of the past based on the excesses of the plutocracies that were the causes of such failures. Those historians in effect further ensure; there could exist no means of competition, to the conventions and the paradigms that could be considered steps in the direction of progress, and change that become rivals, which the plutocrats so loath, and spend every effort to thwart and arrest any progress thereof, through any means to eliminate any competition to the existing and favoured power arrangements, set in place by the said plutocracies.

However, despite the efforts of the forces of reluctance, the natural laws taking precedence; change does occur, and progress does take place. One such an example in our contemporary history is Islamic Republic of Iran and her nation, whom forced change, through their mass strikes, demonstrations, culminating in the hand to hand combat with the henchmen of the former Shah's order in Iran. The brave and single minded nation of Iran successfully overthrowing the despotic regime of the Shah, that was so favoured by the power-brokers in the Western hemisphere. The Iranians in effect began threatening the order set in place, post the 1953 CIA lead operation "Ajax" that had culminated in setting up of the vassal regime of the Shah in Iran, whom so diligently carried out his charge of protecting the advantages of the plutocracy while setting about to actualize an unprecedented wave of repression and coercion inside Iran.

Fact of stating that the revolutionary Iranians going about to set up an Islamic Republic based on pillars of; justice, equity, and liberty, was not welcomed by the Western Plutocrats, is an exercise in stating the obvious. These plutocrats, and their agents, whom found their hand picked local strongman in Iran (Shah), come trained Western poodle, was side stepped, and replaced by an organic (home grown, ie independent from the outside interference) power structure, and arrangements that included the ordinary Iranians, their imperatives being concerned with the

welfare and quality of life of the ordinary folk in Iran, in opposition to the former arrangements; giving priority to the needs of plutocrats from within and from without Iran.

The immediate reaction of the Western Plutocracy was to task their other “strongman”, and “secular darling” in the vicinity; the infamous Saddam to start a war upon Iranians. Saddam relishing the spotlight, and armed with the provided Western; weapons technology, military intelligence, as well as military planning, and funds provided for, by chiefly the US, as well as various other US Satellite countries in the West. This affording Saddam to set about attacking Iran, and killing hundreds of thousands of Iranians.

The Iraqi attack on Iran was an eight years long carnage of death and destruction, during which Saddam used all manner of weapons technologies on Iranians, including the biological, and chemical warfare agents. All the while during these times, the West maintained a regime of sanctions on Iranians, that prohibited the sale of arms and weapons to Iran, as well as medicine, and other goods, and services. Fact is these sanctions have ever since continually become more and more comprehensive to include more areas of economic, scientific, and industrial activities, and are solely designed to sabotage the progress of the nation of Iran. For reasons of the fears of Plutocracy that Iran could become a beacon, and a model for other nations whom are currently suffering under the rule of despotic regimes sponsored by the same Western Plutocrats.

Facts never debated are; the paucity of industrial capability of Iran, at the beginning of the war imposed upon her, through Saddam’s attacks; on the nascent Islamic Republic of Iran. The shameful facts missing from the debate are; at that time Iranians lacked self sufficiency to a degree that they were incapable of provision of locally manufactured barbed wire, and they had to import this very basic product! The darling of the Western Plutocrats; Shah had successfully reduced Iran to the status of a consumer nation, that lived through selling oil alone, totally dependent on the Western Suppliers for the most basic items needed for conduct of day to day living.

The inability of the Iranians to provide the most basics of products, which they needed, was thought to be their undoing, and with the aid of the mostly unilateral US sanctions put in place, the prevailing wisdom of the time was that Saddam would be the emerging victor, in no time holding his victory parades in Tehran. Hence, ridding the Western Plutocrats from those turbulent Iranians, whom fancied their chances and dreamed of better futures for themselves, and their kith and kin. Therefore the imposition of the various embargoes, and sanctions against Iran was a means of putting an end to the ill winds of change in Iran, and putting the notions of an independent Islamic Republic of Iran to sleep. Furthermore, because Iranians were desperately short of all products, and services, they had to purchase the much needed goods through paying extortionate sums to certain intermediary companies whose overinflated prices would be justified due to existence of sanctions and embargoes.

Hence sanctions made good business sense, and were thought of as a kind of remote control of the revolutionary and fractious Iranians, whilst creating an opportunity for a few quick buck merchants to make a killing by overcharging for any supplied item to Iranians. In other words; never mind that the Shah had been toppled, the business is as usual, was afoot as before. Alas much to the chagrin of those whom wished to see the revolutionary Islamic Republic's end, the Iranians throwing themselves heart and mind into the defence of their country, literally fought with bare hands and meagre rations to wrest back the occupied parts of their country back from Saddam, and pushing back the Iraqi forces from their lands, despite the heavy toll of the dead and injured arising from the ever more vicious attacks of Saddam, and the ever more biting sanctions.

Therefore, the current regime of sanctions which have been an ongoing affair for the last thirty years, are in fact continuation of the mendacity of the Plutocrats, whom are punishing Iranians for their desire to be independent of any foreign influence, that effectively would reduce them to serfdom, and modern day slavery, in which the interests of the Iranian nationals taking second place to the interests of the dominant Western Plutocracy. Fact that Iranians have dared to dream of liberty and equity of their own

making, and not subscribing to the Freedom Brand pushed by the agents of these dominants Plutocrats, have meant the ever increasing penalties and costs for the whole of the nation of Iran. Furthermore, Iranian deviation from Freedom Brand has meant the existing projects which were undergoing development, have been hampered by the undue pressures and influences brought to bare upon those carrying out the work of development.

Nowhere this pressure has been more evident than the most visible remains of a half built bombed out, and derelict reactor buildings in southern Iran, which were under construction before the revolution, and somehow abandoned by the Western contractors without any explanations, and left unfinished despite the heavy financial losses on Iran implied by such a breach of contracts. Furthermore, the unseen hands at work stopping any other contractors from engaging to finish the project which would produce cheap electricity for Iran's developing industrial sector. The scenario of a Western movie in which the local gun-slinger coerces the shop keepers in the town to stop supplying a particular family of ranchers whose lands are sought after by the railways, and or some other big time rancher in the area, pops into mind.

Fact that the language of the agents of the plutocracy, take pains to declare that the sanctions are not designed to hurt the ordinary Iranians, are meant to nullify any probable backlash from the enraged masses in the respective countries, which are unilaterally, and or through the exertion of inordinate pressure in the international institutions to introduce even more restriction on terms of trade with Iran through even more sanctions. The notions of restricting the sale of passenger jets to Iran, somehow is not meant to be hurting the ordinary Iranians, somehow does not sound absurd in the bizarre reality that the agents of plutocrats are operating in.

The regimen of the sanctions, which by now have become a life line for many inefficient, and unfit companies in the West to exploit, in the way of making huge profit margins and remain in operation. This is advocated as concerns with progress in the Iranian nuclear technologies sector, which apparently is prohibited knowledge for Iranians. Note the fact that knowledge is forbidden for Iranians, as

clearly stated by George Bush in one his many press conferences regarding the subject of Iran. G. W. Bush speaking at a White House news conference goes on record; "Iran was dangerous, Iran is dangerous and Iran will be dangerous if they have the knowledge necessary to make a nuclear weapon." the surprising candour in this statement by this infamous agent of the Western Plutocracy, can clearly validate the forwarded arguments in this essay. On this occasion Bush is clearly relaying the worries of the Plutocracy, going so far as engaging in prohibition of Knowledge for Iranians, further, Bush was echoed by yet another Impish agent of Plutocracy namely Tony Blair, whom adapted the same lines of argument too, in a kind of a horse and buggy arrangements for the purposes of the show put on for the benefit of the Western constituents, and audiences.

Fact is Iranians are dangerous because they have their own mind, because they wish to run their own affairs, because they do not genuflect to the sacred cows ordained by the Western Plutocrats, because they wish to use their own talents, and manage their own resources, and seek to improve their own lot. Furthermore, if these Iranians made a go of their own affairs, in a pretty speedy fashion, then where would it all end? Tomorrow Timbuktu would fall because of revolting citizenry! Well that is the logic of the domino theorists whom have been pontificating for many years now, that falling dominoes from the rice paddies of Vietnam, to deserts of Iraq, will be the end of the civilization as we know it! The plain fact is; the fearful Plutocrats know, how tenuous their grip is on the apparent power they wield over us all and as with the wizard of Oz they are engaged in all manner of chicanery to stop you the reader to ever think that your lot could be better too!

<http://tinyurl.com/3ykd2jk>

<http://tinyurl.com/38g9ujp>

<http://tinyurl.com/34aaa63>

[www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=ajbc1ooahfRY&refer](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=ajbc1ooahfRY&refer)

September 14, 2010

# People Want Peace

*by Alan Trotter*

The Guardian conducted a poll which revealed 77% of the public are opposed to the catastrophic Afghan war and want the government to withdraw the troops from Afghanistan.

While the decision makers are safely protected in Whitehall they are arranging to send young people into battle zones of death and destruction. Future generations will ask why we ever let them get away with it. The people of Britain want peace. Everyone I speak to wants the troops to return home, enough blood has been spilt, too many families torn apart with the unnecessary and premature death of their loved ones. When I talk to people they know that we were taken to war in Iraq by lies but they have no idea whatsoever why we are in Afghanistan. The cost of these two wars in lives is immense and in currency is colossal.

We the people appoint politicians to represent us and it is we the people who must change things. We are allowing politicians to cut back on public services to finance trident when we need to cut trident and save jobs not just here but across the globe. How can

we find it acceptable that there are in excess of 23,000 nuclear warheads ready to be deployed on our fragile planet.

It was Eisenhower who said 'If the people want peace the politicians better give it to them'. But our government are telling us that we can look forward to at least another five years in Afghanistan. When are the politicians going to listen to the people of Britain? When will they realize that peace cannot be achieved through violence and confrontation but by negotiation? Until then the work of the peace movement goes on.....

Alan Trotter

But when the sky darkens and the prospect is war  
Who's given a gun and pushed to the fore  
And expected to die for the land of his birth  
When he's never owned one handful of earth

Ed Pickford Singer/songwriter

September 17, 2010

# **War Is A Failure Of Politics (or why wor town's war-monger MP deserved to fail)**

*by Phil Talbot*

War is a failure of politics (not its continuation by other means), and political careers stained by illegal wars deserve to end in failure.

And so, like the rest of South Tyneside Stop The War Coalition, I actually welcome the defeat of South Shields MP David Miliband in the Labour Leadership contest.

I regard him as a 'warmonger' - and I believe a victory by him would have furthered pro-war causes.

Of the rest of people of South Shields, it is a fair under-statement to say that most are 'not disappointed' that their town's MP failed to win the Labour Party Leadership.

And it is also probably fair to say that of those most South Shields people who are 'not disappointed', many, perhaps even most, of them are 'almost completely indifferent'.

This rather 'under-whelming' but essentially true small town story

(in contrast to all the mainstream media fantastical hype about the 'Miliband Brothers Drama', etc) perhaps also tells something about the present state of modern British politics.

David Miliband was hyped by the media into the 'brilliant' and 'charismatic' potential Labour Leader (and even possible future Prime Minister) that he never really was.

Locally he was a hyped up Westminster Village Insider parachuted on to the relatively obscure North-East town of South Shields in 2001 to be our 'Golden Boy' MP.

It's hard to say what we have gained from his occasional presence in our town since then.

During his occasional visits to the town, he seems to have represented the village of Westminster in the town of South Shields, not South Shields in Westminster.

It is fact rare to meet anyone who actually lives in the town who is much impressed by Mr Miliband.

In short, most South Shields people are wise enough not to believe the mainstream media hype.

South Shields is a traditionally Labour voting town and a majority of voters here voted for Mr Miliband mostly because he was the Labour Party Candidate - not because they were particularly impressed by him personally.

Although we include former and present Labour Party supporters, South Tyneside Stop The War Coalition decided to put up candidates against David Miliband in the last two general elections.

We did this because, contrary to the prevailing political 'disillusionment' (which includes a growing view that elections are pointless exercises) we believe in involvement in electoral processes.

We did this because we believe vibrant effective politics (peaceful

competition of ideas in public forums) prevents war - war being not a continuation of politics by others means, but a failure of politics.

And we did this because, for all his claims of New Labour 'modernity' and 'progressiveness', we regarded David Miliband as an out-dated form of 'war-monger' politician who had no place in the 21st century.

We particularly objected to his often fervent and always uncritical support for his boss and mentor Tony Blair's violent so called 'democratic imperialist' (a contradiction in terms if ever there was one) foreign policy - of which the illegal attack on Iraq and its aftermath were the worst examples.

During his time as Foreign Secretary Mr Miliband did not merely support this policy, but actively furthered it.

We regarded his actions - which also included his tacit endorsement of torture of 'foreign terrorist' suspects (which he denies of course) - as a disgrace to our town and its fundamentally decent cosmopolitan and humanitarian traditions and values.

The way the votes stacked up in the South Shields seat in 2005 and 2010 might suggest that David Miliband won 'crushing' electoral victories over his anti-war critics.

His failure to win the national Labour leadership election - for which he was supposed to be the shoo-in favourite, and in which he was the mainstream media's 'darling' - rather suggests otherwise.

The dismissive contempt that top-down elitist-type politicians like David Miliband actually seem to have for 'dissenting voices' is illustrated by his contemptuous under-estimation of anti-war voices in the South Shields constituency - and wider world.

Events rarely have single causes, more often than not they have collections of part-causes - spreading into the past.

And so while it was not the only cause, without doubt one of the more important part-causes for David Miliband's failure to win the

Labour leadership in the autumn of 2010 was his support for the illegal attack on Iraq in the spring of 2003.

It was factor counting against him affecting the result of that close election - which he had entered as clear favourite.

Reliable sources suggest that although David Miliband never uttered any public doubts about the attack on Iraq, privately he did have some.

Friends who had known him as a young idealist - and even an anti-war campaigner - wondered how he'd grown into a Labour MP and then Minister who supported and then actively furthered a crude and violent and, in the case of Iraq, illegal foreign policy.

He was one of many Labour insiders who seemed to put his career - and/or party/government 'loyalty' - before principles.

His support for the Iraq war was a costly mistake - personally for him in career terms, but rather more importantly in terms of destroyed lives and well-being for the hundreds of thousands of victims of the war he supported.

Set against the real and deep suffering of these war victims, Mr Miliband's 'personal tragedy' as his election defeat was described by the mainstream media was a very small one indeed.

Alternative courses were available in 2003, when most of the country was against a war widely recognized as 'wrong then'.

Even into narrow personal careerist terms it can now be seen that David Miliband made the wrong choices then.

Over in America Mr Obama chose to be an opponent of the war from the start (even though much of his Democratic party at that time supported it) - and that was one of the reasons he won the U.S. Presidential Election.

Back in Britain, Mr Miliband's own brother Ed, although not an out-spoken vocal opponent of the war in 2003, says he was always

an opponent of the war and would not have voted for it - and that was one of the reasons he won the Labour Leadership instead of David.

Some have doubted that Ed would have resisted internal government pressure to support the war had he actually been an MP in 2003.

But by time and chance it is a fact he did not enter Parliament until 2005, and So Ed Miliband can honestly say now that he did not vote for the war in 2003.

And that enabled him to do what Labour Party members seemed to decide their new leader had to do this year: which was to attempt to 'draw a line' under its private shame over Iraq by admitting the war was wrong.

'I've got to be honest with you about the lessons of Iraq. (...) But I do believe that we were wrong. Wrong to take Britain to war and we need to be honest about that. Wrong because that war was not a last resort, because we did not build sufficient alliances and because we undermined the United Nations.'

These words spoken by Ed Miliband in his first major speech as New Labour Leader were forms of words his brother David could never bring himself to utter.

That is one of the reasons Ed won the election, not David.

And it is one of the reasons the anti-war movement can claim something of a success in the failure of David Miliband to win the Labour Party Leadership.

Our ongoing opposition to people such as David Miliband whom we regard as 'warmongers', meant Iraq wasn't simply 'forgotten' as an issue - as people like him wanted it to be - and meant that he, despite being the mainstream's chosen and 'promoted' candidate, lost - and the Labour Party had to turn in an alternative direction instead.

September 30th 2010



## **Al Quds Day Letter to Tony Blair from Lauren Booth in Iran**

*3 September 2010*

Dear Tony,

Congratulations on your political memoir becoming an instant bestseller. I'm in Iran and have the only copy in the country. I can tell you, it's so fiercely fought over, it's worth its weight in WMD's. Note to Random House; have "A Journey" translated into Farsi and Arabic asap, it'll fly off the shelves in this part of the world.

Tony, yesterday I attended the Al Quds day protest in Tehran. You may have heard of it? It's the rally where Iranians gather to protest against Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine, including the Holy city of Jerusalem.

I'm being sarcastic by asking if you've heard of Al Quds day, because I know you have. It is your very worst nightmare, right? After all, Tehran is the place where politics and Islam intertwine.

Personally I've never understood this fear of "political Islam" it seems to me that religious people should always be educated on

world events rather than kept in ignorance. Like say, Mid-West Christian Zionists in the US. The kind of folk who can't find their home city on a map of their state but are certain they hate Islam even if they are not sure whether it is a type of curry or a foreign make of veh-ic-u-le.

Anyway, yesterday, I stood in the midst of more than one million Iranian Muslims all chanting in unison "Marg Bar Isre-hell!" and "Marg Bar Am-ri-ca!" You know what that means Tony I'm sure; "Down with Israel, down with America". The men, women and children around me withstood a day of no water and no food (it's called Ramadan, Tony, it's a fast). Coping with hunger and thirst in the hundred degrees heat, as if it were nothing. They can withstand deprivation in the Muslim world. Here in Iran they feel proud to suffer in order to express solidarity with the people of Palestine. It's kind of like the way you express solidarity with America, except without illegal chemical weapons and a million civilian deaths.

Some mothers at the rally wept, not out of hatred for "the West" but out of empathy for the mothers of Rafah, Khan Younis, Nablus and Jenin. Do you recognise these place names Tony, as Middle East peace envoy you really should. Israel has massacred children in all of these cities in recent years. Didn't you know?

Today when the streets of London reverberate with cries of "Allahuakbar!" and "Down Down Israel." Christians and Jews will join the thunderous cries of "Down Down Israel", marching shoulder to shoulder with the "political" Muslims you say you fear so much.

Perhaps you believe that I am in danger in Iran, especially on a day like Al Quds. Well here again Tony, you've been fed and have consumed in its entirety, a massive lie. The lie that says when Muslims express an opinion in groups, in public, it is always spurred on by hatred of "us" infidels. As if all protests that are led by Muslim communities are a kind of long held grudge against the Crusades. Perhaps they should be more, not less angry here than they are, Tony. Because having read the postscript to your bestseller its clear you are on a modern Crusade.

The "conflict" between Palestine and Israel is according to you all about religion and has nothing at all to do with the ethnic cleansing

of the Arab population, nor the degradation of those who remain beneath the boots of their Israeli occupiers. You say that Arabs have and always will see “Jews” as enemies. For God’s sake Tony, do your history. And if you’re going to run a “Faith Foundation” then better get up on Islam 101 don’t you think? Did your pals in Tel Aviv forget to tell you how many thousands of Jews lived in Historic Palestine in harmony with their Arab neighbours before 1948? Do you really not know that even today tens of thousands of Jews reside contentedly in Iran?

I’ve sat with Muslim families, those whose children have been burned by Israeli/US phosphorus bombs. Those who are still suffering hunger due to the Israel siege of Gaza. Those who have lived through the early days of sanctions against Iran when they needed food vouchers just to live. And every single Muslim in these suffering families has the same message; “We don’t hate anyone for their race or their religion. We cannot hate Jews they are in our holy book. It is against the teachings of the Koran.” But Tony let me ask you this. Why should any people, Muslim or otherwise, be expected to put up with this kind of constant threats from you and your bosses in Tel Aviv and Washington? Do you have any understanding of what it is like to live in Gaza? Under siege, attacked with chemical weapons, your children’s schools razed to the ground by Israeli missiles, your hospitals shelled, your electricity limited, your water undrinkable?

Actually Tony I think you are a sympathetic person. I actually think that you do feel twinges of pain at the hardships suffered by millions in the Middle East as a direct result of your support for Israel. Then you put that feeling to one side, because on a fundamental level – you think “they” deserve it don’t you?

In your book you say you knew full well how many Beirut homes were flattened, how many civilians died in Lebanon in 2006. Yet you dismiss Lebanese rage about Israeli occupation of the “Sheba Farm” as being an irrelevance, about a “tiny” amount of land. You cannot see it as part of the constant pressure on Lebanese society as a whole by their heavily armed aggressive Israeli neighbour. You see it as: “Israel is attacked. Israel strikes back.” As if Israel lives in placid peace, being kindly to all around it in between these massacres.

As other world leaders came out to demand Israel immediately cease its 2006 bombing raids on Lebanese cities, you stayed silent. "If I had condemned Israel" you say in your book "I would have been more than dishonest. It would have undermined my world view."

Your world view is that Muslims are mad, bad and dangerous; a contagion to be contained. Your final chapter is a must read here in the Middle East Tony, congratulations! For it lays out the "them" and "us" agenda of your friends in Washington and Tel Aviv.

In the final chapter you say; "we need a religious counter attack" against Islam. And by "Islam" you mean the Al Quds rallies, the Palestinian intifada (based on an anti-Apartheid struggle Tony, NOT religious bigotry), against every Arab who fails to put their arms in the air as the F16 missiles rain on their homes and refugee camps and sing a rousing chorus of "Imagine all the people..."

When you say "extremism" must be "controlled and beaten" you mean that you and your kind of morally bankrupt (but filthy rich) world leaders wants control over the rising solidarity spreading through the Ummah and being joined by activists of all creeds on the streets of Paris, London, Bradford, Rome. "Not only extremism must be defeated" you have written but "the narrative" " has to be assailed."

Iran is indeed the place where Islamic tradition meets political action.

They are highly aware of the history of this region, the wrongs perpetrated by Israel against Palestine and the political machinations of the US and the UK governments to isolate them. All things considered are nice as the people have been during my stay. I wouldn't recommend coming over on a book tour though...

*Lauren Booth is a journalist, broadcaster and human rights campaigner, and is also Tony Blair's sister-in-law. The letter appeared on the website of Press TV on September 5, 2010.*

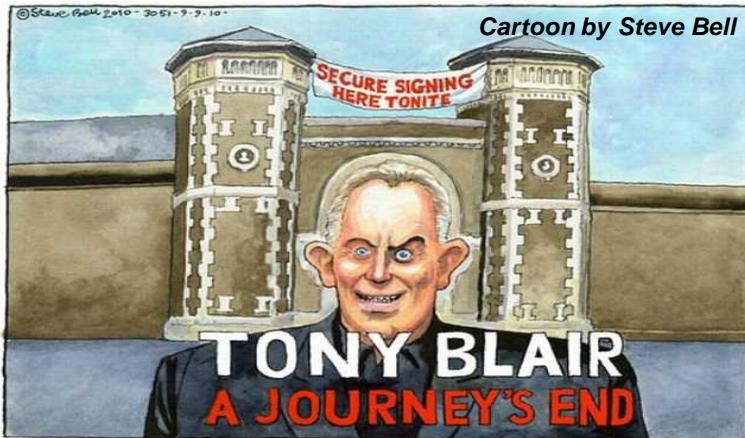


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