



A Collection of articles based on the presentations at the January 21st, 2005 Discussion Forum in South Shields entitled: Will the "War on Terror" Lead to World War?



**South Tyneside
Stop The War Coalition**



C/O Trinity House Social Centre,
134 Laygate, South Shields, NE33 4JD
E-Mail: STSWC@blueyonder.co.uk

Number 4, March, 2005 Price: By Donation

Contents

1. Preface	5
2. Introduction - <i>Alan Newham</i> - 21/01/05	7
3. Why the War on Terror? - <i>Philp Talbot</i> - 21/01/05	11
4. Whose Next? Santa Claus and the Power of Nightmares - <i>Nader Naderi</i> 21/01/05	19
5. Bring the Troops Home and Deal a Blow against the Warmongering Elite at the Next general Election? <i>Roger Nettleship</i> 21/01/05	27
6. Where Do We Go From Here? - <i>Alan Trotter</i> - 05/02/05	31
7. 'Don't Vote' - <i>Doreen Henderson</i>	33
7. Where Next for the Stop The War Movement? - <i>Peter Murray</i> 15/02/05	35
8. Review of Music Drama: Occupation is Not Liberation - <i>Roger Nettleship</i> 23/01/05	37

Preface

Since the US launched its “war on terrorism” hundreds of thousands of people have been killed, or injured, thousands imprisoned in the most inhuman conditions without charge, or trial, and hundreds of families of US and British soldiers have lost loved ones as cannon fodder to this “war on terror”.

The “war on terror” has become the never ending war of terror *itself*. Whilst the occupying powers deliberately do not count Iraqi casualties the truth is starting to emerge about the true cost of human life in Iraq which is put at a figure of over 100,000. In the latest atrocity at least 2,000 people were killed in the US attack on Fallujah which the occupiers systematically reduced to rubble and justified as necessary in order to impose elections and “democracy” on Iraq. Those elections have now been orchestrated, with their secret candidates and secret ballot boxes and the majority of Iraqis either excluded, refusing to vote, or unable to vote because they were dead. Yet still the occupation continues, with the US building its massive military bases, controlling the oil and controlling the country from its fortress embassy.

The occupiers use the resistance to “justify” their continued occupation, to “justify” the bombing of cities and towns and the use of extreme force, including weapons such as cluster bombs and depleted uranium weaponry, phosphorus bombs (modern day napalm) against the civilian population and lightly armed resistance fighters.

But it is the right of all oppressed people to resist in whatever way they choose and it is the business of the Iraqi people how they resist the occupation. The only legitimate business for British politicians is, not to condemn Iraqis as terrorists to justify their crime of occupation, but that the British and US governments get out of Iraq, that the war criminals that organised this invasion and mass murder are brought to account and that reparations are paid to reconstruct the country.

As we write with Bush's second term it is being used as open season to extend this "war on terror" to Syria, Iran, DPRK and move increasingly into Africa and Asia as part of the US plan for "full spectrum dominance" of the world and its markets and raw materials. Already various, provocations and even outrages are taking place in these countries to try and prepare public opinion for an all out attack.

At the same time, the war on terrorism is being used as a justification for increasing attacks on the rights of the people. Already, hundreds of people have been interned in inhuman conditions and subject to all kinds of physical and psychological torture without charge, or fair trial. This is not some distant conflict fought by "foreign tyrannies." This is "our" government illegally occupying the countries of other peoples, killing, injuring and otherwise abusing other human beings. How we choose to respond to this is one of the great challenges of our age.

On this second anniversary of the 2 million strong London demonstration, the workers movement, the peace movement and all human beings should turn their anger into constructive action, discuss the way forward in preparation for making life most difficult for the warmongering elite in power at the next general election, strengthening and consolidating the anti-war forces and building unity.

February 15, 2005

Introduction to the Forum

by Alan Newham

I am aware now that everyone must have a good idea of what has happened and what is happening now in Iraq. So, really by way of introduction I will just share some random observations and talk briefly about why we are still here and why we must continue with what we do at *South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition*.

The forum is entitled; “Will the War on Terror lead to World War”, or put it another way, neatly described by the American historian, Charles Beard; “Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace”. There is evidence of such. If you look at the list of conflicts and interventions carried out around the world by the US military since the end of the Second World War. A list compiled by the Federation of American Scientists, you will note that hardly a day has gone by without American military operations somewhere in the world – so nothing new there.

The conflicts so described were all given operational names, specific to areas, whereas the “War on Terror”, a catch all phrase presumably covers the whole globe. So, we could argue that “War on Terror” and “World War” are interchangeable – one and the same. That is one way of looking at it.

As to where this new offensive has its origins we could look at the *Project for the New American Century* and its supporters and signatories. I would just like to mention two influential books of

recent years which I believe have articulated the neo-conservative agenda, or which have at least given strength to the neo-cons intentionally, or otherwise. The first is Francis Fukuyama's book, originally an essay entitled; *The End of History?* In which he infamously claimed that Liberal American capitalism is triumphant – it is as far as we can expect to go “all of the really big questions have been settled”. He claimed that we are now exhausted from looking for alternatives which had to be better than western liberal democracy which he claimed would be universal and perpetual.

The second book, by Harvard Professor Samuel Huntington is called *The Clash of Civilisations*. He argued that future conflicts would not primarily be ideological, or economic – but cultural. He claimed that an Islamic Confucian coalition has emerged to challenge western interests. I believe that these two men contradicting each other have been influential on the neo-conservatives. On the one hand Fukuyama tells them what they want to hear that the system within which they operate is best for the world. At the same time, in Huntington's case they will consider themselves supported in opposing those who “challenge western interests”. Therefore, full spectrum dominance is not being pursued by politicians and large and powerful corporations alone but is also be supported by academic argument, the danger being that it will serve to give legitimacy and respectability to the neo-con agenda.

There has been talk of maybe a softer approach by Bush and co. re foreign policy and overtures to Europe, etc. But we were left in no doubt that what Bush considers “outlaw regimes” and their rulers “could not long retain it.” A clear message to what they refer to as “North Korea” and Iran in my view.

Talking of Iran the American journalist, Seymour Hersh writing in *The New Yorker* magazine, stated that US special forces have been operating in Iran since at least last summer, identifying possible targets.

The US has imposed economic penalties on eight of China's biggest corporations claiming they were aiding Iran's missile programme. So, Bush mentioned “liberty and freedom” repeatedly in his speech yesterday but it was good to hear the chants of protestors in the

distance between this mumbo jumbo. American history tells us of heroic struggles of ordinary people; the great labour organisations fighting exploitation and injustice and the US is divided as we speak over their foreign policy and the war on Iraq. Many Americans are organising against the war and occupation and that should inspire all of us who want a better world – we stand with those Americans

The situation in Iraq I believe will continue to get worse election, or no election. What form of action will they hatch up against Iran or North Korea we do not know. But what about us? What should ordinary people do? We should demand no less than another world in which we can sleep easy at night and not be tyrannised by wars and rumours of wars brought about by those, be it governments, or big business in whose interests it is to keep us at each others throats. There are too many things that unite ordinary people around the world – than divide us.....

Alan Newham - January 21, 2005

Why The War On Terror?

by Phil Talbot

The title of my talk is the question WHY THE 'WAR ON TERROR'? I find that a very difficult question to answer – because I do not really understand the motives of the people waging what seems to me a senseless and stupid war. So ... instead of attempting a direct answer to the question 'Why the War on Terror', what I am going to attempt is a brief review of some aspect of that war.

My hope is to build up a framework, out of which answers to the 'Why The War on Terror?' question might emerge. My further hope is to encourage other people to seek out fuller answers of their own.

WHAT is the War on Terror? The War on Terror is probably well described as: a violent exercise in paranoid fantasy. It is more a War OF Terror than a War ON Terror. More technically, it might be defined as: a struggle between 'state-terrorism' and 'non-state-terrorism'.

In state-terrorism, the full force of national governments - and their corporate allies - is threatened and sometimes used against weaker groups and individuals.

In non-state-terrorism, mostly small groups of people operating outside normal political frameworks threaten and sometimes do violent acts.

What is now happening in Iraq is a war between the state-terror of the American and British governments - and allied corporate interests - and the non-state-terror of groups violently opposing the occupation.

The anti-war movement sets itself in opposition to BOTH these violent forces. We believe that when it comes to the question of terrorism, war is not the answer.

By another definition, the War on Terror is a very elaborate 'protection racket'. This is how the protection racket works:

- political leaders over-state the threat to national security represented by non-state terrorists;
- the leaders then present themselves as 'protectors' of citizens against this 'threat';
- an increase in the level of state-power then follows in the name of 'security'.

A key element of this 'protection racket' is the deliberate cultivation of fear by false scare stories - the disgraceful deception over 'weapons of mass destruction' being just one example of many. The War on Terror might also be defined as a 'brand name' for a very profitable business venture - particularly for military and security corporations. How much profit has been made at the expense of those killed, injured or otherwise abused in the War on Terror is difficult to calculate - but the sums are vast.

In Iraq alone, since the start of the invasion in March 2003, an estimated 150 billion dollars has been spent on the war. Few of those billions will have gone to the Iraqi people directly, you can be sure - most of it has been siphoned off - one way or another - into the arms, oil, and security corporations.

Even when accurate estimates are available, the figures involved are so vast that they are difficult to comprehend. 150 billion is 15 followed by 10 zeros. By way of comparison, 150 billion dollars is about 1,000 times the amount British people have donated so far to the Tsunami disaster appeal. Taking the present casualty figure in Iraq to be about 100,000 killed, 150 billion represents about 1,500 dollars per life lost over the past two years. It hardly needs to be said that this money could have been better spent.

WHEN did this War on Terror BEGIN? - and when might it END? A common assumption is that the War on Terror began in the aftermath of 9/11 - when non-state terror forces said to be linked to the al Qaeda network attacked America. The phrase 'War on Terror' was certainly coined then. George Bush first used it in a virtual declaration

of world war in response to 9/11. His declaration of war came 11 days later, on 20 September 2001, in a speech to the American Congress. This is what he said:

'Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them. 'Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. 'It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. 'Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make: either you are with us; or you are with the terrorists.

'From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.' That declaration by Bush contains the essence of the War on Terror - an endless war between the American state and whoever it deems 'the enemy' at any given time.

It should be noted that on Bush's terms, everyone is a potential 'enemy' - now or in the future - even those presently in alliance with America. Deeper analysis of the thinking behind the Bush foreign policy suggests that the War on Terror was an undeclared war long before 9/11. The style of the War on Terror operation clearly mirrors the approach taken by America's closest ally Israel in the occupied territory of Palestine. The struggle over the disputed Palestinian territory should be regarded as part of the War on Terror. So much of the anger and fear in the Middle East focusses in on that dispute.

The Bush world-view also seems to see the War on Terror as a fresh variation on the Cold War - with the American state struggling directly and indirectly against every person and every movement deemed 'anti-American' at any given time. Much of this outlook is contained within statements by a right-wing think-tank called the *Project for the New American Century*, which is closely linked to Bush. In the 1990s, many years before 9/11, this group published a series of policy statements calling for a massive increase in U.S. arms spending, so that American could 'fight and win multiple, simultaneous, major theatre wars'.

This was the War on Terror declared in advance. They acknowledged, however, that the American People were not then willing to support such action, nor to pay the taxes required to buy the military equipment and fund the wars.

What was needed to change minds, they said, was 'some catastrophic and catalysing event - like a new Pearl Harbour?'. 9/11 was the 'new Pearl Harbour' event these people had been waiting for. Because of this, 'conspiracy theories' about 9/11 cannot be dismissed out of hand. There really were forces in the American government who were waiting for something like 9/11 to happen. There are reasonable grounds for suspecting that parts of the American establishment in some ways let it happen.

As conceived by Bush, The War on Terror does seem to be a war without end ... In his notorious 'axis of evil' speech in January 2002, he said:

'Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch ...' In his deluded way, he even seems to regard the war as his lasting 'legacy' to humanity. The truth is, the War on Terror has acquired an ongoing momentum of its own - and has become a corrupt violent systematic process. It will only end when popular anti-war movements force a stop to it. Because of the close ties between Britain and America, a British withdrawal of support from the War on Terror could make a big difference. The withdrawal of British troops from the occupation of Iraq could be a first step towards stopping the War on Terror.

I would now like to turn to the question of WHO exactly is fighting the War on Terror? The forces of state-terror are dense networks of many thousands of military and security personnel – with large numbers of private corporate employees also involved. Most of people doing the state-terror 'dirty work' are low-ranking, and in a real sense are 'only obeying orders'. These low-ranking people are the people ordered to do the fighting. They are also the people manipulated into taking part in the abuse and torture regimes. And they are the ones 'scape-goated' to protect those higher up the command-chain when there is a media clamour about atrocities and human rights abuses. Suggestions that atrocities and abuses are only the work of a few rogue individuals are untrue - the whole War on Terror process is deliberately brutal, and systematically brutalizes all caught up in it.

Civilians, obviously, are the main victims of the War on Terror. But the lower ranking 'servants' of the War on Terror are its victims too. They are killed and wounded and psychologically scarred in military

and security operations – as well as in attacks by non-state-terror forces. Almost everyone is being systematically brutalised by the War on Terror. It is only the people who direct the War on Terror who stand aloof from its terrible effects.

But who is really controlling this systematic brutality? The War on Terror has become a very complex process - and there are many shadowy figures directing operations behind the scenes. In some respects Bush and Blair might be regarded as mere front-men - but they do give orders that direct events in the War on Terror, and they are its principle spokesmen. The public leader of the War on Terror, then, is American president George W. Bush – to all appearances, a dangerous, ignorant and deluded man.

It is to the eternal shame of the American people that they let him into power and let him stay there. It is to the eternal shame on the British people that our government is - after the Israeli government - Bush's most loyal international supporter. As far as Bush is concerned, everyone who does not support his War on Terror is an 'enemy'. As he said in his declaration of war speech: 'Either you are with us; or you are with the terrorists.'

In reality, the non-state terrorists are relatively small in number and not a huge threat to world peace. Most of the people now being labelled 'terrorists' in Iraq are in fact people opposing the illegal occupation of their homeland areas by American and British forces. The 'terrorists' we in Britain are supposed to fear - according to scare-story propaganda - in truth represent a very limited and small-scale threat to British national security - or to the lives and well-being of British citizens.

Meanwhile, in Bush's paranoid fantasy world there are: 'Tens of thousands of dangerous killers, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, ... now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning.' [War Declaration, 20.09.01]

At the head of this, in truth, mostly phantom army of 'tens of thousands of dangerous killers' is the mostly artificial 'hate-figure' Osama bin Laden. If bin Laden did not exist, they would have to invent him – and they have, in truth, largely invented him. In reality, bin Laden is a small scale Islamic militant leader blown up by myth

into the main international terror 'overlord'. He is also literally an American CIA 'creation'. The CIA built him up during the resistance struggle against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Later they turned him into a bogey man - 'the enemy' in person ... the 'man they love to hate'.

Another question I would like to deal with briefly is: ...WHERE is the War on Terror being fought? According to the Bush paranoid fantasy, the 'tens of thousands of killers' led by bin Laden exist in 'a terrorist underworld ... [that] operates in remote jungles and deserts, and hides in the centers of large cities.' [War Declaration speech, 20.01.01]

In reality, only a small part of the War on Terror is actually being fought in physical locations - most obviously in Palestine, in Iraq, and in Afghanistan, as well as in the detention camps and prisons. In a strange but real sense, most of the War on Terror is actually being fought inside people's minds. Indeed it might be said that the War on Terror is primarily an 'internal' mental war - 'terror' being, strictly defined, an abstract noun describing a state of mind.

Another way of putting this might be to say that the War on Terror is essentially a media war - a battle for the control of people's minds through the mediums of mass communication. It is in the interests of both 'sides' in this mostly fantasy war for the scale of the 'terror threat' to be hugely exaggerated.

HOW is the War on Terror being fought? According to Bush, in fighting this 'enemy', the Americans are using: 'every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war' [War Declaration, 20.09.01.]

In practice this means they are using:

- Propaganda campaigns involving false 'intelligence';
- Arbitrary arrest and detention without trial;
- Surveillance and 'security' measures taken to extremes;
- News control of news - by 'spinning' and, occasionally, by outright suppression;

- Scare stories to cultivate a general atmosphere of threat and fear;
- Categorization by false associations and innuendo of entire ethnic and religious groups as 'the enemy';
- Stoking up resentments until non-state-terror groups react violently - and then using those violent reactions as excuses to increase the 'counter-terror' measures;
- As a 'final solution', they resort to the use of overwhelming force - with, because of America's huge potential firepower, always a threat of even greater possible force to come.

An additional odd method of the War on Terror is the cultivation of 'insecurity' by allowing 'harmless', almost comical, security breaches to occur - on a sort of nod and wink basis.

Remember for example, how a clown in a beard and dress was 'allowed' to gate crash a royal party at Windsor Castle. The cry went up: 'he might have been a terrorist - security has to be increased'. But he was not a terrorist, he was only a clown in a bear and a dress.

And remember how a fathers' rights protestor was 'allowed' to throw purple dust over Tony Blair in the House of Commons. The cry went up: 'it might have been anthrax - security has to be increased.' But it was not anthrax, it was only purple dust.

And then there are the outright fictions. Remember, for example, the completely fake alleged plot against the Old Trafford football stadium last year. There was a huge media blitz of scare stories. People were wrongfully arrested and then released without charge. The whole thing proved to be a fake story concocted by who knows who. These kinds of weird, unsettling propaganda, along with other methods of truth distortion and attempted mind control, are examples of 'mental terrorism'.

Cultivating a sense of 'insecurity' through 'mental terrorism' in fact makes up much of the War on Terror. When it comes to physical

terrorism, the level of violence used by the state-terror forces is far greater than that used by the non-state-terrorists.

That fact is often lost in the daily reports of smaller-scale atrocities of the non-state terror groups. The American-led attack on Falluja last year, for example, was violent terror on a scale far greater than anything done by Iraqi fighters. And don't believe the claims that huge efforts have been made to avoid civilian deaths. It is a fact that, in the name of combating terror, American and British forces have killed far more innocent civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan than were killed in the 9/11 attacks.

Conclusion

To return to the original question, 'Why the War on Terror?' My brief and incomplete answers are:

- The political ruling classes are bankrupt of ideas and cannot think of anything more positive to do.
- Fear is an effective way of dividing people and keeping them disunited and under control.
- There is a lot of money to be made from the protection racket that is the War on Terror.

Taken all in all, the War on Terror represents a grim, depressing, negative, valueless style of international politics. When states resort to terror tactics, terrorism in every sense is 'winning' - and everyone else is losing.

We have to oppose this War on Terror with more positive alternatives - and not just spend our time reacting in opposition to its terrible events. Our aim must be to end the War on Terror and to help to build a better world without war. Such a world is possible, and, even working on small local scales, we all can do some things to help create it.

Phil Talbot 21/01/05

Whose Next? Santa Claus and the Power of Nightmares

by Nader Naderi

Truth, a semiotic reference denoting the conceptualisation of any phenomenon, and its actuality. It is essentially an aid to the processes underlying identification, discernment, and decision-making. Or in a not so long-winded technicality, truth is an accurate reflection/expression of the facts.

However, as is evident the expressions of facts rely on the semantics deployed to reflect and or express these. Semantics deployed hinge upon traditions, cultural imperatives, and the outcomes sought in expressing these facts, which are aimed to aid the process of conceptualisation in the minds of the target audience.

As ever, further complications arise in acceptance of the forwarded facts, due to the credulity and or lack thereof the target audience, as well as the degrees of their awareness, and the extent of the prior knowledge of the domain of the expressed truth states.

Now the translation of all of this into simple English perhaps could be better achieved, by recourse to that jovial bon vivant and generous old chap namely Santa Claus, and our attitudes towards Santa Claus. We all know that Santa really does not exist, however we maintain this imaginary entity to be very real when it comes to our dealings with the very young. The basis for such public truth in dealing with our young are founded in our belief that our young could in fact communicate with us through the medium of Santa for their desired toys,

sweets, etc. While we are left to remain in control of fulfilling and or finding alternatives for fulfilling their stated wishes. So in other words through the higher authority of Santa we remain in control. In fact the degree of desired levels of control, help to sustain and perpetuate the Santa myth. Perhaps going some way in explaining the lie presented to the young, while the not so young remaining aware of the actuality. In fact the dual state truth, can perhaps be better understood by observing the Japanese' attitudes and cultural imperatives towards the truth. In Japan there are two truth states, one is referred to as public truth, and the other as private truth. In reality the two state truths, or relative truth promote the actualities, while rendering these as contextual notions, and relative to the ambiance, perhaps regardless of the actualities.

Returning to Santa we find as the young grow older the myth is shattered, and the incredulity of our young with respect to his existence steadily grows louder. However, this does not stop the post office from delivering letters posted to him, and newscasts of bulletins with ah factor to inform us of the numbers of letters delivered to Santa, and or the latest calculations of physicists charting the course and speed of Rudolph, and his companion reindeer motive forces propelling Santa's sleigh.

Extending this concept to our daily diet of infomercials we have come to accept as news, in our media conveying the variation of Santa stories, propagating the apparent facts as forwarded by the select opinion leaders to we the people. This extension of the Santa game is based on an accurate reflection or reportage of the facts put to various journalists, whom pride themselves in the verbatim recantation of the facts disclosed by various movers, and shakers. This further is shaped by editorial policies, as well as the propriety policies of the owners of the medium too. Sometimes resulting in grave consequences, as in the case of war in Iraq, and the infamous hunt for WMD.

In all certainty we all can remember the ubiquitous dossiers one and two that were forwarded by our political leadership in the run-up to Iraq war. Both these dossiers informed us all of the dangers that Saddam's Weapons of Mass Destruction posed to our security, and lives. These recounted Saddam's past attempts in using such weap-

ons against his own people as well as other nations. Such as Iran, and Kuwait. These dossiers were follow-ups to comments made by various political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic whom were at pains to point out the imminent and present dangers that were posed by Saddam Hitler Satan Lucifer!

The most memorable part of one of the dossiers, which was not plagiarised from the Internet, was the claim that Saddam only needed 45 minutes to ready any such weapon and attack our troops, and or any other nation within the reach of his deadly and accurate rockets, manifestly a present and clear danger to our security.

Those incredulous of the purported facts contained within the dossiers, disseminated in an attempt to reinforce the warnings of the political leadership were to experience the subsequent heads rolling in the literal sense, including Andrew Gilligan, Greg Dyke, Robin Cook (facing an offer he could not refuse), George Galloway, not forgetting Dr. Kelly, and many others too. The questionings of veracity of the actualities as forwarded by these opinion leaders bent on waging war on Iraq, aired on an early morning radio show, heralded the wrath of a slighted British government, which bent on vindicating itself set up enquiries, and went on to ask for heads of the disbelievers. In other words, we saw on display control of the media by a Fascio, who found dissent treasonous, and dissenters fit for burning at stakes, one of the characteristics of any self-respecting fascist system.

The fact that such a war was instigated on the basis of such lies then upon discovery of no weapons was explained away through invocation of the sincere albeit flawed judgment in perception of the present and clear dangers Saddam posed. The sincerity and integrity angle was further bolstered by two public enquires, and parliamentary enquires to boot. In effect the post office delivering the mail to Santa and newscasts broadcasting the heroics of the postmen in finding the whereabouts of the intrepid jolly red-attired present provider.

To this end all and sundry appearing on any current affairs programme and or published medium, first went through repeating the homily of sincerity of those in charge, and then proceeded to voice their slight misgivings about a war which gradually and grudgingly has come to be accepted as an unjust, evil, and a needless war. This is in great

contrast to the stated and recorded material prior to the instigation of such an evil action.

Putting it simply we the people have been told a Santa story that we now can sincerely say was just a story, and fantasy.

However, not loosing a beat, the objectives of the war now revolve around establishing a democracy in Iraq, and until implementation of such an outcome there could be no withdrawal because there may ensue a civil war. Although this new Santa story relies heavily on our assumption that Iraqis were killing each other prior to the invasion and fighting among themselves and they needed our intervention in separating these warring factions, hence the story line.

The emergent facts before us are, we have been lied to, but as yet what were the reasons for fooling us all is not clarified, and the Santa angle steadily grinds on. Although to appease those whom needed an explanation, the explanation has been the break down in intelligence gathering, and of course misguided spooks that heavily relied on the data provided by the INC (Iraqi National Congress) and others who were in opposition to Saddam. Discounting the Office of Special Plans set up in Pentagon, and headed by Mr. Fieth, ordering an intern around, as reported in Washington Times!

However, forgotten are the ongoing slaughter of Iraqis, and destruction of that country as we speak.

The fundamental question remains, as to why on Earth should anyone wish to kill thousands of human beings under the stated pretexts and why in Hades does a presidential candidate (Bush) go on warning those who may wish to vote other than him of the tragedy that the world would be drifting into, in the absence of his leadership. In other words the only captain that could save this rock (Earth) we stand on hurtling at 65000 miles per hour is president Bush with his first mate Tony, and along with their motley coalition of the bribed and the coerced, not forgetting the neo-conservative cabal charting the course of the path.

Which tragedy is the world being saved from under the helmsmanship of such illustrious and noble liars? A tragedy which we are not aware of, since all facts pertaining to such a calamity remain matters

for national security, and we the people are not, and cannot be privy to, yet we all have somehow become entangled in the contrived selections of captains without so much as having any say or choice.

Needless to point out we the people can elect to believe in the public truth of Santa, and or begin to question and or try and find out the private truths?

The bitter realities facing us are the prevailing uncompetitive practices of the developed nations, in the face of developing nations. In other words technology used as a control construct, any and all nations who manage to close the existing technology lags, are to be the forthcoming targets of the freedom posse under the leadership of self appointed god's own sheriff Dubya!

The torrents of disinformation, and propaganda concerning the next bunch of the hole in the wall gang, and their evil plots for world domination have at this moment targeted Iran. Iran a member of Nuclear None Proliferation Treaty, is exercising her inalienable right of access to technology, by developing indigenous means of nuclear power production, as set out in the Nuclear Non Proliferation treaty, part IV of which includes enrichment of the fuel for reactors. However, Sheriff Dubya's town criers mainly the neoconservative cabal are warning the world of the impending nuclear bombs raining upon them yet again.

Dr. Prather an American nuclear physicist and nuclear weapons designer forwards that editorial writers seem to think it would be easy to make a nuke once you have a uranium enrichment plant. He points out that Iran could not take the first step towards nuclear weapons construction, unless she first completes the plant at Bushehr and runs it for a year, then proceeds to announce her withdrawal from the NPT, which requires six months lead time, and then spends several YEARS taking the fuel out of Bushehr, leaving this spent fuel to cool down for a few more years so it could be handled, then reprocess the spent fuel, and eventually turn it into one nuke device.

However, never letting the ugly facts and mundane probabilities get in the way, the zealots in the neocon cabal are harrying us all to see the imaginary mushroom clouds arising in the next week or so, and save us all from ourselves.

On the other hand Syria, and Lebanon are targeted for letting people cross through the borders into Iraq, to fight alongside the resistance. The fact that the mighty US army, and its allies are the occupying forces, and in charge of borders, does not come into the equation. Since, in this case the questions arise with respect to the capabilities of the US army technology, and its effectiveness, in failing to seal the Iraqi borders, and in fact stopping any resistance fighters, that is if there are any, from crossing these borders. Nevertheless, the have guns will travel motto of the neocons holding, Syria is put on notice too, along with Lebanon.

Then there are the outposts of tyranny around the world as stated by the new secretary of state Dr. Rice, awaiting to be liberated from their resources, in return for enabling their people in electing secret candidates, with secret manifestoes, that is if they can get to the secret polling stations, due to prohibition of unofficial transport on the roads as was the case in the celebrated Iraqi elections, with 78% turn out, then 65%, and eventually 52%, although Saddam used to enjoy 99% turnouts (apparently turn out is a measure of democracy).

Clearly, a secret ballot does not extend to the levels of secrecy practised with respect to the candidates, polling stations, along with deliverables promised to those lucky plebeians.

However, the untamed fires of freedom are on the march (as Bush told us all), and warning those who do not subscribe to the new re-definition of freedom, and sovereignty (yet another version of you are with US or against US). In other words we are witness to an international equivalence of little old ladies coming out of bingo and falling prey to the local muggers.

This is reflected in the words of Professor Thomas Barnett, a professor at the Navy War College in Rhode Island. He is the author of the controversial book "The Pentagon's New Map" that identifies a "non-integrating gap" in the world that is resisting corporate globalization. Barnett defines the gap as parts of Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Central Asia all of which are key oil-producing regions of the world.

In what Barnett calls a "Grand March of History" he claims that the

US military must be transformed in order to pre-emptively take control of the gap, so the US can “manage” the global distribution of resources, people, energy, and money (trust US avuncular Sam knows what he is doing). In other words the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor around the world will continue to increase, and that the Pentagon will have to be used to keep the boot on the necks of the people of the weaker countries to the benefit of corporate globalization.

Finally we can conclude that we the people stupefied by Santa stories, are being sleep walked into a third world war, to the benefit of global oligarchs, relentlessly following the military option, leaving out any possible dialogue, and or recourse to agreed, and accepted laws.

This is reflected in the lack of reportage with respect to growing tensions, and fears of attack, leading Russia, and China to conduct joint military manoeuvres, and Chinese Red Army getting equipped with long-range nuclear bombers.

While Mr. Ledeen, an ex rabbi predisposed to accepting dogma, and one of neocon acolytes dogmatically pontificating faster please “win or loose America must face its enemies”! In other words, gambling on the planet for the sake of ideologies that derive their legitimacy from the power of nightmares! While the rest of the world is haphazardly trying to avert the unfolding of the impending disasters, that are dreamt up by the American Enterprise Institute, promoting the interests of their super corporate sponsors, which have placed their own point man in the driving seat of the super power!

The News Is Broken

<http://www.rense.com/general62/newis.htm>

Nader Naderi 21/01/05

Bring the Troops Home and Deal a Blow against the War mongering Elite at the Next general Election?

by Roger Nettleship

The “war on terror” is a mystification of the real war which is for world domination and its resources by the United States Britain and other powers. As other contributions have stressed that the “war on terror” is more about “winning minds” in this propaganda war where truth is the first casualty. The ruling elite and media can assert, over and over again, that the main problem in the world is “terror” so that all manner of state terrorism can be “justified”, of criminality, of killing peoples with bullets, missiles and bombs, of destroying infrastructure and assets of nations, of arrests, torture and attacks on peoples rights. Even, when given this misinformation people still cannot accept state terrorism as a solution to terrorism and they also recognise the right of people to resist occupation and oppression.

Instead, people are encouraged by the anti-war movement to do their own thinking and identify what is the main problem in the world and act according to what is really in front of their eyes. They could conclude that the main problem in the world is that a few powerful nations containing huge global monopolies exploit the world human and physical resources as well as their own peoples. As some people have said a “war on poverty” would be a just conclusion from this, instead of a “war on terror”. They conclude that political solutions must be found to build another world without war and conflict starting with their own countries.

So, what does it mean to Bring the troops home and to think in terms of dealing a blow against the warmongering elite at the next General Election as the conception for the whole movement in Britain at this time?

The problem that has to be faced up to is why are the anti-war actions not leading to change. This is an important part of the experience of the anti-war movement since February 15th and of the European Social Forum discussions. In all our discussion we must analyse this in order to strengthen the movement for change.

There is sometimes a desperation that our actions have not stopped the “war on terror” which leads to calls that more action is what we need. On the other hand, there is sometimes a desperation that people are so weighed down by the disinformation that all we can do is wait until we all agree that the problem is imperialism, or we all become pacifists and so on, before we can fight back with some coherence. However, our coherence is here and now. It is in our strength to combine our actions with analysis. We encourage widespread discussion on national and international affairs analysing events and our own intervention in those events. In practice we unite regardless of the differing political views and opinions, different ideologies and strive to come up with a new understanding that represents this powerful movement of ours.

So we have to ask ourselves what is this unity in thinking that has developed. ‘Not In Our Name’ was the first milestone in this consciousness and ‘Another world is Possible’ was further step forward. Is now the aim of all this, to bring about an anti-war government, that adopts as its permanent and constitutional policy one of resolving conflicts in the world without war? One that brings the troops home and pays reparations to the countries that it has invaded, occupied and destroyed? One that brings to justice those responsible in the ruling elite and state forces for war crimes?

If so, how do we bring bring ourselves closer to this aim?

Firstly, How do we bring the troops home now? At the meeting last November in the station hotel very important issues were raised by the speakers on what we should do. Speakers from the families of

soldiers were demanding that the troops come home. We had a proposal that in addition to the petition demanding that the troops be brought home we should launch a campaign to demand a referendum on this question. But what should the demand for a referendum be on?

Discussing this afterwards some of us were thinking how can you make it an issue of a vote as to whether your country commits unprovoked, illegal aggression against another – the vote itself would be against the democratic rights of that country. On the other hand you could demand that Britain adopts a constitution in which it forbids any British government to station troops abroad and have a referendum on that. The point is action with analysis means working out practical demands which strengthen the movement and bring us closer to our aims.

Secondly, what about the general election that is to come shortly. Rather than voting for the “lesser evil” to represent us, or voting in a sectarian fashion for one’s own favourite party, shouldn’t this become an important opportunity to deal a blow against this warmongering elite? Wouldn’t this be a step forward?

For the anti-war movement to act as a collective instead, to strengthen and consolidate itself as a collective which includes all the different political, religious and other standpoints is not sectarian to the political parties, even those that are actively engaged in the Stop the War Coalition, at election time –it is not sectarian as some may claim.

How can you split political parties especially when this is precisely the reason why the antiwar movement has come into to being to remedy the unity of the polity against fascism and war and act as one against the warmongering elite in power.

How could a progressive political party object to anything other than the unity of the people against war and striving to empower those it seeks to represent rather than trying to seize power for itself.

For the anti-war movement to act as a collective in dealing a blow against the ruling elite is no more than a trade unionist, or working

class conception in that sense, of building one's own unity, unity is strength, and emphasising the unity of the people's forces.

Then, whatever form it takes, so in this discussion the *Respect Coalition* has already staked a claim that it represents the interests of the anti-war movement, and others also, but the point is that the anti-war movement must become a new political force *itself* that strengthens and consolidates itself with all the political views and different forces that exist within it and that it is part of the solution that comes from the people themselves, from their various communities and collectives and in particular the working class movement itself. No longer encouraging people to vote for the "lesser evil" of the big parties to represent them, which is an illusion, but providing its own solution, its own programme and its own political activity, its own representatives and candidates.

Put simply, at this time the idea of dealing a blow against the warmongering elite is really not to let the warmongers have an easy time, but build the people's forces in the process. To bring the aim of having anti-war government closer by action with analysis that demand the troops are brought home, that challenge in the political sphere and in the elections making life most difficult for the warmongering elite in power particularly at the next general election, strengthening and consolidating the anti-war forces and building unity.

I think this is what must be done.

Roger Nettlehip 21/01/05

Where Do We Go From Here?

by Alan Trotter

We are living in a troubled age, we have in *The White House* a man , who, it appears has a dream to dominate the world by any means (although he would call it spreading freedom and democracy), if not by brutal invasion, then by his 'war on terror' which has little to do with terrorism and more to do with the USA's commercial and military domination of the world, spreading paranoia across the globe, and to our shame he is supported by our own government.

The whole plan has fallen to bits, after the initial 'shock and awe' the Americans and their coalition thought they would be welcomed with flowers and cheers and as we have seen it was quite the opposite. Daily we hear reports about the catastrophic events happening in Iraq with over 100,000 people killed (referred to as collateral damage by these callous and unfeeling hypocrites) and countless injured, the human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib jail, the torture and psychological abuses, the odious and repugnant photographs from camp 'Bread basket'.

What of the future? In September 2000 a US report (Project for the new American century) stated 'even should Saddam pass from the scene' following war 'Iran may prove as large a threat to US interests as Iraq'. Is this the road these bloodthirsty gangsters are going to take us ? More and more people are starting to question the motives of our government with their deliberate misrepresentations used to justify the war, and the lies of 'weapons of mass destruction',

'weapons deployed in 45 minutes', 'liberation of the Iraqi people', and someone must be held to account for taking this county to war on the basis of these lies.

The peace movement continues to grow and we all know in our heart of hearts that we are right and that one day we shall see peace and justice for all peoples on our troubled planet, the struggle may be wearisome and arduous but I remain optimistic because with the support of our courageous and valiant brothers and sisters in the peace movement we will achieve our aspirations.....It is still a beautiful world.

Alan Trotter 05/02/05

‘DON’T VOTE’

by Doreen Henderson

When the number of people killed in Iraq by the invasion of that country by the ‘two B.s’ equals that of the number of people killed by the ‘murdering monster’ Saddam, what will that make them?

What have they achieved for the people of Iraq? They have made many of them people without homes, medical care, electricity, food, etc, etc.

For what? The possibility of an election.

And have either of the ‘2 B.s’ said they will accept a fundamentalist Islamic government for Iraq if elections produce one? - and do you think they will? I doubt it.

Why should the Iraqi people accept western ‘democracy’ when it is so flawed anyway? WE haven’t even got ‘democracy’. The word has been bandied around by politicians so much it has become a dirty word.

What I am about to say now may offend, and may cause consternation - and maybe also raise a few ‘3 cheers’! - but, as a socialist, I cannot bring myself to use my vote in the next election, because I cannot in all honesty vote for New Labour - because I think it is ‘New Tory’ and I cannot vote for any other party [than Labour].

So I will say to people who are having doubts and misgivings DON’T VOTE AT ALL.

Let us show politicians of ALL parties we will not be duped any longer and they must not ignore our wishes.

I cannot remember the policies of 'going to war', 'privatisation of hospitals', 'student fees', etc, etc, being in either of the New Labour manifestos.

Have you noticed how when we don't use the vote in elections we are called 'apathetic', but when politicians don't vote it is called 'abstaining'.

And if Tony Blair himself doesn't even show up to voted on two very important questions - fox hunting, and the living will - then I think I have the right to withhold my vote.

And finally: If by using your vote you could change society, they'd take the vote off you!

Have a peaceful 2005. See you on the march.

Doreen Henderson. 21/01/2005

Where Next For the Stop the War Movement?

by Peter Murray

The Stop the War movement is by far the biggest movement in Britain today. Two million people marching in London back in 2003 against the war in Iraq. Organised protests issues from Abu Ghraib and the Hutton reports and more recently the day to day disobedience on 15 February 2005.

The development of the anti-war movement amongst army families is an historical development and represents the unpouularity of the war within working class communities. The war and attacks on civil liberties are having an effect among the working class people of Muslim background.

In Universities the question of war has been of interest to students with new activists opposing any war. The majority of the trade unions oppose the war, many being affiliated to the Stop the War Coalition.

A mass movement against the war is vital in stopping it. That is why is every persons responsibility to build the movement. We have to challenge those who do not want to stop the war, or who ignore it and say it is not their concern. This was highlighted in the Eurooean Social Forum held recently in London in the debates between the anti-war and the ant-capitalist movements in Europe.

We need to build the movement. It is not just about the war in Iraq.

What about the Congo, Rwanda, etc.. What about the possible threat of the US using its military muscle in Iran, Syria and Korea. All these issues need to be highlighted via publications and public meetings.

This year, there is lots of opportunities to centralise the stop the war strategies:-

March 19, 2005 - International Day of Protest Against War, Racism and Privatisation

May 1 2005 May Day - Join the May Day March with your banner held high

The G8 summit in July being held in Scotland - a chance to challenge the warmongers and neo-liberals. Everybody should be discussing these issues in the work place, school, college and in the pub. Talk about these issues on your break, instead of talking about reality television programmes like big brother -- talk about real live reality.

The majority of the British public do not support the Iraq war but do not know what they can do to stop it. Everyone should write to their MPs, Blair, Jack Straw, the newspapers, hold meetings and attend the stop the war meetings.

The strength of the stop the war coalition has been its unity. America Britain, Russia, India or any other country in the world are not the superpower, the biggest super power is the people of the world and people power. Together we change the world.

Peter Murray 15/02/05

Review of the Music Drama: Occupation is Not Liberation

by Roger Nettleship

On Saturday afternoon, January 22, South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition along with Tyneside Stop the War Coalition, sponsored a performance of the Music Drama: *Occupation Is Not Liberation* performed by the *Not In Our Name Cultural Activists*. About 30 people came to see the performance in St Thomas, the Martyr Church in the Haymarket, Newcastle. The performers were made up of people young and old, amateur and professional from different genres of music and art coming together to give an inspiring performance that mirrored the very essence of the unity of the people in the anti-war movement itself.

Speaking to the performers - they had given the first performance at the London European Social Forum last year and thought it was important to take the production to other parts of the country. How right they were.

In, the splendid setting of St Thomas's the overture and accompaniment of the organ to the drama could be seen this most impressive tradition of organ music reaching forward into the 21st century and providing a rich tapestry of sound to the peoples tribunal in which the drama was set.

The piece which is set in the framework of a tribunal against Bush and Blair and the indictment against them for war crimes against

humanity was delivered by two young narrators bringing to the fore the vitality and key role played by the youth in a performance in which the people affirm themselves as their own liberators.

In a most dignified and beautifully haunting performance an Iraqi mother sings her story which is reflected in the solo violin accompaniment and later piano. A poet enters the scene with verse that takes the indictment to a new level. A choir, recorded for this performance, is projected onto the screen and provides the link and then the turning point. The performers come together and sing a simple but striking harmony - a declaration that war is not in our name. The transition from the crimes of war to the resistance of the people and the affirmation of their culture was reflected in the words, vigour and life of the narrators, then the poet and finally the judge gives his verdict. A powerful performance.

Roger Nettleship 23/01/05



Demonstration to Labour Party Conference, Newcastle, February 12, 2005

Bring the troops home

19 3

Demonstrate Saturday 19 March central London 1pm

Transport leaves Newcastle Central Station

More information: 07719946814 £20 & £10



Contact South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition

for details, E-mail: STSWC@blueyonder.co.uk

Web: <http://philiptalbot.members.beeb.net/ststwc.html>

Silence is Shame!

Published by South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition

C/O Trinity House Social Centre, 134 Laygate, South Shields, NE33 4JD

Printed by Millennium Press - Digital Design & Print

E-Mail: info@millennium-press.co.uk Call 020 8570 4141