



Stop the war drive against Iran

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The imperialist occupiers may be desperate to dig themselves out of the Iraqi quagmire but this in no way reduces their warmongering. The US - with its British lap dog in tow and its Israeli guard dog straining at the leash - is preparing for air strikes against Iran.

The United Nations Security Council - a thieves' kitchen of the leading capitalist powers - has called for sanctions to try to starve Iran into submission. How can antiwar and working class activists, youth and socialists force the immediate withdrawal of the troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, and stop the attack on Iran?

Action not words

In 2003 two million marched in London against the war on Iraq. The huge marches against Israel's war in Lebanon last summer, against the Labour Party conference in September, and in defence of Iran on 24 February all showed that the mass antiwar movement can still be mobilised.

Yet the leaders of the antiwar movement in Britain - the heads of CND and the trade unions, the handful of antiwar Labour MPs and the SWP spokespersons of Respect - are content to keep the movement at the same level as before, calling demonstrations and meetings, but refusing to escalate the action.

With the war less popular than ever and the troops seething with discontent, it is time to step up the action, to go beyond marches to direct measures to stop the war machine.

True, Lindsey German did tell the rally after last month's 60,000-strong demo, 'We will demonstrate, strike and take action until all these wars are at an end.' George Galloway added, 'If Tony Blair takes Britain to war with Iran, there won't just be demonstrations on the streets of Britain, there will be riots.'

The problem is that German is not demanding that the union leaders call strike action nor calling on the rank and file to prepare for strikes, should the union tops duck the issue. Galloway is even worse. Riots are symptomatic of a lack of leadership. Often they lead to the most vulnerable parts of the movement being banged away for months or years; very rarely do they bring about serious change. Galloway is abdicating leadership, not providing it.

At the People's Assembly on 20 March, we will put forward proposals to help defeat the imperialist war drive and fight for the means to achieve it.

Socialists must argue for what is necessary to defeat the war machine. This means using class struggle tactics to beat the imperialists. Socialists should agitate for mass boycotts of military supplies, and blockades of airbases and transport hubs, used to convey weapons of destruction to the occupying troops. We should appeal to workers in supply industries to refuse to handle weapons, as Scottish rail workers did in 2003.

When the Iraq invasion began, workers across the country walked out and staged lunchtime demonstrations; thousands of school students took to the streets. The day the US, Britain or Israel attack Iran, we must repeat this, but on a scale many times greater. Every union leader should call now for strike action in the event of an aerial attack on Iran. Antiwar Labour MPs should disrupt parliament. Students and workers should walk out and occupy town and city centres.

Mass assemblies should be held in every city to co-ordinate resistance from below. The revival of the Peoples

Assemblies has the potential to go much further. We should organise democratic assemblies, with delegates from unions, faith groups, youth and community organisations. The wave of struggles against the Labour government, the fight to save the NHS and halt privatisation, the PCS strike movement can all be brought together in a combined fightback which could bring this weak government to its knees.

Some will say that, by doing so, we put British troops at risk. We must reply that it is Bush and Blair's illegal war that puts troops at risk, and that we are trying to stop it. We should link this to a clear call for the right of British troops to organise separately from their officers and refuse to fight the resistance.

Others will say that this action will aid 'Britain's enemies'. But the enemies of the British government and its generals are not the enemies of the British working class. We do not have to endorse in any way the political programmes of this or that Islamist faction of the resistance to say clearly: Iraqis and Afghans fighting for an end to foreign occupation of their country are fighting for a justified aim and deserve our solidarity.

Of course Labour will try to shift the blame onto the 'enemy at home': the Muslim community. A wave of Islamophobia will sweep the country when the imperialists bomb Iran. Government ministers and police forces will wage a campaign of terror at home against Muslims, cheered on by the capitalist press. Violent racists, like the BNP, will try to carry out verbal and physical attacks.

Every antiwar activist must wage a fight against racism and the persecution of Muslims. Workers must not comply with the government's war on Muslims and support the right to mass self-defence.

Revolution against imperialism

War is an integral part of the system of global capitalism. The wars of the last years are a sign that the system is crisis-ridden. The attacks on living standards at home, privatisation of welfare and public services, ever greater reduction of civil liberties, the hateful persecution of Muslims and young people, the growth of surveillance, vast spending on hi-tech weaponry, mounting inequality: all these are signs of a system in decline, a system that must be overthrown.

Imperialism contains within itself its own gravedigger. All around the world, there are hundreds of millions who detest imperialism and war and face a daily struggle against the capitalist ruling class. This is the force that can defeat imperialism: not MPs, pacifists, charities, vicars and Imams, but the working class millions of the cities and countryside around the world.

A revolutionary mass movement can take action against the war and against the rule of the capitalists itself, converting the imperialist war into a war of the working class against the imperialists. Internationally we need a revolutionary party that can struggle not only for the defeat of the imperialist powers, but for an end to the entire capitalist system.

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