



the socialist alternative

NO TO WAR

BRITISH PRIME minister Tony Blair declared recently that the country was under a potentially devastating threat from terrorist attacks. This, although he wouldn't acknowledge it as such, was a huge admission that the 'war against terror' by the USA and Britain had failed. But now Bush and Blair despite overwhelming mass opposition are proceeding with a full-scale military onslaught on Iraq.

Over 18 months on from 11 September and the actions of the US and British governments in particular have made the world a more volatile and unsafe place and have made thousands of potential new recruits for terrorist organisations like al Qa'ida.

The war against Iraq has brought out huge global opposition on a scale never experienced before. Millions of people worldwide have protested against this war even before its start.

This war is seen as a nakedly imperialist war where the US has no intention of bringing democracy to the long-suffering masses of Iraq. Instead US imperialism – led by a right-wing Christian fundamentalist US government- is now intent on taking over Iraq in the interests of the oil multinationals and to reinforce its position as the sole world superpower.

No wonder one-third of British people think George Bush is scarier than Saddam Hussein - and a bigger threat to world peace.



The Socialist Party says:

- No War - not in the name of the US or UN.
- No to 'regime change' by the US, UN or any other imperialist force. Let the Iraqi people deal with Saddam's regime.
- Build a mass movement against the war. Build local action against war.
- Organise a Stop The War Group in your workplace.
- Pass a resolution at your union branch calling for industrial action.
- Organise a consultative poll/petition/pledge form in your workplace to test support and build for action. Build support for a stoppage from below now in your school, college or workplace.
- For a mass struggle throughout the Middle East against imperialism and capitalism.
- Support the right of the Palestinians to self determination, and support those Israeli reservists who have refused to serve in the occupied territories.
- Trade Unionists should refuse to work in the production of arms for the Israeli Defence Force.
- For a socialist Palestinian state and a socialist Israel, as part of a voluntary socialist confederation of the Middle East.

No war for oil

“We’re not talking about a war in Tora Bora here. We’re talking about a war in the world’s main petrol station.”

New York Times journalist Thomas Friedman.

THE CONSEQUENCES of this war - to establish one of the most highly guarded petrol pumps in the world, - will be horrific for the innocent people of Iraq and for millions of people worldwide. The US effectively wants to control the Gulf region, still the cheapest supplier of the world’s oil and supplier of 60% of it.

The major companies held secret talks before the conflict to negotiate who gets the biggest slice of the oil pie. This is a war about profit, not weapons of mass destruction.

Tony Blair has talked about the ‘blood price’ necessary to win this war. But who will really pay the blood price for the ‘war against terrorism’?

A war means thousands more killed - up to 500,000 according to one leaked US government report - on top of the thousands of people killed in Afghanistan and the half a million or more who have died in Iraq since 1991 as a result of UN sanctions.

The war on Iraq could create a million refugees and could cost - according to one estimate - between \$100 billion to \$1.9 trillion, if Iraq is occupied for ten years.

Aid agencies estimate that at least 3,000 people were killed by bombings in the US attack on Afghanistan and up to 20,000 died as an indirect consequence of the war in that country. Millions were internally displaced.

There are, according to some estimates, likely to be up to 75,000 US troops in Afghanistan for the next ten years.

The ‘blood price’ of war will not be paid by politicians and oil company executives. The blood price will be paid by the long-suffering innocents of the region and by the working-class economic conscripts in the US and British armies who will be the casualties of the war.



In the Vietnam War there were 59,000 US servicemen killed and another 60,000 committed suicide afterwards because of the deep psychological trauma they suffered. A newer high-tech war will bring destruction, suffering and trauma never experienced before in the bloody history of wars.

We say we will not pay their bloody price for war!

No public support

THERE IS very little public support for war against Iraq. In Britain a number of recent opinion polls have shown a big majority against a war.

They have shown that up to 80% oppose any war without UN backing and now over 50% oppose a war under any guise.

Even in the US, a majority said they would not support a war against Iraq if it involved ground troops - as it inevitably does - or if it did not have UN backing. This is an unprecedented situation in both countries in advance of a war. The situation has been similar throughout the world where a majority oppose the prospect of war.

Yet despite this, Bush and Blair have decided to start military action against Iraq. We agree with veteran Labour MP Tam Dalyell who said: “It seems to me that Bush and Blair are doing everything they can to avoid peace. That is why I am in favour of regime change - in Number 10 Downing Street.”

Regime change in London and Washington is one way that the prospect of war could have been averted. But how can such regime change be achieved?

Wars can be stopped. Don’t believe the idea that ‘resistance is futile’

Wars can be stopped but only when organised mass protests and action have shaken governments and made a government’s war aims untenable. You can join us in organising in the anti-war movement to halt the war on Iraq and fight for a better socialist world.

Mass Opposition

MASS MOVEMENTS of working people and the oppressed are the most effective way to challenge Bush and Blair. On 28 September 2002 around 400,000 people marched through the streets of London to show their opposition to Bush and Blair’s war on Iraq. Then, on

15 February 2003 up to two million protested in London - the biggest ever demonstration in Britain.

On the same day three million marched in Italy, seven million in Spain and tens of millions of others marched in thousands of cities and towns around the world. The era of the global demonstration had arrived.

These massive demonstrations partially forced the warmongers to slow down their drive towards war. But since then Bush and Blair - whose very political survival is now threatened - made it clear that they intended to prosecute a war no matter what the public opposition.

For the millions of people who participated in the demonstrations and who oppose the war, the question now being asked is what can further be done to stop a conflict which the Secretary of the Arab League has said: "Will open the gates of hell"?

The economic price of war

IN BRITAIN the firefighters who deal with trauma every day are asking for less than £100 million to settle their justified claim. Yet, Chancellor Gordon Brown says that no government on earth could give in to such a demand.

However, when George Bush clicks his fingers and demands that the British government provides over 30,000 troops and military equipment at a projected cost of £4 billion - £5 billion then Brown and Blair give in without a whimper.

The Gulf War in 1991 cost over \$80 billion. A new war in Iraq is likely to cost much more. US military expenditure has been massively increased and arms factories are working overtime.

US government spending on defence is estimated to be as much as the next 15 to 20 national military budgets combined. The US regime spends three times more on military research than the next six powers combined.

Lawrence Lindsey - one of Bush's main economic advisers - predicted a new war against Iraq could cost \$200 billion. He said: "That's nothing" and compared the expenditure to a drop in the ocean.

Yet, it would only cost \$40 billion to provide a 'drop in the ocean' for the one billion people worldwide without access to clean drinking water and the 2.5 billion without sanitation. On top of that there would be enough small change to ensure that they all had a decent roof over their head and enough food to avoid starvation.

But the US wants to get its hands on the 200 billion barrels of oil reserves that sit underneath Iraqi soil. Even at the 'modest' cost of \$25 a barrel that's \$5,000 billion up for grabs - 25 times more than the outrageous cost of the war.

The price of oil is likely to go up however in the decades to come as the reserves run out. Already, the US now imports 55% of its oil. No wonder the oil companies want this war.

But the war is about more than just getting oil for US multinationals. The Bush government wants to enhance its position as the sole world superpower and show its supreme "full spectrum dominance". Now it's locked in to conflict. For it to back down now would spell the end of

the Bush regime but would also be a humiliation for US imperialism.

Even those sections of the US elites who originally disagreed with Bush realise that to safeguard US interests they cannot back down now. Too much is at stake for them.

Who armed Saddam?

SADDAM HUSSEIN is "a significant problem and a serious threat and something this country must deal with", says George W Bush. But while the US president and his ally Tony Blair attack the Iraqi dictator, it's worth reminding these 'freedom loving' leaders that Saddam's regime only exists because of the backing of previous US and British governments.

During the 1980s Saddam was built up as a regional strongman by imperialism, notably the US, Britain, France and Germany. These powers made lucrative arms deals, trade agreements and brokered massive financial loans to help Saddam wage a bloody war against Islamist Iran.

The brutal repression of Kurds and Shi'ites within Iraq along with the banning of trade unions, political parties and the imprisonment and murder of the regime's opponents, was conveniently overlooked by the West.

The leaders of the former Soviet Union also cultivated Saddam as an important ally in the Gulf despite the Baathist leader's murderous suppression of the Iraqi Communist Party.

The Iran-Iraq War which lasted from 1980 to 1988 cost one million lives and an astronomical \$1,190 billion. Western arms companies grew rich by ignoring UN arms embargoes and supplying both Iran and Iraq.

Pre-revolutionary Iran - another dictatorship, ruled over by the Shah of Iran - had been a large market for British arms exporters but as relations between the two countries soured, Iraq became the new market. In February 1982 Baghdad signed a contract with London to repair 50 Chieftain tanks captured from Iranians on the battlefield.

The Thatcher government encouraged neighbouring Kuwait to register its oil tankers in Britain thus allowing British Naval involvement in the Gulf against Iran.

Although British arms sales were formally banned in 1985, non-military exports to Iraq soared to \$665 million in 1986. However, an illegal flow of arms to Baghdad continued with Tory cabinet approval and despite their full knowledge of Saddam's gassing of 5,000 Iraqi Kurds in Halabja in 1988. Within one month of this atrocity Tory MP Alan Clark representing the Department of Trade flew to Baghdad and offered £340 million in export credits. Iraq was by now Britain's third largest market for 'dual use' machine tool exports.

Astra, an arms company, according to its former chairman was 'taken over' by MI6 and used as a channel to Iraq. The subsequent Scott inquiry into this murky trade whitewashed the Tory government leaders, including Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

The US government has been no cleaner in its relations with Baghdad. In 1987 it offered Saddam \$1 billion in agricultural commodity credits - a vital prop to war-torn Iraq.

Washington also increased its military cooperation with Saddam's regime to frustrate Iran's attacks. At this time (July 1988) an Iranian civilian jet aircraft was shot down by the US navy in the Gulf killing 290 people. The US administration expressed no sympathy.

Without the massive financial and military backing of the US and Britain, it is an open question as to whether or not Saddam's regime would have survived till now.

The Socialist Party opposes the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein's regime but opposes any imperialist intervention to effect 'regime change' and possibly install a new dictatorship. And the only force that can expel imperialism from the Middle East and bring justice, peace and stability to the long-suffering people there is the working class and oppressed masses of the region.

It is the responsibility of the Iraqi people to effect 'regime change' in that country. We will support the Iraqi people in their struggle to remove the dictatorship which has added to the difficulties of the long-suffering Iraqi people and in opposing any government installed through intervention by occupying forces.



War and instability

A product of capitalist crisis

THIS WAR is not just because of the stupidity of Bush. War, conflict and instability are all becoming the norm in a capitalist system riven by crisis. To permanently end the threat of war and terror we have to fight for the end of capitalism and for the establishment of a democratic socialist world run in the interests of the billions instead of for the profits of the billionaires.

This is a war to effect 'regime change' we are told. The US could have effected a regime change ten years ago at the end of the Gulf War but they chose not to because of the difficulties in getting rid of and replacing Saddam. Now they want 'regime change' because it suits their interests and they see it as unfinished business.

Because the US had no alternative puppet regime to install in 1991, it preferred a weakened Saddam to stay in power rather than risk a popular uprising. As a result tens of thousands of Iraqis (including the Kurdish minority in the North) who rose up against Saddam were left abandoned by US imperialism and were slaughtered.

Even if the Iraqi regime is changed it will not bring democracy. Even if elections are held, it will be with the intention of installing a stooge regime that is compliant with and protecting US imperialism's interests.

Where the US has militarily intervened to effect 'regime change', the masses of those countries, like in Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia, have been left at the mercy of rival warlords and endured increasing misery as a result of the military intervention.

Military action against Iraq has until now only strengthened Saddam's tyrannical grip on power.

Intervention into Iraq is further polarising and inflaming the situation throughout the Middle East. Again the main losers are the long-suffering people of the region.

The war over Iraq is likely to increase the prospect of terrorist attacks rather than lessen them. Retaliation by the Iraqi regime could also see devastating attacks carried out on targets throughout the world - again it will be ordinary people who suffer.

Whose weapons of mass destruction are the biggest threat?

THE BUSH regime represents one wing of US big business, its most short-sighted and arrogant section. Their so-called war on terrorism is designed to allow US imperialism to increase their dominance of the world.

If they can get away with it Bush and his cohorts will use the UN to legitimise US aggression. But the UN's

camouflage will not stop a single ordinary Iraqi being killed when the bombs start to fall and the troops go in. The UN is not a neutral or impartial body - it is a club of the rich imperialist powers.

Five big powers are on the Security Council and particularly since the USSR collapsed, the planet's only military and economic superpower - US imperialism - dominates it. Yet, the US is years behind with its UN dues.

Since its inception in the 1940s the UN has proved impotent in stopping wars. There have been wars every year since 1945 and as war and instability are becoming the norm in the capitalist system, the UN has been more and more swept aside by the remaining world superpower the US.

The US has bombed or invaded 23 other countries since 1945 - 21 more than Saddam.

Israel has occupied the West Bank and Gaza and suppressed the Palestinian people for over 35 years. The UN passed resolution 242 in the 1960s demanding they withdraw from the occupied territories but there has never been any action against them. Indeed, the Western powers give tens of billions of dollars every year to prop up Sharon's 'terrorist' regime.

Israel has ignored 23 further UN resolutions in that time and the US has vetoed 29 UN resolutions on the issue since 1991.

In the current conflict the US sought to use the United Nations as a fig leaf to cover its imperialist aggression and intervention.

After 11 September 2001 US forces started bombing Afghanistan with UN approval, rather than getting direct UN assistance. Widespread international opposition to attacks on Iraq, however, forced Bush to beg them to put their name to this adventure.

It was made clear that unless Saddam's regime fully cooperated with the UN-approved arms inspection body Unmovic to investigate its chemical, biological and nuclear capacity, Iraq would face attack. But, Unmovic's predecessor, Unscm, was found to have been stuffed full of spies planted by the US government.

Weapons control - US/UN double standards

WHAT'S MORE Bush's administration has hypocritically blocked international controls on biological weapons. Bush of course opposes any such inspections on US soil - he has the world's largest stock

of weapons of mass destruction. The US is the only country in the world to have ever used nuclear weapons in conflict.

Bush's government even wants American UN 'peacekeepers' exempted from prosecution by the new International Criminal Court, ostensibly the first standing court for war crimes.

Socialists should have no illusions that the UN can act in workers' interests.

The capitalist powers, alone or in the UN, have failed to remove from government or bring to justice those guilty of crimes against humanity. The UN didn't even discuss the growing threat of war between India and Pakistan despite both powers having the ultimate weapon of mass destruction - nuclear bombs.

The Socialist Party is opposed to war or intervention against Iraq in whatever guise - whether through a so-called UN mandate or a 'bogus' international coalition.

The United Nations, dominated by the wealthy and powerful capitalist nations of the world, cannot solve the

world's problems. That's why we fight to unite the working class worldwide in the battle to create a socialist world.

Last year the head of the UN body - the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons - was sacked at the behest of the US. His crime? To ask to inspect the chemical weapons of five countries - including the USA.

The US has the largest stockpile of chemical and biological weapons in the world. The US has 10,600 nuclear weapons in its stockpile. The US has more weapons of mass destruction than any other country by far, and Bush has not only refused to rule out the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons but has even suggested that they could be used.

No to terrorism

SOcialists UNEQUIVOCALLY condemn the terrorist attacks in Bali, New York and elsewhere, which indiscriminately kill thousands of innocent people, who bore not a shred of responsibility for the policies of US imperialism.



We do not agree with those in the anti-war movement who believe that such attacks are understandable or justified because of the atrocities carried out by the Israeli or US regimes. Such terrorist attacks only strengthen the warmongers in Britain and the US. Look how the horrific killing of ordinary Americans on September 11, has been used by Bush to justify his 'war on terror'.

We know that the biggest terrorist threat and rogue state in the world today is George Bush's right-wing Christian fundamentalist regime in Washington and condemn it as such. But we believe that the best way to bring down such a regime is by mass united working-class action. Such action can only be developed if the anti-war movement takes a clear stand and unequivocally opposes the methods of terrorism, which primarily hurts working-class and oppressed people not their capitalist rulers.

Palestine and the Middle East

A SOLUTION that offers a decent future to the Palestinian and Jewish masses can only be provided on the basis of working-class people taking matters into their own hands and ending capitalism in the occupied territories and in Israel.

Only on a socialist basis, with the construction of a socialist Palestine and a socialist Israel as part of a socialist confederation of the Middle East, can a 'final settlement' be reached that will end future bloodshed.

Maavak Sozialisti, (www.maavak.org.il) a growing Marxist organisation in Israel, affiliated to the CWI (Committee for a Workers' International), is promoting socialist ideas in all its activities towards the building of a real alternative to the present nightmare situation in the Middle East.



For 'system change'

WAR AGAINST Saddam is a war for oil and a pretext for the US to assert its economic and military dominance internationally. This is likely to be at the terrible cost of thousands of lives lost and worldwide economic and political instability. Whatever the twists and turns over the next weeks and months, the anti-war movement has the potential to develop a substantial force in Britain and internationally that can put a halt to this war.

War increases poverty, inequality, oppression, insecurity and a feeling of injustice - the very conditions that push people towards terrorism in the first place. It's only by 'rooting out' these conditions that we can rid the world of war and terror. That means fighting to change the capitalist system and replace it with a democratic socialist society.

As The Socialist explained just after 11 September: "Under capitalism it is not possible to rid the world of terrorism and conflict. Even if the US succeeds in capturing [Osama] bin Laden and destroying his bases in Afghanistan, the conditions which give rise to terrorism - poverty, corruption and oppression - will still remain.

"War, poverty, violence and instability are rooted in the very nature of this class-ridden system, which is based on exploitation, inequality and the ruthless pursuit of profit. It's only by eradicating capitalism worldwide that these horrors can be ended." (The Socialist, 12 October 2001)



Build the movement

THE anti-war movement has made huge strides forward in Britain. The setting up of the Stop The War coalition - which the Socialist Party is an active part of and has three members on the steering committee - has helped to mobilise a massive anti-war movement which has had a huge effect in holding back the warmongers.

The demonstrations and protests organised by the coalition and its participating organisations at every level have had a big impact on public opinion and in impeding the war plans of Bush and Blair.

However, in themselves they have not been enough to stop the war starting. During a war sustained, organised mass civil disobedience is needed to stop it - especially through action by the trade unions and in the workplaces.

Following on from the successful demonstrations we believe that the anti-war movement has to be built at local level especially and sink deep roots in the trade unions.

Parallels have been drawn with the effective civil disobedience of the anti-poll tax movement, which mobilised 18 million non-payers, defeated the hated tax and eventually brought down Margaret Thatcher. The effectiveness of the anti-poll tax campaign was not just in the huge demonstrations that were organised but also in the fact that there were over a thousand local anti-poll tax unions.

It was in particular the local anti-poll tax unions that maintained the propaganda and information drive that built up the 18 million non-payers and also defended those threatened with jailings, organised resistance to bailiffs and warrant sales and organised action in the workplaces to defend non-payers.

Through such consistent activity there developed an unshakeable confidence to continue the struggle until the tax was beaten.

Democratically convened anti-war coalitions need to be established in as many localities as possible. Once established, we believe these local groups should establish links with local trade unions, colleges, NUS and community organisations to build a network of anti-war activists that can organise sustained civil disobedience in the workplace, in the colleges and in the communities.

In particular we believe some of the most effective action can be organised through the workplaces. To achieve this, anti-war activists need to link the case against the war to all the other issues that have made working-class people angry with New Labour. Increasing numbers of working people are taking strike action against New Labour's cuts, low pay and privatisation.

Blair is gagging to spend money on war, yet he is happy to wait for the next generation before he does anything about the one in three children in Britain who are living in dire poverty!



The Socialist Alternative

SOcialists in their own organisations, trade unions and workplaces and communities, must give a clear lead in order to show serious opposition to the war; preparing to organise mass protests and action rather than plaintive appeals.

If union leaders were to bring out the class issues in the war, and link such a stoppage with the growing class anger against the Blair government, on issues such as pay and privatisation, then there would be widespread popular support for action. Indeed, a longer stoppage, possibly even a one-day general strike, could develop, if it is prepared properly.

As socialists we welcome and campaign for any steps that will stop this war. But war and instability is inherent in the capitalist system. Bush and Blair could be forced by mass pressure to halt or abandon the current war. But war and instability are an inherent part of world capitalism. This movement against the war has to be linked to ending the capitalist system.

To end the threat of war and terror that now hangs over us we must campaign for a socialist world run for the billions not the billionaires.

The Socialist Party - What We Stand For

- The introduction of a maximum 35-hour week without loss of pay.
- A massive increase in public spending into healthcare, housing, education, childcare, leisure and community facilities.
- For the unions to take immediate action to implement their current minimum wage demands, as a step towards a legal minimum of £8 an hour (the European decency threshold). No exceptions. For an annual increase in the minimum wage, linked to average earnings. For a minimum income of £320 a week.
- No to the fat cats. Renationalise the privatised utilities under democratic working class control.
- People before profit.
- End and reverse all privatisation of our public services, including the Private Finance Initiative, in the public sector, whether in the NHS, education, transport or social services.
- Privatisation invariably leads to a worsening of services for the public, and a worsening of pay and conditions for staff.
- Major investment into a cheap, accessible public transport system that meets the needs of the people and the environment.
- For massive investment into the development of sustainable energy resources - including solar, wind and wave power - in order to reduce fossil fuel use.
- For the urgent phasing out of all nuclear power, with guaranteed, well-paid, alternative employment for the workforce.
- An end to discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, sexuality, disability and end all forms of prejudice.
- The scrapping of the racist Asylum and Immigration Act and all other racist laws.
- For the abolition of the Criminal Justice Act. No curtailment of jury trials.
- Take into public ownership the top 150 big companies, banks and building societies that dominate the economy, under democratic working-class control and management. Compensation to be paid to shareholders only on the basis of proven need.
- Campaign to form a new mass party of the working class.
- An end to the rule of profit. For a socialist plan of production. For a socialist society and economy run to meet the needs of all whilst protecting the environment.

The Real Rogue State

(From The Socialist issue 270 27 September 2002)

An alternative dossier on US imperialism

BLAIR CLAIMS that his "dossier" on Iraq justifies the US and Britain going to war and forcing a 'regime change'.

Rogue State, a guide to the world's only superpower by William Blum, is a "dossier" - with detailed references, many from official sources - on US imperialism.

John Sharpe

Blum shows how the Defence Department outlined US imperialism's post cold war policy in a planning paper in 1992: "Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival.

"We must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

Since World War Two, the US has overthrown, or attempted to overthrow, 40 governments as well as organising, leading or supporting the crushing of 30 nationalist movements.

American armed forces and special operations forces, such as the Green Berets, are being deployed in well over 100 countries. US nuclear missiles are still stored in seven European countries.

Weapons of mass destruction

IN THE 1940s, 60,000 US military personnel were used as human subjects to test mustard gas and lewisite (blister gas).

Most were not informed and never received medical follow-up. They were threatened with imprisonment if they discussed these experiments with anyone, including wives, parents and family doctors.

From the early 1960s, US forces sprayed tens of thousands of tons of herbicides (particularly Agent Orange) over three million acres of Vietnam as well as Laos and Cambodia.

This polluted Vietnam with 500lbs of dioxin, a nearly indestructible pollutant and one of the world's most toxic substances. Three ounces in the water supply could wipe out New York's population. On top of that napalm was used in wars in Korea and Vietnam and reportedly Sarin nerve gas in Laos in 1970.

In the 1990s the Pentagon admits that it exposed nearly 100,000 of its own US soldiers to trace amounts of Sarin gas in the Gulf War.

US imperialism has waged sustained economic, chemical and biological war on Cuba. In 1962, they contaminated sugar exports and infected turkeys with a virus (killing 8,000). In 1971, they infected pigs with

African swine fever. In 1996, they caused a plague of pesticide-resistant plant-eating insects affecting corn, beans, and other crops.

Exporting lethal weapons

A US Senate Committee report says that from 1985 to 1989 American suppliers exported biological materials to Iraq - materials that UN inspectors later found and removed from Iraq's biological warfare programme!

These exports included plans for chemical and biological warfare production facilities and chemical-warhead filling equipment. Iraq was reported as engaging in chemical and even biological warfare against Iranians, Kurds and Shi'ites from the early 1980s. Blum notes: "Presumably, Iraq's use of these weapons against Iran is what Washington expected would happen."

Depleted Uranium, (DU) used in tank cartridges, bombs, rockets and missiles is denser than steel and can penetrate tank armour. It is radioactive (forever), and upon impact forms an aerosol of fine particles that can be carried downwind for 25 miles. When inhaled or ingested it can lead to many cancers and serious diseases.

Hundreds of thousands of acres have been turned into DU weapon-testing grounds in many US states. DU has been sold to Thailand, Taiwan, Bahrain, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Greece, Korea, Turkey, Kuwait and other countries. This weapon was used in Iraq and Yugoslavia.



Cluster bombs

EACH CLUSTER bomb contains over 200 "bomblets" aided by little parachutes that disperse them to hit what the manufacturers call "soft targets". If they fail they in effect become landmines.

Up to 30 million bomblets were dropped in the Gulf War; over a million didn't explode. It has led to over 1,200 Kuwaiti and 400 Iraqi civilian deaths so far.

The Pentagon is working on newer and better cluster bombs, "...suitable for the new millennium. America deserves nothing less."

Assassinations

BLUM CLAIMS that the CIA have been involved in 36 assassination plots since world war two, including Nasser, Castro, Che Guevara, Michael Manley, Ayatollah Khomeini, Qaddafi, Saddam Hussein, Milosevic and even, in 1965, Charles de Gaulle.

War criminals

BLUM SUGGESTS many US Presidents, generals etc for war criminals singling out Ronald Reagan for "Eight years of death, destruction, torture and the crushing of hope inflicted upon the people of El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Grenada by his policies; and for his bombings of Lebanon, Libya and Iran. He's forgotten all this, but the world shouldn't."

He also nominates Henry Kissinger. "(who successfully combined three careers: scholar, Nobel peace laureate and war criminal), behind interventions in Angola, Chile, East Timor, Iraq, Vietnam and Cambodia."

Harbouring and supporting terrorists

US-BACKED Cuban exiles are amongst the world's most prolific terrorist groups. In 1997, for example, there was a spate of hotel bombings in Havana directed from Miami.

There are numerous air and boat hijackings. Even when perpetrators are brought to trial they are acquitted.

The US harbours state terrorists - government ministers and Generals - from Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, Chile, Argentina, Honduras, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iran and former Yugoslavia. That doesn't

include those the US flew to safe havens in third countries.

In Afghanistan Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser to Jimmy Carter in 1979, said that the US began aiding the Islamic fundamentalist Mujahidin six months before the Russians made their move, even though he believed - and told Carter - that "this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention".

Did he regret this action which armed "terror" groups who have gone on many missions including against the USA?

"Regret what? ...an excellent idea," he told *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 1998. Blum notes that the edition sent to the US didn't include this interview.

A US diplomat in Pakistan in 1996 admitted: "This is an insane instance of the chickens coming home to roost. You can't plug billions of dollars into an anti-Communist jihad, accept participation from all over the world and ignore the consequences.

"But we did. Our objectives weren't peace and grooviness in Afghanistan. Our objective was killing Commies and getting the Russians out".

Backing dictators

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI said in 1979, "I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot.... The question was how to help the Cambodian people(!). Pol Pot was an abomination. We could never support him. But the Chinese could." A million Cambodians died under Khmer Rouge rule.

The School of the Americas (SOA) trained tens of thousands of Latin American military and police in counter-insurgency, infantry tactics, military intelligence, anti-narcotics operations and commando operations.

Under pressure, the Pentagon released seven Spanish-language training manuals used at the SOA until 1991. The *New York Times* said: "Americans can now read for themselves some of the noxious lessons the United States Army taught ... during the 1980s.

"A training manual recently released by the Pentagon recommended interrogation techniques like torture, execution, blackmail and arresting the relatives of those being questioned."

Blum's dossier shows clearly that whether it's on nuclear, biological and chemical warfare or supporting terrorists the world's biggest threat is US imperialism.

Debunking Bush's lies

(From The Socialist issue 272, 11 October 2002)

WAR ON Iraq - what team Bush doesn't want you to know by William Rivers Pitt, which includes a lengthy interview with former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter, is a concise argument against a US-led war on Iraq.

The booklet demolishes George Bush's administration's justifications for "regime change" in Iraq. It rubbishes the suggested link between Saddam Hussein and the al Qa'ida terrorist network, pointing out the obvious fact that the secular Ba'athist regime is loathed by Osama bin Laden as much as Western governments.

Ritter says the vast majority of Iraq's 'weapons of mass destruction' were destroyed by UNSCOM's weapons inspectors before they were pulled out of Iraq in 1998. (He condemns the use of these inspectors to spy on the Iraqi regime for the US). And subsequent monitoring via satellites and other means has made it extremely difficult for Saddam to procure the necessary technology to produce such weapons.

Both the author and Ritter attack the idea of 'regime change' arguing that instead of achieving "democracy" it would mean replacing Saddam with another Sunni-based dictator.

Instead, Ritter and Pitt argue that military containment of Saddam through the readmission of weapons inspectors and the lifting of UN sanctions is the long-term solution.

"This will guarantee that Hussein cannot develop any technology that threatens the region or America. As the standard of living improves for Iraqi civilians, as a viable middle class is created, the cultural and economic schisms that have defined Iraq will begin to disappear. The power of Saddam Hussein will wane."

Shortcoming

This argument is the main shortcoming. The idea of creating a liberal-capitalist unified society through increased trade and 'wealth creation' is a mirage.

Has Saudi Arabia's oil wealth transformed it from an autocratic state into a liberal democracy? Have relatively developed capitalist societies such as Northern Ireland, Canada, Belgium solved the question of nationalities, let alone less developed capitalist regions such as Israel/Palestine, Indonesia, Philippines, ex-Yugoslavia, etc?

On the contrary, the existence of class society based on the capitalist profit system is the basis for cultural, ethnic and civil strife. That's why we argue not only for 'regime change' but a 'system change'. Only through building mass workers' organisations linked to a socialist transformation of society would it be possible to unite all sections of the working class and democratise countries such as Iraq.



Contacting the Committee for a Workers International

The Socialist Party is the British section of the Committee for a Workers' International. The Committee for a Workers' International has affiliated parties and organisations in more than 35 countries on all continents. The way to contact our comrades differs from country to country. Some you can contact directly. For others, it is easier to do it via the CWI offices in London... e-mail to the International Office of the CWI: inter@dircon.co.uk or contact us at PO Box 3688, London, E11 1YE, UK. Telephone: + 44 (0)20 8558 5814. Fax: + 44 (0)20 8988 8793. Our website is on: <http://www.worldsocialist-cwi.org>. If you want to know more about us in... Cyprus, Finland, Kashmir, Pakistan or anywhere else...then contact the CWI international offices above.

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