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the communist approach

War is rooted in imperialism – in the drive of the big capitalist powers and the business interests they represent to dominate the whole world in the interests of profit.

George Bush has pursued this approach more aggressively than any other US President. The collapse of the Soviet Union has removed the main restraining factor on US power in the world. Long before the attacks of 9/11 the neo-conservatives in the US had mapped out their plans for taking control of one region of the world after another and removing any regimes that stood in their way.

But there is still a second superpower – world public opinion mobilised for peace. We in Britain have a particular responsibility. Tony Blair is more-or-less the only politician of significance who supports Bush's policy for world domination.

This is not simply about backing the US come what may. New Labour supports the same oil and military interests which Bush does. BP and British Aerospace always find an open door at 10 Downing Street.

Trying to maintain Britain's great-power status lies behind Blair's plan to waste billions on a replacement for the Trident nuclear missile submarines.

The **Communist Party** has a different vision of Britain's place in the world and of the policies needed to bring about peace with justice:

- ★ Withdraw British troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.
- ★ End the occupation of Iraq.
- ★ Fight for justice for the Palestinians with an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank.
- ★ Demand full respect for national sovereignty of all countries.
- ★ Start real nuclear disarmament – no replacement of Trident.
- ★ Nationalise the banking, oil and arms industries – the imperialist forces which push for war.
- ★ Solidarity with British Muslims and opposition to the new racism of Islamophobia.

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stop war

end the occupations

bring the troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan



the 'war on terror' breeds terror

Occupied Iraq a catastrophe. War threatened against Iran.

Sabre-rattling against Syria, North Korea and Venezuela. People detained without trial indefinitely at

Guantanamo Bay, and flown around the world to be tortured in

secret. The 'war on terror' casts a shadow over every continent and almost every aspect of life. US and British 'state terrorism' has led to the deaths of tens of thousands and an attack on the rights of millions. It has strengthened 'fundamentalist' terrorism rather than weakened it. It has trampled on international law and the authority of the United Nations.

And it is far from over: >>>

True, Bush is now less popular than ever and the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are floundering. But he and his neo-conservative cabal are determined to push forward their agenda – with Tony Blair as their chief supporter in the rest of the world.

Today, with Iraq still burning, Iran is being threatened. The same old arguments are being trotted out – weapons of mass destruction, support for terrorism etc. No-one would seek to justify the holocaust denial or the threats to 'wipe Israel off the map' made by the Iranian president.

But these remarks cannot be used to justify an extension of the war in the Middle East which would be likely to have terrible repercussions – not least in British-occupied southern Iraq where most people, like most Iranians, are Shia Muslims.

Such an attack would also mean a greater risk of terrorism in Britain itself.

At present world politics has been locked by Bush and Blair into a vicious spiral, in which imperialism breeds terrorism which in turn leads to authoritarianism. It is time to call a halt, and impose the British people's priorities of peace, justice and freedom.

popular sovereignty for the people of Iraq

The occupation of Iraq has been a bloody disaster. *The Lancet* estimates over 100,000 Iraqi civilians have lost their lives as a result, directly or indirectly. *Iraq Body Count* puts the figure for those who have died violently at around 30,000.

Clearly, the invasion has not brought peace. Nor has it brought real democracy. Bush and Blair want to turn Iraq into a weak puppet state, with US military having permanent bases established there, and its oil industry privatised. Whoever wins the Iraqi elections, real power will rest with the US.

The elections reflect Iraqi opposition to the occupation. Party lists most closely associated with the US, led by Ahmed Chalabi and Iyad Allawi, polled very poorly. Most Iraqi Arabs support parties committed to ending the occupation.

Opinion polls tell the same story. A survey in the south of Iraq, occupied by British troops (not an area of strong armed resistance) showed that only one per cent of the people viewed the presence of foreign troops as legitimate. More than two-thirds felt that attacks on the occupiers were justifiable.

It is no surprise. Under the occupation basic services like electricity and water remain largely unavailable, unemployment is at astronomical levels and sectarian divisions have been stimulated. The country is being divided up into a series of weak statelets only able to do the bidding of the US.

The only contribution the British and US troops can make is to withdraw as rapidly as possible, giving the Iraqi people the chance to address their own problems in full sovereignty and independence.

The **Communist Party** opposes terrorism that targets civilians, but supports the right of the Iraqis to resist the occupying troops by force if they wish.

Nearly 100 British troops have already died in Iraq – sent there by Blair's lies. They too are victims of this conflict. The **Communist Party** believes they should be brought home immediately before there are any more unnecessary deaths.

The future of Iraq should be determined by a genuinely representative and sovereign Iraqi government, which alone has the right to decide whether UN or Arab League peace-keeping forces have any role to play in their country.



the anti-war movement

The mass movement against the war in Iraq and the subsequent occupation has been the biggest sustained progressive campaign this country has seen for decades.

The Stop the War Coalition has brought together the widest range of political, trade union, religious, student, community and other groups and individuals to campaign against the war. Together with CND and the Muslim Association of Britain, StWC has organised the biggest demonstrations this country has ever seen. British Muslims have participated in this mass movement in an unprecedented way. The involvement of the families of British soldiers, grouped together as Military Families Against the War, has also been inspiring and has helped further isolate Blair and the New Labour clique responsible for the criminal conflict.

The anti-war movement has also worked with other groups to defend civil liberties under threat from the government, particularly after the July 7 bombings.

The Communist Party condemned the terrorist attacks in London, but warned that they were the inevitable consequence of Blair's foreign policy, the invasion of Iraq in particular. >>

what could we do with £25 billion?

Instead of replacing Trident with a new generation of nuclear weapons we could

- ★ Build and equip 40 new state-of-the-art hospitals
- ★ Build 400 schools with modern technical facilities
- ★ Provide 120,000 new homes for young families and the elderly

The way to make Britain safer is not to launch racist attacks on Muslims, nor to take away precious freedoms, but to root out the causes of conflict in imperialist policy around the world, and in the Middle East in particular.

There is also a growing demand for Tony Blair to answer for his lies. Recently, General Sir Michael Rose and former independent MP Martin Bell called for the prime minister's impeachment. Thousands of Labour Party members and trade unionists believe he should be sacked as Labour party leader because of his war policy. By one means or another, the mass movement will hold him to account!

This great movement for peace and democracy needs to be made even stronger. The **Communist Party** fully supports the Stop the War Coalition and CND and urges everyone to give them all possible backing in their localities, their workplaces and their organisations.

The immediate priority is to secure a mass turnout for the demonstration in London on March 18 to end the occupation of Iraq, oppose any attack on Iran and hold the Blair government to account for its lies.

replacing Trident is an expensive madness

Over the past few years, the US and British governments have made weapons of mass destruction an issue of global significance. And they have made the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation a cornerstone of their foreign policies. When president Bush and prime minister Blair wanted to go to war on Iraq they used the excuse that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, even though this was not true. Supposed Iraqi failure to comply with UN disarmament resolutions underpinned the case against Iraq.

We now see a similar process over Iran – the assertion by the US in particular that Iran has a covert nuclear weapons programme. No evidence of this has yet been produced, but this may not be an obstacle to an attack on Iran.

Whilst the **Communist Party** totally opposes nuclear proliferation, we note that the real nuclear threat comes from existing nuclear weapons states.

Both the US and Britain have nuclear weapons, both have nuclear first-use policies, even against states without nuclear weapons, and neither they, nor other declared nuclear weapons states are complying with their obligations to disarm under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Even worse, both Bush and Blair regimes are currently planning to develop new nuclear weapons systems. In Britain, a decision is due in the current parliament as to whether to replace the Trident nuclear weapons system. The current system comprises four nuclear powered submarines each carrying up to 16 US Trident II D5 missiles. Each missile carries around three warheads, making a total of almost 200 British nuclear warheads. Each warhead has eight times the explosive power of the bomb dropped by the US on Hiroshima in 1945. That is phenomenal killing power.

To replace this system, would not only cost up to £25 billion – money better spent on jobs and alternative production, health, education and pensions – but would also increase global tension, contravene our international treaty commitments, and encourage other countries to proliferate. The nuclear hypocrisy of countries like the US and Britain does not go unnoticed.

The **Communist Party** opposes the replacement of Trident and believes that Britain should begin the process of nuclear disarmament in line with its treaty obligations. This will make a significant contribution to reducing global tensions.

Major parts of Britain's subsidised armaments industry should be taken into public ownership, and an arms conversion strategy introduced to switch production, research and development to civilian use.