

Black Flag

FOR ANARCHIST
RESISTANCE

Babylon's Burning

What a surprise. A committee appointed by Blair and reporting to him has cleared him.

Yet the information produced by the recent "inquiry" has been useful. It shows, as argued by anti-war protestors at the time, that Blair stands guilty as charged. He lied to get us to support the pre-planned US invasion of Iraq. Most people saw through his nonsense, of course, but it is nice to get confirmation of the fact.

Then Hans Blix said he believed Iraq had destroyed its WMD ten years ago. This could explain the rush to war. Bush and Blair knew the truth and went to war before the UN inspectors told the world. If that happened then the Bush Junta and its poodle would have had to invent a new "bureaucratic" reason for the invasion.

Of the pre-war justifications for war, not a single one has been proved right. No WMD (little wonder Blair and Bush now talk of "programmes"). No Hitler-like Iraqi war machine. Rather we had a clapped out state using decades old technology trying to resist the world's most advanced war machine (and its poodle). Not that we should be that surprised. Iraq was, after all, picked precisely *because* it was no threat.

The dossier is a side issue. Regardless of the inane language, arguments and



conclusions of Blair's committee, there is no difference between "sexing up" a dossier and selectively picking and exaggerating "intelligence." The *real* issue is that the government lied to justify an illegal, immoral and imperialist war and that (most of) the media went along with the lies (as usual).

Since September 11th, the US has killed (at least) three times the number of civilians murdered on that day in 2001. In Iraq, it is (minimally) two times that number. According to sources from Iraq, it is over ten times. Yet, as usual, only Western victims seem to count (literally and figuratively, as the US made it clear that it will not count the civilians they kill).

The hypocrisy of the US knows no bounds – dead civilians are only

important when they can further US interests. Those killed by Saddam in the 1980s and 1991 only became important once he became a hindrance to the US, at the time they were happily sacrificed for the benefit of the US Imperial need. The same can be said of the victims of the numerous bloodthirsty tyrants, like Saddam, the US supports across the globe today. The same can be said of the Iraqis killed by the US occupying forces.

But all these are basic truisms – or should be. Sadly the ability of the media to kow-tow to power is incredible. Rather than state the obvious truth and place it in its real historical context, the media twists and turns to obscure reality and repeat the party line.

the politics of power

So what now? As far as Iraq goes, we must oppose the occupation.

Bush's request for \$87 billion to supplement the billions (\$3.9 billion a month!) already wasted in war is a sick joke. For every gun made, for every aircraft and tank built, every weapon used, then homes and hospitals are not built, health and education are not funded, the vulnerable and the planet are not protected. Militarism is the theft of resources from those who need them to feed a corrupt corporate system

Claims that Bush is acting to benefit Iraqis are nonsense. His request for UN aid is only for the benefit of the US, allowing it to free up resources to threaten others by lifting part of its self-imposed burden in Iraq.

To those who claim that the US cannot withdraw until they fix what they have broken, we say that they are wrong. No

constructive work can occur as long as the country is occupied. Resources will be directed to the defence and interests of the occupying power, not the Iraqi people. Moreover, they will be wasted in rebuilding what has been destroyed again and again in the fight against the occupying powers.

The simple truth is that Iraq can only be rebuilt in the interests of the Iraqi people when *they* do it *themselves*. An Iraq rebuilt under occupation will be rebuilt in the interests of the occupiers – this is what the US has already started to do. More than this, Iraq will only be free and rebuilt when the Iraqi people control their own fate, directly. Only a federation of community and workplace assemblies (anarchism) will ensure an Iraq run by and for its people. If it retains government and capitalism, an independent Iraq will be rebuilt in the interests of the minority in power (i.e. Iraqi bosses rather than US ones). In other words, the struggle against imperial occupation must become a struggle against both

home-grown and foreign capitalism. The same, of course, applies here.

And what of here? The “Stop the War Coalition” (SWC) has failed. It did not stop the war, unsurprisingly given its tactics. Marching from A to B, while often necessary, will not stop the state. The massive march on February 15th is proof enough of that. Yet this did not stop the SWC leaflet advertising the 27th of September London march stating (incredibly) “help make it a huge protest which Tony Blair cannot ignore”! While SWC marches may allow the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), whose front it is, to sell more papers, they will not stop the war. It simply expresses the weakness of liberal pacifism and the SWP’s opportunistic, reformist and directionless politics.

the politics of hope

Only direct action, based on a movement which links war to the system that creates it and fights both, could have stopped the war machine. Mass marches are only the launching pad for more effective action – blockades, occupations, strikes, walkouts. While the SWC and SWP paid lip-service to such action, it is clear that they could not organise, nor inspire, them.

Only a strong anti-parliamentarian movement, one which fights capitalism and the state in our workplaces and communities, could have been the basis for an effective anti-war movement. Building such a movement is our task. To stop the next war we need to make the link between war and capitalism. We need to show that the resources wasted in killing people are the product of our unpaid labour and can and should be used to improve our lives, both here and abroad. We need to show that war is the health of the state and can only be stopped by mass resistance.

This will be a lot harder than walking from A to B. It means sustained activity where we live and work. It means building the spirit of solidarity and revolt, so that people will feel they have the power to change things by their own efforts, and turn this feeling into reality. It will take time, and will be difficult, but it is the only way.

The “More Oil” Case for War

All the lies are exposed. Now the “Saddam was an evil tyrant” line is all that is left. Not that this was the proclaimed reason for war, of course. Blair added it when he saw that we were not falling for the “official” reason of WMD. Yet Blair was prepared to leave Saddam in power if he “co-operated”! How very moral.

Yes, Saddam was an evil dictator. He was one in the ‘80s when the US/UK supported and armed him. He was one in ‘91 when the US preferred him to the popular uprisings. Nor was he alone in being a tyrant or one supported by the US. So why Saddam rather than a host of other bastards? Perhaps because of the oil? But this, Blair asserted, was a “conspiracy theory.”

Yet the US occupying regime aims to privatise Iraq’s oil industry. Iraq is now in OPEC, placing a US regime in the heart of both the world’s major oil producing region and oil producers’ organisation. Coincidence?

Before the invasion, Blair promised that the oil would go into a UN supervised reserve which would exist for the benefit of the Iraqi people. Where is it? He stated that “We don’t touch it, and the US don’t touch it. We cannot say fairer than that.” Yet the US made it clear that Iraqi oil would be used to pay for the war and the rebuilding. US corporations might not touch the oil, but they would touch the money once it was sold. But things have not gone as planned. The costs of the war have outweighed the money available from the oil.

The only people saying that things are improving in Iraq are the Bush Junta and their poodles here. Iraqi civilians are dying at the hands of their “liberators.” Working class Americans and Brits are killing and dying for their masters’ power and profits.

This was a good old-fashioned colonialist war about the control of resources and increasing the Middle Eastern (and global) political influence of the US. Nothing more.

Black Flag



For a social system based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation; against state control and all forms of government and economic repression. To establish a share in the general prosperity for all – the breaking down of racial, religious, national and sex barriers – and to fight for the life of one world.

**Black Flag,
BM Hurricane,
London, WC1N 3XX**

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