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CEC STATEMENT ON WAR WITH IRAQ

Press Statement issued by
the Central Executive Committee
Communist Party of Canada

TODAY ACROSS CANADA, thousands upon thousands are marching to oppose a threatened war against Iraq, and to tell PM Chrétien that Canada should have no part in any such US-led aggression.

We are joining our voices with the vast majority of humanity who vehemently oppose the dangerous drift to war and want a peaceful, political solution to the Iraqi crisis.

Can war still be averted?

Despite overwhelming world opposition, the drums of war emanating from Washington beat ever louder. Even though Iraq has is complying with the UN Security Council Resolution (1441), granting unfettered access to inspection teams to search for evidence of Iraq's alleged cache of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), preparations for an imminent attack are proceeding at a feverish pace.

The US. is putting in place a massive strike force around Iraq, including over 300,000 troops and advanced weaponry, setting the stage for a crushing assault and follow-up invasion.

The Bush Administration, representing the most rabid sections of the U.S. monopoly capital, will settle for nothing less than the complete destruction of the Saddam regime, and the occupation and long-term domination of oil-rich Iraq. And this, according to their calculations, will require a wholesale and bloody military assault, with or without UN authorization.

Undoubtedly, the mass upsurge of anti-war protests around the world has forced U.S. imperialism to manoeuvre. It is pressuring and bribing other permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council to submit to its dictates, even if this means violating the very principles of the UN Charter itself. But if Washington fails to coerce the SC into granting 'authority' for a U.S. military strike, it is preparing to act unilaterally.

At times, the efforts of the Bush administration to concoct justifications for war border on the absurd. The recent statement by U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld that 'the very fact of a lack of evidence [of Iraq's WMD] is proof that Saddam has something to hide is the worst sort of Orwellian nonsense.

The consequences of a war on Iraq would be horrific – not only for its immediate victims. It would exacerbate tensions throughout the region, and could lead to retaliatory attacks

elsewhere.

While the danger of a US-led war is extremely high, it is not inevitable. Mass anti-war mobilizations in Canada and countries around the world – not least, within the United States itself – are having a major impact. Serious divisions are arising within U.S. and British ruling circles about the wisdom of attacking Iraq. In the days and weeks ahead, much will depend on maintaining and intensifying the campaign to prevent this aggression.

What the U.S. Really Wants in Iraq

The Bush Administration says the main issue is Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, and that the elimination of this unsubstantiated 'threat' can only be guaranteed through the removal of his dictatorial, bloodthirsty regime. But the overthrow of Saddam's regime is the responsibility of the Iraqi people themselves, led by the secular and democratic forces, rather than being imposed by the U.S. through war and destruction.

In any case, Washington is not really interested in bringing democracy to Iraq. It is already planning a long-term "presence" to consolidate U.S. control of Iraq's massive oil reserves. It also wants to restructure the political balance of forces in the Middle East as a whole to strengthen its domination of the region's vast resources. This explains why the U.S. supports Israel's continuing oppression of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and its bullying, expansionist policy towards neighbouring states in the region.

"Permanent War"

Control over the Middle East is, in turn, part of a wider strategy of world domination currently unfolding under the slogan "global war on terrorism". The ominous military-strategic policy of the Bush Administration laid out in a document called "**The National Security Strategy of the United States**" is a promissory note for permanent and calamitous war. It declares for instance that the U.S. now considers the use of nuclear weapons acceptable, and "pre-emptive strikes" as a legitimate method of warfare. The U.S. now reserves the right to police and punish nations and peoples it considers 'enemies of civilization', and considers itself free to ignore international law, treaties and obligations that limit U.S. action

.This is not just an adjustment in U.S. foreign policy. It is a radical change in doctrine, elevating the danger of aggression, militarism and war to an entirely new level in the service of the imperial interests of the "empire".

'Globalization' and War

This radical shift towards unilateralism, militarism and the "law of the jungle" by the U.S. and other leading capitalist countries is not happenstance or a function of who occupies the White House at any given time. It is directly tied to the economic interests of the U.S. and other imperialist powers, and the elite transnational and finance capitalist core of the ruling class which controls each of these states.

Yes, it's about money. But not just the super-profits made by the big defence contractors and arm merchants, or even the billions siphoned off by the oil giants.

It's about defending the economic interests of the big monopolies and finance capitalists as

a whole – ‘policing’ the new global economy in their interests and threatening peoples and countries, e.g. Venezuela, that resist domination with dire economic and political consequences and even with military intervention.

In fact, the anti-war movement and the fight against capitalist globalization are one and the same battle, against the same enemy – imperialism, the highest and most reactionary stage of capitalism.

Only the people can stop this frightening slide into unbridled militarism, war and devastation of humanity and our environment.

We must demand of that Chrétien end Canada’s complicity with Washington’s war plans, and declare unequivocally that Canada refuses to participate as a junior partner in any such war – with or without UN sanction. Canada must uphold the principles of non-aggression and peace contained in the U.N. Charter, and play a leading role in opposing this threatened war and in removing the punitive economic sanctions against Iraq.

Only an independent foreign policy of peace can contribute both to the defence of Canadian sovereignty and to the preservation of peace and security around the world.

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