

Join us to Demand A World Without the Unspeakable Atrocity of War

Imagine that bombing is followed by 12 years of a blockade so severe that we cannot rebuild what was destroyed, and over a million people, half of them children, die from easily preventable diseases caused by the destruction of our infrastructure and the lack of basic medicines and foods.

Imagine that much of our country is a radioactive wasteland, because over 300 tonnes of depleted uranium were exploded over the land, dispersing deadly radioactive particles which have caused horrible birth defects and huge increases in cancer rates.

Imagine having gone through all this, and yet still you face the daily threat of increased bombing, the continued effects of sanctions, the massing of hundreds of thousands of heavily armed soldiers on your borders, and the publicly stated aim of dropping over 800 cruise missiles and thousands more bombs on your city over a 48 hour period to “shock and awe” us.

That is what the people of Iraq have faced since 1991. This is the situation today. And plainly put, it is unspeakable.

BUT THERE IS HOPE

Hope in the struggles of people around the globe to resist war and poverty, hope in all of us getting together to make our voices heard, hope in the power of communities saying No to injustice and yes to compassion, friendliness, and the idea that we CAN live together in peace and justice, without exploiting others, for there is more than enough in this world for us to share., Enough for need, not for greed!

So keep up the pressure, keep phoning, faxing, e-mailing legislators, keep speaking out, because together our voices CAN make a difference.

For more information, contact: Homes not Bombs, (613) 237-0730 ext. 1 or write us at PO Box 73620, 509 St. Clair Ave. West, Toronto, ON M6C 1C0, tasc@web.ca.

Canada should build homes, not blow them up.

WHY A MASS SILENT SIT-IN?

Our silence is in stark contrast to the noise of mass media hysteria and bombing which is daily visited upon the people of Iraq. While the drums of war and violence beat loudly, we have chosen to silently, strongly resist Canadian participation in the war against the people of Iraq.

And while millions of words have been thrown about to describe the situation in Iraq, we tend to forget that over a million Iraqis have been killed by our wars and our military enforcement of sanctions since 1991 Millions more are at risk given the planned military escalation..

In the eyes of those who are targeted in war is a question we all must answer: why?



At such a time, words fail us. All we can do is use our bodies to sit firmly in place and state clearly, at the base of Canadian military power: NO WAR IN OUR NAME.

INTERFERING WITH WAR PLANS

And in the tradition of the great pacifist Dorothy Day, some of us are prepared to nonviolently interfere with the ability of people at the War Dept. to do their daily work. We state, “If they come for the innocents without

first stepping over our bodies, then a curse on our religion, and a curse on our lives.”

(Photos: Above right, an Iraqi mother holds her child in a hospital, awaiting medicines that will never come due in part to the illegal, immoral Canadian enforcement of economic sanctions which have killed 1 million Iraqi people. Above left, a woman holds her baby sister who, having seen her house blown up and her family members murdered by U.S. bombers in Afghanistan has stopped speaking, and only cries, constantly.)



THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WAR

Nonviolence is an alternative to solving conflicts; if we continue to think the only way to work out our differences is through cruise missiles and laser-guided bombs, we will make of our world a lifeless desert.

We gather here as 60% of Canadians say they are opposed to war against Iraq, yet Canadian generals join their U.S. counterparts in planning a slaughter overseas.

We gather to say that although we are opposed to the brutal rule of Saddam Hussein, we are also opposed to the brutality of Bush/Chretien/Blair's idea that murdering millions of people to gain control of Iraqi oil-fields is "worth it."

And while all forms of terrorism must stop, the infliction of even more terror and mass violence will only breed more hatred.

The war waged since 1991 against the people of Iraq is, plainly, illegal, immoral, unspeakable.

We are all of us responsible for the suffering experienced by the people of Iraq; we are all of us responsible for ending this misery.

That is why we are here. To prevent an escalation of the war. To put an end to the crippling sanctions. And to show that love, not war, is a far better path to choose.

We refuse to be like those "good" Germans during the 1930s and 40s who looked the other way. The Nuremberg Principles state it clearly: *when governments plan wars of aggression, crimes against peace and crimes against humanity, it is not only our right, but our legal obligation, to interfere with those plans.*

Some of the faces of warfare we don't see on CNN. (Photos: (above left) A parent does what no parent should ever have to do: dig out the body of her dead child, buried in rubble in Basra, following a U.S. air attack over the 'no-fly' zone, 1999. The attack killed 20 people. Above right, A father holds the body of his murdered child, again, killed by a U.S./U.K. air attack.)



On this day, we sit here to demand the following:

1. No war against Iraq, and a halt to the 12 year one-sided war which has been waged against the Iraqi people.
2. Bring all Canadian soldiers home from the region, and bring Canadian Generals home from U.S. Central Command, where they are involved in war planning. Put an end to the \$5 billion per year war industry which fuels such slaughters.
3. Provide full medical and financial compensation for Canadian Gulf War vets who are dying from Gulf War Syndrome.
4. Turn the War Dept. into the Housing Dept. Canada now spends more than 700% more on war than affordable housing. Poverty, homelessness, lack of daycare spaces, destruction of the ecology, these are the real threats we face, not the paranoid ramblings of George Bush.



WHY DEMONSTRATE ON VALENTINE'S DAY?

Today is Valentine's Day. Few people realize St. Valentine went to jail as part of war resistance. The days of the Roman Empire are very much like our own, what with massive violence to protect the wealth of the privileged few. In the ancient Roman Empire, Emperor Claudius II banned rituals leading to love and marriage, as young men in love or who married were reluctant to join the army, for which Claudius was having recruitment troubles. Although the Emperor declared engagements and marriages to be illegal, a priest called St. Valentine felt the Emperor's dictates were unjust and started to conduct marriages in secret. Once his activities became known he was jailed and later executed.

IMAGINE FOR A MINUTE OR TWO...

Imagine our country has been bombed 30,000 times from the air in the past 10 years, killing hundreds of civilians and thousands of livestock.

Imagine our country was bombed relentlessly for six weeks with the equivalent of 8 Hiroshima-sized nuclear weapons. Imagine that everything we need for our daily existence—water filtration systems, sewage systems, food processing plants, hospitals, electricity production and transmission facilities, bridges, train lines, highways, among many other things—was deliberately targeted and destroyed.

