

FIRE THIS TIME

Movement for Social Justice



Update on War **#3**

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FREE

People of the world, People of Canada, People of BC, People of Vancouver: All out against this immoral, unjust, brutal, criminal, bloody war against the people of Iraq and all of us.

Just shortly after the war started, in a press conference Captain Al Lockwood, a British military spokesman told reporters at the main allied command centre in Qatar he believed coalition forces could be in the Iraqi capital in as little as three days. Now after 5 days of destruction of Iraq, the US and UK are finding out the victory may not be near, and what they are getting sunk in is a quagmire. Iraqi forces, making clever use of guerrilla warfare and flanking tactics, have shattered confident predictions of an easy victory and the rapid demise of Saddam Hussein

and his regime, according to some experts.

Resentment and fear among these soldiers are growing, and according to independent sources, the morale of soldiers is lowering. At a rear base in Kuwait, an US Army Captain was killed and 15 wounded when grenades were rolled into three tents of the 101st Airborne Division by one of its own soldiers. At the time of printing this update, US and UK casualties total at least 60 dead, 20 captured, 300 wounded.

Casualty of 'Victory'



All Out Against the War on Iraq!

At the Peace Camp (US Consulate, 1095 W. Pender)

Tuesday 5 PM
March 25th

Thursday 5 PM
March 27th

Friday 5 PM
March 28th

At the Vancouver Art Gallery:

Wednesday

8 PM

Saturday March 29th

12 Noon

STOP THE WAR NOW!
US, UK, CANADA, OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!



All-Region Anti-War Forum

The Lower Mainland Mobilizes

On March 22, the Vancouver Art Gallery was flooded with people demanding an end to the unjust, criminal war on the people of Iraq. StopWar.ca had called, along with international community, for a demonstration the Saturday after bombing began and with only three days notice, the streets were filled and the anger of the people of Canada was felt all across the city, province and country. Libby Davies, MP; Ellen Woodsworth, COPE City Councillor; Ali Yerevani, Fire This Time; Itrath Syed, Palestine Solidarity Group, and many others spoke to the swelling crowd about their opposition to the aggression of the US and UK. The speakers made it painfully clear that despite Canada's stance of non-involvement, it is still very involved in aiding the horror and destruction of this war. As a result, the people out on Saturday condemned not only US and UK leading active aggression, but also the Canadian government's complicity.

Energized and resistant, the crowd began to march through the streets, for the 4th time, in four days, to the US consulate. Others were called onto the street from restaurants and shops along the way. Each person that joined was a victory that was celebrated with cheers from the crowd. On Saturday, escalating from the previous three days, the downtown streets around the US Consulate and Peace Camp were plugged with the people of Vancouver. As the march reached its destination, more speakers continued, the energy of the crowd created an empowering dynamic of strength and resistance. After many hours, even after the crowd had been thanked and the demonstration had 'officially' ended, the people

remained encircling the Consulate, hands joined, their voices still gaining strength despite hours of continuous chanting. By the sixth hour the crowd, which had hardly dwindled from the initial thousands, took over a close-by intersection, Thurlow & Pender, in yet another display of resistance. The demonstrations, which have been building since before the bombing began, are becoming increasingly urgent and increasingly necessary to bring an end to the attacks on the people of Iraq. When Vancouver takes to the streets we are not alone. In hundreds of cities and towns world-wide we are standing in international solidarity. On Saturday, in Canada alone, we had 18,000 in Edmonton, hundreds of thousands in Montreal and Toronto. Across the globe, we were joined in Barcelona by the 500,000 who took to the streets along with thousands upon thousands across Europe. Seoul Korea saw massive numbers out as well, and all across Asia, the Pacific Rim and the Middle East the demonstrations have continued to escalate.

When we are in the streets, no matter how large or small our presence, we are with the people of the world. Our power which was felt by the hundreds of thousands that took to the streets Saturday is the only tool we have to defeat the imperialist powers who are attempting to break us. As Ali Yerevani, of Fire This Time, stated at the Vancouver rally on Saturday, "As the people of Iraq are suffering, we are all suffering. Injury to one is an injury to all; and if this is true and this is what we believe, then I say we are all Iraqis, billions of people are Iraqis, ... and the people of Iraq will not be defeated."

On Sunday evening, after four days of escalating mobilizations against the military destruction of Iraq, the StopWar.ca coalition held an All-Region Anti-war Meeting in Queens United Church New Westminster, which saw 110 people come out to further build the movement across the lower mainland. The forum began with Mordecai Briemberg outlining the situation in the Middle East and emphasizing the importance of a long-term antiwar movement. The next speaker, Suvendrini Lena, presented the state of the global anti-war movement and how local/regional organizing is integral to this movement. She spoke of the victories already won as we are now seeing the largest mobilizations in history. Finally, Ivan Drury spoke about the role of organizing; concretely why we organize against war and how we organize against war. He emphasized the necessity of cross-regional co-ordination and encouraged people from each community to attend the StopWar.ca meeting on Wednesday in order to build diversity and broad representation within the existing coalition.

In the short discussion that followed there was a report from Surrey about the weekly demonstrations that have begun to happen; just before the forum, there had been over 200 people in the street demonstrating their resistance to this unjust and criminal war on people of Iraq.

After this discussion, the meeting broke into eight regional groups; Surrey/Langley, North Shore, East Vancouver, West End, Richmond/Delta, Burnaby, New Westminster, and Coal Harbour. The discussions in each group varied, but all worked toward the common goals of ending Canada's involvement in the assaults on Iraq and building a long term, growing movement against imperialist war and towards peace. The focus of discussion was to build action immediately, based on the truth that the long term anti-war movement will only be established if much work is done immediately to bring in as many people into the struggle as possible.

Much support was put into building the March 29th mass demonstration in Vancouver; doing leafleting, banner drops, poster campaigns, media blitzes and smaller support actions locally. The meeting, despite being hectic, with 110 people and only 3½ hours to organize, was a great success. Very important connections were made with organizers across the lower mainland and it was clear that this kind of cross-regional organizing is long overdue. The success of Sunday evening shows the incredible potential of organizing in the lower mainland outside of downtown Vancouver. There are efforts underway to ensure that there is another meeting next Sunday, March 30th, to increase momentum and continue building the antiwar movement.

This Update on War was published by the

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**Get involved with
STOPWAR.CA!**

**General Meetings
Every Wednesday
5:30 PM
Maritime Labour Centre
1880 Triumph St
(Triumph & Victoria)
Vancouver**