

THE 'GOOD WAR' IN AFGHANISTAN

The continued war and occupation of Afghanistan by foreign military forces has brought only death and destruction to the Afghan people and instability for the wider region. The war, which has now spread into nearby Pakistan with horrific consequences, has little to do with the claims made by Barack Obama and Gordon Brown and is un-winnable.

Some facts on the so-called good war:

- Thousands of Afghan civilians were killed by occupying forces in the first few months of 2001: 150 of these at wedding parties attacked by air strikes. See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/may/20/afghanistan.comment>
- Between 2006 - 2009, U.S. predator drone strikes have killed over 800 people in Afghanistan and Pakistan, mainly civilians. In May 2009 one strike alone killed 150 civilians including many women and children – an act of terror that equivocates to over five Omagh bombings.
- The U.S. supported Afghan government of Hamid Karzai has lost all domestic and international credibility due to its corruption, involvement in the drug trade, its deals with the warlords and its repressive legislation, which is aimed against women in particular. The recent election offers little hope of serious change. As MP Malalai Joya says: "Like millions of Afghans, I have no hope in the results of this week's election. In a country ruled by warlords, occupation forces, Taliban insurgency, drug money and guns, no one can expect a legitimate or fair vote." See <http://stopwar.org.uk/content/view/1441/1/>
- According to Trocaire over 2 million refugees fled from the Swat Valley during the U.S. supported military operation by the Pakistani Army. Tens of thousand of refugees have fled Afghanistan since the invasion in 2001.
- Over 200 British soldiers have now died in Afghanistan – more than were killed in six years in Iraq. More Western troops have died between March and August 2009 than in the period from 2001-2004. All four US military commanders in Afghanistan have recently called for more troops amid a "deteriorating" situation.
- Many western advisers are now questioning the madness of the US military strategy and noting that the war is un-winnable and that the Afghan people must achieve a political solution.
- The majority of Afghans do not want the war and occupation. The majority of British people think the troops should come home by Xmas at the latest. In two recent polls 56% (BBC and Guardian) and 59% (ITN) want the troops out.
- Britain has spent £4.6 billion every year on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq – enough money to create 200,000 graduate jobs annually.
- Ireland is directly implicated in this unjustified war and occupation in Afghanistan, since it has deployed seven officers there in the NATO led International Security Assistance Force (Isaf). Minister Micháel Martin recently stated that more 'advisers' are to be sent. US warplanes also constantly stop over at Shannon Airport.
- If the Lisbon Treaty is passed this will pave the way for a broader involvement of Irish Troops in EU Battle Groups in illegitimate wars such as the Afghan War.

The IAWM believes that there needs to be an urgent political solution to the crisis in Afghanistan, which can only be achieved by the Afghan people themselves without external interference. One of the essential pre-requisites for such a solution is the ending of the war and the withdrawal of all foreign troops, including Irish troops and advisers. As Malalai Joya tells us:

"Your governments in the West that claim to be bringing democracy to Afghanistan ignore public opinion in their own countries, where growing numbers are against the war. President Obama in particular needs to understand that the change Afghans believe in does not include more troops and a ramped up war."

For further information see - www.irishantiwar.org or contact:

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Irish Anti War Movement
Protest at Department of Foreign Affairs
80 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2
Thursday 24 September,
12.30 – 2.00pm

**FOREIGN TROOPS OUT
OF AFGHANISTAN**



- **STOP IRISH SUPPORT FOR THIS PHONEY 'WAR ON TERROR'**
- **BRING IRISH SOLDIERS HOME FROM AFGHANISTAN**
- **STOP U.S. BOMBING OF AFGHANI AND PAKISTANI CIVILIANS**
- **END THIS SENSELESS AND UN-WINNABLE WAR NOW**