



**South Tyneside
Stop The War Coalition**



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***For A Future Without War
Build The Movement To End
The Crimes Against The Peace!
For the Peaceful Resolution
of International Conflicts!
Britain Out of NATO!
For an Anti-War Government!***

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Preface

This issue of *Silence is Shame* has been produced as result of the work of the South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition and anti-war forums held in South Shields both prior to the General Election and following it. We recognised the importance of hosting a discussion with anti-war candidates in the General Election which was about us as an anti-war movement raising the whole profile of the need for an anti-war government and taking this vital question into election and beyond. It was also about continuing to build our movement to hold the new government to account. So, the second anti-war forum on June 16th was about confronting the pro-war stand of the Conservative government announced in general by the Queen in her speech to Parliament.

Also, the second anti-war forum followed an important national Stop the War Coalition conference in London on June 6th “Confronting a World at War” and we reproduce a report on that conference. We also include a report on the pre-election anti-war candidate forum which includes the contributions of three candidates in South Tyneside and also our own comments at that forum. The discussion paper that was presented in the second forum has highlighted some initial important questions facing the anti-war movement. As can be seen in the discussion one could say that the issue of strengthening the anti-war movement and its work in the

deteriorating situation is vital. The Anglo-US “war on terror”, NATO’s military expansion up to the borders of Russia has created this dangerous situation in the world. This is the vital problem taken up for solution by the anti-war movement.

Equally, there is a need to keep the initiative in the hands of the people. The anti-war movement must remain at the centre of and with all the movements of the people to defeat the whole fraudulent “austerity” agenda. This agenda is led by the same monopoly corporations and financial oligarchy that are behind these wars to takeover resources such as Ukraine’s farmland, Middle East oil and Africa’s water and precious metals.

Equally, it is a fight against the despicable propaganda and measures taken to single out of Muslims, immigrants and vulnerable people and blame them for terrorism and problems that this ruling elite have created. This has to be recognised as an attack on us all. Defence of the rights of all must become the watchword just as much as fighting for a future with out war.

We hope the pamphlet will encourage people to further get involved in the anti-war movement.

***Build The Movement To End Crimes Against The Peace!
For the Peaceful Resolution of International Conflicts!
Britain Out of NATO!
For an Anti-War Government!***

Discussion paper

Organise Keeping the Initiative in Our Own Hands to Bring About a Future Without War

by Roger Nettleship

In our forum with anti-war candidates in March we pointed out that the issue for the people in Britain and throughout the world is their right to be, now and in the future, in a peaceful world where they make the decisions. However, the irrational world view, as it is, sees the global monopoly corporations, including those who make the weapons, dictating to governments that serve their interests to strive for domination of the world. This is not only impossible but last time around it ended with the defeat of such ambitions of the nazis and with 40 million dead and who knows how many millions will be killed in a future world war. Ours is a just, rational and vital demand for the alternative to war. In other words, the necessity for an anti-war government has never been as great as it is today to confront their world at war. This is why today we need a strong anti-war movement, and we need to organise keeping the initiative in our own hands to bring about the right of the people to that future without war.

The Queen's speech and the government's statements in the debate that followed showed that the government's programme for war has not changed. It is a programme for which it has no

mandate from the people. The Monarch representing her government in Parliament said; “My government will continue to play a leading role in global affairs, using its presence all over the world to re-engage with and tackle the major international security, economic and humanitarian challenges.” Unable to spell out the sinister Blairite myth of “making Britain great again” which gave full support for the US imperialist wars and interventions, the Queen said Britain would “use its presence all over the world to re-engage with and tackle the major international security, economic and humanitarian challenges.” In other words, whilst it is already engaged with the US warmongers the government wishes to re-engage more directly with their actions like overturning the opposition of the people and Parliament to its direct intervention in Syria.

Speaking in the debate on the Queen’s speech Philip Hammond Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs tried to hide that the British government will pursue its warmongering path alongside the US and exclude the vast majority of countries from their decisions, when he said; “The UK is one of only a small number of countries with both the aspiration and the means to play a significant role in world affairs.” In other words, the aspiration of the imperialist system of states, and in particular those around the US and NATO are to create their unipolar world set against the world of freedom loving peoples and their sovereign countries. Something which the peoples and majority of countries rejected 70 years ago with the aspiration of the German nazis for a unipolar world.

Hammond also reveals in his statement the nature of a Britain led by the rich today. That of a parasitic ruling class, a Britain dominated by a financial and corporate elite who require a warmongering pirate economy that recognises no borders of sovereign countries. He said; “Maintaining that engagement is very

much in our national interest. As one of the most open economies in the world—a nation that earns its living through trade in goods and services across the global commons—we have a greater stake than most in securing: a world that operates according to a rules-based system of conduct in which international norms are respected, differences are resolved through the application of legal principles and the zero-sum game approach is rejected in favour of a recognition of mutual benefit through international co-operation; a world in which the majority of nations work together with a common agenda and resolve to isolate rogue states and suppress terrorists and others who threaten the rule of law; and a rules-based international order that is in Britain’s interest but is also in the interest of building stability, security and prosperity for the world’s population as a whole. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a leading member of the EU and NATO, as well as the G7, the G20 and the Commonwealth, Britain is in a better position to help deliver that ambition than most.”

Apart from noticing that he doesn’t mention the G8 which the Coalition did in the Queen’s speech in 2010, which of course included Russia, Hammond speaks about the “global commons”. Is it a global commons for the public good, or for interests of private monopolies? Clearly the latter, for the government global commons is any territory, or sovereign country in the world that the global monopolies demand access to, or which need to be breached as a challenge to their market domination. When he talks about securing “a rules-based system of conduct in which international norms are respected”, he is not talking about respect for the sovereignty of nations which is international law. No he is talking about the how the Anglo-US imperialists have the changed the rules to suit their interests. Furthermore, when he talks about “mutual benefit through international co-operation” he is not talking about all the countries in the world making mutual decisions together. What he is talking about is Britain and its imperialist friends ganging up in the UN

Security Council, or outside of it, against any country that stands in the way of their so-called “national interests” which are certainly not the interests of the people but the interests of the monopolies. In this way, their declared aim is to isolate countries in the name of “rogue states and to suppress terrorists and others”. This has led to the devastation of many countries, the killing and displacing of millions people, the wrecking of whole nation states by sanctions, interference, and wars. The examples are too numerous to mention but countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Ukraine have all been laid waste by the Anglo US interference and war. Not to mention, threats to the DPRK, Iran and even big powers such as Russia. How is this anything other than a warmongering aggressive foreign policy that needs to be stopped once and for all by the peace loving people of Britain.

At the same time, this warmongering of the government did not wait for the Queen’s speech it is happening now, it is the reality of warmonger aggression in the here and now. For example, as we meet (June 16) Britain has had military involvement in one of the world’s largest military drills which has just come to an end. It involved almost a quarter of a million personnel, the United States Seventh Fleet’s “battle force” Task Force 70, B-54 and stealth bombers, amphibious beach landings, hundreds of tanks, artillery pieces and “nuclear-powered attack submarines”. According to one commentator these exercises are taking place in one of the most likely flashpoints on the planet for a major war to break out, in a divided country with one of the largest concentrations of armed forces in the world along the Military Demarcation Line (an artificial line drawn by the US to divide Korea) – and yet they are virtually ignored by the western mass media other than to constantly demonise the DPRK as if that justifies war. And this month Washington announced a plan to deploy missile defence forces in Korea, clearly intended to make a pre-emptive first nuclear strike against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

possible. (Also since the forum, Michael Fallon Secretary of State for defence is calling for the bombing in Syria to kill “ISIS terrorists” in support of the “good terrorists” but against the present elected government of Syria. The US which is presently bombing Syria is doing it in violation of the sovereignty of Syria and its elected government.)

This preparation and propaganda for war against a sovereign country without any direct threat from that country is a crime against peace - the most serious of all war crimes. Yet, this is one of the real sinister aims of the government when Philip Hammond uses sugar words that Britain’s foreign policy is “a rules-based international order that is in Britain’s interest but is also in the interest of building stability, security and prosperity for the world’s population as a whole.”

At the same time, Philip Hammond also mentioned what he called “challenges facing the government.” That of repelling what he called the “threat to the established order” from Russia which he accused of having a “doctrine of asymmetric warfare”. He also talked about; “crushing the poisonous ideology of ISIL and extremist Islam more generally and resolving Britain’s relationship with the European Union.” It seems to be the habit these days of Britain and its partners immediately accusing their chosen target of doing exactly what they are inflicting on the world themselves. For, over several years Britain has been supporting an asymmetric war against Syria openly supporting an armed opposition, including what the government describes itself as terrorists against the sovereign government of Syria. In 2011, they supported an asymmetric war against Gaddafi in Libya throwing that country into anarchy and ruin. This much Britain has been doing in Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere for decades. More recently they supported the Maidan coup in Kiev which overthrew the elected government in Ukraine in favour of an anti Russian regime that

supports NATO. NATO countries collectively spends 10 times more on their military spending than Russia. NATO is provocatively advancing up to Russian borders, which shows that Britain is not only a culprit in the asymmetric war, but it is engaging alongside the US in military threats against the biggest powers in the world.

Also, “crushing the poisonous ideology of ISIL and extremist Islam” leaves out the truth that the Anglo-US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, their destruction of Libya holds them responsible for the creation of these armed insurgents. According to many sources it appears that Al-Qaeda was based on the Anglo-US support for the training of Saudi rebels to intervene in Afghanistan against the then Soviet Union. That construct of Al-Qaeda then as a terrorist group became the convenient excuse following the collapse of the Soviet Union to wage wars in the Middle East. Today, DAESH (ISIL), and others like Boko Haram, etc., are no different and is the excuse for unending military intervention in the Middle East, in Iraq, Syria and in Africa. Furthermore, the government further incites racial and religious hatred in Britain with its warmongering crimes abroad and attacks what it calls “extremist Islam” to attack the rights of all in Britain.

For the people in Britain and for the anti-war movement confronting a world at war means organising from the base against war and in defence of the sovereignty of nations and peoples of the world paying particular attention to the dirty tricks of the Anglo-US powers who, because of the anti-war sentiment, are forced to invent all kinds of justifications for their crimes against peace. The goal is for an anti-war government on the soil of Britain, and an end to all the blocs such as NATO and the EU which threaten peace, sovereignty and the fraternal unity of peoples who are fighting to be in control of their own destiny. We need to organise keeping the initiative in our own hands to bring about the right of the people to that future without war.

June 16th 2015

Some points from the Discussion in the Anti War Forum on the Presentation

*Anti War Forum in South Shields on
The Need to End the Activities
of the Warmongers and Hold the
Government to Account*

N...That was interesting to hear. Philip Hammond speaks about rules. What the rules are is: "Might is Right!". He is saying that we have the city, we create money out of fresh air and you guys borrow it and start paying interest to us. Then if you don't play we will come and bomb you and shoot you and make you understand how silly you have been. That is what the rules are that he is talking about. Basically, we are talking dog whistles here, he said. A dog can hear the whistle but humans can't and these politicians when they are talking they are constantly blowing dog whistles. It appears they are talking to the nation but they are trying to fool people. Another example, Cameron speaks from both sides of his mouth on the NHS standing in front of a poster for *Vitality*, a private insurance company, and then he says NHS is safe in his hands and he is not privatising the NHS. But what he is really saying is privatisation is the way to go and come and get it.

N...Then, Murdoch owns all the papers but the media says he is

not an oligarch. Their narrative is only Russia has oligarchs. Murdoch and co., the super rich in Britain, have the good of us at heart and buy papers to keep us informed. Not to lie to us! There is a lot of stuff happening, with the rules based world that Hammond is referring to. You have the Chinese who have come with a great gusto and he is hammering at them for not playing by the rules. They are not copying the Anglo-US rules in south east Asia. They go to these Islands and seize the natives and kick them out of their homes to occupy the Islands and create their military bases as part of their threat against sovereign states. No, the Chinese are building their own Islands as we speak to counter the threats for the US "Asia pivot". So, they are not playing by the rules according to Hammond. I think like with TTIP, and other trade agreements, that put the big corporations above the law of nations they are attacking international law and the sovereignty of nations. So, we are living in a world where nothing that we see is real. The only thing that makes these things real to us is our experiences, and if they don't lie to us their game is up. What we need to do is to learn more and become more aware. One thing they can't afford is a nation that knows that they are lying.

N...This report on the national stop the war conference confronting a world at war is quite good. Good to have it in the Congress House which places in the working class in the centre. When you read it is shows that the world is a much more dangerous place than it was 14 years ago.

E...I think one of the key things, something Tony Benn said, if people actually realise how little power they have there would be an uprising. I think we need to point out to people, this key point about people not being safe that it is their wars that have created such a dangerous place and getting the message over you don't have that much power but if you do engage with the anti-war movement and become

aware then you do have power – power together.

D...That is a key thing that is to my mind unarguable if somebody is not really engaged in this mode of thinking already. If you can compare the world now to 14 years ago and whether it is real, or just perceived, the idea that most people would feel that they live in a considerably less safe world know than they did then. So, that agenda of the “war on terror” has failed.

P... If you stop people in the street they will say we are no longer at war because they think the wars ended with Afghanistan. So, this the scale of the task we have got.

D...The difficulty is and the challenge is in th face of the might of the media organisations how you spread and alternative and make them aware of what they are fed and that is the difficult part.

N...I am a great believer in distributed knowledge. Try and explain to people and let them decide. And have faith in people and let people have the facts. People try to hoodwink themselves so you need to help people to stop hoodwinking themselves for a second and see that ugly face of the truth and the more people see it the more chance we have got of actually going for an anti-war government.

R...I think that what is key is we need to build up our own media and our own alternative political direction and keep the initiate in our own hands So, I think it is important that if we can focus at this time on the government’s intention to carry on its warmongering agenda that will be very important. And if we can produce a pamphlet that reflects that well! We need to be very focused and not give any ground and have to strengthen the anti-war movement so that we can take them on again in a bigger and better

way. That is why we need to protect the anti-war movement and keep organising it because there is a temptation to run off and do everything else, and so on, and not strengthen it. For us in South Tyneside it is a credit to us that we keep meeting and keep organising but it is how to take that work forward which is really important. We can publish it and make that the focus and give a call that the anti-war movement needs to be strengthened in the fight against war – This can be a our contribution to that.

June 16, 2015

Here We Go

by Alan Trotter

With the election behind us and the Tories in charge, the shares in Babcock International leapt up 9.4%. Babcock is the second biggest supplier to the Ministry of Defence. The shareholders must have been delighted when the Queen's speech announcement that the government would undertake a full security and defence review and do *whatever is necessary* to protect the military, which raises the question "are there no limits to what the government will do" ?

Also, in the speech there was a statement that the government would work to reduce the threat from nuclear weapons, well let's start by reducing our own nuclear arsenal and not renew Trident.

Trident is a 'disaster waiting to happen' according to William McNeilly the Nuclear Submariner turned Whistleblower and in the Ministry of Defence's own report they highlight that there have been 316 "nuclear safety events"

Stealing from the vulnerable and poor to fund Trident to the tune of £100billion are the depraved actions of a corrupt and unprincipled

political system. Michael Fallon, the Secretary of State for Defence said this was a price worth paying.

The only people who profit from this lunacy are the shareholders of Babcock International, Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems and other companies who are part of the multinational death machine system.

We have Sir Peter Luff, Lord Richards, Robin Southwell and Sir Richard Shirreff advocating that Michael Fallon double the amount of money spent on defence research although the UK is one of the highest spenders on defence research in NATO and the government has committed to spending £160 billion on equipment and capabilities to “keep Britain safe”.

In August it will be the 70th Anniversary of the catastrophic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, today’s missiles are profoundly more powerful than those dropped by the *Enola Gay*. These weapons of mass destruction have no place in a civilised world.

June 25, 2015

Just a Thought

by Alan Trotter

While watching the coverage for Armed Forces Day on TV with all the cheers, hurrahs and flag waving I thought of Siegfried Sassoon's poem 'Suicide in the trenches', the last verse is:-

You smug faced crowds with kindling eye

Who cheer when soldier lads march by

Sneak home and pray you'll never know

The hell where youth and laughter go

Stop The War Coalition National Conference

Confronting a World at War

Workers' Weekly Report

The Confronting a World at War conference was organised by Stop the War Coalition on June 6 at the TUC Congress House in London to discuss how to resist the continued Anglo-US aggression and to oppose the assault on Muslim communities taking place under the signboard of combating “extremism”.

The conference was well organised. It consisted of an opening Plenary in the Congress Hall called the “Wars Abroad – Austerity at Home”; three workshops covering different areas of regional conflicts and issues; and the final Plenary which ended the conference in the Congress Hall, the closing speech being made by George Galloway. There were about 20 speakers from Britain and abroad and each presented their own analysis of Anglo-US aggression and its results, coming to the conclusion that the world is a much more dangerous place than it looked fourteen years ago, before

the launch of the “war on terror”.

In 2003 and since then the anti-war movement predicted that these interventions would set the Middle East on fire, the conference underlined. We are now seeing it burn, and the politicians, like David Cameron, who continue on this course are fanning the flames of war.

The conference pointed out that meanwhile, great power confrontation has returned to Europe as NATO has pushed progressively eastwards towards the Russian border, triggering crisis and civil war in Ukraine, thus creating the conditions for the return of the Cold War. “Confronting a World at War” brought together key writers, campaigners and politicians to analyse this alarming situation and to discuss and plan how the anti-war movement should respond.

“Eyewitness Palestine” - Mustafa Barghouti gives a graphic analysis of the recent Israeli aggression with video images showing the large scale destruction and the deaths of around 2,200 Palestinians. The destruction is still visible while the Western media turns a blind eye. The US and British politicians routinely defend “Israel's right to self-defence”, while accusing Hamas of terrorism. The speaker exposed Israeli war crimes and pointed out that “there is no point in negotiating for peace as this always turns out to be a deception”. The other speaker was Sarah Colborne from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign who called for a boycott of Israeli goods, and explained how companies profit and big business supports Israel. There was a long ovation.

“Africa: New front in the War on Terror” - Speakers Barbara Ntomy and Explo Nani-Kofi speak about the West's interference and extension of the war into Africa: e.g. the role of AFRICOM.

NATO has completely destroyed Libya's infrastructure thus creating the present chaos with no stable government. Before NATO's aggression Libya was a developed state with its own welfare state and health service. Today it is failed state. UN cannot be relied upon as the UN Security Council passed the resolution for imposing "No Fly Zone to protect civilians" yet 30,000 people were killed. There was a long ovation.

Imperialism, ISIS and the Middle East - This was a very popular event held in the Council Chamber with all seats taken. Speakers included Seumas Milne, Lindsey German, and Erdelan Baran. Seumas Milne stated that there was no Al-Qaeda in Iraq before 2003, and that the invasion of 2003 has been the cause of the catastrophe in the region. Lindsay German stated that the “war on terror” is war for the destruction of states, and that it is necessary to oppose wars abroad and austerity at home. Erdelan Baran asked where ISIS came from – is it backed by imperialism? He stated that ISIS is being used as another justification for war by imperialism. This was a popular meeting with interventions from the floor.

Final Plenary - The closing session of the final Plenary, the final session of the conference, was introduced by Jeremy Corbyn MP in the Congress Hall. Jeremy Corbyn spoke of the endless wars being waged by the West which beget even more wars and why the anti-war movement must oppose these wars abroad and austerity at home. The anti-austerity demonstrations in London and Glasgow on June 20 were highlighted with a call to join the anti-war blocs.

George Galloway presented the final speech of the conference. George Galloway talked about Britain's wars, and that another world is possible. He warned that US imperialism has unleashed unending evil on the modern world. The conference ended with a

standing ovation and a further call to participate in the demonstrations on June 20 demanding an end to war and austerity.

Source: Workers' Weekly Vol.45 Number 18 June 13 2015

<http://www.rcpbml.org.uk/wwie-15/ww15-18.htm#fourth>

Electoral Anti-War Forum in South Tyneside:

The Necessity for an Anti-War Government Is an Election Issue

On Tuesday, March 24, South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition (STWC) organised an anti-war forum in South Shields as part of highlighting the necessity for an anti-war government as an election issue and also of building the anti-war movement to hold the new government to account after the May election.

Opening the meeting, Chair Roger Nettleship thanked the participants for taking part in the discussion organised by the STSWC. He said that over the recent period the anti-war movement has taken a stand against NATO and its interference in Ukraine, the bombing of Iraq, the threat of Britain extending air strikes to Syria, and against any further open and covert military operations there, or in Ukraine, Africa and Asia with troops, or other forces.

However, tonight, he said, we would like to explore the vital need for a lasting peace, the ending of all foreign military and other interventions by Britain and an end to hostile actions by NATO in

which Britain is a leading member. He emphasised that the need is for an anti-war government in Britain and all that means for the people going into the General Election.

He said that the STWC has invited South Tyneside anti-war candidates to take part in this discussion. One is from South Shields – Shirley Ford, the Green candidate – and two are from Jarrow and Hebburn – Dave Herbert, the Green candidate, and Norman Hall, candidate for the Trade Union Socialist Coalition (TUSC). Nader Naderi, one of the founder members of South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition, was also speaking on the necessity for an anti-war government in Britain.

After the speakers made their contributions there was a question and answer session. During the contributions and discussion, issues were highlighted such as the ending of the Trident nuclear programme in Britain, reforming the UN so as to enhance its role for peaceful solution of conflicts rather than a tool of the US and other big powers, the withdrawal of British troops from foreign soil, and the ending of Britain's membership of NATO. Also discussed was the importance of opposing the attack on the Muslim community and defending the rights of all from the attack on them by the ruling circles in Britain.

The speakers also elaborated some of their views on taking this anti-war stand into the General Election and how to take forward the anti-war movement post-election should they win their seats.

Whilst there were different views expressed, what characterised the focus of the forum was a common theme of the need to end the activities of the imperialist warmongers and their war machines once and for all. As one speaker said, “The urgency for an anti-war government in Britain has never been as great as it is today.” The

issue for the people was determining their right to be, now and in the future, without the threat from the warmongering elites that have unleashed such barbaric and devastating wars against the peoples and countries all over the world.

What the speakers said at the forum

Dave Herbert, Green Party candidate for Jarrow and Hebburn said the Green Party's policies start with "peace and defence". Peace is the first word. From that it follows that the Green Party is committed to peace-making and to resolving conflicts by negotiation rather than actual physical force.

The Green Party would focus any forces on peace-keeping and trying to engender mutual respect between peoples rather than hostility between peoples. They would look at reforming the UN because the UN is quite ineffectual in preventing conflict across the globe. The UN should become a peace-keeping force. The Green Party has got a long history of opposing the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as Syria, and urges negotiation, opposing boots on the ground to resolve issues through force.

The Green Party would reform the defence force and bring it down to the lowest required for defence of the country but they would also want to use it for peace-keeping where there was a UN resolution, for humanitarian aid. In instances like the flooding, they would see armed forces equipped more for humanitarian and emergency aid than just fighting capability.

Dave Herbert also outlined the Parliamentary record of the Green MP Caroline Lucas in opposing military intervention and wars. He said that she had called for a constitutional convention with a view to abolishing the whipping system in Parliament so that MPs could

look at the facts objectively and vote with their conscience. The aim would be to eliminate the pressure to vote for war and to make diplomacy the first resort so as not to commit armed forces abroad in an aggressive manner.

The question can be asked as to what is going to drive conflict in the future – climate change is one factor as it would lead to shortage of resources that are fundamental to people’s lives. It follows that there is a need to improve people’s lives across the globe as an answer to the inequality and the problems that exist. The global corporations are plundering the natural resources of and exploiting the under-developed world. This is another factor driving conflict in many areas of the world.

Norman Hall, Trade Union Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidate for Jarrow and Hebburn said his view was that whilst it was possible for individual conflicts to have temporary solutions they are in effect temporary as long as the system of capitalism exists on the planet. This exploitative system by its very nature is competitive. There is competition between imperialist states for resources, for access to markets and for all the measures which making maximum profit necessitates leading to conflict. Inevitably that conflict becomes open warfare at times.

For instance, today there is a debate regarding the strengthening of the “defence” systems on the Falklands. Conflict could once again break out as the issue over the sovereignty of the Falklands is for Britain about access to the potentially rich oil fields around Antarctica and for fishing rights, and so on. Another area of conflict which may be on the agenda in the near future is the North West passage and who controls it once the ice is melted.

At present, proxy wars are taking place in the Middle East. The

US has been responsible for so much confusion and warfare taking place with the doctrine of “my enemy's enemy is my friend”. It is this which has led to the creation of ISIS. Another saying that the US uses is that “something must be done” when referring to the chaos they have created throughout the Middle East and the countries they have invaded. It may sound good, but the issue is what is being done.

TUSC upholds that what is needed is not to send troops into countries but to support the movements of the working class and people so that the people of those countries are the ones who are in control of their destiny. The position of TUSC is that a genuine anti-war government can only exist when a radical transformation to a socialist government takes place.

Shirley Ford, Green Party candidate for South Shields said she was really pleased that STWC had organised this meeting because taking a stand against war has to be addressed as a really serious election issue. We have to raise our voices against the clamour of pro-military expansion and spending that is coming at us relentlessly though mainstream media. US generals come over to say that all countries have to have a spending minimum of 2% of GDP on “defence”. The issue of the Falklands is just the latest appalling incarnation of the way that argument is being whipped up.

Shirley Ford said that at the time she became active in CND, things were about to be escalated to the extent that a global war could have broken out. At the end of the Cold War there was the chance for peace and ending all the spending on the war industries. But rather than that happening, there was the First Gulf War and others followed. This has shown that there is a need to address the fundamental causes of war.

The anti-war movement has carried out incredible work since that time to expose and take a stand against these wars and against the huge arms industry which has never been fully tackled. After the illegal invasion of Iraq, which was opposed by the people, a whole new mantra was promoted to justify more wars: “Responsibility to Protect” and “Pre-emption”. This process has gone on and on, and they try to find a different justification each time.

The movements of working peoples represented by the “Arab Spring” have been utilised by the West in a very hostile way in their own favour and to block the peoples’ aspirations for democracy.

All of this is showing that there is a need for Parliamentary campaigning. Electing anti-war MPs can make a difference if the anti-war movement is supported, as they did when they voted against the bombing of Syria. But the Green Party does also oppose the causes of war by challenging the political and economic mechanisms which are at the heart of these conflicts.

The Green Party is arguing for a very radical transformation of the economy, society and politics. The election is one opportunity, but there is a need for a political movement. In terms of Stop the War campaigning, the necessity is to take a stand against and to challenge and expose as much as possible the pro-war tide.

Nader Naderi, South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition, spoke on the necessity for an anti-war government. He said that the urgency for an anti-war government has never been as great as it is today. It is not just intervention that is going on, but bombs are being dropped in a wholesale brutal killing of people and beating them into submission. Old empires used to feed the Christians to the lions, but the new empires give you live bombing of Baghdad, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and so on during chat shows. We call it

intervention, but they are raining death, destruction, despair, grief and anxiety on the people. Through their anti-people actions and methods they attempt to subjugate peoples physically and mentally and in every way.

A genuine anti-war government is a real “I am” people’s government – a genuine and real movement of the people. It is bringing sanity back into politics, bringing about what the vast majority of people and governments of the world want, which is that conflicts should be resolved peacefully. However, the push for war is phenomenal. For example, Chris Alexander, Canadian Minister of Immigration and Citizenship, who in a fund-raiser thrown by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress organisation in Toronto said that Vladimir Putin is only going to face his come-uppance “with every option on the table”. Nader noted that every option means nuclear too. This means even the lackeys of US policy are going back to the crazy notion of the first strike doctrine in the worst of the bad years of the Cold War. Yet those in charge of those powerful countries are telling us they are working for “peace, stability and freedom”.

These people are waxing lyrical about a war against Putin. The “war on terror” and against “Islamic extremism” still goes on, but in their aim of global domination they are treating Russia as a threat to world peace. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union they used the excuse of the nuclear missile gap, the bomber gap, and so on. Now the West has turned cities and towns into broken rubble in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and they would like to turn Putin’s Russia into a similar wasteland.

The government’s latest assessment claims that currently Putin is going to be spending \$100 billion in two years. But what they are keeping quiet about is that the British government is participating in NATO’s aggressive moves in the Ukraine and attempting to throw

a ring of steel around Russia. In the promotion of the austerity agenda, spending on social programmes is being cut with the victimisation of those on benefits who cannot find work, while there are always funds for any escalation in military spending. Nader Naderi concluded that this is why we need an anti-war government in Britain.



<http://stopwar.org.uk/>

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Silence is Shame!

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