

IAWM PRESS RELEASE - 05 OCTOBER 2011

PROTEST THIS THURSDAY 06 OCTOBER, 5-7PM AT DAIL EAREANN.

END THIS SENSELESS WAR NOW – STOP THE DRONE MURDERS

IRISH TROOPS OUT OF ISAF - US TROOPS OUT OF SHANNON

JUSTICE FOR THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ and PALESTINE

In a statement issued this morning the Irish Anti war Movement (IAWM) noted that it will hold a protest this Thursday evening at Dail Eireann from 5-7pm to mark the 10th anniversary of the start of the US led invasion of Afghanistan. The purpose of this protest is to remember the dead victims of the Bush / Blair wars and to highlight the complicity of the Irish Government through the facilitation for the US military at Shannon Airport and the fact that seven Irish troops are serving in under NATO command in ISAF in Afghanistan.

The statement noted:

“In October 2001 the preposterously named “Operation Enduring Freedom” was launched by the US, with Britain and some NATO allies in tow, on one of the poorest countries in the world, ostensibly to track down Osama Bin Laden after the 9/11 terror attacks. It was instead the beginning of an endless brutal war that soon stretched to Iraq, Palestine (via Israel) and threatened also to spread to Iran and Syria. It has brought nothing but death, destruction and immense suffering to hundreds of thousands of civilians. Thousands of soldiers have also been killed and wounded. It has not made the world a safer place – in fact the exact opposite has occurred.”

The statement noted that:

“These wars are now being continued by Obama and Cameron with the general acquiescence of the previous and current Irish Government. Ireland has seven Irish soldiers serving in ISAF in Afghanistan and has also facilitated millions of US troops and flights involved in illegal rendition at Shannon Airport for the last ten years.”

The statement continued by noting:

“Violence is at its worst in Afghanistan since the start of the war ten years ago. There were record civilian casualties and high levels of foreign troop deaths in the first six months of this year including the shooting down of a Chinook helicopter that killed 38 US soldiers, the highest single loss of life suffered by foreign forces in ten years of war. This is America’s longest foreign war ever and there seems to be no end in sight.”

Jim Roche, PRO for the IAWM said:

“The war and occupation in Afghanistan, and its sister wars in Iraq and now Pakistan, is unjust, immoral, futile and unwinnable. Many top-level military officials have admitted that the war is

unwinnable. Yet the US refuses to openly admit this or to announce a withdrawal because this would signal defeat. So the carnage continues, including extrajudicial killings of its own citizens by US forces as witnessed this week. The new US commander of the occupation in Afghanistan, General John Allen, said recently: "We're actually going to be here for a long time" - so the Afghani and Pakistani people have more terror to look forward to."

He continued by noting that:

"President Obama has spread the war into neighbouring Pakistan creating an extremely volatile and destabilized situation and has increased the cowardly use of Drone attacks in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, the results of which mainly kill civilians. Though final figures of civilians killed by Drone attacks are disputed, it is well known that they have killed innumerable numbers of women and children and have wiped out several wedding parties. In addition suicide bombings in Pakistan were virtually unknown ten years ago. Now they are commonplace with 50 bombings last year that killed over 1100 people and 500 killed so far this year. There is clear tension within the Pakistani army over the continued Drone murders and the infringement of Pakistani sovereignty with the US killing of Osama bin Laden. This is an extremely dangerous situation and is the direct result of US foreign policy"

The statement concluded by noting that:

"Public opinion polls in the US and Britain have shown the unpopularity of the war with a huge majority of British people polled calling for the troops to be brought home. Ireland should lead the way and call for this futile war to end now."

"The Labour party has in the recent past said that the war in Afghanistan should end. The IAWM calls on the Irish Government, and in particular Minister for Foreign Affairs Eamon Gilmore, to withdraw the seven troops from ISAF, to end the US Military and rendition flights stopover at Shannon airport and to publicly call on the US and British Governments to end this senseless war now."

This is why the IAWM will hold a demonstration this Thursday evening, 5-7pm at Dáil Eireann.

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