

GAAW EVENT

**SOLIDARITY FUNDRAISER
FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY AFGHANI WOMEN
MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
5TH MARCH @ 9PM: ROWING CLUB, WOODQUAY.
MUSIC, SONG, FILMS & FOOD**

GAAW SUPPORTED EVENT

Valentine's Day Vigil at Shannon Airport "Love Not war"

Date: Sunday 14th February

Time: 14:00 -15:00

Venue: At roundabout before airport entrance.

Organiser: Shannonwatch

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TRAVELLING TO GALWAY CONTACT US ON
gaaw1@eircom.net or 087-9159787**

Website of Month: www.shannonwatch.org

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Remember the Lisbon Treaty Debate?

Quote of the Month: "The (Lisbon) Treaty lays out a common security policy...The long-term goal is to build up a European army under parliamentary control. The EU has to live up to political expectations of its role as a global player." Guido Westerwelle, German Foreign Minister, speaking at the annual Munich Security Conference, 7th February 2010.

Do you remember how the establishment's politicians and pundits called us scaremongers and "loo laahs" when we dared to mention the military implications of the Lisbon Treaty? Instead they claimed Lisbon was all to do with jobs: Fianna Fail & Fine Gael were saying "Yes to Jobs", Labour's slogan was "Yes – Work with Europe". As the number of unemployed passes the 450,000 mark it is worth recalling these lies.

2

Yawn: The Warshow is Back

So the warshow is back to pollute the skies over Galway Bay and only thanks to a grant of €25k of taxpayers money. Of course, it is a scandal, but no real surprise. The warshow is nothing other than a vulgar manifestation of a much deeper political and economic malaise in this banana republic of ours.

Just log onto the website shannonwatch.org to see how we now have a US military installation on Irish soil. Six hundred US troops per day passing through Shannon airport,

at least 40 military supplies planes per month and in 2009 five “extraordinary rendition” planes.

And that is only the tip of the iceberg. Enterprise Ireland is busy burrowing away inside the European Defence Agency seeking contracts for Irish companies in the EU’s military industrial complex. The passing of the Lisbon Treaty was a great fillip to this obscene ‘economic’ project.

AfrI’s report from a few years ago “Death from a Distance: The ongoing militarisation of Ireland” named names. Acra Control in Dublin – identified in Phoenix magazine as linked to the deadly US drones. MOOG in Ringaskiddy, Cork, or Timoney Holdings Ltd in Navan. And not to forget our neighbour Composites Testing Laboratory (CTL), which grew out of NUI Galway. CTL is now a subsidiary of ÉireComposites Teo based in Indreabhán.

The Salthill warshow is an obscenity and GAAW will be organising against it, but it is just another dimension of the iniquitous militarisation of the Irish Republic that we and all the other peace groups in the country have to campaign against. At least, there has been one major success in the past few weeks, the announcement that Raytheon is to leave Derry. We would like to convey our congratulations to the anti-war campaigners in Derry city and offer our support to members of Raytheon women group who still face charges in relation to the occupation of the offices of that arms company.

It is worth noting that we are not alone in opposing warshows. In the USA the Iraq Veterans Against War (IVAW) were running alternative parties on Sunday in opposition to the warshows being carried out in conjunction with the Super Bowl. In its newsletter the IVAW stated: “Militarism pervades our society in obvious and subtle ways, and to the average citizen, the intrusion of martial values in all aspects of life often goes unquestioned. The National Football League takes pride in its relationship to the military, but we want to challenge this tradition of linking the violence of war with competitive sports. With IVAW's alternative Super Bowl parties, help us shine a light on one area of our society where patriotic symbolism is used to mask the realities of war.”

The lessons of Iraq have been ignored. The target is now Iran

The US military buildup in the Gulf and Blair's promotion of war against Tehran are a warning of yet another catastrophe.

Seumas Milne in the Guardian Wednesday 3 February 2010

We were supposed to have learned the lessons of the Iraq war. That's what Britain's - Chilcot inquiry is meant to be all about. But the signs from the Middle East are that it could be happening all over again. The [US is escalating the military build-up in the Gulf](#),

officials revealed this week, boosting its naval presence and supplying tens of billions of dollars' worth of new weapons systems to allied Arab states.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/feb/03/iraq-inquiry-blair-missile-shield-iran/print>

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Africa: Children at War

Ryszard Kapuscinski was a Polish journalist and an eyewitness to revolutions and wars in Africa, Asia and Latin America. He also put down in book form his insights and depictions of wars on these continents. “Soccer Wars” and “The Shadow of the Sun” are just two of his marvellous books. In the latter he writes the following about children at war in Africa:

“I sometimes read stories about a child in America or Europe shooting at another child. A child killing one of his contemporaries, or an adult. Such news is usually accompanied by expressions of horror and outrage. In Africa, children kill children in enormous numbers and have been doing so for years. In fact, modern wars on this continent have been, and still are, largely wars of children.

“In those places where conflict has lasted decades (as in Angola and Sudan) the majority of older people were killed long ago, or perished from hunger and disease; children remain, and it is they who are doing the fighting. The bloody chaos in which various African countries are plunged has spawned tens of thousands of orphans, hungry and homeless. They look for anyone who might feed and shelter them, and it is easiest to find food where the troops are, because soldiers have the best chances of obtaining it: weapons in these countries are not only for waging war, but are a means of survival – sometimes the only means.

“Abandoned, lonely children gravitate to where troops are garrisoned, where they have their barracks and camps. They help out, work, become part of the army, “sons of the regiment”. They are given weapons and quickly undergo a baptism of fire. Their older companions (also children) often laze about, and when a confrontation with the enemy is pending, send the little ones to the front lines, into the thick of battle. These armed encounters between youngsters are particularly fierce and bloody, because a child does not have the instinct of self-preservation, does not feel dread or comprehend death, does not experience the fear that only maturity will evoke.

“The wars of children have also been made possible by technological developments. Today, handheld automatic weapons are short and light, the newer models increasingly resembling children’s toys. The old Mauser was too long, too big, and too heavy for a child. A child’s arm could not reach freely for the trigger, and he had difficulty taking aim. Modern design has solved these problems, eliminated the inconveniences. The

dimensions of weapons are now perfectly suited to a boy's physique, so much so that in the hands of a tall, massive men, the new guns appear somewhat comical and childish.

“Because the child is capable only of using handheld, short-range weapons (he cannot conduct long-range artillery fire, or pilot a bomber), clashes in these children's wars take the form of savagely unmediated collisions, of close, almost physical contact; the children fire at one another separated by just a step. The toll, typically, is frightful. And it is not only those killed then and there who perish. In the conditions under which these wars are fought, the wounded will also die – from loss of blood, from infection, from lack of medicines.”

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Arresting Bertie ?

The website www.arrestblair.org urges people to make a citizen's arrest of the war criminal Tony Blair. For a successful attempt the site pledges to pay the citizen who performs this civic duty a quarter of the money collected by the website. One wonders whether we should be setting up an arrestbertie website? Wasn't Bertie an accessory to the illegal invasion of Iraq? Of course, as we see our economy collapse, one could think of other reasons for arresting Bertie.

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Our Last Port Is Freedom Sending a Flotilla in the Spring to Break the Siege of Gaza

The Free Gaza Movement and the Turkish Relief Foundation (IHH), announce a joint venture, sending 10 boats in the spring of 2010 to the besieged Gaza strip. Organizations from Greece, Ireland and Sweden have also promised to send boats to join the flotilla with the Free Gaza movement and Turkey.

Two cargo ships will be part of the flotilla, one donated by the Malaysia-based Perdana Foundation and one from IHH. Both will be laden with building supplies, generators and educational materials that Israel prohibits from entering Gaza since their brutal attack on the civilian population a year ago.

The many passenger boats accompanying the cargo ships will carry members of Parliament from countries around the world as well as high-profile journalists and human rights workers.

The Free Gaza movement, a human rights group, sent two boats to Gaza in August 2008. These were the first international boats to land in the port in 41 years. Since then, seven more voyages boarded Parliamentarians, human rights workers, and other dignitaries to witness the effects of Israel's draconian policies on the civilians of Gaza. The last three voyages were illegally stopped by the Israeli navy when, in December, 2008, they rammed the DIGNITY in international water, turned back the SPIRIT OF HUMANITY

by threatening to shoot all on board, then hijacking the SPIRT on July 1, 2009, kidnapping the passengers and throwing them into prison for a week. www.freegaza.org.

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For Your Diary

Public Meeting: Can Palestinians and Israelis Live in One State

Israeli historian and author, Illan Pappé, Palestinian novelist Ghada Kharimi and Jewish socialist and author, John Rose, will share their views on an alternative strategy to finally achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians at a public meeting organised by the Irish Anti War Movement in February.

The public meeting at which these three articulate advocates of the "One-State" solution will speak is on Saturday February 20th at 2pm in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin