

Stop the War leaders are trying to stifle debate by illegally expelling those who criticise them



On 23 September, the CPGB-ML received an email from the Stop the War Coalition informing us of a decision by the “officers group” to “reject the affiliation” of our party. We were told that this was on the basis that the CPGB-ML had been “publicly attacking Stop the War Coalition” in its publications.

We responded as follows:

No basis for expulsion

First: we have been affiliated for many years to the coalition. Therefore it is not *now* possible to *reject* our affiliation. If it can be proved that we have failed to comply with StW’s constitution in some way, then we would have to be expelled.

Second: assuming for a moment that such a case can be made, what authority does the officers group have to make such a decision? We would be interested to see the rule that allows the officers to act without any kind of procedure and without any mandate from the membership via a national conference.

Third: it is perfectly clear that there is no such case to answer. You accuse us of “attacking Stop the War”. Comrades, the organisation belongs not to the officers but to the members. What we have done is to criticise the *leadership* of the coalition – not because we have failed to uphold the aims and objectives of the coalition but because it is our belief that *they* have done so.

We would be interested to see any proof that our organisation has stopped opposing imperialist war – including the concomitant racist backlash and erosion of civil liberties. According to StW’s founding statement, these are the only membership criteria and our party fulfils them amply.

No cooperation with war crimes

In 2009, StW national conference passed a resolution, proposed by our organisation, calling on the coalition “to do all in its power to promote a movement of industrial, political and military non-cooperation with all of imperialism’s aggressive war preparations and activities among British working people”.

In 2010, national conference passed a further motion on non-cooperation with war crimes by an overwhelming majority (our recollection is that just one person present voted against). It specifically drew attention to the propaganda aspect of imperialist war and called on the coalition to “draw in as many members and supporters as possible to an ongoing campaign to hold the media to account for their pivotal role in apologising for, covering up and normalising British, US and Israeli war crimes”.

Not only has the Stop the War leadership failed to implement these resolutions, it has actually been *helping* the propaganda effort in support of the criminal imperialist war against Libya.

StW leaders and the war in Libya

Stop the War leaders have accepted Nato propaganda that characterised its agents in Benghazi as a ‘popular’ movement and a part of the anti-imperialist ‘Arab spring’. They have even mobilised demonstrations in support of these agents, while characterising the popular Libyan government as a ‘brutal dictatorship’.

And today, while those who continue to resist Nato’s assault are being carpet bombed in cities all over Libya, Stop the War leaders *continue* to prop up the imperialist propaganda effort by:

- accepting and promoting the imperialist lie that Gaddafi’s government has already fallen and that the stooges of the ‘NTC’ have formed a new government;
- accepting and promoting the imperialist lie that the ‘fall’ of the Gaddafi government is a cause for popular celebration in Libya;
- accepting and promoting the imperialist lie that the ‘rebels’ are expressing the popular will of the people and thereby bringing ‘freedom’, ‘democracy’ and ‘justice’ to Libya;
- keeping the imperialist media’s silence about the resistance that is being mounted by the legitimate government of Libya, its armed forces and the armed citizens;
- keeping the imperialist media’s silence about the real character of the ‘rebels’, despite the wealth of evidence now available;

- keeping the imperialist media's silence about the terrible crimes that have been and are being committed by Nato's 'rebels' against the people of Libya (massacring of black people; massacring of pro-government supporters, raping of women, looting and burning of homes);
- keeping the imperialist media's silence about the terrible crimes committed by Nato's bombers and special forces, including the targeting of civilians, water and electricity supplies, schools, mosques, hospitals and libraries, the imposition of sanctions to prevent the import of medical supplies and food, the theft of Libya's wealth and resources, the use of chemical and nuclear weapons, including depleted uranium-tipped missiles, and the carpet bombing of civilian populations that has resulted in a death toll of well over 50,000 so far;
- keeping the imperialist media's silence about the gains made by ordinary Libyans since the Green revolution in 1969, which have brought them from being the poorest people in the world to the richest in Africa, with a standard of life for ordinary Libyans comparable to that in parts of western Europe;
- keeping the imperialist media's silence about the critical support given by Libya to anti-imperialist movements all over the world, and especially its support to the African struggle to break free from the chains of the IMF and the World Bank and the diktat of imperialist corporations and governments.

In so doing, Stop the War's leaders have proved themselves unfit for their positions. We call on them either to correct their line immediately, or to resign and allow a national conference to elect new, more suitable leaders who are prepared to carry out StW policy thoroughly and completely.

Hold the leaders to account

We call on the Stop the War Coalition's members to hold their leaders to account. We need an organisation that is truly willing and able to work amongst the British people to promote a movement of industrial, political and military non-cooperation *with all of imperialism's aggressive war preparations and activities*.

Only then will we be able to claim that we are not complicit in the war crimes of the British government, armed forces, media and corporations. And only then will we have the remotest chance of *actually stopping the war*.

8 October 2011

For further information or to contact us please send your telephone number, email or address to:

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