

printflare

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Weapons of Mass Destruction found – in the USA

Weapon finds in the US aren't that rare an occurrence. Over the last years, American far right groups have been discovered with massive arsenals of explosives, bombs, flame-throwers, grenade launchers, guns and ammunition. Most people will have be aware of the tragic loss of life resulting from the bombing campaign of the Unabomber and the Oklahoma city bomb in 1995. What's new is that now the extremist militia men have Weapons of Mass Destruction.



In late November, along with a variety of explosives, chemical agents, guns, ammunition and racist literature, a sodium cyanide bomb was seized by federal authorities in a small town near Tyler in East Texas. The sodium-cyanide bomb is a genuine weapon of mass destruction capable of delivering a deadly gas cloud and killing up to 3,000 people in one hall or building.

Three white supremacist militia members were arrested and one of them, William Krar has pleaded guilty to possession charges. Krar is also suspected of having sold more such bombs to other US unknown right wing groups as earlier in 2003, he was discovered carrying sodium cyanide and a coded list of US cities during a traffic search in Tennessee.

Last year, the US administration waged war on Iraq in order to guard against the 'potential that Saddam would acquire WMDs sometime in the future'. Iraqi civilians were bombed to prevent the potential use of possible WMDs which to this day still haven't been found. It appears that Weapons of Mass Destruction are only of interest to the Bush administration if they are in the hands of Arabs, Muslims or "rogue" states.

It's ironic that such destructive weapons were then found in Mr. Bush's home state and even then, only by accident. Krar posted a package of counterfeit IDs which was mistakenly delivered to the wrong person who called the police after opening it. Only then did the FBI start to keep an eye on his activities. This is even more surprising considering that in 1995, the ATF had investigated him on weapons charges.

There is also a stark contrast in the behaviour of the office of the US Attorney General which makes high profile announcements whenever a suspected Al Qaeda terrorist is apprehended. If it had been the Quran or Osama bin Laden tapes rather than white supremacist literature found in Krar's arsenal, we can be sure the find would have been hailed as a "major victory in the War Against Terror".

It's also likely that had such a bomb been set off without the white supremacists claiming responsibility, that al-Qaeda would be blamed and US citizens would be looking at even more serious curtailments of their civil liberties.

Krar, being a white American will naturally be entitled to due process of law. He was told by the local judge that he was facing 10 years in prison. On the other hand, if he was of the wrong religion or nationality, he would be looking at a lengthier incommunicado detention in Guantanamo Bay without access to a lawyer or a jury trial.

The big news corporations in the US were also guilty of ignoring this particular story of genuine weapons capable of mass destruction. Until mid December, the only US media covering the story were local papers and the local TV station, Channel 11. Channel 11 is a subsidiary of CBS but the network refused to run the story. Only on the 13th December did a large media publication, the New York Times decide that this story was newsworthy enough to publish.

Fore more ingotmation on this story, visit:

Indymedia Newswire Report: http://www.indymedia.ie/newswire.php?story_id=62602

Local TV station Report: http://cbs11tv.com/investigations/local_story_330180036.html

US Justice Department Report: <http://www.fbi.gov/dojpressrel/pressrel03/texas111303.htm>

For more information on these stories and more, please go to the Indymedia Éire website – <http://www.indymedia.ie>

Post your event on the Indymedia Event Calendar

The "events" section of <http://www.indymedia.ie> listed over 60 different events in 8 counties last month, on a wide range of topics ranging from boycotts to bike workshops and Cuba to carol singing. It is run on the same open-publishing basis as the newswire; you can put up a notice for your non-commercial event, and see it displayed immediately on the weekly and monthly calendars. It is also possible for you to view all events on a particular topic or in a particular county. The link for the events calendar is <http://www.indymedia.ie/eventcalendar.php>.

Here's a sample of events posted for the 1st week in January:

Clare / Anti-War: Call to Women's Anti-War Vigil at Shannon

One year later, on Nollaig na mBan, an autonomous women's vigil at Shannon called by women from the peace camp. 12 midnight Monday 5th to 12 noon on Tuesday 6th January.

For more information and to discuss the form of the event please ring Kay (085 7290674) or Maggie (087 7838688) if you are coming. If you can't make it, other help and support appreciated.

Derry / Anti-War: FEIC Day of Witness: Call for solidarity and support

Wednesday 7th January 2004
Derry City Council Special Meeting on the Arms Trade
Guildhall Square, Derry

FEIC is planning a day of witness, to highlight the human and economic costs of the arms trade and invites activists and supporters to come to Derry for the day, to take part in the day long vigil and witness in Guildhall Square. We look forward to the peaceful solidarity and support of activists from all over Ireland and beyond on the day.

Galway / EU "Another Europe is Possible" meeting

There will be a meeting under the banner of "Another Europe is Possible" in the Menlo Park Hotel, at 8pm on January the 7th in Galway.

This meeting will be taking a critical look at certain, neo-liberal, policies of the EU such as militarisation and privatisation and proposing an alternative view of doing things.

This meeting is taking place at a critical time in Galway as there will be an informal meeting of Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs taking place in Galway between the 15th-17th of January. Speakers: Richard Boyd Barrett, Peter Butler, Triona Nic Giolla Choille Owen McCormack, Mick O' Reilly.

Fintan Lane Update: 29th December 2003

Fintan Lane returned to Limerick Prison on St Stephen's Day following his three-day Christmas release (Fintan is serving a 60-day prison sentence for his refusal to pay a €750 fine imposed on him for his part in a peaceful protest at Shannon Airport in October 2002).



He will complete his sentence on 24th January. Fintan is in good form and has expressed his gratitude to all those who took the trouble to write to him during the past month (he intends to reply to all correspondence upon his release, as he is only allowed to send a few letters a week from prison). Correspondence has been crucial to maintaining Fintan's spirits, so please drop him a line soon and often. He has recently changed cells (from E to B Wing), so his address is now: Fintan Lane, B Wing, Limerick Prison, Mulgrave Street, Limerick.

The financial appeal launched last week got off to a good start, but if you intend to make a donation, please make the effort to do so as soon as possible. Money is needed to provide various items for Fintan in prison and to assist him upon his release; in addition, a small amount of money is required to pay for publicity materials related to the campaign (posters, etc.). Fintan himself is not aware of this financial appeal; however, we have become aware of the financial difficulties encountered by Fintan as a result of his loss of earnings, and feel that we need to demonstrate our solidarity with him by helping him to overcome these difficulties upon his release. We are seeking to raise a substantial amount of money and are appealing to anti-war activists for donations. A trustee has been appointed to oversee the appeal: Brendan O'Neill, a retired branch secretary with SIPTU. Please lodge donations in this account (and contact the Cork Anti-War Campaign to let us know of your donation):

Account name: Cork Anti-War Campaign
Account no: 03811074
Bank: Allied Irish Bank (AIB)
Address: College Road, Cork (sort code: 930121)

Alternatively, you may send a cheque, payable to Cork Anti-War Campaign, to: Dominic Carroll, Ardfield, Clonakilty, Co. Cork. If you wish to organise a donation through some other means, please contact the campaign at 087 1258325 or corkantiwar@hotmail.com

"Release Fintan Lane – US Military Out of Shannon" posters are available for download (pdf files). Please contact corkantiwar@hotmail.com

Niall Connolly, Martin McCauley and Jim Monaghan spend third Xmas in Jail

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Brian Cowen, has said that he has noted the contents of a report which claims that the three men, Niall Connolly, Martin McCauley and Jim Monaghan, held in Colombia on charges of training guerillas should be immediately released.

The report by a group of Irish, US and Australian lawyers and politica lfigures including Niall Andrews MEP, Senator Mary White and TDs Sean Crowe and Finian McGrath has concluded that the men have not received a fair trial, that there is no evidence to link them to the main charges against them and that they should be released immediately.

In a Dáil answer to Mr McGrath, Ind, Mr Cowen said that he had noted the contents of the report but would not comment until the judge issues his verdict in the case. The minister in his written reply also said that the trial ended in early August but the verdict by Judge Jairo Acosta is not expected until the new year.

The observers report entitled Colombia 3; Judge for Yourself, includes detailed analysis of the legal case and the trial process by a number of lawyers who attended the hearings including Irish barrister, Ronan Munro and solicitor, Pat Daly. It also includes contributions by US human rights advocate Natalie Kabaskalian and Australian lawyer Shaun Kerrigan both of whom criticise what they claim were prejudicial statements by senior Colombian political and military figures during the trial.

The men who were arrested on August 11, 2001 as they arrived in the capital, Bogota, from a demilitarised zone controlled at the time by FARC guerillas in the south east of the troubled Latin American country will now spend their third Christmas in a Colombian jail where, the report states, they are constantly exposed to physical danger.

"These men are now to spend their third Christmas in jail and away from their families who are deeply concerned for their safety and well being. We are glad that the minister has read the document and noted its contents and we can only hope that Judge will make his decision based on the law and will not be subjected to any outside political or military pressure" said Caitriona Ruane, spokesperson for the Bring them Home campaign.

10th Anniversary of the Zapatista Uprising

On the eve of the 10th Anniversary of the Zapatista Uprising, Jan 1 1994, the indigenous rebels had an unexpected surprise for the thousands of supporters who gathered here in Chiapas to pay homage – they did nothing. No spectacular celebration, no mass march upon San Cristobal, no bold new political initiatives, and certainly no new armed uprising. Instead there were a series of subdued celebrations in each of the 5 Zapatista Caracole centers, attended modestly by rank and file and somewhat more generously by national and international supporters.

President Fox claims he has ended the conflict and brought peace to Chiapas, and mainstream political analysts predict an end to Zapatismo. 1994 – 2004 : The great illusion, the great frustration,



reads the cover of this weeks Proceso, Mexico's most prestigious political weekly. Their contention, that the Zapatista Uprising did not deliver its promises and has brought little but more misery upon the base communities, is gaining currency. The Zapatistas are a spent force, have no answer to the new challenges of the 21st century, are losing ground in the communities and that Marcos has gone mad is all grist to the mill amongst not only the usual suspects, but also some sympathizers.

"To still be here is a victory," said a Zapatista veteran at Oventic. "Well, a small victory...." he added. Encircled by the Mexican Army and threatened by paramilitaries, such small victories can be considered quite an achievement. When one considers the fate of the resistance movements in neighboring Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua in the 1980's - the predecessors of the EZLN, then maybe indeed the victory is to still be here, and not to have been massacred.

A young Zapatista read out the end of year message in Oventic. It did not address the quite momentous achievements of the previous 10 years of Zapatista resistance but i nstead concentrated on the concrete gains of the past year- the consolidation of the autonomous municipalities, the creation of the 5 Caracoles and the new Juntas of Good Government. "We have been able to advance in our struggle, in our different tasks. During 2003 we made important gains..." the masked Zapatista read. "We ask that the companeros and companeras in each region and each municipality, simply, continue working...."

No rhapsodic communiqués of love and rage, no poetic convocations to global revolt, none of the signature tunes of Sub Marcos, just the nuts and bolts of local resistance, of building radical communities and autonomy in action. With or without the shadow of Marcos, the Zapatistas move forward in stealth and cunning, and the end of Zapatismo proclaimed by pundits may be just the end of Marcos and the more spectacular Zapatista ventures, for now. And the fictitious peace proclaimed by Fox may be merely a prelude to a non-violent revolutionary change of the structure of power in Chiapas that could reverberate further, nationally, internationally and indeed, intergalactically.

Fireworks pierced the murky night sky and the predominantly young crowd danced all night long. Despite the mud and the cold mountain air, the atmosphere was cheerful and there is something still very special about this demure festival of resistance. This day last year 20,000 Zapatistas descended upon San Cristobal. This year the Zapatistas felt no need for a big show. To be alive, a small victory, to be capable of joy and struggle. "Only in a rebel existence," the masked youth reminds us, "Can we continue constructing our autonomy..."

News from Independent Media Centres around the world

DAVOS 2004 ANTI-WEF PROTESTS

The World Economic Forum, which was due to hold a European conference in Dublin last October, is holding its meeting again in January at its headquarters in Davos, Switzerland. Below is the call to action posted on many internet sites across the world:



From the 21 of January to the 25 of January the WEF (www.weforum.org), a meeting of the richest multinational corporations and government buearacrats more than 2,000 (mostly european) "global leaders" from politics, media, and economy are meeting in Davos ski resort, Switzerland (www.davos.ch).

They discuss in a "private setting" about ways of making oppression and exploitation more efficient and more profitable. The WEF, which claims its mission is to help "eradicate poverty, promote security and enhance cultural understanding" is more often that not seen to represent the interests of multinational corporations.

It's members include Microsoft, Coke, Nestle, Shell and hundreds more. For 31 years the annual meeting of the WEF has taken place in Davos. Except in 2002 the WEF went to New York City. This year in Davos is another attempt to minimise the social and political rights in favour of the benefit of the capital owners. The last summits have shown, that a critical public isn't welcome, neither inside nor outside the conference buildings. Due to the past years mobilisation in Davos, the Swiss authorities had authorized the demonstration in Davos on the 25 of January 2003 but in reality they made everything possible to deny access to demonstrators. Only half of the crowd accessed Davos. The others were victims of heavy repression as in 2001 when the demonstration was forbidden and all, who protest against the meetings with their voice and their presence, were confronted with a massive repression on the part of the police. 2004 will surely be the same. But we are going to confront the rulers with resistance that cannot be ignored.

We disapprove of the WEF and our attitude towards it is confrontational. It is impossible to reform the WEF, because of this we don't want to have any dialogue. Our aim is to smash the WEF and to prevent their meetings. But the WEF is only one specific institution of the capitalistic system of exploitation, which we disapprove of completely. Our protest does not end with a smashed WEF, our fight is against capitalism which rules together with other forms of oppression like sexism, racism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, characterising the injustices of our world.

Our protest is against categorising, marginalising and excluding people and social groups; our aim is a society that is orientated to the needs of all, and not to the profit of a few. Our protest contains the use of resources and information equal to all people. In our actions and in our kind of organising we try to live our own utopia. We are against a society based on hierarchy and control. We disapprove of the state as a place of capitalistic actions and we also refuse the new institutionalisation of the capitalistic exploitation by the WEF, IMF, or WTO. Our answer is our protest, are our own actions. We do not rely on political parties or lobbies, we express our criticism together, independently and unmistakably. The ways of protesting and showing the criticism depend on the people who express them. In our resistance there should be room for different kinds of actions and there should be no limits to creativity.

The protest against the WEF summit in Davos is not the only thing, it is only one part of the global resistance against oppression and exploitation. Our solidarity is with all oppressed, who do not want to accept the prevailing contradictions without criticism, and our solidarity is with all, who realise their power and organise emancipated resistance. But as we are part of the prevailing contradictions, we have to question our positions all the time. Our action is a reaction on the prevailing situation, it is a logical and necessary answer to the ruling politics and the politics of the rulers.

UK IMC: Israeli Soldier Arrested For Attempted Murder Of British Activist

The Israeli sniper who shot activist Tom Hurdall brain dead has been arrested. The army leadership has now admitted that its initial accusations of Tom being armoured and in camouflage, as well as its claim that the soldier was returning Palestinian fire, were lies.



The arrest is particularly important as opening fire on activists in Palestine is becoming increasingly regular for the Israeli army. On Friday January 1st Israeli soldiers fired live ammunition into a non-violent action. Gil Na'amati, an Israeli from the Anarchist Movement Against the Wall, and an American woman of the International Solidarity Movement were seriously injured. On the same day the Israeli army fired over 100 rubber bullets aimed at people's heads during another demonstration. Approximately ten people were taken to the hospital and deportation

orders were issued against four activists, including a Swedish MP who was involved in the demonstration. Tom was shot in Rafah (Gaza, Palestine) in April last year while pulling away children out of the way of a tank. He is currently on life support in a London hospital.

Irish Activist Caoimhe Butterly also gave the following update from Palestine: "The old city in Nablus and Balata refugee camp have been under almost relentless siege since December 25th. There's a very compelling call to action posted on the website www.electrictinfada.net, by a Nablus resident. with house to house searches and demolitions, a large number of people wounded and over ten killed. The use of collective punishments (a suffocating curfew, the blocking of medical relief crews and of humanitarian aid) and what amounts to weapons of mass destruction when unleashed on a captive, mainly civilian, population - tanks, a.p.c.s, apaches, high-velocity bullets, racism, impunity - the situation is desperate.

Palestinian blood has been cheapened to the point that this siege is not being covered by the mainstream media. Instead the potential of dialogue (between a corrupt, incapable, and complicit Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government that uses their own particularly well-planned form of state-sponsored terrorism as a negotiating tool - the brutalisation and humiliation of Palestinians until they capitulate seems to be Sharon's bottom line) is making the headlines. This is only a distraction that serves to normalise an occupation that is illegal and blatantly unjust."

Melbourne IMC: Hunger Strike highlights John Howard's 'pacific solution' bankruptcy

Asylum seekers in the Nauru Detention camp run by Australian Immigration Authorities have entered their fifth week of a hunger strike, with over fifty people now participating. Immigration officials have not been seen at the camp since the strike started, and Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone has refused responsibility saying they "are not Australia's problem", despite Australia establishing the detention camp on the Pacific nation of Nauru as part of its 'Pacific Solution' of refugee and migration control. Refugee activists in Melbourne picketed Amanda Vanstone on December 18th.

Human rights advocates, psychiatrists have called for the immediate closure of the Nauru Detention Centre. Prominent lawyer Eric Vardalis has lodged a writ in the NSW Supreme Court for "false imprisonment" on behalf of the 325 detainees taken to Nauru by Australian authorities over the past two years. Two members of the United Nations Refugee Agency UNHCR have visited the camp: "They did nothing" according to an inmate. The Howard Government is demonising the asylum seekers for political purposes similar to the 'children overboard' fabrication in 2001.



Hassan Ghulan sent this message from inside the camp on New Years Eve: "I am truly puzzled by the lack of a Government intervention in the life and death situation in the Topsisid camp on Nauru, where hunger strikers are peacefully protesting their despair and hope-less-ness after more than two years in limbo and with no safe place to go to. Is this another aspect of the policy of deterrence - sending a deadly, negative message to any future asylum seekers?"

Reports to Elaine Smith and to me are telling distressing details of bodies breaking down after 22 days without liquid and food. But the spirit of these men is far from broken. Their solidarity is that of aggrieved and decent men damned by the inaction of others. They are, after all, survivors. Resilient people who have suffered unimaginable things before fleeing the land of their birth, before being rescued from drowning when the unseaworthy Indonesian boats sank. They had a dream of living in freedom and peace, somewhere.

The Government is being urged from all directions - including the Australian Medical Association - to confront and deal with the human medical crises intensifying with the passing of every day. Their lack of action is incomprehensible. How long can this inaction continue? The Australian Government has dumped the caseload of 45 self harming patients onto the Nauru Hospital, which appears to be seriously under resourced to handle this crisis. Some men are seriously ill and require specialist treatment. We fear some are dying.

The information we have been reporting - posted on <http://www.nauruwire.org> - is known to Government and truly in the public domain. Their failure to act is seen by many of us as a dereliction of their duty of care towards men women and 93 asylum seeker children. It reminds us sadly of the situation which resulted in the drowning of 353 asylum seekers from the SIEVX in waters patrolled by our navy. The Government knew, and failed to act. The current information about the hunger strikers' condition is available to the Prime Minister and his Minister for Immigration. Why won't they meet and talk and solve this humanitarian crisis with the community groups who are working to save these lives and find a lasting, decent solution?

We enter 2004 with a huge stain on our Australian agenda. There is no doubt in my mind that decent, reasonable Australians very much want this Government standoff with powerless asylum seekers to end. I am the authorised person trusted by the hunger strikers to speak for them and I have been waiting for 22 days for an invitation to speak with those in Government who have the power to solve the future for the 284 human souls trapped on Nauru."

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