

Anti-war groups to hit the streets

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The following are three important anti-imperialist events scheduled for the coming months. Workers World Party is supporting and participating in each of them.

Feb. 4: Emergency protest in 48 cities to stop war on Iran

U.S.-based anti-imperialist and anti-war organizations have called for protest demonstrations to stop U.S. aggression aimed at Iran on Feb. 4, calling it a - global day of action.- As of Jan. 29, the movement had grown to include protests in 48 U.S. cities, plus cities in five other countries.

The demonstrators demand, in a leaflet posted on a few of the endorsing organizations-websites: - No war, no sanctions, no intervention, no assassinations against Iran.-

While the organizations involved have varied assessments of the Iranian government, they all see that any intervention by U.S. imperialism in the oil-rich Asian country not only threatens the Iranian people, but could also be a stepping stone to a much wider war in Asia.

Activists in Iran are also concerned about these dangers. The Iranian organization called The House of Latin America has been contacting its friends in the Western Hemisphere to work toward actions on Feb. 4.

Workers World spoke on Jan. 28 with Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, one of the original organizations to call for the Feb. 4 action.

- The quick response to the emergency action shows deep apprehension about the threat of war,- said Flounders. - Different combinations of the endorsing groups have already called for actions in 48 cities around the United States. Each of these groups has its own political program and analysis of the world situation, but they have agreed to give priority to fighting against this new and possibly devastating war that threatens humanity.

- Sometimes people in the U.S. fail to see that sanctions are in themselves an act of war. Those the U.S. and the United Nations carried out against Iraq from 1990 to 2003 cost the lives of more than 1 million Iraqis, including at least half a million children. The Iran sanction measures also impose sanctions on any country that doesn't go along with the U.S. blockade. This drives up oil prices and threatens to unhinge the economies of the poorest countries.

- International support, considering the short time span, has been good,- continued the IAC leader. - Demonstrations are planned in Ireland, Norway, India, Bangladesh and Canada.-

People can follow developments on the Facebook link: No War On Iran: National Day of Action Feb 4, tinyurl.com/883f7jg. There will also be updates, giving times and places of demonstrations, at the International Action Center website: iacenter.org.

March 23-25: UNAC national antiwar conference

Hundreds of anti-war activists are expected to attend the United National Antiwar Coalition- s National Conference in Stamford, Conn., March 23-25.

UNAC established itself as a major anti-war coalition in the summer of 2010 when 800 people gathered for a conference in Albany, N.Y. At that meeting, a large majority voted to support UNAC- s anti-imperialist positions opposing U.S. intervention against Iran and condemning U.S. support for the Israeli settler-state.

The group held major anti-war demonstrations, a march of 10,000 people from Union Square to downtown Manhattan on April 9 and a march of 3,000 people in San Francisco on April 10. Demonstrations were also held on the 10th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan.

UNAC says this will be - a conference to challenge the wars of the 1% against the 99% abroad and at home- and to - say NO! to the NATO/G8 wars and poverty agenda.- (unacpeace.org) One of the main tasks of the conference will be to plan protest activities in Chicago when both NATO and the G8 are holding summits May 15-22.

A series of workshops and plenaries at the March 23-25 conference will take up questions including the Occupy Wall Street movement, the global economic crisis, anti-Islam bigotry, the movements that sprang up in Tunisia and Egypt and spread throughout the Middle East, and U.S. intervention in many parts of the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as Latin America and Africa.

UNAC says its conference will highlight - the relationship between the wars abroad and the racist war at home on the Black Community- and - the way in which mobilizing around these issues is central to effective movement building.-

May 19: Protest the G8 and NATO in Chicago

Whoever plans summits for the imperialist gangsters dominating and plundering the world decided that it was a good idea, after the October 2010 NATO summit, to hold summits for both the G8 economic centers (the old G7 plus Russia) and the NATO military powers in Chicago on May 15-22.

The summits were planned before the so-called debt crisis and austerity measures opened a new recession in Europe - and provoked a fightback from European workers along with the rise of the - Indignant People- s movement.- It was also long before the Occupy movement began to change the political discourse in the United States and put youth on the streets - with banners and political discussion - in more than 100 cities.

By last summer anti-war forces in the U.S., many of them in UNAC, began to organize protests for that week in May. They submitted requests for permits to the Chicago police. They organized a struggle around the right to demonstrate, appealing under the name of the Coalition Against the NATO and G8 War & Poverty Agenda (CANG8).

On Jan. 12, the City of Chicago granted the permit for suitable marches and rallies. Organizers took note, however, of a clause that allows the City to rescind the permit should there be a demand from Homeland Security to do so. CANG8 and all supporters of the right to protest say they will remain mobilized to fight for that right.

Meanwhile, the imperialists scaled down their summits so that the G8 will meet May 19-20 and NATO May 20-21. CANG8 will hold a - People- s Alternate Summit- on May 12-13 and a mass rally and march on May 19. The entire week will be filled with meetings and protests.

On Jan. 25, Adbusters, the Canada-based network associated with the Occupy movement, issued Tactical Briefing #25, urging massive support for the May actions.

Besides a growing movement within the U.S. that supports the protests in Chicago, the joint meeting of NATO and G8 has aroused international indignation. Already the organizers of the Chicago actions have opened discussions with anti-war forces in other countries to arrange solidarity actions - either to participate in Chicago or to hold mass actions in their home countries.

For more information, visit unacpeace.org, cang8.wordpress.com or iacenter.org.

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