

BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

END THE OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ AND PALESTINE

Bay Area Women in Black stands in solidarity with the women of Afghanistan, Iraq and Israel/Palestine for peace and an end to occupation and militarism. We oppose increased troop levels in Afghanistan and the indefinite military presence in Iraq. We believe U.S. foreign policy should emphasize diplomatic solutions and rebuilding the devastated infrastructures in Iraq, Afghanistan and Gaza.

AFGHANISTAN

- The occupation of Afghanistan costs the U.S. \$2 billion a month.
- We already have 32,000 troops there.
- 800 cases of detainee abuse have been recorded in U.S. facilities in Afghanistan.

Sending more troops and spending more U.S. taxpayer money will not establish democracy there; it will cause more destruction and will retard the economic recovery here at home. **"Escalating the occupation will bleed us of the resources needed for economic recovery, further destabilize Pakistan, open a rift with our European allies and negate our improved image in the Muslim world prompted by our [limited] withdrawal from Iraq. Escalation will not increase U.S. security or secure a better future for Afghan people - indeed, more troops will certainly mean more dead civilians."** Katrina vanden Heuvel in The Nation

We stand with the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan and their supporters, who demand an end to the occupation. **"As soon as possible, the US/NATO troops must vacate our country. We want liberation, not occupation. With the withdrawal of occupation forces, we will only have to face one enemy instead of two."** Malalai Joya, former Afghan parliament member.

IRAQ

- To date, the Iraq war has cost U.S. taxpayers over \$600 trillion. Of this amount, Californians paid \$83 billion which could have provided over 35 million Californians with healthcare for one year or paid 1.1 million elementary school teachers for one year.
- The occupation has resulted in the death of over 4,200 U.S. soldiers and the wounding of more than 31,000, as well as the death of over 1.3 million Iraqis.

During the campaign, President Obama promised to end this illegal war and occupation. Now he proposes to extend the time for withdrawal and intends to maintain 30,000 to 50,000 troops in Iraq indefinitely. This can only mean more deaths and more wounded.

PALESTINE

- Israel subjects Palestinians to home demolitions, check points and curfews, assassinations and extra-judicial detentions. Israel continues its confiscation of Palestinian land to build Jewish-only settlements and the wall annexing these settlements to Israel proper, both in violation of international law.
- The recent Israel assault on Gaza killed over 1,300 Palestinians, including 900 civilians and 300 children. Thirteen Israelis were killed. The attack followed an 18-month punitive blockade of Gaza.

The remorseless attack on the completely trapped and mainly civilian population of Gaza was critically dependent on U.S.-supplied weapons, including fighter jets and Apache helicopters. U.S.-made missiles and white phosphorous were also used in the attack. Israel is the largest single recipient of U.S. foreign aid amounting to \$3 billion a year. This is a fifth of the entire U.S. foreign aid budget. Moreover, the U.S. has vetoed 32 UN security resolutions condemning Israeli human rights violations. Peace in Israel/Palestine requires the withdrawal of U.S. military and diplomatic support of Israel's occupation of Palestine.

"To all other peoples and governments watching today. . .know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and that we are ready to lead on more." President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009