

3,000 march in Tel Aviv

David Cohen
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Some 3,000 people, both Arabs and Jews, demonstrated this weekend in Tel Aviv to protest the US-British war drive against Iraq. The demonstration was held by a coalition of peace organizations, political parties and alternative media groups, including the Communist Party, the National Democratic Assembly, the Democratic Arab Party, the Independent Media Center, the Alternative Information Center, the Jewish-Arab Partnership Group (*Ta'ayush*), the Peace Block movement (*Gush Shalom*), and the Organization for Democratic Action. The Zionist left, including *Meretz* and *Peace Now*, decided to boycott the demonstration.

The demonstrators gathered at the square of Tel Aviv's Cinematheque and raised placards with antiwar slogans: "Iraqis and Israelis: peoples' solidarity!", "No to the war of big capital!", "George W. and Ariel: we'll wait for you in Brussels!", "Defend Iraq!", "Palestine and Iraq: one nation!", "Occupations and wars, killing us all!" and "Bush, Blair and Sharon: the axis of evil!"

Many Arab youth came with Palestinian flags, others danced while singing the Palestinian anthem. Feras, 23, told the *World Socialist Web Site*, "This is the beginning of a new movement against the war. The fact that neither the so-called 'leftist' Zionists nor any other Zionist organisation came shows that they are for the war. If they are for the war, they're against us, the Palestinians."

He added, "Sharon plans to overthrow President Arafat like Bush strives to overthrow President Saddam Hussein. If the Iraqi people are defeated by the American military intervention, it will encourage Sharon to smash the Palestinian people. Everyone knows that Sharon and Bush are allies. We should build mass anti-imperialist movements in Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Libya to kick out the Zionists and imperialists from our lands."

Hanna, 29, told the WSWS, "You can't build a

movement against the war on hatred. Hatred is the enemy's weapon, not ours. We want to live here, Jews with Arabs, peacefully. I am a daily reader of the *World Socialist Web Site* and although we have differences on many issues, I agree with your English leaflet. Nationalism can bring only bloodshed, and as student who studies history, I certainly oppose any kind of nationalism."

"Black Laundry" is a gay and lesbian group of activists who oppose the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and support social justice and peace. Dina, 34, a sympathizer of the group, said, "It is well known that Bush wants to grab Iraq's oil wealth and he doesn't care if the Iraqis live under a democratic regime. He wants the oil! He did the same in Afghanistan when the Taliban regime, which was created by the US against the Soviets during the 1980s, was overthrown and a new dictatorial caste came to power. The question is not democracy, but oil. The question is not our future, but the future of capitalism."

Victor, 46, a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, remembers the demonstrations against the 1982 war in Lebanon. "Almost 400,000 gathered in today's Rabin Square to protest against Sharon's bloody policies. Today, we are only a few thousand. It reflects the bankruptcy of the Zionist ideology. The fact that Israel is declaring its support for the war places us in serious danger. How many young soldiers and youth must be killed before the Israeli public understands that our government is sacrificing us to its crazy military aspirations?"

Dov, 64, a pensioner, added, "The Labour and *Meretz* parties, by cooperating with Sharon, show that they are the enemies of peace. I'm a socialist and I want to support the stand of the *World Socialist Web Site* on this war. Capitalism is driving humanity to barbarism, as Rosa Luxemburg warned. We need a mass socialist party today and our role is to carry out this task

immediately. This is the essence of the situation.”



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