

“I feel repulsed and outraged about last night’s attack on Syria—it was completely unnecessary”

UK workers oppose drive to war

Our reporters
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Reporters from the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to workers and young people over the weekend on the military assault by the US, Britain and France on Syria.

At a lobby outside Prime Minister Theresa May’s official 10 Downing Street residence Friday evening, Jeff, a software engineer, said, “There’s no certainty that the Syrian government is responsible for a chemical weapons attack.

“You don’t bomb another country because you disapprove of what they are doing. If you want to bomb countries because you disapprove of them, why is Yemen still going on? Why is the problem in Myanmar still going on?

“We saw what happened last time in Libya. We saw what happened before that in Iraq. We have had enough of going to war based on intelligence that we never see. The Russian’s poisoning of the Skripals—again intelligence we can’t see. Just believe us, just trust us the government says. No, not any more. Trust is gone. You’ve got to prove it.

“Going toe to toe with Russia is a brave step, even for these fools. In the case of Iraq with Saddam Hussein and in Libya with Colonel Gaddafi, it was an easy win. But it’s not an easy win if Russia says they will retaliate. That must give pause for thought. If the British government lost a frigate or a submarine, it could not do much to Russia. But America obviously could, and we don’t want to be sitting here between America and Russia having a war.

“I think it’s because the press and the television, who are cheerleaders for this nonsense, that we are in this situation. Rather than lobbying my MP I’d rather lobby the BBC, Radio 4’s ‘Today’ programme or ‘Newsnight’ demanding they do a proper job holding

Parliament to account. I feel betrayed by the *Guardian* failing to oppose military intervention. Their lead editorial today is full on pro-war.”

Artist Aheela has composed two paintings, portraying Prime Minister Theresa May and President Donald Trump as warmongers.

He explained, “According to the British Constitution, the prime minister cannot declare war without the consent of Parliament. She just shows contempt for Parliament, so I paint her as you see.

“With or without parliamentary approval, what will a war achieve? Which war has ever achieved anything, apart from destruction, misery and massacres?”

In Manchester’s Rusholme district, reporters spoke to Tashoor. He said, “I think this is more to do with politics against Russia than Syria or concern for the people there. They are opposing Russia on all fronts.

“NATO is dominated by the US and the UK is just following it. The same thing happened with Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We don’t need any more wars. We need a peace process, but we need people to resolve things, not politicians. All that is happening now is that regimes are being taken out through invasions and others are put in and they are just as exploitative as the ones they replaced.

“All these wars since 1990 are to do with politics and economics, aren’t they? It’s about resources and how the UK can get better sanctions in place so they can make more money for companies who are manufacturing weapons.

“BAE Systems is one of the biggest weapons makers in the world. How can it be beneficial to the people of Syria to give rebel groups weapons and then after that

bomb areas in Syria with planes from the UK and US?

“I don’t believe all this stuff about chemical weapons attacks. It was the same with Iraq. They said they had weapons of mass destruction there. They destroyed the whole country and the country is still in ruins.”

“It was same in Afghanistan when they just installed Hamid Karzai. Karzai worked for an oil company in America.”

“The United Nations was supposedly set up to ensure we would have no major wars in the world, but the UN is just a puppet for the US.

“There should have been a referendum on whether to go to war! They are asking us to go to war with no evidence. Nothing at all. This is all governed by economics and geopolitics.”

Ruairi is a student and lived in Russia for eight months:

“It’s very corrupt there. It’s a capitalist country run by an oligarchy. But we don’t start from that when looking at these wars.

“I don’t agree with what America and the UK are doing. No good is going to come of it. How can we know what’s going on? We cannot have proof.

“There is complete disrespect and lack of interest in other people’s countries by Western governments. They say they support democracy, but support ISIS. They trained these groups in Afghanistan.”

George is from Teeside and spoke to reporters in Leeds on Saturday.

“When I heard the news about the bombing this morning I didn’t believe it at first. It seemed to spring out of nowhere.

“How much will it all cost? They can find the money for airstrikes, but not for the people that need it most—the homeless, the sick, the elderly, mental health services and those on low incomes.

“I get most of my news from Twitter and Reddit, which is good for news because it is quick to cross reference. I don’t trust the media. I want to look at all the sources.

“I think that somebody is benefiting from this terrible situation and it’s not ordinary people. The Tories have shares in arms companies and it makes economic sense for them that they want to build more Tridents.

“As far as the poisoning of the Skripals is concerned I am very sceptical. There is no hard evidence. They moved so quickly from the claim about the poisoning to

kicking out the diplomats. My mother says it stinks. They just wanted an excuse.”

Steve works for Deliveroo. He said, “I feel repulsed and outraged about last night’s attack on Syria. It was completely unnecessary. We should know this by now. This is not the first time we have gone on these outrageous Middle Eastern adventures—not just 2003 but every bit of meddling in the Middle East.

“They are after regional control and I suspect they aim to surround Russia and Iran and there is probably a financial incentive as well.

“They should stop it right now. They acted on the flimsiest, probably nonexistent evidence, and Parliament was not consulted. It has been a complete failure of our democracy.”

Isobella is a supporter of the Stop the War Coalition. She suggested, “It may have been a false flag operation in Douma. That is the lesson of the lies about ‘weapons of mass destruction’ in Iraq. But was any of it a reason to go to war? So many deaths and so much suffering have been caused.

“The UK is one of the largest exporters of arms. Their aim is to sell more weapons to make more profit. The big corporations run the world, don’t they?

“Almost everyone I know is against war—my parents, the old, the young—everybody. I’ve been thinking a lot about how to empower people. The YouGov poll found that only 22 percent supported the war, 43 percent were against and the rest didn’t know.

“Today’s demo in Leeds is about saving the National Health Service, which is in tatters. There is plenty of money for the war machine, but not for the NHS. Theresa May’s talk about humanitarianism is all crap! There is enough money to solve all the problems of society but it is in the hands of the wrong people.”



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