

On the occasion of *the Queen's* visit:

REMEMBER THE DEATHS

*AT THE HANDS OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES IN
IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN*

Speakers;

Joan Humphries

(Grandson killed in Afghanistan)

Ben Griffin

(Former SAS trooper)

Roger Cole

(Peace and Neutrality Alliance)

Richard Boyd Barrett TD

(Chair of the IAWM)

Plus others

Black-Balloon Protest,
Tuesday 17th May, 6.30pm. GPO - O'Connell

Irish Anti-War Movement
<http://irishantiwar.org/>



BLACK Balloon protest at the GPO, O'Connell St, TUESDAY 17th May at 6.30pm

There has been an escalation in bombings, raids and killings in Afghanistan over the past year. The presence of NATO forces has lead to an increase of violence on both sides.

Like any occupation, the presence of foreign troops, kills, wrecks whole cities and lives. The majority of the 2,080 civilians who were killed in Afghanistan last year 2009 were from anti government and Talliban attacks, but even so, NATO and pro-government forces totalled 440 civilian killings during this time.

In March this year 100 Afghan civilians were killed in Nato military operations in different provinces in Afghanistan, including 65 in Kunar province in one bombing raid in Ghaziabad district.

The Irish Anti-war Movement will be holding a black balloon protest as a reminder of the thousands killed in Afghanistan and Iraq at the hands of western troops. From 2007-2010, according to one UN report, Afghan civilian deaths have reached a staggering 9,759. They include the deaths of young British troops, many of who joined the army purely to improve their economic circumstances - only to be killed or maimed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Her Majesty's Armed Forces, as one of the major contingents of foreign troops, have been directly responsible for appalling human suffering in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Afghan occupation is now entering its tenth year, and in recent weeks has seen further escalation of violence.

The British royal visit is being portrayed as a sign of the maturity of the British-Irish relationship, whilst cynically overlooking the wider ethical and economic grounds for which this visit should be opposed.

Although the impression is given that the Queen is just a titular figure-head, she is actually the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armed Forces and the person to whom members of the forces swear allegiance. Her role is to pursue what governments of the day identify as Britain's political strategies and interests. These interests include the purchase of cheap oil and the selling of armaments by major British Corporations – interests which lie behind the war-mongering policies of the British Government and their involvement in wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and now Libya. The UK has been selling weaponry to dictatorial regimes without any regard for their end uses, a policy that has caused untold human suffering.

Polls conducted in Britain have shown the unpopularity of the war in Afghanistan and have supported the call for troops to come home. Almost 700 British troops have been killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and tens of thousands physically injured, many horrifically. Huge resources are being given over to waging an unwinnable war in Afghanistan just when the British Government is introducing stringent cuts in other branches of state spending, such as the health service and social services.

The Queen, as the head of the British armed forces, must be held to account for this wanton waste of human life and resources. That is why the Irish Anti-war Movement will hold a dignified black balloon protest during her visit to Ireland to remember the dead victims of her futile wars.

For further info contact: Richard Boyd Barrett TD, Chair IAWM, Tel. 086 781 4520 Jim Roche, PRO Steering Committee, IAWM, Tel. 087 6472737

Meeting for those interested in helping with the Black balloon protest on Wednesday 11th May Central Hotel, Exchequer St, at 7pm.

Title: Remember the Deaths

Organisation: Irish Anti-War Movement

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