SHAME AND OUTRAGE

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George Bush's terrorist war launched last night against Iraq is the greatest moral tragedy of a generation, an unprecedented failure of American leadership, and a profound crime against the principles of democracy. Saddam Hussein may be an evil person, but America has always held a person innocent until proven guilty through a system of impartial justice that weighed all evidence, rather than allowing an accuser to take whatever action they wished against another. That is lawlessness, and it is lawlessness for our country to attack Iraq when alternatives of international law exist.

It is our own country's actions that are at issue here, not those of a small-time despot. The Bush administration and other previous U.S. governments have in fact been happy to aid, finance and arm some of the most brutal dictatorships on the globe.

Since long before 9-11, the Bush administration has pushed relentlessly towards this war with a series of incredible lies about virtually every aspect of the current conflict - US intentions, international law, 9-11 links, weapons inspections, Iraq's likely military status and the amount of international support for Bush administration aims. Applauded by American corporate interests and cheered on by media institutions, the Bush administration's unilateral drive to war has been actively opposed by most of the world's people, governments and international institutions.

Diplomacy did not fail at the UN. It succeeded. It succeeded in that other countries held firm in their demand for valid rather than imaginary or fabricated evidence of Iraqi danger. It succeeded in that other countries held firm against unimaginable bullying, intimidation, bribery and threats from our country to force their support.

Bush's war is not about Hussein. The real objectives of this war of aggression are U.S. domination over the strategic and oil-rich region of the Middle East, and to cause people at home and throughout the world to fear the immoral, illegal and brutal action that will be taken against anyone who fails to support the administration's policies.

The administration seeks now to overcome its failed diplomacy and political isolation by resorting to massive military power and the exercise of limitless violence. In the coming days and weeks, anti-war forces in the United States and around the world will intensify their protest, opposition and resistance to this illegal and immoral war.