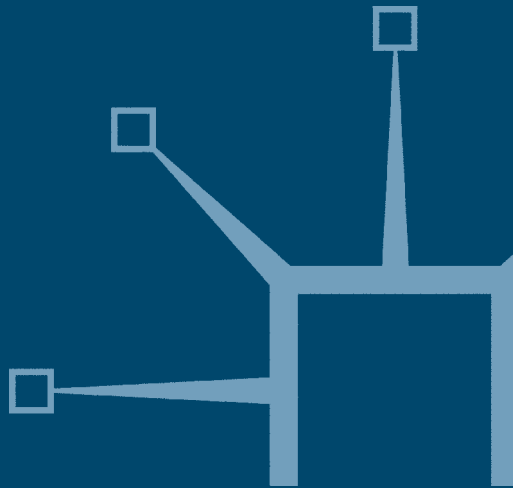# Anti-War Activism

New Media and Protest in the Information Age

Kevin Gillan, Jenny Pickerill
and Frank Webster

Anti-War Activism

New Security Challenges Series

General Editor: **Stuart Croft,** Professor of International Security in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick, UK, and Director of the ESRC's New Security Challenges Programme.

The last decade demonstrated that threats to security vary greatly in their causes and manifestations, and that they invite interest and demand responses from the social sciences, civil society and a very broad policy community. In the past, the avoidance of war was the primary objective, but with the end of the Cold War the retention of military defence as the centrepiece of international security agenda became untenable. There has been, therefore, a significant shift in emphasis away from traditional approaches to security to a new agenda that talks of the softer side of security, in terms of human security, economic security and environmental security. The topical *New Security Challenges series* reflects this pressing political and research agenda.

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Anti-War Activism

New Media and Protest in the Information Age

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Preface

15 February 2003 was a remarkable day in world politics. An American-dominated 'coalition of the willing' was poised to launch a military assault on Iraq. America and its allies alleged that Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein, posed a grave threat to their security and vital interests because he possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and gave succour to terrorists, notably Al Qaeda. Weapons inspectors from the United Nations were working under intense pressure, experiencing hindrance inside Iraq but finding nothing and requesting more time, while American leaders insisted that WMD were in Iraq. The UN Security Council refused to authorize the invasion, but the build-up to war continued and its outbreak appeared to be immanent.

Throughout several months of intense diplomacy and feverish media speculation, there had been a series of demonstrations from those opposed to the impending war, but the high point of protest was the coordinated demonstrations against the war that took place around the world on 15 February. Figures are imprecise, but none refute the fact that they were enormous: there were protests in over 600 cities round the globe; over 2 million demonstrators in Rome, over 1 million in Barcelona and in London (where some claimed 2 million) and hundreds of thousands in cities as diverse as Berlin, Melbourne and New York. To get a measure of its scale, take the London demonstration of that day. It dwarfed any previous protest in British history: the Chartist campaigns that culminated in their 'monster rally' of perhaps 100,000 at Kennington Common in April 1848, the suffrage campaigns during the 19th and early 20th century that 'filled' Hyde Park in 1908 with something like 250,000 people in attendance, the legendary anti-Vietnam protest outside Grovesnor Square in March 1968 that mobilized maybe 30,000 – all are small compared to 15 February 2003. So striking was this recent protest that Patrick Tyler (2003) of the *New York Times* was moved to describe what he saw as 'two superpowers' set against one another, the United States of America and 'world public opinion' as represented by the marchers. Jonathan Schell (2003) saw the same clash as nothing less than 'a global contest whose consequence far transcends the war in Iraq'. A central task of this book is to look closely at the character of this anti-war movement as it was manifested in the United Kingdom.

The unprecedented mobilization of anti-war support took place at a time when it was commonplace to point to declining participation in elections in established democracies (the general election turnout of 2001 in Britain was just 59% of eligible voters, the lowest since universal suffrage was granted in 1918), an inability to persuade people to join political parties and heightened scepticism towards and distrust of professional politicians (Baston and Ritchie 2004). On the one hand, there is evidence of a decline in interest and involvement in politics; on the other, the anti-war protests got unprecedented numbers of people onto the streets to resist this political action.

This paradox was one important reason why we undertook this study of the anti-war movement in Britain. We wanted to investigate distinguishing features of this massive social movement at a time when so much evidence suggested a turning away from politics among large sections of the public. The scale and intensity of the 15 February protests have not been maintained, but the anti-war movement has kept a visible presence throughout the intervening years. We wanted to examine how this has happened.

We were also conscious of the changing character of war. We write about this more extensively in Chapter 2, but in brief our view is that nowadays much armed conflict takes place in conditions of Information War. A good deal has been written about the hard side of Information War, about the digitized battlefield, command and control systems and smart weapons that make for astonishing asymmetries in combat. So long as an enemy can be identified (and it does not possess nuclear capability), then those with state-of-the-art satellite and aerospace technologies will quickly win – although occupation of a defeated nation's territory is a very different matter. Insufficient attention has, in our view, been paid to the soft side of Information War. Here we refer to the realm of persuasion and propaganda, of course, but also to the steady stream of information from and about military conflict. As a rule this is presented as a matter of the exercise of control by military and government forces, leading to media management that ensures the public is 'on message'.

But the information environment of war is today too volatile, even chaotic, for control to be so straightforwardly effected. Participants do endeavour to control what is reported in ways that are advantageous to themselves, they even train and plan for it as best they can, but in an era of email, satellite communications and the Internet, this is an impossible task. The enemy might be overcome militarily with ease, but if there follow digital photographs taken by servicemen torturing

prisoners, video film of soldiers beating civilians or even day-to-day questioning of the enterprise from opponents back home, then information control is not only demonstrably hard to maintain for those waging the war, but it is also of enormous magnitude since it threatens any possibility of winning peace.

This hard-to-manage information environment, one that is vastly expanded and more pervasive than ever before, also means that contemporary publics can have a massively heightened awareness of war compared to their predecessors. But this is overwhelmingly experienced from afar. Nations with Information War capability may fight now with little immediate consequence for their citizens, who are not called upon to fight in large numbers and are rarely subject to attack back home, yet these publics have access to information about war on a scale and with an immediacy that their forebears lacked.

Such mediation of war also means that nowadays we encounter intense symbolic struggles aiming to persuade the public one way or another about the rectitude and progress of war. The anti-war movement plays a key role in these matters, albeit generally removed from the war-fighting zones, and it struggles with pro-war forces to mobilize the public to its side. It was another goal of this study to examine the anti-war movement's operation in this changed information environment.

New technologies are a central aspect of this changed environment. The anti-war movement is an assiduous user of email, the web and the mobile telephone. Accordingly, we insisted that our research would not just examine how new technologies were used in the symbolic struggles between pro and anti-war forces, but also how they were integrated into anti-war organizations and campaigns. How might anti-war organizations be using information and communications technologies in coordinating their campaigns? How do they adopt new media in their mobilization of supporters and coordination of actions?

We brought different disciplines and histories to this study. Kevin Gillan was educated as a political scientist and has researched anti-globalization and peace activists in the English provinces; Jenny Pickerill is a human geographer who has done work on environmental and anti-capitalist activists' use of new technologies, while Frank Webster is a sociologist with a long-term interest in information issues and trends, including Information War. The team did not prioritize any discipline or background, but judge that the combination allowed an interdisciplinarity that enhances the study. One outcome

was adoption of a wide range of methods in data collection, which is reflected in our use of a variety of modes of presentation throughout the book. We endeavoured to paint a full picture of the anti-war movement in Britain by conducting over 60 in-depth interviews (mostly carried out in 2006 and early 2007), by hosting an online group discussion with dispersed activists, by hyperlink analysis of online networks, by observing activism at national levels as well as at local meetings of activists, by absorbing ourselves in available literature and content put out by the diverse groups that make up the movement, whether in electronic or hard copy, and by paying particular attention to 'hot topics' such as Israel's invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 2006 and the arrests of a score or so of suspected terrorists in Britain later that year.

We could not look at every dimension of the anti-war movement, so we selected a number of examples for close study in our research. To allow a broad range of coverage of this variegated movement we included groups with alternative positions on several continua of difference such as those between broad ideological and single-issue focus; complete pacifism and a particular anti-war position; religious and secular backgrounds; or direct action and lobbying strategies. Working with these criteria we centred on six foci, presented in Table P.1. Social movements are never amenable to categorization in neat, exclusive typologies, and as the table indicates, we used a mixture of pragmatism and sensitivity to difference in selecting particular cases to study. Our investigation took us far beyond this initial set of groups and we conducted additional interviews as the opportunities arose. Appendix 1 lists all of our interviewees and includes independent activists and writers and members of groups such as Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp (aign) and Voices in the Wilderness UK that are not listed in Table P.1. For ease of reference, brief introductions to all the groups we discuss in the following pages are provided in Appendix 2.

Table P.1   Case study groups

Group names	Structure and locations	Group aims	Justification for focus
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament	National organization based in London; regional and local groups also studied	Remit includes opposing any war that involves nuclear armed states	Major long-term peace organization. Co-organizers of high-profile national demonstrations

(continued)

Table P.1 (continued)

Group names	Structure and locations	Group aims	Justification for focus
Faslane 365	Steering group based near Faslane naval base; large number of blockading groups drawn nationally and internationally	Year-long campaign of direct action against British nuclear weapons facility. Focused on stopping the renewal of the Trident weapons programme	Not focused on the 'War on Terror' but very high-profile peace movement activism during the research period. Represents direct action focus and autonomous group structures
Justice Not Vengeance	Central group based in Hastings, East Sussex	Producing information on the 'War on Terror', Iraq and civil liberties. Protests focused on UK Parliament	Attained a high profile despite small size. Represents a range of looser networks of non-socialist activists
Muslim networks including: Muslim Association of Britain, Muslim Public Affairs Committee, British Muslim Initiative, Friends of Al Aqsa, Cage Prisoners	A range of structures. Our research began with a focus on groups represented in Leicester, but included national organizations and individuals	Most groups with a broad remit to represent Muslim interests but involved in mobilizing constituents for anti-war demonstrations. Some focused on civil liberties implications of anti-terror legislation and policing	Widely seen as expressing new involvement of a religious and ethnic minority in collective action. Range of groups for study partly determined by changing fortunes and affiliations of organizations during the research period
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	National organization, London base	Denomination of Christianity with a very long history of peace activism since the 17th century. Wide range of campaigning styles	Permanent presence in movements opposing war offers a long-term view. Represents Christian pacifist activism
Stop the War Coalition (StWC)	National organization, London base. Local affiliates (e.g. Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Leicester) also studied	Socialist dominated centre entirely focused on the 'War on Terror'. New political party, Respect, developed from StWC, running on an anti-war platform	Major new anti-war organization from 2001. Co-organizers of high-profile national demonstrations

In selecting groups on which to focus, we were aware of potential for a skewed view of activism resulting from an excessive focus on London. To a degree this is unavoidable since the capital city is indeed a locus of activism, but as will be evident from the table, we took pains to ensure a much broader view. Most importantly, we undertook to examine activism in Leicester, a Midlands city of less than 300,000. Leicester's population includes a relatively large proportion of Muslims, study of whom gave us insight into participants that are especially noticeable because of their ethnicity and previous lack of visibility in public political affairs. We did not adopt the received view that Islam has introduced religion into anti-war activism and additionally chose the Quakers as a case study because here is a group of committed Christians devoted to peace that was established in the 17th century. This helped remind us that religion has long played a role in anti-war activism and one ought not to suppose that it is some recent intrusion brought about in response to the invasion of Iraq. However, despite the considered use of these examples we are aware that we have not, and could not, comprehensively include all in the anti-war movements. In this respect, we acknowledge there is an under representation of feminists, anarchists and performance-based groups and perhaps an over-emphasis upon the more formally organized anti-war campaigns at the expense of these often more fluid networks.

This research was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) under its New Security Challenges programme. Since this is easily misunderstood to be a programme dedicated to investigating threats to society in order that they may be better disciplined, it is important to make clear that we do not see the anti-war and peace movement as a threat to social order. Quite the contrary, we conceive of it as a constituent part of a vibrant democracy that is open to change and redirection. The anti-war movement helps call politicians to account, stimulates and helps clarify debate, critiques the construction of a 'War on Terror' and, perhaps as important, can enable often-marginal groups to engage in and with the wider society. It may be especially worth emphasizing this point since we shall argue in this book that parts of a marginal and minority grouping in British society, that is, Muslim communities, have been able to engage, at least to a degree, in political affairs through involvement with anti-war activism. (But we will also describe a failure to extend and deepen dialogue with such groups that may have been a missed opportunity to further integrate what is in truth a diverse Muslim presence.) In our view the continued marginalization and stigmatization of Muslims, especially the young, actually risks pushing

them into the arms of much more extremist groups who frame their claims in the name of Islam.

It remains for us to set out the structure of this book in summary form. Chapter 1 establishes the wide context of the study, mapping the post 9/11 terrain of the 'War on Terror' that has played a major part in galvanizing the anti-war movement. Chapter 2 considers at length the changing information environment within which the anti-war movement operates. It suggests that the control paradigm that currently dominates media studies of war needs revision, going on to observe the complexity of information circuits that now exist, before suggesting that there has been established an alternative information network within anti-war activism. The central concern of Chapter 3 is with the representations and identities of anti-war groups. Using analysis of their publications and online presence it explores the ways in which groups shape, control and project particular campaign messages by carefully selecting source material. However, these representations were neither as controlled nor carefully strategic as might at first appear. Moreover, such representations were an important part of the construction of a religious identity, especially for Muslims, which was both challenging and contested by anti-war activists.

Chapter 4 details the diversity of the anti-war and peace movement and considers how alliances and coalitions are constructed. We argue that while new media enable anti-war information to move across distances with ease, cooperation requires much more substantive connections, from interpersonal ties to ideological agreement. In this light alliances between Muslim and non-Muslim groups are investigated, as is the relative paucity of grounded interaction and exchange across groups. Chapter 5 concentrates on the national and transnational dimensions of the anti-war movement, demonstrating through hyperlink analysis high levels of transnational exchanges in informational terms. However, when it comes to organization, action and goals, we suggest that the priority of the national – indeed of place – is reinstated. We examine the multiple ways in which local activities constitute, and are constituted by, behaviour and beliefs oriented to national and international levels. Chapter 6 investigates how activists cope with the informational demands they must now encounter, from the effective management of their offices to the stresses of individually handling email messages. We identify filtering processes that are ways of reducing information overload, and reflect on activists becoming caught in what Cass Sunstein conceives as information cocoons. Chapter 7 centres on adoption of information and communications technologies

among anti-war activists. We record heavy use, especially among the most involved, but observe that this tends to be restricted to the ortho-dox capabilities of ICTs, what we term their manifest functionality (e.g. to cheapen costs, to distribute information) as opposed to their latent functionality (e.g. to increase interactivity, to adopt wiki practices in creating information). Finally, Chapter 8 pulls together our findings and arguments. Impatient readers may start there, though they will need to read specific chapters for substance.

Acknowledgements

Anti-war activism is necessarily contentious. So too is writing about the subject. This being so, it is perhaps especially important that we state that we alone are responsible for what appears in the following pages.

Abbreviations

9/11	The terrorist attacks in America of September 11, 2001
ARROW	Active Resistance to the Roots of War
BMI	British Muslim Initiative
CAAT	Campaign Against the Arms Trade
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
ESF	European Social Forum
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
F365	Faslane 365 campaign
FAB	Faslane Academic Blockade
FMO	Federation of Muslim Organisations, Leicestershire
GSM	Groupe Spéciale Mobile
HOPI	Hands Off the People of Iraq
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IHRC	Islamic Human Rights Commission
IMC	Independent Media Collective
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRC	Internet Relay Chat
JNV	Justice Not Vengeance
LCSTW	Leicester Campaign to Stop the War
MAB	Muslim Association of Britain
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MFAW	Military Families Against the War
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MPACUK	Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PDF	Portable Document Format
PGA	People's Global Action
QPSW	Quaker Peace and Social Witness
RNC	Republican National Convention
ROR	Rhythms of Resistance

SMS	Short Message Service
SPT	Stop Political Terror
StWC	Stop the War Coalition
SWP	Socialist Workers Party
TUC	Trade Union Congress
UCU	University and College Union
UFPJ	United for Peace and Justice
UN	United Nations
UoLISoc	University of Leicester Islamic Society
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
Wombles	White Overalls Movement Building Libertarian Effective Struggles
WSF	World Social Forum

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Post 9/11

This book sets out to analyse the anti-war movement in Britain during the opening years of the 21st century. To address this subject adequately we need first to detail the circumstances in which anti-war activism developed over this period. That such activity is shaped by conditions beyond activists themselves is scarcely contentious, since it is obvious that it has waxed and waned depending on broad trends and issues. It would be hard, for instance, to comprehend the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)-led protests during the late 1950s and early 1960s without acknowledging the post-war rivalries of the Soviet Union and the United States, just as the re-emergence of anti-war protests in the early 1980s owes much to the Second Cold War of that time and to NATO's decisions to relocate nuclear missiles across Europe. None of this is to suggest that the anti-war activists, who are our main concern, are merely respondents to external forces rather than pro-active agents of change. Without trivializing the strength of protesters' convictions or organizational efforts, we nevertheless recognize that those beliefs and actions are conditioned partly by their historical situation. For this reason, we begin by setting out the wider contexts within which our subject is situated.

September 11, 2001

The assault on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by 19 Al Qaeda terrorists on the morning of September 11 is of signal importance. The hijacking of four commercial airliners and the crashing of three of them into the Twin Tower buildings and the Pentagon (the fourth hijack appears to have been thwarted by the resistance of passengers and came down in a field in Pennsylvania) claimed almost 3000 lives. The Manhattan incidents – passenger aircraft careering into defenceless offices, their instantaneous

disintegration, the ignition of massive fireballs, the collapse of the gigantic buildings, thousands of terrified and bewildered citizens, dense billowing smoke – were televised in real time and worldwide.

The effects of 9/11 were felt across the globe, but nowhere more intensely than in the United States, the country attacked by unannounced enemies with a declared affiliation to Islam. America is exceptional in being a nation that has long regarded itself, with justice, as invulnerable to enemy assault. Many countries have experienced defeat and enemy occupation, but not the United States. This sense of inviolability has been bolstered over generations by the US being a sanctuary for those fleeing oppression in its many forms. Unsurprisingly, then, the immediate reference point for 9/11 was 7 December 1941, the date of the unannounced attack on the Pacific Fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor in which over 2000 serving men were killed during Japan's declaration of war by surprise attack. The American response to 9/11 was an echo of that made 60 years ago: shock and outrage at violation, followed by rapid mobilization to ensure prompt retribution on the perpetrators.

Shortly after 9/11 the United States declared a 'War on Terror', George W. Bush designated himself a 'War President' and it was announced that 'pre-emptive attacks' on perceived threats would be sanctioned. The invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001 and the overthrow of the Taliban regime that had provided shelter to Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda associates followed from this, as later did the occupation of Iraq in March 2003.

The 9/11 attacks were also catalysts for the anti-war movement in Britain. Stop the War Coalition (StWC), which soon became the major opposition body, was established just weeks after the Al Qaeda assault on the US. From the outset one major driving force behind StWC has been the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party (SWP). With a 30-year presence on the British Marxist left and a fluid membership of around 3000, the SWP was well organized, conscious of the enormity of the terrorist attack and alert to the likelihood of a military reaction from the United States. This made it possible for the SWP to respond quickly and to seize the reins of opposition, though a great deal of this remained inchoate and uncertain in those opening weeks.

Lindsey German, a leading SWP member throughout most of its history, recalled that the SWP hosted a public meeting after 9/11, to which 'a couple of hundred people turned up, though we just called it at a couple of days notice'. Since the usual attendance at an SWP meet might be a dozen or so, here was evident interest and concern about 9/11. Everyone had been shocked by the magnitude of 9/11, and the SWP quickly sensed a groundswell of concern about the likely aftermath.

But it too was unclear about how best to channel this apprehension and interest. Mike Marqusee, soon to play a lead role in StWC, drew attention to the anxiety and energy coming from below, to which even the SWP cadres did not quite know how to react.

> The SWP had a very quick but interesting meeting. . . . And because I was in the network, and we worked closely with the Socialist Alliance, I went to that meeting. What was interesting was that all it was, was a straight up SWP meeting, so it wasn't exactly something that, in ordinary circumstances, anyone would have been interested in. But the hunger for alternative points of view, and frankly also for some community – that you weren't sitting alone in front of this insanity – meant that it was packed out, including obviously with SWP members, and people like myself who had been working with them. I spoke a bit, and different people spoke, and it's interesting because it's still very confused at that point exactly what the perspective was, except we knew we didn't want a war. But people were just, you know, 'what is Islam?' That was not even remotely dealt with at that meeting, and the question of Islamophobia wasn't particularly significant at that point, although everyone knew the backlash danger.[1]

Amid this confusion a second meeting was convened on 21 September by the SWP at the Quaker headquarters, Friends House, on London's Euston Road. At least 2000 people arrived, confirming the groundswell of concern. Lindsey German recalled that 'we were absolutely astonished because we filled the hall upstairs, the school hall, then we had five hundred people out in the streets, all wanting to come to the meeting'. This meeting had been called under the slogan 'Stop the war before it starts', but beyond this there was little sense of direction (Murray and German 2005, p. 47). Nonetheless, from this second gathering an 'organizing meeting' was arranged for a few days hence. Even then German remembers things as 'absolutely insane', since hundreds of people – of diverse backgrounds, experiences and attitudes – came along. Long-experienced participants of peace movements, supporters of a range of far-left parties and students of variable sympathies participated. 'Of all the political meetings I've been to', said German, 'that was one of the most bizarre, because it just involved hundreds of people, some of them heckling, but loads of people with different ideas.'

What was unusual at these early meetings was the presence of Muslims. They were not much associated with political engagement in Britain. There have been one or two prominent Muslim politicians,

some observers might have recalled that angry Muslims in Bradford had burnt copies of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in the late 1980s because it had allegedly insulted Islam, they participated in demonstrations against the first Gulf War in the early 1990s, and others will have remembered Muslim youths participating in the Oldham riots during the spring of 2001. But on the whole, Muslim groups have had a low public and political profile, focusing on their communities and keeping out of issues and areas that might cause controversy. Political activists on the left had little previous experience of this constituency: if any contact existed, it was occasional and with secular Muslims such as the veteran Marxist Tariq Ali. But here were Muslims mobilized in large numbers through apprehension about the likely response to a heinous attack that had been mounted in the name of Islam. Lindsey German voiced a general perplexity: 'loads of Muslims came and we didn't know a single Muslim at the time politically'.

What the SWP did know, however, was that Muslims were a palpable and novel presence at their meetings. German candidly told us that 'the Muslim community really surprised us because we knew nothing about it', but they learnt quickly. StWC was established in the autumn of 2001, and from the outset it worked with Muslim groups, notably from 2003 with the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) and later in conjunction with the British Muslim Initiative (BMI).[2] From its early days StWC campaigned against war and 'against the racist backlash' that it feared would follow a US-led assault on Afghanistan. It was a steep learning curve on all sides; Mike Marqusee recalled 'the naivety that came out' because 'people didn't know that they [Muslims] prayed five times' a day, while many Muslims resented having 'to work with this bunch of fucking crazy lefties'. Meanwhile, German remembered that, having been advised to visit London mosques to build support for an upcoming demonstration, StWC activists found themselves unwittingly turning up during Ramadan observances.

StWC mobilized to oppose the invasion of Afghanistan that began early in October 2001 with British and American forces. The Taliban was quickly ousted and attention soon turned to Iraq. During the following months StWC grew very rapidly as threats to invade Iraq grew in intensity. Indeed, there has been a close correlation between energy and participation in the anti-war movement and the apparent proximity of impending military action following the 9/11 attacks. This was evidenced aplenty in the StWC-organized demonstration in London on 15 February 2003 that galvanized between one and two million people. It was evidenced again on 20 March in a demonstration that StWC called at a few days' notice

of the invasion of Iraq, when between a half and one million took to the streets. As we shall see in more detail later, the SWP maintained a central role in the StWC, not least since it had Lindsey German as convenor from the beginning and could offer the organizational resources vital to large-scale mobilization. This coalition held together an assortment of bedfellows, from committed feminists to Green Party members, from Labour Party Members of Parliament such as Jeremy Corbyn and Katie Clark to trades unionists from the Fire Brigades Union, from CND activists to the veteran parliamentarian Tony Benn. The anti-war movement more generally was even more eclectic and diverse. But surely the most unlikely partnership of all came from the combination of secular Marxists from the SWP and Muslims from the MAB.

Terrorism and war

The 9/11 attacks were a wake-up call both for the United States and for the anti-war movement that was so apprehensive about America's likely response. It is important to register the widespread concern among the anti-war movement about the United States' militarist reaction and, in Britain, about the Blair government's determination to follow steadfastly the American lead. The October 2001 decision to invade Afghanistan and overthrow the ruling Taliban regime and, it was supposed, to capture Osama Bin Laden was widely expected since the Taliban – a fiercely intolerant and repressive theocracy – had sheltered Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda supporters. However, it was the development of a systematic military solution to terrorism, emerging from George W. Bush's declaration of a 'Global War on Terror' and eventually leading to the occupation of Iraq, that stoked anxiety in many who were drawn to the anti-war outlook. We should stress that in this research we encountered no one who condoned the terrorist attacks of 9/11 or who expressed sympathy for jihadists. Doubtless there were fringe players who might have felt that 'America had it coming', but we never heard such voices and they found no expression in organizations such as StWC and CND. However, the rhetoric and reaction of the United States' leadership especially contributed to the disquiet and unease that propelled anti-war activism. One cannot say that this caused anti-war protesters to become active, but a frequent refrain from many was a feeling that President Bush's language inflamed the situation (BBC News 2004).

Few analysts would deny that there is a genuine and growing problem of terrorism in the world today. For instance, the authoritative *Human Security Report* points out that 'international terrorism is the only form

of political violence that appears to be getting worse' with 'a dramatic increase in the number of high-casualty attacks since the September 11 attacks on the US in 2001' (Human Security Centre 2005, p. 2). Since Al Qaeda designated the International Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders in 1998, there have been over 300 major terrorist attacks in some 16 countries, with around 5000 deaths and over 12,000 injuries. The killing of over 200 tourists in a Bali nightclub in 2002, and again in 2005, the massacre of almost 200 travellers in Madrid (when commuter trains were blown up) in 2004 and the London transport bombings of 2005 are among the most dramatic instances of this trend. The invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq may have exacerbated the problem of terrorism and provided a rationale for some perpetrators, but there can be no doubt that terrorism was a troubling reality well beforehand.

These terrorist attacks are matters of grave concern, but we need to discuss here two vital matters: *proportionality* and *appropriateness of response* to terrorism. As regards proportionality we need to recall, even with the latest terrorist outrage at our resorts and cities in mind, that the type of conflict that really does threaten society to its roots – war between and within nations – is in decline and has been so for decades. The *Human Security Report*, for instance, charts a 40 per cent decline in the number of armed conflicts since the early 1990s (Human Security Centre 2005, p. 3). For some this is counter-intuitive since opinion polls record high levels of anxiety about war today, there is considerable awareness of the global arms trade that makes powerful weaponry available for those who seek it and we routinely learn of horrendous atrocities in places as far apart as Congo and East Timor. Indeed, as we explain in the next chapter, the conditions of Information War ensure that publics are made acutely aware of outbreaks of conflict – war as well as terrorist outrages – and raise expectations of further incidents occurring. In addition, there are transnational organizations such as Amnesty International, UNICEF, Human Rights Watch and Médecins sans Frontièrs that make it their business to expose wrongdoing round the world and thereby heighten consciousness of conflict (Brysk 2002).

While acknowledging that security is undoubtedly experienced unevenly across the globe, we nevertheless emphasize that nowadays most people live far safer lives, far removed from military threat or contact, than their 20th-century antecedents. The 20th century was the epoch of terribly destructive wars between countries and their respective allies that called for the mobilization of men and material in defence of the nation on an awesome scale. Eric Hobsbawm (1994), for example,

reminds us that the 1914–45 period may appositely be termed the 'age of catastrophe', since it was characterized by virtually continuous fighting between and within fascist, communist and capitalist nations. In such circumstances young men were called to military service and sacrifice as matters of course, and for lengthy periods total war enveloped them and the rest of their societies.

The death tolls were staggering. Many nations lost between 5 and 20 per cent of their entire populations: from Russia with an estimated 20 million dead between 1941 and 1945, through Korea with losses of between three and four million between 1950 and 1953, to Vietnam with deaths between two and six million in the long wars against France and the United States from the 1950s to 1976. The losses and upheavals from war, occupation and economic waste were crippling, not least in the continent of Europe. Describing a 'war of annihilation' in the East and a 'brutal peace' that followed, Mark Mazower details the enormous scale of death and dislocation that had to be endured between 1939 and 1948: he estimates that 40 million people were killed and even more than that number forced from their homes in what we would today call ethnic cleansing (1998, pp. 216–22). Tony Judt observes a 'collective amnesia' across Europe to the shame and suffering of occupation, collaboration and foul deeds that went with the Second World War, which led to between five and six million deaths from among Europe's eight million Jews in the Holocaust (2005, p. 61).

To write this is not to trivialize the most recent horrors such as the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the atrocities of Rwanda in the mid-1990s, the fighting in Chechnya, the brutal ethnic conflict in Darfur or the quagmire of the Iraq occupation since 2003. But it is to stress that the destructive wars between countries, the catastrophic civil wars that often accompanied or preceded wars between nations in the 20th century, the once-familiar proxy wars fought between the superpowers and the bitter struggles of national liberation fought against the colonialists have radically diminished, and with them has retreated the threat of war.

There are two related reasons for the decline of war: the end of the Cold War (which resulted in the Soviet Union breaking up) and then its constituent parts being integrated, unevenly to be sure, into an increasingly globalized capitalist system. Globalization in all its manifestations – from real-time trading round the world, the spread of tourism and travel, to the development of production and marketing as global operations – contributes to a decrease in the significance of territory, the basic element of the nation state and historically the central concern

of wars between nations. Borders and national sovereignty still matter enormously, of course, but they are undoubtedly of less concern than even in the recent past. This is so much so that Anthony Giddens conceives of 'states without enemies', with armed forces becoming much smaller and risking transformation into zombie institutions that continue without purpose (1994a, p. 235). We may grasp this by a moment's reflection on Europe, the locus of many of the world's most costly wars during the last hundred years, now well on the way to economic and even political integration with 27 member states, open borders and a dominant common currency. Who could imagine the members of the European Union, the likes of France, Spain, Italy, Britain and Germany, again going to war with one another, though they all have fought on an industrial scale, and repeatedly, in the not-so-distant past?

In comparison to the inter-state wars of recent history, the costs of contemporary terrorism are relatively minor matters. Terrorism does not present a total threat to nations' ways of life, still less to the lives of whole populations, though that is exactly what war portended in the past. This is not to deny that terrorism is terrifying and terrible, but by most comparative measures of war, terrorism takes few causalities. However lamentable the innocent deaths, and however reprehensible the perpetrators of terrorism, in the round the numbers are small.

On current figures the chances of a British citizen being killed in a road accident are considerably more than those of being murdered by a terrorist attack, and in the United States, while 3000 perished on 9/11, between 15,000 and 25,000 Americans have been murdered every year over the past two decades, and more than 40,000 are killed annually in road accidents (Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation 2007). We make these points, let us underline, to set the issue in perspective only: we are insensitive neither to the gravity of the problem nor to the ambition that for the most worrisome terrorist groups the intention is to maximize the number of those people whom they set out to destroy. A stark reminder of what is entailed here, should one be required, was revelations from the trial of the Al Qaeda member Dhgren Barot in November 2006. Sentenced in London to 40 years' imprisonment for his part in an Al Qaeda conspiracy, it was revealed that Barot plotted to flood the London underground rail network by exploding a train under the river Thames, a plan, if successful, that could drown thousands of travellers. A further reminder was the warning delivered around the same time at Queen Mary College, University of London, from the outgoing head of MI5, Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, that there were currently at least 30 active service units of Al Qaeda

threatening the United Kingdom. Twelve months after this warning the new head of MI5, Jonathan Evans, estimated late in 2007 that there were around 2000 individuals in Britain who posed a threat to national security and public safety because of their support for terrorism.[3] Few observers can doubt the seriousness of the threat of more terrorist attacks in cities such as London.

Consciousness of these points allows us to observe something of the character of the most threatening form of terrorism to have emerged in recent years, one that responds to, and takes advantage of, processes of globalization that in other ways might encourage peace.[4] Giddens (1994a) refers to the emergence of 'enemies without states' that set out to contest the 'Great Satan' of globalized, secular capitalism, to challenge its cosmopolitanism and individualism, in the name of a fundamentalist creed that seeks to transcend national boundaries in ways that parallel the very thing it contests. This is the milieu of the Al Qaeda ('the base') network, aiming to establish a caliphate in place of the globalized market economy and its plural cultures. It is a terrorist organization prepared to adapt civilian aircraft to wreak destruction in the name of advancing primitive certainties taken from the Qur'ān (cf. Laqueur 1999, 2003; Pedahzur 2005). It is a significantly deterritorialized and networked body that poses serious problems for defence agencies, though the prospects of its overturning the present world order are minuscule (Sageman 2004).

All forms of terrorism are concentrated in particular places where they find circumstances most propitious and where grievances are most manifest (Halliday 2002). Accordingly most have rather specific territorial demands. One might think here, for instance, of Northern Ireland over the course of 30 years and the 'Troubles', of Basque Separatists in Spain or of Palestinians in the Middle East, where the respective groups campaign for a homeland of their own. Militant Islam is also geographically centred in places such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan and Iraq, but what makes it stand out is its transnational networks and its ambition to overturn secular capitalism at home and abroad (Bergesen and Lizardo 2004). Such features make Al Qaeda an uncompromising and ruthless enemy, one to be feared especially were it to gain access to weapons of mass destruction.

This outline of the proportions of the terrorist threat serves as a base from which to question the appropriateness of responses to it. As we know, following the 9/11 attacks the United States declared a 'War on Terror'. While this was a measure of America's determination to resist terrorism, in the judgement of many it was mistaken. A first reason is

that it elevated the stature of radical extremists, boosting their self-belief that they were 'soldiers' engaged in war (Richardson 2006, p. 217). Ken Macdonald (2007), the British Director of Public Prosecutions, has deplored this 'rhetoric of the "War on Terror"', insisting that 'London is not a battlefield. Those innocents who were murdered on July 7th 2005 were not victims of war. And the men who killed them were not, as in their vanity they claimed on their ludicrous videos, "soldiers". They were deluded, narcissistic inadequates.' The corollary of Macdonald's analysis is that 'crimes of terrorism are [to be] dealt with by criminal justice' and that those responsible not be dignified by the terminology of war. Had Osama Bin Laden and his fellow conspirators been defined from the outset as murderous criminals, to be pursued unrelentingly that they be brought to justice, then it is probable that there would have been less apprehension and anxiety around the world. Declarations of war inflated the terrorists and raised the spectre of American military might being used disproportionately.

This brings us to the second problem with declaring a 'War on Terror': war is hard to wage against opponents who reside and operate outside of states. A transnational opponent such as Al Qaeda is not to be overcome in the traditional ways of war that involve attacking an enemy in a given territory. First Afghanistan and later Iraq were invaded because war can be undertaken most readily against identifiable states. Significantly this was the moment during which the term 'rogue nations' came into currency, to label a country that might be attacked because it was harbouring, or one day might harbour, terrorists. US policy by late 2001 was to put 'the world on notice that any nation that harbors or supports terrorism will be regarded as a hostile regime' (White House 2001). America's declaration of 'War on Terror' readily translated into invading other nations in a search for 'regime change'. Such a policy fed into widespread concern about US intentions that deflected attention away from the terrorists to anxieties about American imperial ambitions. This stoked the concern of many, including those in the anti-war movement, which saw in the United States' actions an inappropriate response that increased alarm as Iraq was occupied and insurgency there grew into civil war. British support for America, notably from Prime Minister Blair, meant that the UK too became a focus of attention for protesters who felt that this country was engaged in an illegal invasion of another nation.

A third difficulty with the 'War on Terror' is that it is exceedingly difficult to develop measures of success for such a policy, still less for bringing it to a successful conclusion. The latter was, of course, clearly

evident in the hubristic declaration of 'Mission Accomplished' of the Iraq War by President Bush as early as April 2003. If one cannot identify when terrorism is defeated, then it follows that the prospect of perpetual war must be entertained. By any account this is an unnerving scenario. Commentators began to talk in late 2003 of a generations-long struggle against terrorism being required (Podhoretz 2007). The Former Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski (2007) has expressed concern about such feverish talk, castigating those who voice it as 'terror entrepreneurs' who have encouraged a 'culture of fear' inside and beyond the United States, going on to warn that in consequence the country is 'very susceptible to panic'. This 'culture of fear' has also influenced many in the anti-war movement who see the threat not so much of terrorism but of unbridled state leaders waging war without end.

Changing media domain

All this was communicated and dramatized in a rapidly expanding and changing media domain. Few of us directly experience a terrorist bomb, but enormous audiences watched the unravelling of the 9/11 attacks and the hectic urgency that accompanied the 7/7 suicide attacks on the London transport system. It will readily be appreciated that sense of proportion may soon be lost in an era of round-the-clock reportage, of pervasive media and the compelling importance of the here and now. History and perspective easily fall away as news media focus on the latest explosive occurrence that commands attention. Terrorism and war are highly newsworthy; there is little that is more engrossing and alarming, so there is an understandable engagement of newsmakers with the latest crisis, outrage and threat. Nowadays journalists converge on trouble spots in unprecedented numbers, equipped with technologies that enable them to report back (and see others' interpretations) with a facility hard to imagine even a decade ago (Tumber and Webster 2006).

These are the circumstances of Information War that we elaborate in the following chapter, but it is worth observing here an important contrast with our forebears. Today we have much less direct experience of war than our predecessors, yet we have a massively increased mediated experience of conflict. This is likely to be of major consequence when it comes to public perceptions. Satellite reportage from a conflict zone, delivered straight to camera by a tense and dishevelled journalist, perhaps with interview materials from distraught participants and photographs or even film of carnage, is a commonplace of today's front-line reportage. This is typically followed by contributions from

officials (political spokespeople, ambassadors and the like) in disparate locations and supplemented by commentary and debate from a range of accredited experts. This can do much to heighten awareness of the urgency and seriousness of situations among viewing publics, though they are likely to be far from the actual events. If they are particularly moved, and the issue especially newsworthy, then publics can switch to (and between) rolling news television on CNN, BBC or Al Jazeera. Further still, they may go to websites to garner still more information and exchange commentaries in an interactive creation of yet more interpretation of events.

There has been such an exponential growth of new media in recent decades that many analysts, convinced of their import, set out to gauge the effects of these technologies. We have deliberately eschewed such a *technology impact* approach in this study. It is beyond doubt that the information environment within which conflict and contention operate has been shaped by the incorporation of new media. But since activists engage purposively with the technologies they use – taking them up where the tools offer advantages, adapting or ignoring technologies that offer none – technology can have no constant and exogenous impact on developments within a complex, variegated movement. Rather than seek an isolated 'technology effect', we think it is far better to present in this study the character and dynamism of the contemporary movement, utilizing close observations that necessarily take account of the integration of new media facilities into activism. Accordingly, in this study we try to paint a picture of anti-war activism in Britain, one that allows us to detail ways in which new media have been used, while highlighting the primary colours of a movement that aims to stop war and succour peace.

Neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism

The events of 9/11 and the subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were not the only factors germane to our account. These have been prominent over recent years, but we also need to take some measure of political trends that are of longer duration, namely, the development of neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideologies at the heart of American politics and their spread in a post-Soviet world dominated by the unipolar position of American power.

The end of the Cold War and the increasingly global reach of American capitalism have helped to unleash economic liberalism around the world. President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher found

common cause in deregulation and privatization; policies that became economic orthodoxy as *laissez-faire* principles and practices, for years thought outmoded, again took a grip. Developed liberal democracies in the West demonstrated enthusiasm for private property, business, entrepreneurship, profit and loss and competition; policies whose spread was aided by the accompanying burst of globalization enabled by the fall of Communism and cognate suspicion of collectivist measures. Confidence in neo-liberal economics within financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) furthered that spread as conditions on IMF loans to already indebted developing countries included privatizing state functions, lowering trade barriers and encouraging export-focused enterprise (Stiglitz 2002).

This combination of liberalism and globalization is predominantly thought of in business terms: as financial exchanges taking place on networks that traverse the world, linking London, New York and Tokyo in continuous billion-dollar dealings in stocks, shares and currency trades, as contract details flowing electronically across continents from and between private equity organizations, and as marketing strategies being devised to accord with production plans of transnational corporations. But this is also a process that has vital cultural and socio-political dimensions, ranging from an increasing consciousness of one's own and others' 'globality' to a diminishment of territorial sovereignty. These combinations of economic, cultural and socio-political transformation, though highly variegated, have major consequences for life today (Shaw 2000; Cerny et al. 2005).

At the time when nation states were having their powers denuded by globalizing processes, the US, now the sole superpower, was eager to extend liberalism round the world. One might think that this was largely a matter of self-interest: now that the Soviet opponent had been seen off, the nation that had most championed capitalism and stood to benefit from the opening of markets from its established strength was raring to go. However, there was more to America than business priorities. There was also the conviction, articulated most famously by Francis Fukuyama (1992), that the triumph of the West was proof of the perfection of the capitalist model: the market society was demonstrably superior to its alternatives and it was the only system that could combine rational economics with a liberal democracy that respected the dignity of the individual. We had come to the end of history. By this account all routes now followed American directions. Fukuyama's thesis was important not only because of readers it might have persuaded, but also because it articulated a widespread sentiment among American

leaders that from now on 'there is no alternative'. For many this was to be admired and emulated.

Neo-liberal globalization hardly went uncontested, however. The ink was hardly dry on Fukuyama's celebration of American capitalism before the institutions acting to promote that model elsewhere – the IMF, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum and soon the World Trade Organization – were being besieged by militant and well-organized protest groups. What became known as the anti-globalization movement included an eclectic mix of anarchists, revolutionary socialists, liberal reformists, ecologists, trade unionists and (on some accounts, e.g. Starr 2000) small business protectionists.[5] In common, among such groups, was a recognition that the triumph of capitalism was not identical to its perfection and neither did it herald an unshakeable trajectory.

The anti-globalization protests form an important part of the political context of the anti-war movements studied here. This became clear immediately after 9/11 as many individuals and organizations switched their focus from contesting globalization to contesting the expected military response (*Economist* 2001). An anti-globalization rally planned for 29 September 2001 in New York went ahead, despite the surrounding devastation and continuing shock, as an anti-war demonstration; offering a very clear signal of the shift in focus occurring at that time (Campbell 2001). Anti-globalization groups had become particularly adept at utilizing all the tools offered by the information age to coordinate action across national boundaries and, occasionally, to contest their opponents on the Internet, as well as on the streets. In subsequent chapters we will detail some of the ramifications that this injection of organizational and technical resources had for the present anti-war groups. For now it is enough to observe that while the anti-globalization protests had focused on international institutions, a major and continuing line of critique had taken aim at US dominance in these sites of power. It is unsurprising, therefore, that their attention included both the neo-liberal economics and the developing neo-conservative politics emanating from the US.

America's leaders, adjusting to a unipolar era, were well aware of the challenges presented in an increasingly open and market-driven world. In 1993, Dick Cheney, the then Secretary of Defense, set out a vision for the 'Project for a New American Century', which became a seminal document in neo-conservative policy. Central to this paper were twin concerns of supporting democracy and ensuring the security of American strategic interests. The spread of democracy round the globe was presented as central to long-term American security, with Cheney

envisaging a 'community of democratic nations bound together by a web of political, economic and security ties'. This was set out at a time when commentary frequently argued that no two democracies would go to war; hence, security could be enhanced by encouraging democratic practices (Friedman 1999).

We return to this issue soon, but for the moment elaborate the Defense Secretary's special concern for the security of American interests. This included not just national boundaries but also America's global interests. In articulating a strategy for securing these global interests Mr Cheney made clear the willingness of his neo-liberal administration to adopt deeply conservative security policies, ones that included the option of intervening in other nations' affairs should there be a perceived threat to American interests. As Mr Cheney observed, America 'must maintain the capabilities for addressing selectively those security problems that threaten our own interests . . . and to act independently, as necessary, to protect our critical interests'. A few years later this translated into the doctrine of 'pre-emption' against perceived enemies of the United States.

This is a remarkable amalgam of liberal advocacy and conservative preparedness. The US has certainly developed the military capability to act unilaterally and to strike anywhere it so decides. A central component of the Information War capabilities, in which America leads the world, is the 'revolution in military affairs', shorthand for the digitization of the full range of defence technologies (Cohen 1996). The United States, with a $529 billion budget for defence that accounted in 2005 for 48 per cent of the world's total expenditure in that area, has produced a remarkable array of information and communications intensive technologies that puts it far ahead of all others (SIPRI 2007). Continuing technological innovation and massive investment in command and control systems means that, especially because of dominance of the skies and space, it is beyond military challenge. So long as an enemy is identifiable, if it is attacked by American forces then it will be dispatched in short order, something demonstrated repeatedly over the past 20 years, so much so that Manuel Castells describes those in which the US participates as 'instant wars' since there is such asymmetry of forces that no one is able to mount more than a few weeks of resistance (1996, pp. 454–61).[6]

All this is to say that a liberal ideology may coexist with deeply conservative policies.[7] The United States is a proselyte for liberal capitalism, but it takes care to maintain the military capability to overcome resistance if its perceived interests are put in jeopardy. Nonetheless, should

the United States intervene in others' terrains to protect its interests, as it does frequently, such actions do require legitimation. Without justification on a world stage American actions are readily condemned as self-serving, even bullying, and such perceptions are likely to be damaging to the goal of protecting long-term interests. The United States is militarily supreme and it can, if it so decides, defeat any challenge to its 'hard' power. But the United States must also take care to avoid acting unilaterally and without credible cause if it is to prevail. This is a key reason why US military excursions generally involve coalitions – America dominating what is usefully characterized as a 'unipolar concert' (Ayoob and Zierler 2005).

It is in this milieu that discourses of democracy – as well as associated considerations for human rights – make an important contribution. In the 'New American Century' document the ambition to 'build a democratic security community' is prominent and Secretary Cheney asked for substantiation from those charged to make it. A decade on, following the Iraq invasion in 2003, great stress was placed on the holding of successful general elections there in 2005, with a 70 per cent turnout in the December polls roundly celebrated, though clearly the resultant Shia dominance has been problematic (Caraley 2004). As recently as June 2007 George Bush identified himself with the title 'dissident President' precisely because he regarded it as recognition of his commitment to spreading democracy. Bush (2007) proclaimed that 'democratic dissidents today are the democratic leaders of tomorrow' and would accordingly find succour in a White House committed to the 'ideological struggle' between 'extremists' and those dedicated to democratic values.

This ought not to be dismissed entirely as rhetoric, however damaging have been the experiences of the Iraq occupation and the treatment of prisoners by the Americans at Guantánamo Bay. There has been an undeniable democratization round the world in recent decades that is of major consequence (Held 1995; Diamond 2003). Forty years ago the great majority of societies were authoritarian, while today there are less than 30 per cent that might be so described (Freedom House 2007). It has been an uneven process, but whatever the measures involved (the spread of elections, universal suffrage, plural parties, secret ballots, independent media and so forth) one cannot ignore the real gains in democratic accountability. In Europe alone long-term authoritarian states collapsed in Spain and Portugal in the 1970s and shorter-lived dictatorships were toppled in Greece. In Latin America military dictatorships have given way to democracies in nations such as Chile,

Argentina and Bolivia, once bywords for torture and abuse. The end of the Soviet era has opened up many nations to democracy since 1989, even if the practice is flawed, and some go so far as to argue that the spirit of 1968 has hastened and extended this democratizing ethos into matters of identity and culture (Eley 2002).

Thomas Oleson (2005) remarks that now 'democracy constitutes the ideological core of world order'. It is present in just about every justification that is now made for military intervention in other nations' affairs. This was especially so during the decade of Tony Blair's premiership of Britain from 1997. Throughout his period of office, which saw British military involvement in Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, Mr Blair explained his policies as emanating from a commitment to what he unhesitatingly told Timothy Garton Ash was 'liberal interventionism' (2007). Democracy and democratization are at the heart of this; Blair and his supporters insist, even after three years of setbacks in Iraq, that the 'embrace of democratic values, which do not belong to any race, religion or nation, but are universal, should reinforce our own confidence in those values' (Blair 2006a).

However, the discourse of democracy is not the prerogative of political leaders. Oleson goes on to observe that concern for democracy 'also defines the political terrain of most transnational social movement activism' (2005, p. 109). The anti-war movement endeavours to reclaim the vocabulary of democracy from those who would use it to justify military involvement. For instance, the most prevalent anti-war slogan of 2003 – 'Not in my name' – was translated directly across the globe, representing a democratic insistence that one would not consent to military action in Iraq. Intense debates at the time centred on core questions of democracy: whether the United Nations was the appropriate decision-making forum, whether it is acceptable to overthrow a dictatorial regime and whether a meaningful democracy can be introduced in times of military occupation.

We have entered an epoch that is globalized and marketized, where there is heightened consciousness of citizenship rights and claims, but there is also considerable instability and tension. Towards this the United States responds to protect its interests, while acknowledging and adopting the language of democracy. This very language is taken up by opponents of US foreign policy, notably in the anti-war movement, and turned into a tool to resist American actions. Moreover, this is enacted amid a dense media environment that, if centred in nations, reaches far beyond any particular country. When it comes to armed intervention, politicians and military leaders make assiduous efforts to ensure that

their justifications are transmitted. However, much media are not easily manipulated, nor are they closed to opponents of government policy or limited to national frontiers. The outcome is that media – established and new – are major spaces of conflicts over legitimation and critique. The language of democracy is not the prerogative of any party, and so we see the anti-war movement taking a very active role in all of these arenas.

2
Changing Information Environment

The concern of this chapter is with the information environment of war, its distinguishing features, and ways in which the anti-war and peace movement adapts and contributes to this changing domain. By information environment we mean the full range of information resources available to the public, which may extend from recollections of returning combatants to newspaper reportage, from personal experiences of conflict to satellite television coverage. We spell out how and why this information environment is now significantly different from that found in earlier forms of war. We go on to argue that this provides opportunities for anti-war activists to participate in struggles of representation and interpretation that are a key component of today's Information War.

Information War

A requisite of understanding the changed information environment is appreciation of Information War. This term is intended to characterize major armed conflicts now engaged in by the most advanced powers, notably the US, that far outstrips others in military capabilities (Tumber and Webster 2006, pp. 11–44).

Information War is to be distinguished from Industrial War, the latter depicting many wars of the 20th century that were waged between and within nations, involving the mass mobilization of populations and the harnessing of the entire society's resources for the war effort (Robins and Webster 1999, pp. 149–67). Industrial War generally revolved around territorial disputes. It might be conceived as Fordist War: mass production for war coupled with mass participation and attendant mass casualties as opposing national armies clashed. As a rule the more industrially powerful the nation, the more likely would it prevail in Industrial War (Kennedy 1988).

Premier examples of Industrial War would come from the 1914–18 and 1939–45 periods, but there have been other such wars, for instance, between 1980 and 1988 Iraq and Iran participated in one such territorial dispute that led to over one million combat deaths (cf. Hobsbawm 2007, pp. 15–30). Information received by citizens of nations participating in Industrial War was generally self-censored by journalists who were firmly behind the patriotic efforts of their own country and frequently accompanied their own forces dressed in uniform. Alternative viewpoints would be unavailable to citizens and all news subject to government and military approval.

Information War, usually dated as commencing with the First Gulf War (following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait) in late 1990 and early 1991, is profoundly asymmetrical, conducted by professionalized and high-tech military forces, and lasts only a few weeks or months (Berkowitz 2003). This can be conceived as post-Fordist War that involves relatively small numbers of combatants in highly flexible and mobile groups, has global reach and does not tolerate large losses of its own forces. It has two major dimensions: *weaponry* that incorporates the most advanced computer communications technologies available and a vastly expanded *symbolic realm* where media of all sorts play a vital role. Information War weaponry is exemplified in 'fire and forget' missiles, in 'precision targeting' and in an abundance of air power from which to launch attacks. Information War in its symbolic dimensions is manifest in round-the-clock news reporting, the presence of hundreds and even thousands of journalists in the war zones and in Internet communications ranging from email to weblogs. We may think of these dimensions in Joseph Nye's (2002, 2005) terms of 'hard' and 'soft' power: Information War weapons are hard in so far as they disable and destroy identified enemies; Information War symbols are soft in that they are concerned with meanings and understanding. Both are essential for the conduct of contemporary war, with the former most important in the early stages, though the latter vital if a force is to prevail longer term. Indeed, a recently declassified US Department of Defense (2003) document, *Information Operations Roadmap*, makes clear that capacity to 'fight the net' is a 'core military competency' that requires capabilities right across the spectrum in an 'information-centric fight', from being able to destroy enemy network and communications-dependent weapons to influencing public opinion.

It is not disputed that the leading edge of Information War is the aerospace, missiles and communications technologies that unleash such devastating assaults on identified targets, such as we witnessed during the 'shock and awe' campaign that opened and ended the invasion

of Iraq in March 2003. However, while such weaponry ensures rapid defeat of identifiable resistance, once a territory is occupied by ground troops then invaders are vulnerable to 'insurgency' that can adopt guerrilla tactics such as roadside explosions, suicide bombs and sniping. As Max Boot (2006) put it, 'the most high-tech military force will always remain vulnerable to the less sophisticated but still deadly technology of its adversaries on the ground'. Moreover, in such circumstances the symbolic dimensions of Information War can take on a heightened import since a steady stream of reports of troop casualties and ongoing disobedience readily saps the morale and support of the public whose approval is required for the long-term success of the war. Information War may be lost due to failings on the soft side, even though in strictly military terms the winner is unchallengeable.

The mediation of war

A distinguishing feature of Information War is not just a heightened role for the symbolic, but also the presence of saturation media coverage. War has of course long been newsworthy, but the mediated dimensions of Information War operate on a vastly expanded scale. Coverage is pervasive and continuous on 'rolling news' channels such as CNN and BBC World, and it is present too in email communications, Internet websites and on listserv groups. The most important medium remains television, but it too is transforming with digitization and globalization, to enable a much greater variety and quantity of information about war. This might be contrasted with media in the era of Industrial War. Then media, especially radio and newspapers, were important to the war effort, but they were readily conscripted to the national effort and censored.

We live now at a time in which we are presented with an unceasing diet of news and comment (and entertainment) on the risks of war, of the dangers of 'dirty bombs', of reportage from many parts of the world of new eruptions of unrest and armed conflict. This comes to us round the clock, with rolling news and cable and satellite services ensuring pervasive coverage. It is produced and updated rapidly, it is globalized and it is often in 'real time'. War is unquestionably dramatic, and can draw literally thousands of journalists to report on it (Tumber and Webster 2006).

It is remarkable that, while our parents and grandparents frequently had direct experience of conflict, today we have much greater knowledge of war, but chiefly at a distance (Seaton 2005). We are safer from war than ever, yet we witness it as spectators, often in appalling detail: a kidnapped

victim pleading for his life; children screaming in terror; the hanging of a former dictator (Ignatieff 2000). This mediation of war stands in contrast to the days of mass mobilization of conscripts that pertained in the era of Industrial War when huge numbers of men were compelled to experience war directly as fighting forces and, after eventual demobilization, would be able to narrate their experiences to family, friends and former comrades, making such recollections and reminiscences important sources of knowledge for much of the public. This might be compelling and deeply felt, though of necessity it tended towards particulars of location and service.

In contrast, today there are fewer combatants in Information War, such that it is comparatively rare to personally encounter former soldiers and sailors in 'post-military' societies such as ours (Shaw 1991). However, the astonishing informational output that is available nowadays lets us know far more about conflict – about the planning of campaigns, about their attendant risks, about the consequences of bombing – than the sailor mobilized to the Atlantic convoys during the Second World War, or the 6th Army infantryman encircled at Stalingrad, could ever have imagined. The sailor and infantryman knew well enough what it was to meet the enemy and feel the bitter cold of the Russian winter. But today's media-rich viewer can get instantaneous coverage from many spheres of battle, watch reporters communicating from satellite video phones and then have this digested for its strategic significance by politicians and experts. It is this that we want to emphasize: removed from experience of war, citizens today have much greater informational resources than their predecessors about war and the likelihood of its breaking out. It is these greater informational resources that enable what Anthony Giddens calls the 'intensified reflexivity' of life today (1994b, p. 24).

The control paradigm

We would emphasize the enormous growth and extension of media today. On one level this is simply a matter of drawing attention to the character of media: 24/7 services, transnational news, more television and speedier communications round the globe. But we need also to appreciate that what we understand by media is changing due to the convergence and integration of computing and communications, so much so that any adequate comprehension must come to grips with the mobile communications, the World Wide Web, email, weblogs and cognate technologies. Even established media now require reconceptualization: the *Guardian*

newspaper sells less than 400,000 hard copies daily, but its website, *Guardian Unlimited,* achieved between three and four million electronic hits each day through 2006; the *Times* newspaper makes around 600,000 sales per day, yet the *Times Online* website gets three times that many hits; the BBC's flagship news broadcast at 10 p.m. commands audiences of about 4.5 million, while its website is accessed 20 million times a day.[1] The Internet is the major phenomenon here, which, while its availability is by no means universal, already plays an important role in the ways people become informed about what is happening in their world.

Governments and military forces, being aware that citizens learn about war through media, pay careful attention to managing information. Conscious that public opinion can matter enormously when it comes to war, politicians and commanders assiduously practice 'perception management' (Taylor 1992). They want, as far as they can manage, to have publics receive news and reports that justify their conduct. This ambition is succoured by a conviction that the Vietnam War was lost because a critical media was allowed unrestricted access. Reportage of the burning of villages, exposure of atrocities, and photographs of napalmed children sapped American domestic support for the fight. Beginning with Robert Elegant's (1981) *Encounter* article, 'How to Lose a War', this 'stab in the back' theory developed into a conviction among the military that media were important to the war effort, but were not to be trusted to get on with their jobs unguided, since they might publish stories that were unhelpful and counterproductive. Thereafter military 'planning for war' has always included measures to control information: a preparedness to 'handle' journalists, the grooming of military spokespeople, and 'unfriendly' journalists held at bay. From this follows much documented practices of misinformation, 'minders' chaperoning journalists and photo-opportunity events designed at central command. The extended conflict in Northern Ireland and media coverage during the Falklands War of 1981–2 provided well-documented cases of this information management (Curtis 1984; Morrison and Tumber 1988). The category of 'embedded' journalists who were allowed to accompany fighting units to Iraq during the 2003 invasion is in line with the 'planning for war': such journalists were accredited by the military and were restricted to locations the military controlled. Those journalists who spurned this arrangement, the so-called unilaterals, went without military approval and, it was made clear, without military protection from enemy attack (Tumber and Palmer 2004).

It should surprise no one that those who wage war, yet who must seek public legitimacy, endeavour to put the most favourable gloss on

their conduct and policies. However, media researchers have too readily moved from recognizing this aspiration to working with a control model of information about war that presupposes the military and government are able to get away with it (Glasgow University Media Group 1985; Philo and Berry 2004). Researchers in this mode might undertake, for example, content analysis of newspaper and television reports, demonstrate that there are patterns to reportage and conclude that most of these prioritized government and military spokespeople. The conclusion is easily reached that citizens are informed inappropriately because media are disproportionately influenced by military and government sources.

Such research can produce important results (Hallin 1986; Robinson et al. 2005; Bennett et al. 2007), but it meets numerous objections. One is that it is difficult with such an approach to take into account the relative importance of stories. It might be that, day after day, official press releases are major sources of news. But it is hard to believe that several weeks of such has anything like the consequence of, say, the leaked photographs of prisoners being tortured and abused by American guards at Abu Ghraib in Baghdad, during the spring of 2004, or the video footage of the beheadings of kidnapped victims released by insurgents that year. The control model also too easily ignores the significance of unanticipated events that may throw awry the functioning of control processes – perhaps the untoward bombing of an air raid shelter, the resignation of ministers protesting government policy or the shooting of one's own military in circumstances of 'friendly fire'.

But the most telling criticism of the control paradigm is that it is outmoded. Instead of control, one might better conceive the information environment of war and conflict nowadays as chaotic, certainly as more confused and ambiguous than might have been possible a generation ago (McNair 2006). Among the reasons for this is the resistance of many journalists to being controlled and their deep-seated scepticism towards all sources, something that is bolstered by the presence in war zones of reporters from many corners of the globe such that patriotic pleas to 'support our boys' may fall on deaf ears. It is exceedingly hard for the military and governments to control a large and diverse group of correspondents who set out from the presumption that all sources are trying to manipulate them (Tumber and Webster 2006). Not only this, journalists are increasingly equipped with a range of equipment that both enables them to report more or less immediately, with little entourage, and simultaneously offers access to huge repositories of alternative information from the Internet or from their offices back home. Furthermore, the development of transnational satellite and cable television mean that audiences have

much more differentiated information sources than were possible just a few years ago (Calhoun 2004). The increased availability of the Internet to ordinary citizens, bringing along weblogs, emails, electronic versions of newspapers and periodicals, video clips and websites, means that any idea of information control being readily achievable from conflict zones must be jettisoned. To be sure, it is striven for, but the information domain is so febrile, extensive and open that control is at best an aspiration.

It is necessary to conceive of a much more expanded and differentiated information environment than hitherto. Publics are receiving their information on war mediated, but mediation is now considerably more ambiguous. It comes quicker than previous forms (even instantaneously), it is less predictable, much denser and more diverse than before. To say this is not to suggest there is a full pluralism operating in the media realm, but to insist that space has opened up in a vastly expanded realm (Castells 2007).

This requires us to question, from the outset, any narrow definition of what constitutes the media. It is no longer enough for researchers to start and end with television, radio and newspapers in analyses of content; we must insert the web, email and even the iPod. Scholars need to acknowledge that we are 'engaged in the first war in history . . . in an era of emails, blogs, cell phones, blackberrys, instant messaging, digital cameras, a global internet with no inhibitions, hand-held video cameras, talk radio, 24-hour news broadcasts, satellite television. There's never been a war fought in this environment before' (Rumsfeld 2006). This does not deny the mediation of war, but it complicates it to a remarkable degree. Those who wage war have acknowledged the change (Department of Defense 2003). Similarly, Tony Blair, British Prime Minister for a decade from 1997, appreciates that 'twenty-five years ago, media reports came back from the Falklands [during the 1981–2 war with Argentina] irregularly, heavily controlled', but nowadays Internet sites allow 'straight into the living room . . . gruesome images [that are] bypassing the official accounts'. As such, this 'transforms the context within which the military, politics and public opinion interact' (Blair 2007). It is time media researchers also recognized this.

An alternative information environment?

The information environment around war, and the threat of war, might best be conceived as one of symbolic struggles between various agencies: national governments, military forces on all sides, transnational media organizations, concerned non-governmental organizations and so on.

These compete for time, for news agendas and for interpretations of events in a complicated but relatively open arena. Significantly positioned within these symbolic struggles is the anti-war movement. It strives to ensure that its perspective gets access to media in various ways, from organizing enormous and colourful demonstrations that may be coordinated across the world and be compellingly newsworthy to presenting journalists with briefing papers setting out coherent, evidenced opposition to those who wage war. It also adopts a panoply of new information technologies in the struggle to ensure that its views get a platform.

We return to the relation of the anti-war movement with established media below, but we would stress here that the changed and changing information environment means that we need to think beyond a settled media in which movements are reported upon. The changed information environment has allowed the anti-war movement to create its own media, even to establish what might be considered an alternative information environment. The web maintainer and office manager of StWC, the dominant umbrella organization in the UK since its inception late in 2001, described this to us. Like several of his co-activists, he feels that the anti-war movement receives poor coverage in more mainstream media. He complains that 'there are fewer and fewer oppositional voices available in mainstream media; everything seems to be filtered through government and establishment journalists'. He described StWC's Newsletter – which goes to around 20,000 subscribers via a listserv; the organization estimates that it reaches twice that many since many recipients forward copies to friends, allies and other listserv groups – as an important element of an alternative information network for campaigners. It appears fortnightly or so, though in periods of intense activity more frequently, and it offers a digest of key issues, comment on topical matters and hyperlink connections to other sources of information. Given that he believes that 'some of the previous sources have deteriorated badly', it is little surprise to hear him declare that 'we're continually saying it, thank god for the internet'. One suspects that this sentiment is shared by Tom Feeley, producer of the daily electronic newsletter *Information Clearing House* that circulates from Southern California to subscribers across the world offering 'News you won't find on CNN or Fox News'. During 2006 Feeley's website received around 200,000 daily hits.

Our informant with Internet responsibilities at StWC is an experienced political activist, a former teacher with technical and communication skills and an eye for design, whose early retirement allows him to dedicate considerable time to anti-war activism. He told us that 'it's

very difficult to get mainstream media to relate to us at all. . . . I don't expect anything from them [the media] anymore. So if we get something that's just a bonus. And the reason why it doesn't trouble me anymore is because we do definitely have our own networks, which is not just in Britain, they're international.'[2] His working day begins around 6 a.m. when he does an online review of 'a whole series of websites that I always look at for information', which he then uses to update StWC's website. He is attuned to what Thomas Rochon calls 'critical communities': the producers of non-establishment analyses whose power relies on 'the extent that their ideas are taken up by wider social and political movements' (1998, pp. 23–5). Movement organizers like our StWC informant can raid the critical ideas provided by such sources, making information supportive of StWC's priorities available on its website and thereby increasing its potential audience.

Tony Benn, President of StWC, responding to the suggestion that the Internet allowed an alternative information environment stated crisply: 'Absolutely correct'. Asked to elaborate Benn seconded the criticism of mainstream media, particularly the BBC:

> Well I wrote to Helen Boaden, who's the Head of BBC News . . . and I took a memorandum to her and I said, "Look the least you could do is to treat the peace movement with the same respect that you treat the environmental movement [or] the Make Poverty History movement and just report it", but they don't. They just don't want it. And it's Hutton that terrorized the BBC.[3] The BBC are terribly nervous and frightened . . . it's amazing that when you think everything we ever said about the war was right. We're the last people they think of asking about it because the greatest offence in politics to be a bit ahead of your time: that is unforgivable.

Exasperation with mainstream media is a common theme among anti-war activists, but for some it is now less of an issue because the movement has its own information networks. Here, for instance, is an extract from the 4 October 2006 Newsletter of the StWC commenting on a demonstration it had organized that was held in Manchester at the Labour Party annual national conference.

A DAY TO REMEMBER: 23 SEPTEMBER 2006

While the newspapers showered Tony Blair with praise for a speech of breathtaking dishonesty and deception (see http://tinyurl.com/

gklmw, if you can stomach it), they gave hardly any coverage to the event which brought up to 50,000 protestors from across Britain to Manchester on the eve of the Labour conference, calling for an end to the Bush/Blair wars and opposing the replacement of Trident nuclear weapons, the cost of which is now predicted to be £75 billion. . . . Only on the internet will you find a full record of this memorable day of protest that filled the streets of central Manchester and surrounded the G-Mex Centre, where the Labour conference was held. FOR A SELECTION OF REPORTS, PICTURES AND VIDEOS, INCLUDING FILM OF ALL THE MAIN SPEAKERS AT THE TIME TO GO RALLY, SEE: http://tinyurl.com/pp7vn.

In this instance we see, absolutely clearly, the utilization and promotion of an alternative information environment related to war. In criticizing the mainstream media, and in promoting alternative sources, this StWC Newsletter simultaneously adds material to that wider information environment.

If StWC's estimates of the number of people its newsletter reaches are at all close to the mark, then such messages speedily offer a potential challenge to mainstream accounts. Our informant at StWC described a further example. He was being interviewed a few weeks after the arrest in August 2006 of over twenty Muslims in the UK on suspicion of planning terrorist attacks on aircraft by smuggling bomb-making equipment aboard. He pointed out that there has been widespread media coverage of the arrests, but little criticism of the action. He suggested that this could be challenged through Internet resources: 'there's a whole climate of truth mainstream media has created that we feel we have to counter and the people who we're in contact with are really pleased that we do counter it and put it on our website. . . . You know you get this massive media thing, you get [arrests of suspects]. They're often charged, they go to court, nearly every case so far is thrown out, but when it's thrown out the media doesn't [provide retractions] . . . So initially there's this massive thing like we've got now. Now that type of thing, you respond to those things via the internet and you find the best information is via the internet.'

Mike Marqusee, press officer for a time with StWC, drew attention to the circumstances that impelled StWC towards the Internet. 'In that first year' of 2002, he recalled, 'it felt very much like our point of view was completely excluded from the mass media'. Consequently, the 'circulation of articles and comment pieces . . . around the internet played a huge role [because] people were really hungry for [anti-war

information]. . . . We set up Media Workers against the War . . . all kinds of young people, many of whom were not journalists, but were just working on websites.' Lindsey German, the StWC convenor, echoed this when she said that she felt many readers of the StWC's website were in search of information that went beyond reports of events to opinion and analysis. She had spoken of the difficulties of StWC getting a presence on mainstream media, and she looked to the Internet to provide a venue for further critical accounts: 'it's not just checking events, I think a lot of people now read [the website] to see what's going on . . . we put a lot of articles on ZNet and all that sort of thing, and they're popular, people read them. So I think a lot of people do get it for information.'

Mediated politics

Today's enlarged information domain provides opportunities for dissident views, but it has grown while another traditional informational source appears to have diminished. There has been a perceived decline among many older activists of the traditional public meeting, where politicians and activists would come together with interested citizens and discuss matters of the moment. Public meetings still play a vital role in campaigning, but an older informant at StWC recalls a time when there were more such occasions where interested parties could be exposed to alternative information rather than mainstream media. He remembers that, a few years back, 'I would go to a public meeting and there would be brilliant speakers who would give you a context . . . There was more, if you think back, not so long ago . . . in London there were dozens and dozens of bookshops and different organizations producing pamphlets, most of that's gone . . . You could go to meetings all the time, the whole range, but a lot of that's gone.' He reminisced about an older generation of politicians and activists who prioritized public meetings as the prerequisite of mobilization, and he still recognizes the value of this method of getting people involved. Public meetings, rallies, conferences and the like indeed remain the 'bread and butter' of StWC, with face-to-face engagement being crucial for effective mobilization. But he also regards the Internet now as a key to informing and organizing. This is in accord with Manuel Castells who coined the term 'informational politics' to emphasize that parties and activists must be committed to new media or condemned to 'political marginality' (1998, p. 312). In so far as most people are conscious of war, nowadays this comes through media. Necessarily, opponents of war must compete in that domain.

Information circuits

The majority of the anti-war groups and organizations now have websites that, relatively cheap to set up and maintain, were unknown a decade ago (Pickerill, 2003). The websites contain varying amounts and qualities of information, but typically provide a statement of principles, news and comment as well as links to cognate organizations. They are a first port of call for those wanting to know more, often bypassing secondary information sources such as newspapers. The sites generally offer facilities that allow readers to sign up to a listserv, so that they may receive email messages that will keep them up to date direct from the group. Moreover, many anti-war groups participate in the construction of independent media networks, such as Indymedia, which strive to offer autonomous and self-sustaining reportage from the frontlines of protest. Indymedia has an international presence with a proliferation of local, regional and national based collectives (Pickerill 2007).

While elements of an alternative information network are in place, there remain complex connections with established media – itself transforming in significant ways – that testify to what Manuel Castells describes as 'coexistence and interconnection of mainstream media, corporately owned new media, and autonomous internet sites' (2007, p. 252). No one ought to imagine that there are serious moves from the anti-war movement to abandon mainstream media, however dissatisfied activists may be with the coverage they are given. For one thing, the mainstream media has to be engaged with since that is what most people observe. For another, the anti-war movement lacks the newsgathering resources of media institutions, so perforce it must use these to glean much information. It is rather that opportunities to complement established media are being sought in changing circumstances. Accordingly, efforts to gain favourable coverage and get access for their movement are made alongside the construction of alternative information outlets.

To better appreciate the current information environment we need to take cognizance of the information circuits that flow between different media, groups and actors. In the following paragraphs we distinguish several sorts of circuitry.

1. Information flows from established media to the anti-war movement

It is a commonplace that interest in a subject makes people eager to seek out information. Accordingly anti-war campaigners read the press

and watch television news. They are hungry for news and comment about conflict and seek it out in a range of media through, for instance, quality newspapers on the liberal end of the spectrum, such as the *Guardian* and the anti-Iraq War *Independent*. Other activists noted that the breadth of sources they consulted had widened (to include outlets such as Al Jazeera) as they became more attuned to the necessity of a media critique. So rather than abandoning sources, they widened the plurality of information they accessed.

This is not simply a matter of activists reading particular newspapers. StWC's website, for example, presents through hyperlinks many articles taken from mainstream as well as oppositional periodicals. Heavily used in this respect is the *Guardian* newspaper's electronic version, *Guardian Unlimited*, which allows free use of materials. One might also note that a considerable number of anti-war supporters figure regularly in some of the mainstream media; John Pilger, Robert Fisk, Andrew Murray and Gary Younge are prominent examples. These tend to congregate in the pages of the *Guardian* and *Independent*, but are often then circulated around websites and listservs of anti-war movement groups, where campaigners can readily access them.

Tom Shelton, a web designer at CND, points out that this allows access to particular mainstream reports of which anti-war activists are likely to approve, while at the same time to bypassing the original sources, since pertinent issues may be incorporated onto anti-war websites. Thus Shelton can say that 'my own main source of information is the internet' since 'I don't read a paper regularly'. He explains that at CND there is a daily roundup of the media by someone whose responsibility it is to collate information in electronic form for effective use by CND activists. That person 'browses the web, collates all the daily news that happens related to nuclear issues . . . and sends it round as a bulletin with a series of links and a few bullet points about the content of the article to our staff and to our officers'. Such an arrangement means that media can be drawn upon for specific items without it being necessary to attend to the whole product.

The flow of information to the anti-war sites extends to collating government reports and publications in documents and articles authored by activists. Milan Rai of Justice Not Vengeance (JNV) produces briefing papers that he distributes to a listserv of around three thousand subscribers.[4] 'All the sources', he explains, 'are completely mainstream', being 'either mainstream newspapers or government reports or reports from establishment bodies like Chatham House'. The purpose of this is to provide campaigners with 'a set of credible sources with which to argue against current propaganda', such that 'someone who is a bit

sceptical about what you're saying can go and check out the sources and see that's the *Daily Telegraph*, 20 August, page two, and, if they want to, they can go and look it up and they'll discover that you've given the information as it is recorded in the mainstream'.

2. Information flows from anti-war movement activists to mainstream media

There is a clear power asymmetry between movement activists and mainstream media since even a large demonstration or rally may not be reported (Carroll and Ratner 1999). This is clearly one root of the distrust in the media described above. In such circumstances the movement adopts various tactics that help get its message across into the mainstream, from cultivating contacts with sympathetic journalists to ensuring high visibility by, for instance, designing eye-catching displays and memorable slogans (for more detail see Chapter 3). For instance, a national demonstration was held in London on 5 August 2006 to protest against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. StWC had organized the demonstration around the theme of 'Unconditional Ceasefire Now' with publicized backing of distinguished figures such as artist Antony Gormley and broadcaster Anna Ford. Clearly attempting to stage a highly symbolic and media-friendly event, StWC urged demonstrators to bring along children's shoes to deposit (at Downing Street according to early publicity, but actually at the Cenotaph which is close by) as a symbol of innocent lives being taken by Israeli actions.

The relationship between mainstream media and activists includes local press, which can often be more receptive to reporting small-scale actions, even if it may do so unsympathetically. In Leicester the *Leicester Mercury* have, at times, provided significant space for reporting anti-war actions, including commentary from activists. At other moments the same newspaper has ignored movement activities completely (Taylor 2007).

The amount of influence anti-war protesters have is limited, not least because they lack financial resources and expertise in public relations. Lindsey German of StWC contrasted the 'very, very slick PR operation' of three wealthy former employees of National Westminster Bank who were facing extradition to America on charges of financial malfeasance during the summer of 2006 with StWC's much more modest endeavours. She admitted that 'it's very hard to punch your weight in that area unless you've got high flying professionals'. Nevertheless, in the current period the fact that two national newspapers (the *Daily Mirror* and the *Independent*) editorially support the anti-war movement does mean that

considerable amounts of sympathetic coverage are ensured. Thus on the day of the 5 August 2006 demonstration the *Independent* newspaper (a quality daily of just under 300,000 circulation) supported it with a full front page full of mug shot photographs that featured esteemed individuals (e.g. John Mortimer the playwright/lawyer as well as teachers and academics) wearing a tee-shirt – designed by Kathleen Hamnett, the well-known fashion designer – proclaiming 'Unconditional Ceasefire Now'. Moreover, in a marketing-style tie in, the newspaper announced that t-shirts could be bought for £3 plus a voucher from the *Independent* at the 5 August demonstration.

3. Websites, weblogs and interactivity

These areas of the Internet readily service the alternative information networks of the anti-war movement, but some observations on their relationships to established media might be made. We have observed above that activist groups routinely cull the established media for information that they then collate on their own electronic sites as a service for supporters. Here we develop this point to include more recent matters. As a preliminary, we might note the novelty of the Internet as a widely accessed information network. Just a decade ago the World Wide Web was in its infancy, emails primarily used for business and discussion groups and chat rooms little used. Now websites are prevalent in the anti-war movement, and these often include features that enable readers some interactivity with the organization. Blogging has grown very rapidly, especially since 2004, so much so that a Harris poll in Britain reported that 40 per cent of Internet users (who are about 70 per cent of the population) read a weblog (Gibson 2006). The Pew Research Centre estimates that 90 per cent of weblogs allow readers to respond, hence integrating interactivity into the process (Lenhart and Fox 2006, p. 20).

These developments, still inchoate, merit comment in relation to traditional media, not least because journalists are informationally insatiable and avidly seek out sources. As such, we ought not to be surprised to come across materials from websites finding their way into the mainstream. For instance, when Tony Blair admitted on a television talk show that he prayed and would be answerable to God for his Iraq policy, the mother of a soldier killed in that country, Pauline Hickey, wrote a commentary on the StWC website. Later this piece was reprinted in the *Guardian* newspaper (Hickey 2006). Such a direct relationship is rare, but it is clear that journalists keep a close eye on the Internet and its traffic. As such they are among the more avid readers of weblogs (and many journalists,

especially among the commentariat, maintain their own websites) and this can influence what they write. For instance, during the summer of 2006 when Muslims were arrested in Britain on terrorism charges, Polly Toynbee noted in her *Guardian* column that 'the internet hummed with theories that this was all a plot to deflect attention from Lebanon' (Toynbee 2006). Newspapers such as the *Times* and *Guardian* now also offer reviews and comments on websites and weblogs. In addition, some – notably the *Guardian* – have websites that allow readers to contribute to discussion. The *Guardian*'s site, *Comment is Free*, is interactive, featuring articles that are accompanied by often-lengthy reader contributions. Even the BBC, Britain's most used website, enables readers to comment on news items. Consequences of this interactive capability have yet to be assessed, but we may be confident that it is of significance.

From a different angle, some weblogs can be a form of journalism that is itself newsworthy. For instance, weblogs from Baghdad have provided insight into conditions and experiences where journalists cannot easily go. Not surprisingly, these sites are frequently visited, reported on in traditional media and on occasion produced in book format (Riverbend 2005).

In addition, though the YouTube facility – considerably easing the process of uploading and displaying digital video – became available only in 2005, by late summer of 2006 the anti-war movement was using it extensively to further its cause. Accordingly, by early 2007 StWC were hosting clips of speakers on YouTube after major rallies and demonstrations. This was not restricted to political speeches. For instance, around February and March 2007, StWC used YouTube to promote a spoof of Tony Blair, in the guise of his student rock band the Ugly Rumours, singing the song 'War (what is it good for?)'. The StWC website allowed users to buy the record online while the StWC Newsletter urged sympathizers to do this so the record could enter the pop charts and further embarrass the Prime Minister in expected publicity. The issue of 25 February 2007 was blunt:

> For just £1.50 you could get a Prime Minister into the charts with a song for peace, but of course we want to do more than embarrass Tony Blair. We want his warmongering in Iraq and Afghanistan to end immediately. We want to help stop plans to attack Iran. We think Tony Blair should be held accountable for war crimes. Getting the spoof Blair record into the Top 10 can play apart in publicising the anti-war message, which represents the view of the majority of this country who oppose the Bush-Blair wars.

Please buy WAR – WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? now and encourage as many people as you can to do the same.

What this amounts to is that the information environment now instances significant traffic between and across traditional media and the anti-war movement. There is appropriation from the mainstream media, contributions made more or less directly to that media, and, with new media especially, possibilities of amplification, challenge and discussion through interactive features and the growth of the blogosphere. While a good deal of these developments enables an autonomous information network to be constructed, it is also clear that the anti-war movement connects with established media in significant ways. To emphasize, none of this ought to be interpreted as suggesting that we now have an even plurality of voices; official spokespeople still get the lion's share of attention and it is rare for the anti-war movement actors to set the news agenda. It is simply that the information environment is now considerably expanded and possessed of more possibilities of participation than traditional media, and scholars need to acknowledge this fact (Coleman 2005; Castells 2007).

Beyond mediation, beyond the virtual

We have emphasized that nowadays war is a mediated experience for most people, and that symbolic struggles are a striking feature of today's Information Wars (Tumber and Webster 2007). But mediation is by no means all there is about war nor is it the whole story of the anti-war movement in Britain. This is so for two reasons. First, activists' sense of the harsh realities of warfare for its victims is highly motivating for their desire to shift government policy. The symbolic struggle can only be a means to an end. Second, activists are keenly aware of the importance of place in mobilizing opposition to policy. The value of mediated communication is, of course, that it offers the potential to transcend distance, yet it cannot do so entirely since it lacks the character of embodied, situated interaction.

Exposing people to anti-war perspectives is necessary but not sufficient to achieve policy change. The *New York Times,* in an editorial of 31 August 2006 underscored this, arguing that while a 'majority of Americans now say they oppose the (Iraq) war', it is difficult to find this publicly expressed in marches and vigils. 'Bloggers say there is an anti-war movement online', says the *New York Times,* but 'it takes crowds to get America's attention'. It is cheap to set up a website and it takes little

effort to sign up for an email petition, so not surprisingly electronic campaigns that remain in the realm of the virtual are of limited consequence (Chadwick 2006, p. 121). It is because of this that our informant with Internet responsibilities at StWC castigates those who do appear to regard anti-war campaigning as solely a matter of mediation. He criticizes 'people who see [the internet] as the end in itself. There are lots of people actually campaigning who submerge themselves into it completely . . . I know individuals whose whole life is producing their weblogs, but they're not related in any way to anything that goes on, on the ground, so I don't know the point.'

Acknowledgement of the importance of mediation to contemporary warfare should not lead us into the trap of mediacentrism. In Britain most anti-war campaigners endeavour not just to change consciousnesses, but also to change policies by mobilizing opposition to war. It will use new media more or less adroitly, for example in terms of coordinating members more effectively or marshalling sympathizers more speedily (Juris 2005). In Chapter 7 we examine the wide range of possibilities for doing so. At this point we can indicate that the great weight of new media use is directed primarily at organizing protest itself. David Gee from the Society of Friends, for example, explains that 'if there is an attack on Iraq or on Iran . . . we instantly have the infrastructure there to mobilize the entire Quaker network. There'll be somebody in every meeting, in all those 400 odd meetings, that will have access to the internet, at least one person I would have thought, who can quickly look, and it'll be on the home page of the Quaker site. . . . There'll be a whole list of things you can do, a briefing, so instantly we can mobilize the whole Quaker community in that case.'

Another way of putting this is to say that to be adequately understood the anti-war movement needs to be situated in a wider frame than media. The priority of influencing policy by mobilizing opposition is one major dimension of this. Others include campaigning during a period of involvement of US and British military forces in an unpopular war in Iraq, apprehension about international terrorism, concerns about and within Muslim communities regarding Islamism and the distinguishing characteristics of the groups that make up the anti-war movement in Britain (Meyer and Corrigall-Brown 2005).

For all the talk about living a mediated existence, and of virtual relationships increasing in importance, we need to remember that people also live in real places and interact, for the most part, with real-life human beings. Their outlooks are not merely formed by virtuality, but also by matters such as biographies, experiences and political

circumstances. The significance of this for the anti-war movement in Britain is that, despite widespread adoption of new media, one is struck by the ways in which places and people root the movement and shape its actions (Taylor 2007). We may exemplify this with a series of examples:

It is striking that the anti-war movement, while it utilizes the Internet to draw upon transnational information sources in putting together its websites and assorted documents, remains emphatically oriented towards the national, and even more local, scenes (see Chapter 5). Thus while the Internet specialist at StWC starts the day by scanning sites around the world to update its website, he stresses that StWC is 'a campaigning organization' and that this necessarily means materials are oriented to mobilization of members for demonstrations and protests of one sort or another. Politics remain predominately nationally organized, so campaigners need to focus where they have maximum effect. Kate Hudson, Chair of the CND, observes that 'in Britain, working on a national level, the internet doesn't fundamentally change anything . . . Communication on certain things can be much easier, and access is quicker. But I don't think it changes how we do things politically, because the most crucial thing is a political approach through forging alliances with different organizations.' This is a salutary reminder to those who imagine the anti-war movement to be an intensely global phenomenon.

It is with this concern to ensure that local activists' interests were addressed that the person responsible constructs the StWC website. He is conscious that activists need timely and pertinent materials to argue and debate with members of the public. This priority meant that however interesting the articles he finds on his daily review of websites, many are rejected because they do not fit with 'giving [activists] the information that they need in terms of whatever level they're at, how they're involved in the campaign that we're organizing'. This also explains how and why he wrote the StWC Newsletter. He endeavours to provide convincing arguments and information to persuade members of the public whom activists will encounter in their campaigning. As he put it, 'it was always the people on the streets and they're talking to people, what are the arguments that they're going to face. For example, [StWC] used to have two very closely linked slogans, which were "Don't Attack Iraq" and "Freedom For Palestine". Now "Freedom For Palestine" actually raises quite a lot of questions as a slogan, and it is much more problematic to deal with than "Don't Attack Iraq", which is straightforward. So what I used to do through the newsletter and through leafleting was to use the arguments to help people.'

Another factor that fixes anti-war organizations in the local is their membership base. The degrees of internationalism vary between organizations, with a highly disparate, networked group like Women in Black towards one end of the spectrum and local anti-war groups in a city such as Leicester at the other. However, even an international organization such as the Society of Friends, with offices on mainland Europe as well as Britain and the US, was pulled by the local concerns of their membership base which is chiefly in the US and UK.

There may also be a part played here by disposition, as explained to us by Martina Weitsch who works in Brussels for the Quaker Council of European Affairs. Though there were links with North America, she said that 'in terms of coordination, there isn't any because most Quakers see themselves as individuals who happen to come together as a group'. There is a strong ethos in Quaker doctrine of personal responsibility, of bearing witness and following one's conscience. Associated with it is a preference for personal meetings, something one officer at Friends House in the Euston Road explained as Quakers being 'much more about getting together as people. They're not really natural bloggers . . . they don't sit in front of the computer, they'd much rather go out and meet people and talk to people. I don't even think five years from now that will have changed a lot. I think probably there will still be that sense of let's get together, physically, and talk about this; why would you do this in cyberspace when you could actually go down the road and see these people?'

When one considers the Muslim role in the anti-war movement, then the question of the location of activists appears especially important. In Leicester, the Muslim population of approximately 30,000 (dominated by those from an Indian background, with a few descending from Somalia, Bangladesh and Pakistan) and their 22 mosques are concentrated in the east of the city, specifically in the areas of Highfields and Spinney Hills (Leicester Council of Faiths 2002). Place and community are vitally interconnected: 'we've got a really big population of Gujurati Muslims around Highfields. If you go towards St Matthews . . . we've got a really big Somalian community now. We do still have, if you just pass University Road, a predominantly Bengali community. We all seem to keep our old traditions going and live with people we know. There's not that many Pakistanis here. . . . about 70% of the Muslim community in Leicester is Gujurati from India' (Yaqub Dadhiwala, University of Leicester Islamic Society). In such circumstances it is not surprising that anti-war activists, living close by one another and with the mosques and community centres as frequent meeting points, appear to have less need for Internet technologies. Proximate living means people interact interpersonally

rather than virtually. For the same reason, political concerns, despite the ethnic origins of so many, have a decidedly local flavour.

With regard to Muslim participation in the anti-war movement it might also be observed that the local mosque and Imams appear to play a key role in organizing and motivating. For instance, Chris Goodwin of the Leicester Campaign to Stop the War (LCSTW) said that when her group tried to organize events involving Muslims, leafleting mosques tended to be unproductive. Those who are sensitive to this dynamic can utilize it strategically. For instance, a leading activist from Birmingham, Salma Yaqoob (2003), made a cognate point when writing about StWC's conscious strategy to increase Muslim involvement by courting the Mosques and their congregations: 'In order to involve as many people as possible the Muslims within the coalition asked cooperative Mosques . . . to provide funding for coaches to leave from the less active Mosques. By having departure points from these different Mosques we hoped for an expectation to be created within the congregations that these Mosques would participate in any future anti-war activities and demonstrations. A few demonstrations down the line, congregations did indeed expect their own Mosques to actively support anti-war activities and provide transport, which eventually happened across increasing numbers of Mosques.'

Conclusion

In this chapter we have emphasized that, in conditions of Information War, war for the vast majority is a mediated experience. Necessarily, then, those who wage war and those who oppose it enter vigorous symbolic struggles to win the support of the public. Government and the military need to find legitimacy for the wars they wage, to which end they endeavour to manage information flows concerning the progress of conflict. At the same time, an important element of this legitimacy is that the public have a right to know what is being done in its name, a principle that assists journalists in their quest to report war, even where this might embarrass and annoy government and military information managers. The shifting, complex nature of this information environment belies any attempt to present the soft side of Information War as simply a matter of establishment of control of news.

Into this mix one needs to place anti-war activists who endeavour to persuade the public that government and military policies are wrong. The movement finds significant space for its messages, partly through finding allies in left-leaning newspapers, and partly because its sheer

size has ensured that mainstream media take note. The anti-war move-ment has even been able to establish elements of an alternative infor-mation environment using listservs, websites and related technologies so that readily digested and better-targeted interpretations of events become more easily available across the movement. Moreover, we find that information flows between the mainstream and the alternative in both directions. To be sure, anti-war activists are dependent on the information gathering resources of corporate news providers. But the latter also make use of the sharp commentary and diverse views and experiences that can be found in the activists' favoured sources.

However, it would be an egregious mistake to conceive war and its opponents in the anti-war movement solely in terms of media. War is about propaganda and 'hearts and minds', but it is also about inflicting material damage on people and places. The distinction between 'soft' and 'hard' power with regard to war is easily understood, even if the dividing line may be blurred. Anti-war activists are, of course, keenly aware of these factors. We draw attention to the importance of non-mediated (or minimally mediated) relationships found at the local level of activism. This shapes how groups organize, respond and campaign against war.

3
Representation, Beliefs and Identities

The ways in which a group represents campaign messages can be vital to its success. The more effective a group's communication, the more likely it is to capture public, media or political attention. Social movement scholars, in a body of work that deals specifically with the framing of movement messages, indicate that movement groups typically attempt to align their claims with values and beliefs held widely across the population.[1] By doing so, they may reap the rewards of popular backing and wider participation.

In this chapter we explore how anti-war groups have represented their campaigns, particularly examining the intentions behind the choices made in these depictions. Our analysis considers the broad variety of different media used to represent anti-war groups and their messages. One key concern is with the implications of new media for representational processes, but, of course, movement groups utilize a wide range of traditional media – pamphlets, flyers and posters as well as websites, blogs and mass emails – so we give attention to these different forms as well. We will suggest activists' use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has allowed speedier exploitation of political opportunities and changing circumstances. It has also enabled them to reach much broader audiences than they previously could achieve, thereby expanding the reach of 'local' groups, something which in turn impacts upon activists' understanding of their own identity and place within opposition to war. These benefits come partly from an increase in control over representation that is offered by online communications. However, although the activists we studied usually had a clear sense of their aims and objectives, these were not always developed into a coherent representational strategy. Thus, while groups were careful in making their material accessible to a variety of audiences and controlled their representations in diverse ways, the intended consequences of such actions sometimes remained unclear.

Representation is not simply about making strategic decisions about messages and media, however. Movement messages are often complex and always contest claims made by other (usually more powerful) groups in society. Activists' representational choices are coloured by motivations and politics that are rarely straightforward to interpret, and these frequently intrude upon ambitions to command the widest possible public interest. Achieving internal consensus on a campaign's image and priorities can be difficult, groups can be endeavouring to speak to multiple and divided audiences and they might seek to intervene in particularly fraught debates such of those about identity and religion. Indeed, representational choices are dependent on the deeply held beliefs, and even identities, of those who seek to speak out. The following also includes, therefore, consideration of the role of identity politics within the anti-war movement. In particular, inclusion of a significant constituency of Muslim activists in recent anti-war protest has brought the inclusion of religious identities to the fore. As suggested in Chapter 1, and further explored in Chapter 4, this has created some unusual and complex alliances. In this chapter we detail the development of British Muslim identity politics and its ramifications within anti-war activism in terms of representation and belief. We will argue that the anti-war movement has provided a space in which Muslim identity itself has come under scrutiny, and Muslims have sought to realize the possibility of holding multiple identities.

Unpacking representational forms

Movements have typically made use of a wide variety of means to get their messages in the public domain. The propaganda of flyers distributed in the street, graffiti daubed on walls or pamphlets sold at stalls have been well documented (Atton 2001, 2003). Others seek media attention via stunts or the subversion of mainstream media or through creating their own alternative media outlets (Scalmer 2002). Opportunities offered by new media such as websites, emails, wiki pages and mobile technologies may be understood either as continuations of older formats, simply distributed differently, or as innovations that challenge established outlets. These two possibilities may even be integrated, as Jane Tallents of Faslane 365 comments, while hardcopy productions continue, their use has been reshaped by ICTs.

> We still do paper stuff, but it's very different, it's much more about inform-
> ing your supporters about what's been happening, perhaps flagging up a
> few key dates of what's coming ahead. It's trying to empower people to

be involved, but it's not the same as the daily updates, what's happening now, that is done by websites and through email lists.

One can identify several important trends in groups' uses of media for propaganda. In the following we examine the range of representational forms and highlight the vital role of imagery in the materials that anti-war groups construct. Since activists' discussions repeatedly demonstrate the importance of the intended audiences for their messages, we will also consider the way such interpretations shape the range of content and presentation on offer.

Multiple forms

On the whole, we find similar material posted on anti-war websites as is used in flyers, posters and street action imagery. But the avenues through which groups sought to publicize their campaigns varied considerably, from those without a website to those who made numerous online interventions. For some a website was not a priority, as Zina, a peace activist from Leicester, instanced: 'ARROW doesn't have a website. We've talked about having it. . . . We have organized things which we have done temporary websites for . . . it is about prioritising the campaigning rather than telling people that we exist.'[2] Elsewhere Chris Talbot explained that 'we use street stalls rather than a web presence, or face-to-face. I mean obviously there's a national site and Socialist Worker's available on line'. Local groups tended to prioritize locally distributed media, such as pamphlets (see Figure 3.1) that often incorporate cartoons and other imagery and which are not generally replicated online.

Other anti-war activists sought to use a mixture of avenues; for example, Helen Pearson of Just Peace Leicester explained that 'we want our audience to be mixed and the way that we advertise is we have quite a big email list audience and just taking flyers and posters around to places and then getting other organizations to email it on'. Since a central aim of Just Peace Leicester is to represent an 'alternative Jewish voice' – that is, one critical of Israeli foreign policy – both within and beyond the Jewish community, it is important that they reach multiple audiences and broaden their communicative horizons. For that particular campaign strategy, therefore, these mixed methods of representation are highly pertinent. Additionally, many other blends of communication media have been in evidence within anti-war protest. For instance, StWC distributed the flyer shown in Figure 3.2 as a means to collect signatures to a statement opposing the invasion of Iraq. In addition to advertising a place and time where signatures would be collected, it also

Figure 3.1   Leicester Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament pamphlet, distributed summer 2004

BRING THE WARMONGERS TO ACCOUNT

Text STW + your name to 80010

Standard text message rate applies

Sign the call for a tribunal into the Iraq war at Parliament Square, or text any time

The situation in Iraq has reached a critical and dangerous point. All the reasons for war have been exposed as lies, and the anti-war movement now speaks for the overwhelming majority of the population.

Today as well as marching we are asking you to sign the demand for a tribunal to bring the warmongers to account. You can sign in Parliament Square between 11.30 and 12.30, or text in your support at any time.

With the increasing threat of war against Iran, we need in the next weeks to step up our efforts. We need bring the troops home protests in every area, and we need to collect signatures for the tribunal call everywhere we can.

We are asking every one of our anti-war groups to prepare for local and national protests against an attack on Iran.

To discuss these initiatives the Stop the War Coalition has called its conference for June 10th in London, at which there will be speakers from the United States and from Iraq.

To keep in contact with Stop the War Coalition and with a local anti-war group near you, fill in your details and hand this card to a march steward or send us your details.

NAME

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

STOP THE WAR COALITION 27 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JP
Telephone **020 7278 6694**   Email **office@stopwar.org.uk**

Figure 3.2   Stop the War Coalition postcard, distributed March 2006

allowed for signatures sent by text message to the organization. These multi-modal forms of communication represent quite an innovative use of the available technologies and are discussed further in Chapter 7.

More usually, groups use ICTs to increase their capacity to collect, collate and distribute information from disparate locations. On anti-war and peace websites one finds stored an enormous amount of information, gathered from many sources (from personal testimony to newspaper reports), in support of their case, which increase the symbolic resources of protesters. For networks such as Faslane 365, activists are able to upload their own testimony of events and photographs of their participation in actions, contributing to an array of information about the campaign and its history. ICTs thereby offer opportunities for both deepening and broadening the symbolic materials used to represent the anti-war movement. Ippy explains that *Peace News*

> have a much bigger online audience than we do for the print issue . . . We're doing two things really: we're publishing the print edition online and we're publishing additional feature articles and reviews, and also sometimes special sections . . . That goes through great phases of being fantastically good and very productive and lots of stuff being on there and lots of contributors.

Many websites also contain links to cognate organizations. This means that sympathizers with any one group may use its website as a one-stop source for information about anti-war and peace activities. The choice as to which site to use as the first stop will indicate a broad orientation of the user (it might, for instance, be a feminist or religious one), but links from there will allow the member to be informed about a wide range of associated organizations. The *Network for Peace* specifically acts as a linkage point to multiple anti-war organizations. The creation of hyperlinks thereby structures the range of representations that an individual encountering the anti-war movement online will experience.[3]

Simplified messages: Iconic imagery and slogans

Different groups framed their opposition to war in different ways that depend on groups' histories, political characteristics, constituencies and remits. So, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) tended to highlight the hegemonic power of the US, and the importance of oil resources in the argument against war. They also tended to personalize their campaign around Prime Minister Blair, who was seen as representing US interests. Such arguments clearly make sense on the basis of
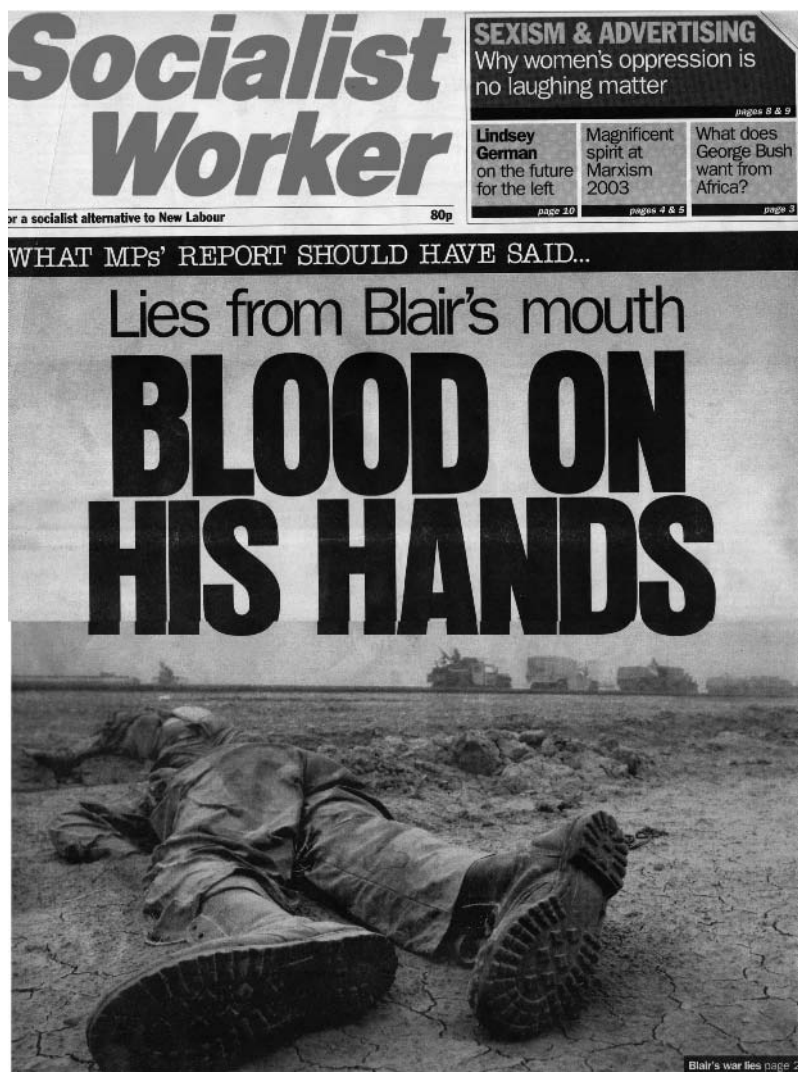
Figure 3.3a   Socialist Worker (July 2003) newspaper front page

a revolutionary socialist perspective that sees imperialism, capitalism and competition over resources at the heart of society's ills (Gillan 2006, ch. 7). Figure 3.3a shows the way this position is represented on the front page of the SWP's newspaper through the use of iconic imagery: a scene of death and devastation directly tied to 'Lies from

Islamic Human Rights Commission

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Empowering the Community PAGE 3

Working Internationally PAGE 6

Exposing Islamophobia PAGE 7

In the name of Al-laah, The-Source-Of-Mercy, The-Especially-Merciful.

THE AIMS OF THE ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ARE:

■ To champion the rights and duties revealed for human beings.

■ To promote a new social and international order, based on truth, justice, righteousness and generosity, rather than self-interest.

■ To demand virtue and oppose wrongdoing in the exercise of power (from whatever base that power derives - e.g. political, judicial, media, economic, military, personal, etc.).

■ To gather information about, and to publicise, atrocities, oppression, discrimination, and other abuses of divinely-granted rights.

■ To campaign for redress, and to support the victims of such crimes.

■ To campaign to bring the perpetrators and their accomplices to justice.

■ To cooperate with other groups and individuals where such cooperation is likely to further the achievement of these aims.

IF THIS CHILD WAS A TERRORIST, THEN WE ALL ARE

A child from Ter Hafra village - one of many killed whilst fleeing Israeli bombardment, July 2006

This front page article – unusually – was began some two months before publication towards the end of July 2006. The photograph was chosen because it symbolised the death of innocents by the Israeli war machine in its onslaught on Lebanon. The article originally began thus:

"…Faced with the trauma of witnessing events in Gaza and Lebanon, we can only pray that in the intervening weeks till the publication of this newsletter in Ramadan that there will be nothing worse."

A few days later came the carnage at Qana.

Still the blood of Muslims is cheap – perhaps cheaper even than 10 years ago when a similar massacre at Qana forced an end to the then Israeli offensive on Lebanon.

This time, Qana wasn't enough to halt the bloodshed. In this decade though, and even in this last ceasefire there is much to hope for and much left to fight for. This time, despite the massive casualties, for once, Israeli aggression was checked. This time, the support of the world for those dying en masse came despite biased media reporting and the incessant harping by governments regarding the now thoroughly exposed 'war on terror'. People can see what is wrong whether they are Muslim or not, whether the victims are Muslim or not.

Yet sadly, even with the ceasefire in Lebanon, we know that other offensives continue elsewhere, little heard of and unsung, or demonized beyond recognition. Mass disappearances, murders and rapes in Chechnya continue. The fighting in Ogaden becomes more bloody and the persecutions in Burma and Palestine – always Palestine - remain. What is our duty and what can we do about it?

Islamic perspectives, always focus on hope. Hope despite pain and suffering in realisation of justice as the realisation of the Almighty's will. You do not have to be a Muslim to recognise that justice is the only goal that will unite all peoples and deliver true peace. To this end, IHRC has worked this year to break down even more barriers between communities on projects that help realise this goal. We took the British government to court over its facilitation of munitions flights to help the Israeli military. Our legal team and their subsequent report, sent to assess violations of humanitarian law, was co-sponsored by other NGOs. Our

conference, 'Against Zionism: Jewish Perspectives' brought together academics, rabbis and activists from different Jewish backgrounds to discuss their reasons for opposing Israeli state ideology.

Whilst events in the Middle East have dominated the news, IHRC has sought to highlight different causes, as well as focus on events closer to home. The resurgence of sectarian fighting amongst Muslims, has caused us to reinvigorate the Charter 3:103 Campaign, with notable signatories opposing the descent of Muslim communities into violence and mayhem. The British Muslims' Expectations of the Government project is drawing to a close and its focus this last year has been on hijab, the British legal

ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PO Box 598, Wembley HA9 7XH, UK · Tel: 020 8904 4222 www.ihrc.org

Figure 3.3b   Islamic Human Rights Commission (September 2006) newspaper front page

Blair's mouth, blood on his hands'. For comparison, we present the front page of the newsletter of the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) in September 2006 (Figure 3.3b). Here the argument is rather

different, since the image and story relate to the Israeli attacks on the Lebanon of that summer. IHRC criticizes the injustice inherent in using war as a response to terrorism, using a picture of a dead child to argue that 'If this child was a terrorist, then we all are'. The use of such shocking images is a common tactic among social movement groups since the logic that promoting strong emotions of anger and disgust might lead to action is straightforward. Iconic images – pulled out of context and reused to a campaign's advantage – serve to simplify the message by encapsulating the whole phenomenon of war in a single, abhorrent injustice. Simplified in this way, the strong imagery can be made to serve a wide range of political arguments.

The use of visual symbols to convey simplified aspects of a political argument is hardly limited to newspapers. On the streets in the US, Code Pink, for instance, utilized flamboyant pink imagery in their protests. Doing so carried a specific message, 'The name CODEPINK plays on the Bush Administration's color-coded homeland security advisory system that signals terrorist threats. While Bush's color coded alerts are based on fear, the CODEPINK alert is based on compassion.' So, the pink banners and pink costumes of this 'women-initiated grassroots' group partly imply a feminist critique of militarism, but is chiefly intended to subvert the government's own imagery. A London-based Codepink-inspired group has been present on many of the major anti-war demonstrations in London, transferring a symbol drawn in the US to a different context. British protesters have also represented jumpsuits and chains to evoke the plight of prisoners such as Omar Deghayes, incarcerated at Guantanamo Bay for five years (Figure 3.4).

Naazish Azaim of the University of Leicester Islamic Society (UoLISoc) made heavy-used photography in the group's publicity material to similar effect:

> I try to use images when I'm designing a poster – I helped to design the human rights poster and because I think images convey more than words and I wanted to use something shocking – something that shocked every human to the core – like you know you see pictures of people in chains in those orange jump suits.

Again, we see a strong belief in the power of images to shock and perhaps lead to action on the part of the viewer.

The digitization of photography, and increasing uptake of ICTs in general, allows for the easy transferral of such representational strategies to the Web. Asad, a former member of StWC, credited young Muslims

Figure 3.4   Anti-war rally, London, 18 March 2006. Photography: Jenny Pickerill

with being particularly adept at using such imagery to communicate with the broader Muslim communities:

> the people doing that are young Muslims who are internet savvy, who were getting emails, pictures: 'this is what's happened in Afghanistan' – picture of dead kid – 'take action'. They were the ones speaking to us and they became the engine that brought out the wider community . . . It captured the imagination for a lot of young people.

The same trends have increased prevalence of video footage online (especially through sites such as YouTube and MySpace), adding to the ability of activists to use images in powerful ways: 'people are publishing footage as well as text and audio. The human eye quite likes moving pictures, so it tends to have a bigger impact' (Ippy). This is evidenced in Figure 3.7, where we will see the re-presentation of demonstrations through recorded speeches made available online as, among other things, an attempt to signal the diversity and unity of the anti-war movement.

The decision by groups to use distressing photographs of casualties of the war in Iraq on website and in newspapers is alleged to have influenced some mainstream media portrayal of events. Anas Altikriti told us that

In June of 2003, I was invited to *The Guardian Forum* in Farringdon, and the introduction was that I spoke on behalf of an organization which had almost changed the way in which the Iraq War was covered . . . There had been agreement between the main media outlets and government – before the war in Iraq – that if any kind of gory images came through, they wouldn't be published, for the safety of the troops. And [Emily Bell] said on the third day we received this press release from MAB with the picture of the child, Ali, whose head had been split in half by shrapnel. She said we discussed whether that agreement with the Government still held water . . . and she said we decided to change our course of action and to cover everything, and we started publishing the pictures that were filtering through about what was really happening in Iraq . . . So MAB, at one stage, became extremely influential [in relation to the media].

As with the use of strong images, short slogans are consciously designed to represent particular elements of anti-war groups' critiques of the 'War on Terror' in an immediate and concise manner. The SWP's personalized campaign against Tony Blair focused on his culpability ('Blood on his hands') and dishonesty (marked on demonstrations by thousands of placards with the 'a' and 'i' transposed to read 'Bliar'). Meanwhile other groups sought to connect the 'War and Terror' to different analyses. The Green Party tied the invasion of Iraq (via arguments relating to diminishing oil reserves) to capitalist overproduction and overconsumption and represented this in the placard slogan 'Peace Not Profit'. Other environmental groups presented the same messages through regularly organized 'critical mass' cycle protests under slogans like 'Bikes not Bombs'.

The combination of the use of simplified messages and new media through which to present them can provide groups with increased flexibility in the symbolic realm, thereby enabling more 'nimble campaigns' than hitherto (Bennett 2003, p. 145). While the core aims and ambitions of an organization may remain relatively stable, the presentation of those may shift. Reflecting on the changes to the format and focus of the long-standing peace movement newspaper, *Peace News*, its then editor, Ippy, argued: 'times change, the situation changes, methods of communication change, needs change, and so you shouldn't cling on to something just because it's been there for a long time'. The ability to change allows groups to felicitously adapt their frames in response to changing political opportunity structures. For example, as we entered 2006, a major theme on websites and protests of the anti-war

Figure 3.5   Stop the War Coalition flyer, distributed March 2006

movement was a perceived threat to Iran from the United States. StWC quickly commenced calling for Iran to be left alone (see Figure 3.5), while a new affiliate site came into being, StopWarOnIran.org. To be sure, without ICTs this change of focus could have been achieved through

traditional methods: fly posting, leafleting, public meetings and the like. But it is difficult to comprehend how it could have been achieved quite so efficaciously without the speed and convenience of the web, email and electronic publishing.

However, there are limits to such adroitness. For instance, the slogan 'Troops Home from Iraq' has been employed by StWC since the war began in 2003. At the time this slogan encapsulated a quite radical claim since one key argument, used even among many who had opposed the war, was that with the Iraqi dictatorship defeated a strong military presence was required to maintain order. As Iraq slipped deeper into the chaos of sectarian bloodshed under the watch of occupation forces, however, that argument became less compelling. Indeed, many supporters of the war now sought a quick exit to avoid further military casualties. Since StWC (and similar groups in the US) had chosen to frame their arguments with a focus on the troops – partly to respond to the patriotic demand to support troops in action – it became possible for their opponents to co-opt their slogan, both in the US (Heaney and Rojas 2006) and in Britain where Gordon Brown has sought to reduce the presence of UK troops since the start of his Premiership in 2007 (BBC News 2007c).

Alliances and audiences

One of the most important ways in which slogans have been used is to signal alliance relationships. For instance, in February 2007, as the Parliament debated the renewal of Britain's Trident nuclear weapons system, StWC and CND co-organized another mass national demonstration. The slogans for this demonstration were 'Troops Out' and 'No Trident', making the obvious connection to the political opportunities of the time. It is worth stressing that this need not have been the case; the argument against the 'War on Terror' could be made without reference to British nuclear weapons and this was the norm throughout the various campaigns. Very close to the four-year anniversary of the 15 February demonstrations, the focus on this day might logically have been on Iraq only. But here was an opportunity for CND, who had been co-organizers of demonstrations since 2001, to have their primary issue represented as a reason for demonstrating. Naturally, the concern to link the demonstration to a debate currently receiving significant media coverage and movement interest would also have been a key consideration.

The broad coalition of interests within the StWC is demonstrated by the slogans from the 24 September 2005 anti-war demonstration: 'Stop the Bombings', 'Stop the War', 'Bring the Troops Home', 'Defend

Figure 3.6   Stop the War Coalition banner, London, 18 March 2006. Photography: Jenny Pickerill

Civil Liberties' and 'Defend the Muslim Community'. Such slogans have been repeated on numerous protests since (Figure 3.6).

The explicit link made between the war on terrorism and attacks on Muslim communities has been one of StWC's defining features and has helped them secure Muslim support. It has had strong ties with MAB (and links with MCB, though in late 2006 it moved to affiliation with a new group, the BMI) as demonstrated by the 'No to a Racist Backlash' campaign in the lead up to the war in Iraq. In particular, StWC insisted there are connections between the 'War on Terror' and the targeting of Muslim communities in Britain, an increased threat of global terrorism, and Iraqis being worse off now than under Saddam Hussein.[4]

In turn, Muslim groups such as MAB have linked their ongoing campaign for 'Justice for Palestine' with calls to 'Don't Attack Iraq'. This linking has enabled them to support alliances with StWC and be part of large-scale protests such as 28 September 2002, while retaining a distinctive focus on Palestine (see Figure 3.7). As noted above, this figure also demonstrates the presentation of video on the MAB website (which predated widespread use of YouTube). The range of speakers represents MAB's involvement in a broad coalition, echoing, or re-presenting, the same message sent on the rally. Additionally, since many of the individuals are very high-profile figures in politics and the media, this form of presentation also projects a certain level of strength and professionalism, issues to which we return shortly.

One of the most obvious reasons for making alliances within the anti-war movement, and especially for representing them in slogans on the streets and on websites is that the core messages of each group

Figure 3.7 Muslim Association of Britain website, September 2002

can get to wider audiences. But movements need also to expand their horizons and reach beyond those already involved in even the broad range of groups represented above. Online forums have been identified as one possible avenue for reaching such new audiences. Anna Liddle of Yorkshire CND described the use of MySpace as an additional publicity avenue.[5] She explained that

> If there's an accessible point for young people, and loads of young people use MySpace, then it's an accessible point for them to start thinking about Hiroshima, for example, if they stumble across it and just have a look . . . The internet is a non-scary way of exploring things, you don't have to go up and talk to some stranger on a stall, you don't have to phone up and ask somebody, you can just browse and have a look.

Others, such as Andrew Murray (StWC) and Anas Altikriti (BMI), write for the *Guardian's Comment is Free* site in addition to their own organizations' websites, thus assuring a wider (albeit largely politically left or liberal) audience.

Indeed, most anti-war groups took pains, in their use of language and imagery, online as well as on posters, flyers and in talks, to reach as broad an audience as they imagined possible. Activists such as Zulfi Bukhari of the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK (MPACUK) acknowledged that although the audience of the 'website will be 80 per cent Muslim, ten per cent Zionist . . . ten per cent would be just the wider community. Because we get a lot of non-Muslims coming on to our website who are just general people who want to know stuff'.[6] Similarly, an anonymous interviewee from the Leicestershire Federation of Muslim Organizations told us that he wanted their website to be a 'a window for non-Muslims because unless you're directly in contact with Muslim people, or in a work or university environment . . . there's no way people of Leicester would find out [about the community]'. Jane Tallents of the ambitious Faslane 365 (F365) campaign echoed this, noting that 'we have deliberately said we cannot just do this within the peace movement, there are not enough people in the peace movement wanting to do direct action, to do something on this scale, we've got to go way outside of our normal circle'. The F365 steering group therefore went to great lengths to represent the campaign in a wide range of different forums through, for instance, running workshops at summer music festivals as well as handing out flyers to the 'usual suspects' at demonstrations.

Having an easily navigable and visually appealing website – 'one that looks good on the home page, one that is easy to use . . . where you can advertise your immediate issues easily and attractively' – was seen as communicating with this broad audience (Denise Craghill, Yorkshire CND). Beyond this, the use of language was seen as essential to ensure good communication. Helen Pearson talked of a number of terms that were controversial and therefore needed to be used judiciously. In relation to the Israel/Palestine conflict she explained 'the "apartheid wall" – people object to it being called the Wall. Separation fence is actually the Israeli title of it, and then other people call it an apartheid wall, then other people object to that because they don't think it represents apartheid'. Muslim activists were also circumspect in their use of Arabic terms, Asim Qureshi (of Cage Prisoner) noting that 'you have to connect with the audience, there's no point in my speaking for an hour to a group of non-Muslims using Arabic terms if they don't understand what these Arabic terms are. In my articles or in my works, wherever I do use an Arabic word, I will immediately translate it straight afterwards'. Arif Sayeed of UoLISoc and Respect added that 'most of the posters when we're advertising, we try and add a bit of affability into the posters – it's important it's not intimidating to non-Muslims as well as Muslims. If it's the religious

lexicon, we try and stay away from that too much – everything's in plain English, everything's straight, so if a Muslim or a non-Muslim saw the poster they'd know what's going on.' Finally, activist Zina believed that although it was important to shape leaflets in simple and accessible ways and to know the target audience, a website enables greater flexibility in communicating more complex rationales for action:

> For something like Women in Black, whenever I write leaflets, if leaflets are for the general public, then I am seriously simplifying both concepts and language to an extent that I'm not happy with, but I think that it is more accessible . . . With a poster, I want as few words on it as possible . . . If what I'm trying to do is to get people to a direct action like Faslane 365, then I assume that we're not going to get people who aren't already sympathetic to this issue, so I'm not trying to educate people . . . If you were doing a website, you would feel more able to use language, different language in different sections of the website, and when we have done that, if you have a section of legal advice, then you don't have to worry about it, and similarly if you have a section of press releases, you phrase it very differently.

This quotation usefully highlights the key points made in this section. First, anti-war activists make use of a range of media through which to represent themselves and their arguments and to mobilize participation. Second, the representational form and content are chosen in relation to the intended audience of communication. Third, the kinds of messages that are transmitted are partly determined by both the form of communication and the intended audience. Simplification of a message can, through the use of iconic imagery or slogans, be represented more powerfully to a wider public. However, as Zina hints above, messages may be simplified to the extent that their authors become unhappy with them.

Control and strategy

The availability of ICTs has enabled groups to exercise increased control over how they are represented. Groups may now project their size, force and support from other groups through their websites. Even those with but a handful of active members can set up a site, create electronic lists of members and sympathizers, establish email contact and have a reach far beyond the interpersonal. Those who then access these sites encounter messages with little sense of the size and wider significance of the group that created them (Boyd 2003).

It is not only size but the appearance of professionalism that is important to activists' online presentation. This is what Denise Craghill was driving at in the quotation presented above, concerning the easy navigability and attractive appearance required of a good website. Tom Shelton, who among other tasks worked on the development of CND's national website, explained that CND's work had become much more professional in recent years, working 'on a parliamentary level' and producing materials for a range of powerful and high-profile bodies. However, he described his frustration:

> I don't necessarily think our web resources really match that at the moment, especially on the main website, it's a bit disappointing in some ways. But it's mainly through usability there . . . it kind of looks okay but it's just not clean enough really. Not quite professional-looking and I do think – you know, the whole idea of branding makes me feel slightly sick – but the reality of it is that your members want to see evidence of the fact that you're professional and that you're doing a good job. And if your website is a mess, then it's not necessarily a good indicator of the way your organization's run, from [the members'] point of view it doesn't look good.

Shelton also described some 'extenuating factors' that explained why the website wasn't as professional as he would like. Primarily, the site had been designed some years earlier using older technologies that did not allow for easy updating of the site. As a result, more and more material was added in an ad hoc manner, making it difficult, at times, to locate relevant documents.

These technical matters can, however, work in the opposite direction and allow an appearance of professionalism achieved through technical proficiency. In attempting to represent themselves, activists are quite conscious of the advantages of this; one web designer insisted that 'if you make it more organized and look professional, people will just come to it regardless of whether they agree with the information or not' (anonymous, FMO). In a sense, then, the technical skills of web development are becoming an increasingly central competency for activist groups to develop. Figures 3.8a and 3.8b demonstrate StWC's increasing skills in this area. The first screen-shot (Figure 3.8a) shows the rather rudimentary StWC website from early 2002. Since the group was very new at this point, the fact that there was a website at all, coupled with the range of resources already available, is quite impressive. Nevertheless, the second screen-shot (Figure 3.8b), from 2007, shows a set of quite sophisticated

(a)

(b)

Figure 3.8 (a) Stop the War Coalition website, March 2002; (b) Stop the War Coalition website, March 2007

developments. The design of the site is clearly improved, with the most obvious elements being the use of graphics and images. The range of interactive possibilities (donate, join, affiliate or subscribe) has been increased, and the relevant links gathered to the top right corner. There is clearly a greater range of resources available, with links to statistics, video and film, music and art, as well as the news and analysis section. Of course, such resources tend to be focused on protest activities or key events in the news and therefore take time to develop. But these may be managed in different ways. Whereas Tom Shelton suggests that the ad hoc arrangements of CND's website mean that additional resources make the group appear less professional than they would like, StWC has managed its increasing level of online materials in a way that presents it as a more professional, better organized and more richly resourced organization than it had been a few years before.

We describe these developments because they indicate an important shift in the nature of contemporary activism. We noted in Chapter 2 that despite activists' continuing commitment to grounded action in the public arena, certain routes through which the public might become better informed of a movement's claims were diminishing. Notably the frequency of public meetings and the number of independent book-shops that might distribute materials and hold events is in decline. The vast availability of information on the Web is hardly a disconnected phenomenon. But the key point here is that these shifts change the construction of activism as such. Activism is less constituted by public, interpersonal events and more by computer-mediated communications and the dissemination of news, analysis and imagery online. Activists therefore need a different set of skills than before. Of course, talented rhetorical orators – and here we might think of Tony Benn or George Galloway – remain in demand for their 'rabble rousing' speeches. But on a day-to-day level, those with skills in presenting information and argument through ICTs are ever more in demand, and their work is seen by a wider range of people.

In addition to technical skills, the attempt to project a group's size and professionalism online requires a strong degree of control over which informational resources are made available to the public. In one sense, ICTs – through enabling the alternative information environ-ment described in Chapter 2 – offer an increase in the control of rep-resentation by groups no longer so strongly dependent on large media organizations. But this need not always be the case, and some groups consciously choose to limit the control over representation exercised from the centre.

Different groups take different approaches in controlling what gets posted online. The decision-making process by which material is selected is, of course, correlated with different political ambitions and organizational structures. Because the national-level CND has a formal democratic structure where decisions and power flow to a group of elected officers, control over the website is also formally organized, with the chair having 'final sight of everything'. For StWC the ability to post online is limited to a few key positions. However, the organization also makes use of links to news articles hosted on a range of other sites, including the *Guardian*'s open discussion section *Comment is Free*. Ackland and Gibson (2006) suggest that links between political websites infer support for these external sites and even the potential for groups to collaborate in activities. However, this suggests a degree of monitoring and systematization of decision-making as regards ICT usage which does not exist in the anti-war movement groups we examined. The choice of which groups are linked to from the site remains informal and often ad hoc, as Lindsey German noted: 'it's completely pragmatic . . . either somebody says, will you put a link, which is a good enough reason as long as you agree with them, but it's not very systematic because then if people don't ask you, you don't put it up'.

Other groups, more committed to non-hierarchical organizing, tend to take a more open and fluid approach to deciding what material is posted (Pickerill 2006). For example, although the rules of participation in Faslane 365 were decided by a core group of activists who retained control of the site overall, some substantial autonomy is given over to others involved in the campaign. With the ambition to have a different blockading group protest at the Faslane nuclear submarine base every day for a year, those groups were also expected to perform their own representations. As such, blockading groups were offered control of sections of the F365 website to post press releases, testimony, images of protest and so on. This reflected the ambition of the steering group to bring a multiplicity of voices to the campaign. Other groups have sought to create space for debate online, as Zulfi Bukhari observed:

> Most Muslim groups are really, really controlled about what's said in their websites. What we say is nobody owns the Muslim community. The Muslim community are their own people and, as their own people, they've got the right to say what they want, and if we can create a space, where the people can [freely express themselves], then we can at least see what's going on, judge the temperature, let

them speak, and that way the causes and the issues that are dear to the Muslims at least have an avenue within MPACUK to progress onwards and then affect the greater community.

However, in terms of content on the website Bukhari thought that what MPACUK was 'solely focused in doing is creating a state of dissatisfaction with the mosques' and as such it had a number of control mechanisms for what gets posted up, 'so it's hierarchy, but we push that decision-making downwards until something outside of the guidelines or a procedural vagueness [arises] and that's when we then say, "no, we've got that discipline, you have to forego some of those luxuries of independence"'. Naturally, these issues may relate to all forms of representation, not only those on the Web. Just Peace in Leicester designed material through negotiation, Helen Pearson told us that 'we quite often have a lot of back and forth before we get a consensus about the wording on things'. In this way groups have graduated approaches to controlling online representations and, although many sought to control material in order to present a coherent and consistent message, this control was rarely absolute.

Furthermore, the control of a group's representation can be difficult to maintain in the face of ever-changing media possibilities.

> You do tend to get bowled along by things, you see other people doing things and think 'oh that's a good idea, perhaps we should be doing that', without thinking too much about whether it is worth it or not in the end. And either way I think the website is probably necessary these days, and especially more and more young people, it's the first place they go to when they want information about something. So if you can put your information there, then it's going to be available to them as well. But I suppose there isn't really an in-depth structured discussion on which way we should go with information technology – we just do it.
>
> (David Webb, Yorkshire CND)

The complexity of the ways in which groups made interventions online and the degree of control they had over their representations are indicative of a lack of a cohesive online strategy by many groups. In short, many groups had not fully considered what they intended to achieve through their online representations. All groups had clear aims and goals, but these were not necessarily coherently expressed in the online arena.

Some interviewees had a binary vision of individuals' motivations for visiting sites. In the view of Milan Rai (JNV), 'people come to a website either because they want what it's got or they want to protest about what's on it'. From this perspective a website may have either a resource-based focus with thematically arranged materials, or an action-based focus that highlights opportunities to protest against some particular injustice. Milan Rai sees Justice Not Vengeance (JNV) as providing the former, with its content largely being carefully constructed arguments and downloadable leaflets and posters to support anti-war activism. Alternatively, StWC prioritizes the latter function for its website, it being primarily about encouraging protest activities such as street-based protest. With the focus on such activities, the content put on the website is necessarily related to mobilization. As our informant with Internet responsibilities at StWC explained:

> If something big breaks on one day, then on the homepage I might quickly actually write a short piece to do with that, and links to do with that. Nearly always, given the type of campaign we are, it will be links to some activity that we're involved in, which is the main function of our website – to actually support activity.

More multi-purpose sites need to utilize carefully considered design methods to help readers navigate, for instance, by making links to information for certain groups, such as the press, more prominent. Others, such as the Society of Friends (Quakers), have complex websites that effectively have differently 'branded' sections aimed at different users. Thus, the site offers information about relevant activities and grew in response to the invasion of Afghanistan, when 'there were a lot of vigils cropping up, people requesting [information] . . . We put a section on the site just to list all the peace vigils and that grew and grew and grew' (Nik Dadson, Society of Friends, website manager).

Ambitions to implement a strategy could be limited by the diversity of the activists involved. Chris Talbot of Leicester Respect told us that

> because it's a coalition we struggled to come up with consensus political statements . . . We tried to write leaflets with statements about the war, but there were continuously people that objected to things, and so the list of core demands or core statements that we could make was often quite minimal – for example 'Stop the War'. Someone might want to say 'Victory to the Iraqis', but obviously we wouldn't put that on a leaflet even if someone believed it . . .

> We retained plurality of opinion while operating together, but this was the campaign website, so in the end what we could have was details of the next meetings, demos coming up etc, which of course is valuable, but then it's not going to create a very in-depth website.

In addition, most activists were hindered by a lack of time and finances (see Chapter 6), or by the complexities of the message they were trying to convey. Farida Tejabwala, Chair of the Justice Campaign for UoLISoc, for instance, argued that 'we've got two jobs now whereas before it was just inviting people to Islam and telling them the beauty of the religion . . . Now it's also trying to tell them this is what our religion says and we're not like those people that do these things we think are wrong.

   Nevertheless, without a clear strategy of what their online representations were to achieve, it becomes difficult to determine the effectiveness of online interventions. Thus although ICT use might be considered a means of deepening and broadening the range of symbolic resources available to state the anti-war case, the range of information may also cloud the key arguments. This occurs when the message of a group becomes diluted or readily contested. Online representations can lead to a loss of thematic focus for a group if, for instance, they become inappropriately associated with others through loose alliances or hyperlinks, or when unmoderated discussion forums raise controversial issues and intractable debates. ICTs have also facilitated a heightened information flow, which could serve to complicate a campaign's key messages. The capacity to upload immediately and irrespective of distance means that bewildering amounts of news reports and analyses become available to audiences. An unintended consequence can be dilution of the host's core concerns.

Changing the politics of identity

The preceding sections describe the representational strategies of a wide variety of anti-war movement groups. We find some of the common characteristics across organizations: the simplification of messages through slogans and iconic imagery; the increasing use of ICTs and attendant requirements on the resources of groups; the manipulation of presentation according to expectations about the audience; and the use of slogans in protest and on websites to signal alliances between groups. We have not yet, however, explored the relationship between these representations and the deeply held beliefs that motivate them. We have

at times inferred – from the content of websites and leaflets, from the choice of slogans, from the deployment of shocking imagery and so on – a number of key beliefs that motivate a range of participants. But this task is far from straightforward, not least because of the wide diversity of views represented in the recent anti-war and peace movements. We will detail the diversity of political positions in the next chapter, but here we wish to focus on the impact of identities (and particularly British Muslim identities) on the representation of political positions described above.

Conceptually, it is hardly a radical claim to suggest that social movements develop in connection with the construction of identities. Indeed, much scholarship on social movements has, since the 1970s, focused on the identity politics of the 'new' social movements. Here we have a series of struggles apparently defined by the attempt to create, defend and promote particular self-identifications shared among significant groups. Challenging their contemporary moral and social codes, such groups developed new ways of thinking and new ways of being (Melucci 1996). We do not introduce these notions to suggest that recent anti-war protest ought to be understood as a new social movement. However, as we explain in the following, the development of collective identities among British Muslim participants is highly pertinent to the dynamics of representation within the movement as a whole.

Identities may be a subject of social movement activity since they are neither fixed nor constant, but rather constantly emerging in continuous negotiation within and between groups, and as such are simultaneously expressions of activists' identities and contributions to the reshaping of activists' understandings of their identities (Checker 2004). The process of negotiating collective identities and the ways in which primary identifiers are represented to assert certain commonalities and exclusions ultimately shapes the political direction of particular anti-war campaigns.

We focus on religion as an identity category because of its particular prominence in recent anti-war campaigns and society generally. Consideration of religion as a motivating factor in collective action or studies of religious movements have been underexamined by social movement scholars (Bayat 2005). Furthermore, the expression of Muslim identity has been effected by the high-profile terrorism that claims to be so motivated. This complicates the use of religion as a basis for personal identity, as one interviewee surmised, 'the moment you root your identity in a religion then, particularly for Muslims, there's a danger' (Asaf Hussain, Muslim author, Leicester). We should

note that although there are strong links between the peace movement and Christianity (expressed through the Quakers, the Christian Peacemakers, Pax Christi and many others), Muslim communities have become a visible contributor in recent years (Caedel 1980). This is not to suggest that Muslim activists have never been involved in peace or anti-war campaigns, but to emphasize that their prominence and voice has increased dramatically in recent years. Thus we focus here on expressions of Muslim activist identity, but do so mindful of the historic ties between Christianity and the peace movement.

By 2001 self-identified Muslims constituted 2.7 per cent (1.6 million people) of the British population, the second largest faith group in Britain (ONS 2003). They are frequently perceived by the majority populace as a unified group, but are in fact deeply divided in terms of religious affiliation, national origin, language, class and Islamic sects (Radcliffe 2004). Given their heterogeneity, it is problematic to talk of Muslims as a community in the singular, rather there are multiple Muslim communities (Modood 2007). This is further reflected in the array of Muslim political organizations in Britain. Many of these focus on local issues (Vertovec 1996), but in recent years national groups have emerged such as MCB and MAB to represent Muslim interests politically (through lobbying and involvement in protests) and to the media. Other groups like the Islamic Foundation and the Islamic Society of Britain focus on education, research and building bridges between Muslims and others. Additionally there are those groups who advocate non-participation with British politics and push a separatist agenda, such as al-Muharijoun and Hisbut Tahir.[7]

Involvement of Muslim communities in peace efforts can be traced to the early 1990s when the First Gulf War triggered Muslim objection in Britain. This was followed by the Bosnian War which Saleem contends 'was a watershed for Muslims in Europe because it confirmed the hypocrisy of the west. The horrific murders, torture, rapes and mass systematic killings of Muslims in Bosnia, took place in a context of western indifference, even culpability' (2005, p. 24). This perception persists among some Muslim activists despite it being a period of interventionism by the UN in support of Muslims in the Balkans. Most recently, the US response to the events of September 2001 was met with worldwide Muslim condemnation and aspects of this coalesced into participation in the broader anti-war movements re-emerging at that time (AbuKhalil 2002).

Muslim participation in anti-war activism has been heterogeneous, involving a variety of groups with differing remits and objectives. MAB had a significant early presence as a key coalition member of the StWC.

Its name was repeatedly associated with StWC and CND on anti-war flyers, banners and literature. This was a strategic alliance that benefited both MAB and StWC. MAB, however, was seen as too conservative by other Muslim groups, such as those wishing to express a more radical voice, to link anti-war protest to anti-capitalist campaigns or to take direct action. Thus other smaller and more grassroots groups emerged such as MPACUK, a civil liberties group; JustPeace, 'an anti-Iraq war group that promotes Muslim participation in movements that campaign for freedom from oppression and injustice' (Saleem 2005, p. 25); the Muslim Network; and Cage Prisoner.

Many of these groups sought to make links between anti-war and Muslim oppression more broadly, seeking to link issues of poverty, marginalization and anti-terror legislation. In addition to these predominantly Muslim groups, Muslim anti-war activists were also involved in different secular groups such as the Radical Activist Network, an anti-capitalist network based in London, and many secular anti-war groups have shown solidarity with Muslims, such as JNV selling Muslim solidarity badges (Figure 3.9).

The heterogeneity of Muslim involvement in anti-war activism points us to the contested nature of British Muslim identities. Ismail notes that 'the intersection of religion and identity is complex and raises important questions both in public spheres presumed to be secular and in contexts where religion is thought to play a significant role in defining the public sphere' (Ismail 2004, p. 614). Many British Muslims find themselves between such contexts, contending with what it is to be British while simultaneously being influenced by their parents' homeland, their local community and their faith. Accordingly, as Bagguley
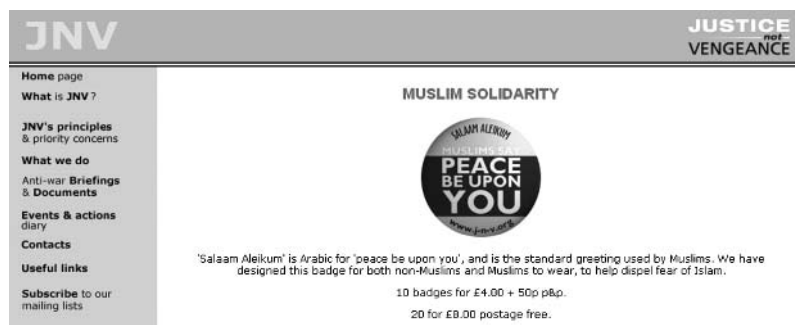
Figure 3.9 Justice Not Vengeance website, March 2006

and Hussain (2005) argue, people construct multiple identities such as being British and Pakistani and Muslim.

Endeavouring to represent a religious identity within the rhetoric of anti-war campaigns is problematical and fraught. Some Muslim groups have sought to project a version of Muslim identity that at once seeks to mobilize Muslims against recent wars and, at the same time, strives to counter stereotypical versions of what it means to be a Muslim. For example, MPACUK's aim, as described on its website, was to 'empower Muslims to focus on non-violent Jihad and political activism'. This was partly achieved by representing a politically active form of Islam that refused to condone terrorism and was very much about being British. Thus one page of their website contained an article 'Islam a Blessing to Britain' (Figure 3.10) and another article entitled 'The Rational Centre: MPACUK's Vision for British Muslim Identity' called for Muslim participation in all aspects of British society and politics.

An explicit link between anti-war activism and religious identity was necessary for those who felt caught between the tensions of how to be British and Muslim. This was felt not least by young women who chose not to wear the hijab or take a less literal interpretation of the Qur'ān. Many Muslim activists wanted to represent an alternative, non-fundamentalist version of Islam to the world, be politically engaged and be British. Thus, 'in the post-colonial world, we need to consider the

Figure 3.10   Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK website, August 2007

'both/and' way of thinking – that it is possible to belong to both, to be part of the *umma*, the global Islamic community, *and* be British . . . We refuse to make a choice' (Saleem 2005, p. 24).

This transformation is what Tariq Ramadan refers to as the 'silent revolution' (2005) – the politicization of second- and third-generation Muslims (including many women) in Britain. Ramadan identifies Muslim involvement in the British anti-war movement and their involvement in other social justice campaigns 'working in the name of common values' as 'evidence of new trends, a new movement that is coming out of our presence' (quoted in Reyes 2005, p. 23). In his writings Ramadan advocates the need for a new form of Muslim politics which deals with the complexity of British Muslims' position. He calls for an 'ethical reform' of Islam, a contextualized reinterpretation of the key texts that is relevant to the everyday lives of ordinary Muslims. Part of this 'silent revolution' is Muslims being selective and critical in what they subscribe to – from both British culture and from Islamic values. Thus 'the making of a British Islam is an ongoing, unfinished process of experimentation, diversity and debate' (Lewis 2002, p. 8) that is reflected in the heterogeneity of Muslim involvement in anti-war campaigns.

Debates concerning the identity of Muslim anti-war activists reflect a political focus on religious identity that has been marked since 9/11. This focus, however, belies a longer running tension within anti-war activism about the place of religion within the movement. The recent focus on Muslims has created a general environment in Britain where Islam is regarded as a religious outsider, even as an intrusive threat. This contrasts with the perception of the place of Christianity in the wider society and also within the anti-war movement itself where it has occupied a prominent position for generations. Be this as it may, Bruce Kent, Vice President of CND, saw a strong secular current within anti-war activism that has long sought to sideline those with Christian affiliations.[8] It is his view that

> sometimes in the secular peace world there is a prejudice against faith people speaking on platforms. They're not looked on as quite as serious as your trade union leader or parliamentarian. There is, in some quarters, that kind of prejudice about having church people.
>
> Actually the faith people, especially the Quakers, have been amongst the most persistent and consistent of any group, any group at all. But often it seems more important to have as a chair the President of the TUC or half a dozen Labour MPs than someone from the church.

While there is an undeniable historical importance of Christianity to peace activism, there has also been some reluctance among activists to using Christianity as an overt religious identifier within anti-war activism. Given this record, the overt representation of Islam as an identity has, not surprisingly, profoundly challenged many activists. As Asad Rehman observes, 'in the past on the Left you would have had to stay quiet if you believed in God . . . We [Muslims] are forcing open a space not only within the Marxist left but also in contrast to the right-wing Islamists as well. *We have multiple identities and need multiple space*s. Those who want to engage with us have to recognise our rights to these identities and spaces' (quoted in Bouteldja and Rehman 2004, emphasis added). In a later interview, however, Asad talked of the negative implications of such an identity politics:

> It's identity politics and we know where identity politics leads. Identity politics . . . is an inward looking politics, which actually is devastating because it does separate you from everyone; it's why we're having this multiculturalism debate, faith schools debate, because it actually is about identity politics. And I think this is where the anti-war movement's biggest failures – not on the war, but creating space which affected us in the social and the private sphere. Its effect wasn't about the war because in the war we were able to fight and always be there – it's in the other spaces.

There are reasons for Muslims choosing to promote a strong religious identity. Anas Altikriti suggests that it was a consequence of 9/11:

> It came quite naturally – it wasn't something that was manufactured. British Muslims, coming from all sorts of nationalistic backgrounds – Asian, African, Arab, Latin American – have constantly failed to promote national identities . . . One thing that we noticed after 9/11 was that many Muslims who before 9/11 never really saw themselves in a religious guise, in fact many of them had never been to a mosque in their lives . . . actually deciding to change their ways very, very naturally. . . . Muslim organizations come into it, that they welcome this kind of return to religion and this association of the religious identity, but at the same time they try to control things.

The post-9/11 political climate has been such as to put Muslims on the defensive. They are widely regarded with suspicion in countries such as the US, UK and France, attacked for their values and even for how they

dress. This milieu forms part of the broader symbolic struggle within Information War and anti-war campaigns themselves, hence StWC choosing to include 'Stop the Racist Backlash' as a core and early slogan. Thus many Muslim activists have sought to embrace a collective identity of religion at the same time as working with and towards nuanced inter-pretations of its implications and practices within anti-war campaigns.

ICTs enable the complexity of such debates to be represented and expressed without having to simplify to slogans. As such, technologies have helped overcome some of the perceived barriers of communica-tion. As Farida Tejabwala insisted:

> there really is no communication problem, because communication has changed. We use the internet, we use phones, we use text messag-ing to communicate, so I really don't see it as a hindrance. At the end of the day if a woman wants to wear the veil she can wear the veil like somebody wants to have tattoos all over them or piercings – it's just an identity isn't it?

Such expressions of collective identity, however nuanced, to some extent challenge the argument that we are experiencing a rising prominence of individualism in society. Barry Wellman (2001) has argued that ICTs and broad social trends are leading towards a 'networked individualism' where 'individuals build their networks, online and off-line, on the basis of their interests, values, affinities, and projects', rather than on local place-based affinities. There is a perceived danger that within such a network society individuals would have a weakened commitment to any one community, forever able to move on and find new 'others' to connect with. In such an environment it is thought difficult to generate the trust, solidarity and collective identity necessary for individuals to coordinate effective collective action. The representation and affiliation of a religious Muslim anti-war identity questions the spread of such individualism. Though ICTs have been useful in cementing representa-tions of such religious identities, our evidence suggests that they have by no means fatally weakened the importance of place and trust within such anti-war campaigns.

Conclusion

The ways in which anti-war groups have represented their campaigns, and the material they have used to do so, has led us to make three key points in this chapter. First, anti-war groups have made multiple online

interventions that mirror their other material in its use of confirmatory and iconic arguments, and imagery and projection of their power. Second, these representations are generally neither as controlled nor part of as careful a strategy as might at first appear, and many groups have a complicated (and at times messy) approach to considerations of their audience, relations to place, and the importance of using durable frames. Finally, such representations were a core tension in the construction of a religious identity as being a primary identifier of Muslim anti-war activists. Muslim religious identity was construed to be both challenging and valuable by different activists, but was itself going through a process of reconstruction and renegotiation, thus complicating the possible connections with anti-war activism.

4
Alliances and Fractures

The anti-war movement in Britain is generally described in singular terms, thereby implying there is a unified body. It is more accurate to refer to the collectivity as the anti-war *and peace* movements because this encompasses the range of activists, from those wanting to see one side defeated to those who abhor all forms of violence. For the sake of brevity we refer to the anti-war movement, but stress that it is an uneasy alliance of remarkably diverse groups and individuals. The anti-war movement is fractured and fragmented, yet simultaneously it contains multiple alliances and coalitions. The common cause is 'Stop the War', but the more detailed aims, justifications, methods and alternatives of participants are as heterogeneous as the groups involved. In addition, previous anti-war campaigns invested heavily in lobbying established political parties. For instance, CND has, over its history, lobbied intensely within the Labour party who, as a result, have for brief periods been committed to a policy of unilateral disarmament. The decline of class politics, plus the transformations of New Labour and its own heavy involvement in recent wars, means that the present anti-war movement is not only more diverse than its predecessors, but also less inclined to follow a parliamentary focus. It joined together to oppose the 'War on Terror' and pursuit of this goal operates outside and across party politics.

In what follows, we first detail the variegated character of the anti-war movement, setting out some dimensions along which movement groups' characteristics vary. We then examine some of the processes by which coalitions and alliances might achieve a degree of harmony and cooperation despite their differences. This includes returning to the complexities of the inclusion of Muslim groups within those alliances, further exploring some of the issues of identity politics raised first in Chapter 3. While, as we have noted, the inclusion of such differing groups within

one movement is in itself remarkable, we also identify a range of features of the movement that mitigate against deeper, more fundamental connections being made across barriers of identity difference.

Diversity and opposition

In key respects the anti-war movement is a union of opposites. Feminists march with patriarchs, Muslim women wearing hijabs campaign alongside bejeaned students, Jews walk in protest against Israel's 2006 invasion of Lebanon alongside anti-Semites declaiming 'We are all Hezbollah', secular Trotskyists link with devout Christians, extreme left-wingers join with centrist Liberal Democrats and those who wish for the military defeat of Anglo-American forces combine with deeply committed pacifists. As the Respect candidate and regular StWC speaker Yvonne Ridley told us, 'In Britain, the anti-war movement has forced some bizarre coalitions'. More hostile commentators have interpreted these contradictory alliances in terms much stronger than Ridley's 'bizarre' (Horowitz 2004). Gita Sahgal, in *Women against Fundamentalists* (2006), for instance, contends that some Muslim groups participating in anti-war activities are connected with terrorism and supported by neo-fascist organizations in South East Asia. But strong evidence is rarely provided for such claims (Ware 2005, 2006; Bright 2005).

Given this diversity it is hard to think of such groups forming a genuinely united social movement. Although there is commonality in resistance to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, their framing and broader demands differ widely. Some groups, for instance, link their resistance to war to broader anti-imperialist struggles or to a pacifist ideology, while others believe in the necessity of war but that the specific war against Iraq was not justified. Consequently it needs to be considered more as a 'movement of movements' (Kingsnorth 2003), with internal allegiances that cut through and fracture coalitions, than as a cohesive movement.

StWC, presently the largest of the formal alliances, must strive to hold together extraordinarily contradictory constituencies. As we described in Chapter 1, StWC was driven from the outset by an established Trotskyist group, the SWP, which – like everyone else – was unprepared for the large-scale ethnic minority involvement. The SWP's experience and political nous, combined with its organizational discipline and resources, allowed it to channel this unanticipated opposition to some extent.

However, a price of the coalition has been that the SWP muted its Marxist adherence to socialism and secularism. Uncompromising leftist criticism of patriarchal family formations and of religion as an anti-scientific

'opiate of the masses' has been dampened for the sake of maintaining a united front by those wary of upsetting the Islamic devout. The website of the SWP now announces a plural and inclusive outlook:

> We fight alongside anybody or any organization that wants to build the movement. The anti-war movement has gained its strength from its unity and breadth. That's why we fight to maintain the principles [of] unity of all the coalitions and campaigns with which we are involved. We respect people with ideas that are different from ours. So, while we seek to persuade people of our revolutionary ideas, we resist moves to narrow the movement to those who are already part of the radical left.
>
> (SWP 2007)

Some sense of the problems this entails comes from Mike Marqusee, former StWC press officer, who told us:

> The advantage of having the SWP as a national organization with a printing press and twenty full time workers and a rapid network for the distribution of leaflets was huge in getting the Stop the War Coalition off the ground. . . . And I think they were right, in the sense that they felt that this is a crossroads in global politics. It was that strong sense that brought people together, and the SWP did have that. They then though took that into meaning that nothing should be allowed to confuse anybody about what was the absolute priority, which meant that the arguments, complex arguments about secularism and religion were not heard. . . . So, for example, pretty early on, those people who questioned the link with MAB [Muslim Association of Britain] were castigated as Islamophobes.

So how might we conceptualize such a collection of groups? We consider there to be eight broad continua within the British anti-war movement.

1. First we distinguish along a continuum of peace movement to anti-war. This ranges from an ideological *pacifism through to opposition to a specific conflict*. On this continuum we might place at one end organizations such as the Peace Pledge Union and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) that have a long history of pacifism. At the other end of the continuum would be the StWC that campaigned specifically against the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, Iraq in 2003 and continues to campaign against a perceived threat of an attack on Iran. The StWC leadership also prioritizes opposition to Israel

because of its treatment of Palestine. Members of the Trotskyite SWP play key roles in StWC, but it also draws support from factions of the Labour Party, Respect, CND and MAB.

2. It is also possible to distinguish the peace and anti-war movement in terms of a more or less direct *affiliation with political programmes*. These cover a substantial range, from the Liberal Democrats to the much smaller Communist Party of Great Britain.[1] The centre of gravity here is towards the left, with the political party Respect being intimately linked with the anti-Iraq war campaign, and it includes Labour Action for Peace (not affiliated to the Labour Party) and Labour Against the War, convened by MP Jeremy Corbyn. It may also make sense to locate the anarchist group, Wombles, on this continuum, though arguably it expresses an anti-formal politics outlook.

3. Then there are *feminist or feminist-inspired/influenced groups* that have distinctive characteristics and have long played a prominent role in peace activism (notably through the Greenham Common camps in the 1980s). For instance, Women in Black is well established and international in orientation, and though relying heavily on Internet links it also holds regular 'vigils' in specific locations. There is also the oldest women's peace organization, WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom), that was founded in 1915 and has its headquarters in Geneva.

4. One might also consider *religious-oriented organizations*. The London-based group JustPeace was an explicitly Muslim anti-war group and MAB has been prominent both on anti-war rallies and in providing Muslim orientated perspectives in mainstream media coverage. Women Praying for Peace is also an instance of the conjoining of pacifism and feminist. The Society of Friends is a pacifist group with long established roots in Christianity. Moreover, CND has contained from its foundation a significant Christian presence (Parkin 1968; Taylor 1988).

5. We need also to distinguish groups along a continuum of *organized institutions to loose networks*. Some are strongly centralized and organization-oriented while others are loose, virtual connections. The Network for Peace might be seen as fitting at one end of this continuum (loosely connected) with StWC at the other (centrally organized). In addition, groups vary in terms of the degree to which they are nationally or internationally oriented.

6. There are also activist/performance groups that deserve attention, not because of their size (they are often numerically tiny), but due to their emphasis on symbolism that can capture considerable media attention and public interest. They offer music, dance or performances in

pursuit of peace and can inject carnivalesque features into actions with appealing sounds, make-up and striking puppets. Examples include AntiWarArt, Rhythms of Resistance (ROR), Bare Witness, Musicians Against Nuclear Arms (MANA), the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) and Code Pink.

7. There is also a distinction between organizations that have a *specific remit* (e.g. CND being anti-nuclear weaponry; International Action Network on Small Arms) and those that have *a broad anti-war remit* (such as pacifist groups).

8. Finally, there is a continuum that one may draw in terms of degree of *military association and involvement*. In the United States there has been a marked presence of military families and veterans (examples include Veterans for Peace, founded in 1985; Military Families Speak Out; and Iraq Veterans Against the War) from the early days of the Iraq invasion. In the UK, from a lower base point, Military Families Against the War (MFAW) has become a significant feature of the anti-war movement since one of its leaders, Reg Keys (whose son was killed in action), contested the then Prime Minister's Sedgefield constituency in the 2005 General Election.

This overview is not intended to provide a typology within which any particular anti-war group could fit. Rather, we wish to highlight some important ways in which organizations differ. Grasping the variegated character of anti-war activism is sufficiently important that we might also represent this visually. Figures 4.1–4.6 present a set of images of anti-war contention intended to display some aspects of diversity in both participation in protest and in the range of public activities in which activists might engage. So, Figure 4.1 offers ample visual clues of diverse participation, while Figures 4.2 and 4.3 evidence the involvement of two groups – Muslims and school students – whose apparent politicization through this period are much commented on.

Figures 4.4–4.6 represent a range of modes of movement action. While it is certainly images like that shown in Figure 4.1 that were seen in national news media across the world in the lead up to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, such mass events rested on local mobilization across the country, as discussed further in Chapter 5. Figure 4.4 shows one such meeting and its connection to the local is evident not only in the community hall location, but also in the strong Muslim representation in the room, since this particular meeting was held in a predominantly Muslim area in Leicester. Figure 4.5 shows one of many ways in which anti-war activists attempted to mobilize iconic imagery (discussed in Chapter 3) in

Figure 4.1   Anti-war rally, Trafalgar Square, London, 27 September 2003. Photography: Richard Searle

stating their opposition to war. This example – in which hundreds of children's shoes were thrown on the asphalt in front of the Prime Minister's office in London – was intended as a symbol of the devastation of civilian areas of Lebanon wrought by Israeli rocket attacks, and as a reminder of the children that had died in attacks. Figure 4.6 shows an alternative mode of symbolic representation of opposition to war. The practice of 'subvertising' had grown within anti-corporate movements who sought to oppose the corporate takeover of public space highlighted by authors such as Naomi Klein (2000). Here a corporate message is obliterated and the space reused for making a strong political point, albeit one that plays for its humour on the original message of the billboard.

In sum, it is clear that the anti-war movement certainly evidences unexpected coalitions carrying out a wide range of activities to oppose war. It is to the different ways of operating across such diversities to which we now turn.

Working together

Having described the diversity of anti-war participants, we move on to consider ways in which they work together. In what follows, we suggest five ways – which are not mutually exclusive – in which this may happen, namely, with *formal coalitions*, by *shared identity*, by *common tactics*

Figure 4.2 Anti-war marcher against the bombing of Afghanistan, London, 18 November 2001. Photography: Jess Hurd, reportdigital.co.uk

and conduct, by *acts of solidarity* and by building *transnational networks*. Discussing these analytical distinctions will also allow us to say more about the part played by new media in the anti-war movement.

Formal coalitions

The outstanding example of a formal coalition in the current anti-war movement is StWC. This is the largest organization in Britain that arose to oppose the 'War on Terror'. It came into existence in September 2001, growing from a groundswell of concern about an impending American military response after the 9/11 attacks. The coalition grew during its

Figure 4.3   School students strike against war in Iraq, Parliament Square, London, 20 March 2003. Photography: Jess Hurd, reportdigital.co.uk

campaign against the invasion of Afghanistan and expanded as preparations for the invasion of Iraq developed in 2003. As it expanded StWC brought in other significant players, including a partnership with MAB and CND. Interestingly MAB was initially approached to be affiliated to StWC, but it did not want to be subsumed into the coalition and thus pushed to be an equal partner and sponsor of StWC events. Anas Altikriti, formerly of MAB, explained the tensions this caused: 'at the time we didn't realize that CND were also invited to become part of Stop the War coalition; however, they had refused on the basis that we were part of it and they didn't want to be seen as part of the coalition that was against

Figure 4.4   Muslim anti-war meeting: 'Stop Now . . . Lebanon, Gaza & the Middle East Crisis', Highfields, Leicester, 30 July 2006. Photography: Jenny Pickerill

the rights of women, free speech and the like'. Resistance to the arrangement did not just come from CND, however, Anas goes on to note that 'people were saying to us you'll never succeed. We've never ever tried building any kind of position with the left, they will never have you. You're on opposite extremes of the spectrum in terms of belief and faith. Their moral code, their values, in terms of their family values, is totally different from yours, and you will never be able to do much. You may be able to hold an event, but nothing more, nothing in the long run'.

On the coalition's national executive are members of the Green Party, Respect, Friends of Al Aqsa and CND, as well as various MPs (e.g. Katie Clark, Jeremy Corbyn) and trade unionists. Its President is Tony Benn, an octogenarian, long-serving Member of Parliament and former Cabinet Minister who is widely recognized and admired in Britain and who plays an active role in StWC, especially as a public speaker. Among a clutch of Vice Presidents are retired maverick (and aristocrat) MP Tam Dalyell, novelist and political essayist Tariq Ali, Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas and Respect MP George Galloway.

StWC also has affiliates from groups such as the Palestine Liberation Campaign, the BMI (individuals who were once part of MAB) and the Communist Party of Britain. In addition to the London-based central group, dozens, later hundreds, of smaller local groups are affiliated to

Figure 4.5   Demonstration against Israeli attacks on Lebanon, Parliament Street, London, 5 August 2006. Photography: Jordan Matyka

StWC. We calculated from its 2005–6 accounts that StWC has only about 300 individual members (see Chapter 6), but its emphasis on affiliations from groups such as trade unions and branches of political campaigns increases its weight.

StWC places emphasis upon marches (chiefly regular demonstrations, usually in London) that are aimed at bringing pressure to bear on government as well as to maintain public awareness of the issues. As we show in Chapters 6 and 7 its organization is steered by three or four people who work full time in the central office. This enables StWC to respond quickly to events, having nimble campaigns, but it

Figure 4.6 'Subvertising' against occupation of Iraq, Bristol. Photography: Jeff Brewster

is not something that allows for much dialogue or open discussion. Its annual conference, held over one day, is managed to ensure that a range of StWC members speak from the platform, thereby parading the breadth of the coalition, but motions shaping policy bear the imprint of core activists, especially those from the SWP. Thus at the Annual Conference on 10 June 2006 the programme had been prearranged and motions to be decided upon pre-printed. These had come from several organizations, but SWP motions came first after the opening speeches with others postponed for consideration towards the end of the packed day. Moreover, delegates wishing to speak were compelled to inform the chair in writing if they wished to intervene. This made for well-ordered proceedings, but it was evident that core players had exercised overwhelming influence over a significantly orchestrated event.

Attempting to share identities

Unity can be achieved by possessing a common outlook on the world. This has been important in past anti-war activism and it remains significant, for instance, with regard to pacifist and left-wing socialist involvement. However, shared identity as a basis for alliance is problematic in at least two ways: first, it can be exclusionary of potential allies who do

not have this identity; second, identity is generally a much more complicated and nuanced matter than it appears once one looks beneath labels such as socialist or Christian.

In the recent anti-war movement it has been the engagement of a particular ethno-religious group, Muslims, that has been especially noteworthy. Recent events have galvanized many Muslims and impelled them to take part in the anti-war movement. Muslims are now a visible presence on anti-war demonstrations, routinely part of protest movements, and for this alone worthy of comment. In what follows we will work initially with the simple category Muslim, but later we will consider some of the complexities of identity this can disguise.

The involvement of a religious and ethnic minority has challenged the political left to accommodate and better understand such a heterogeneous coalition. For many Muslims such involvement seems to have been empowering and contributed to the proliferation of Muslim groups that sought political change through activism outside the formal polity.

This Muslim presence from the early days of StWC, as Mike Marqusee observed, 'caught the SWP and the white left completely by surprise'. However, StWC soon capitalized on the opportunity to include a more diverse range of activists. Consequently, the strongest Muslim connections in the anti-war movement in Britain have been with left-wing socialists, exemplified by the Respect Party that sought to capitalize on the Muslim anti-war vote, and the high-profile presence of Respect Councillor Salma Yaqoob. In practice this has involved the StWC hosting key Muslim leader speakers at their events, and in the naming of a Muslim organization (originally MAB, since 2006 the BMI) as co-sponsors of StWC (with CND)-organized London rallies.

Non-Muslim anti-war activists have spoken of the need for 'respect and tolerance' for Muslim practices, and prayer spaces were provided at key anti-war rallies. Many groups other than StWC also made links with Muslim anti-war activists. This is exemplified at the local scale (in Leicester) by joint meetings being called, Muslim speakers invited to address local groups and vigils attracting a variety of Muslim support (expressed through different Islamic dress, chants and banner slogans). Chris Goodwin (LCSTW) recalled, 'we had dealings with the Federation of Muslim Councils, and we worked with them to organize a big local demonstration in Leicester, and we did the liasing with the stewards and people and they mobilized the people from the mosques, and loads of people came out from the mosques on that'.

This incorporation of diversity has been celebrated by many in the anti-war movement as a sign of its strength (the logic of numbers),

liberalism (as opposed to others' emphasis on war and terrorism) and as an example of integration in action (proving through practise that common ground can be found through political action). It is clear why non-Muslims sought the involvement of Muslims and vice versa. Both cohorts benefit from increased numbers and their respective arguments are strengthened by the inclusion of the other (for non-Muslims being able to illustrate their diversity and solidarity with 'those under attack'; for Muslims supporters outside their own faith networks). However, there are tensions in these relationships, with some interviewees arguing that Muslim groups are increasingly aware of their own power and their desirability to non-Muslim groups. As Korin Grant, ex-Chair of LCSTW put it to us, 'if you are the one with all the Muslim contacts that is the person to be'. On the other hand, a Muslim activist expressed a cynical view of why Muslims had been embraced by existing leftist anti-war groups, arguing that because Muslim communities were already highly organized internally (usually around mosques), then left groups could simply tap into those pre-existing networks to mobilize protesters. Asad Rehman, formerly of StWC, qualified this perspective, suggesting that while Muslims were under-represented at StWC nationally and this was a source of discontent, people at 'a local level worked together in very local coalitions – (and) that's where people were represented. If the mosques weren't necessarily representing themselves officially, what they were doing was they were opening space where people with a link to a mosque would say "oh yeah, 27 mosques in here, no problem, we know all the mosques, we'll go and leaflet, we'll get people outside all of that – it'll be brilliant". And there were public meetings – "make sure someone big from the Muslim community's speaking, some Iman, someone like that", so it was very much done on those sort of levels'. Moreover, Asad was upset that Muslims had been targeted for inclusion rather than there being a broader focus on bringing in different voices, 'where's the Afro-Caribbean community in the anti-war movement, where's the Sikh community, where's the Hindu community – where are they? Nowhere. They've gone for what they think is an easy . . . it weakened us and not only weakened but it's created a narrower Muslim community'.

Despite the apparent success of the joint mobilizations in attracting large numbers and diversity, these interactions were fraught with suspicion and were rather temporary. Naima Bouteldja, a Muslim activist who volunteered with Stop Political Terror (SPT)[2], described MAB's involvement with StWC as a '*mariage de convenance*' that was not liable to last very long given the suspicion that StWC was more interested in gaining political advantage than understanding and supporting Muslim

concerns. Although there was Muslim representation on the StWC Steering Committee (for example, Ismail Patel of Friends of Al Aqsa[3] and Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui of the Muslim Parliament), there were no Muslim office holders in the organization and, as Asad Rehman pointed out, 'there were no big Muslim organizations represented there'. The inner workings and power of this steering committee remain contested. It was diverse in its composition and activists reported its discussions being open and inclusive. However, its resolutions were reportedly often ignored by office holders of StWC.

We spoke to several people who expressed concern that Muslims were being appropriated by secular anti-war groups, so such groups could appear inclusive and draw on broader support. As Mike Marqusee insisted, 'it's not the rainbow coalition, it's like someone painting the stripes and deciding who's in and who's out'.

Beyond the temporary interactions of marches, or jointly held meetings, conversations were often not extended. Many non-Muslim anti-war activists had few direct links to Muslims and spoke of their frustration that coalitions had not been built, dialogue had not continued and mutual understanding had not been fostered. Mike Marqusee, biographically knowledgeable about the internecine character of much Muslim politics, was emphatic on this score. Describing the early days of StWC, he told us about meetings in which

In the front row you'd have a vicar in a dog collar, a Muslim guy in a cap and a beard, a guy with pink hair and six nose rings, and then someone in practical flat shoes and tweeds . . . The discussion was sometimes confused, but it was exciting to see, and to be part of the movement as a whole, grappling with what's really going on here, is it, you know, 'what is our attitude towards terrorism, what is our attitude towards Islam and then Islamism, and to the politics of religion, what is it about America, is it about Tony Blair and George Bush, and is it about oil?'. . . But the approach of both the SWP and the CP (Communist Party of Great Britain) to that discussion was basically to say 'well there are three or four core points that we want you to get, and we'll just knock the rest of it out'. I hope that my approach was different from that, and I learned a lot from going around the country . . . The deliberate outreach to the Muslim population of Britain was the right thing to do, and was a great thing to do, and a necessary democratic task. I always felt that that was about, dialogue isn't even the right word, because there are more than two voices, but that's the point. And I was aware of the various, very different

political voices within the Muslim community, and that it's very important the anti-war movement engaged with that in a sophisticated way. And from the beginning there were some difficulties with that, because it was a difficult task, people were dealing with an area (where) they had no idea.

By 2006, some non-Muslim activists in Leicester felt excluded by Muslim groups, who organized their own events and appeared to forget to invite them even though, for one event, the Muslims had billed a non-Muslim activist as a key speaker. Some could also feel uneasy marching alongside Muslims who were shouting for something they could not understand. Korin Grant recollected that while pleased at 'the number of Muslims who had turned up at the demo in Leicester', she had misgivings because 'while they were shouting things that I didn't understand I suddenly thought I actually feel a bit uncomfortable because I really, really don't know what they're saying. And, you know, I hoped and assumed I would feel that way no matter what language was being spoken. But normally, if you're on a march, you can shout along with other people. But I was being a steward and smiling and I just felt very much like they were laughing at me. I thought "mm I wonder, what am I doing here?"'

From another position, Arif Sayeed, a Muslim student from Leicester who wore a jacket with a Palestinian flag to our meeting, described his pleasure when, on an anti-war march in London, he was walking side by side with an Orthodox Jew and realized that they could be on the same side. He argued that such demonstrations create space 'for dialogue between people'. However, he did not feel able to talk to the Orthodox Jew, despite at other times initiating conversations with other left non-Muslim activists. Anti-war protest had helped bring Muslims out on to the streets alongside those with whom they rarely, if ever, had come into contact.

Throughout the recent period of anti-war conditions, a significant group of Muslims have felt an affiliation with a movement that was shared by others with many different backgrounds. Thousands of people walked side by side, all opposing the same policies of the same government, but few talked to each other across the ethno-religious divide. In the following paragraphs we describe four reasons for this continuing division that centre around: the political foci of key anti-war organizations, a tendency to reify Muslims as a single community, the inherent difficulties of connecting across religious identity and the complexities of the broader projects of Muslim politics in Britain.

1. Prioritization of anti-war campaigning

Some groups articulated the need to resist anti-terror legislation and try to prevent demonization of Muslims at the same time as arguing against war. For example, StWC began in 2001 with three demands: 'Stop the War, No to a Racist Backlash, Defend Civil Liberties'. In practice, however, many groups prioritized their activities around anti-war campaigning rather than defence of civil liberties. Muslim interviewees spoke of their disappointment that more non-Muslims had not acted in their support after anti-terror raids or had not spoken out more assertively against their perceived persecution. Zina, a peace activist from Leicester, details this mismatch of priorities, 'when we started trying to get people together for Faslane 365, I contacted loads of different Muslim organizations saying could I come and do a talk, would this be something you might support? And the response, time and again, is they're just feeling so under pressure at the moment, so endangered at the moment that nobody who's Muslim wants to stand up and be counted at the moment because they're worried that the police will raid their houses and shoot them. And it's a very understandable position for them to take.'

These mismatched priorities become more obvious over time. Dedicated activists feel overworked and when issues competed for their attention non-Muslims prioritized anti-war campaigning. When their engagement with Muslim politics became complicated or difficult (for example, during public debates about the rights of women to wear the veil in late 2006) many chose to avoid taking sides. Moreover, such engagement was seen by some as a diversion from the more important politics of being anti-war.

2. Tendency to reify 'the Muslim community'

Activists are attempting interaction between two different entities. On the one hand, there are those who have a particular repertoire of tactics and strategies aimed at a clear target. In the case of anti-war, that target is mainly the British government's involvement in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. The target is broader than that, of course, incorporating the US government's actions (especially with regard to Guantánamo Bay), a broader concern for peace and horror at the loss of life. But the target in Britain is primarily national and primarily the government. Thus the fundamental aim of most of the groups involved in the anti-war movement is to mobilize public opinion against the wars, and thus force the government to change its strategy of involvement.

On the other hand, there is a diffuse, complex, fractious identity of Muslims in Britain. As outlined in Chapter 3 there is no discrete British Muslim identity. There may be some underlying unity in what it means to be Muslim, but there are a plethora of organizations attempting to represent 'British Muslims' politically and to the public which all represent different perspectives. In addition there are numerous small politically focused Muslim groups such as MPACUK, JustPeace and the Muslim Network. For many Muslims there is an indivisible relation between anti-war opposition and criticism of new terrorism legislation. Because this is so, Muslim groups Cage Prisoner and Stop Political Terror may also be considered as part of the anti-war movement. However, like many of the smaller non-Muslim anti-war groups, these groups have struggled to survive. JustPeace folded in 2005 and Stop Political Terror merged into Cage Prisoner in late 2006 due to a lack of resources. StWC's Muslim Network has found it hard to get off the ground, its initiators conceding as recently as September 2007 that 'we must be honest and recognise that there is still a great deal of work to be done within the Muslim community to build an awareness of what individuals can achieve by working together' (StWC 2007). For Nahella Ashraf, a key instigator of the network, it was the prioritization of anti-war concerns above being Muslim that was proving problematic, 'one of the reasons why I wanted to do the network was to broaden this kind of understanding as to what we're trying to do with Stop the War. Because if you come into it from a Muslim group, then I think you pigeon hole yourself as well as letting other people do it. That's one of my biggest frustrations with Muslims, if I've said it's a Muslim thing, they'll turn up. It is quite difficult. . . . It is frustrating that . . . the fact that I am a Muslim . . . has more of an impact than what I have to say.' Moreover the ways in which Muslim participation was encouraged in anti-war campaigns was often structured via communities, rather than individual participation in anti-war groups. Thus, in Leicester Yaqub Dadhiwala (UoLISoc) noted that 'three or four Imams in the city are very influential and they'll make the final decision over what happens'.

As a result non-Muslim activists have had to engage with organizations which, although they may have expressed opinions about the war, did not articulate being anti-war as their core rationale. The majority of these organizations make representation on behalf of Muslim communities *per se*, and often on a range of broad issues that affect their constituents – such as education, crime and security (for example, the Federation of Muslim Organizations in Leicestershire [FMO], or MAB), core principles being the defence of Muslims and advancement of their

case. Unavoidably, their targets and requests are diffuse. Moreover, some of the targets for these groups are international, following through diasporic links beyond Britain.

3. The challenge of commonality across religious identities

This complexity of Muslim identity in Britain is a core friction for those seeking commonality in the anti-war movement. For many interviewees, Muslim and non-Muslim, Islam became a barrier to cooperation. Activists found establishing commonality around religion difficult and many non-Muslims' lack of understanding of Islam and the variety of ways in which Muslims practise their faith further complicated matters. There were frequent misunderstandings, misinterpretations and false assumptions made. At the same time, some Muslim activists said they had not joined anti-war groups because they felt such groups failed to respect the importance of Islam, 'a religion or faith [which] people live with all their lives, they're born with it, it's integral, whereas their political view develops . . . and sometimes it [anti-war activism] can just be a bit frivolous' (Arif Sayeed).

The possibility of finding commonality has been complicated by the way in which Muslim identity has been essentialized in Britain. As Bouteldja (2007) points out, politicians and journalists have been 'constantly entrapping and caricaturing Muslims within their religious identity'. As a result being Muslim in Britain has come to be expressed by many in the media as a singular identity, an identifier that categorizes large numbers of people under one banner in a way that few would attempt with Christianity. Fearful of alienating Muslims, or of adding to their demonization, few non-Muslim activists have questioned this homogenization. In an attempt to project a united anti-war movement, debate about the differences between Muslims and non-Muslims, let alone within Muslim communities, was often carefully avoided. Thus Stuart Hodkinson, an early member of Leeds StWC reflected on processes that his and other local groups had struggled with, recalling that it had 'worked hard to cultivate and bring in . . . those organizations that could bring a mass of Muslim people into the anti-war movement and therefore you would have meetings of Stop the War Coalition, where anything . . . to scare them [Muslims] off, was prevented – it was a complete and utter party line – we don't talk about capitalism, anti-capitalism – we don't talk about direct action'. A consequence was that, even among anti-war activists, Muslims were, as Mike Marqusee put it, 'conceptualized in almost a colonial fashion, in that the communities, and the elements, were seen as monolithic and homogeneous'. Consequently,

as Asad argued, 'it's all very shallow front-type politics . . . the white left thinks it's easier to get the vote from the Muslims – we've always argued "leave us alone – you go and work with the white community – win them over because why aren't they on the demonstrations? – we can get the Muslim community – it's alright you standing outside the mosques trying to mobilize people to do that and so on – it's easy". . . . they're replicating *shell type politics* which actually don't take you any further because they're actually not about plurality, engaging a lot of people, adding lots of different voices within it . . . they have gone for the lowest common denominator type of politics, so actually they are doing the Muslim community a disservice, because actually they are allowing the debate to either be framed by the media or to be framed by the Islamists.'

While the mobilization potential of homogenization should be acknowledged, such simplification of identity hinders alliances in the longer run. Asad Rehman, a Muslim activist and formerly of StWC, articulated his frustration as follows: 'what we didn't want was either the right or the left to see the Muslim community as one homogenous community, with one voice, one identity, and one political perspective. We thought it was very important for people to know that actually there's always been a progressive Muslim identity – we are not new on demonstrations, we've always been demonstrating – we've been demonstrating on many, many different issues – just because the white left has never seen people – but increasingly we looked to MAB as an easy way, more I would say a street product, hired to bring a lot of people out on the street.' In consequence of this homogenization, anti-war activists actually helped proliferate the singular and inadequate notion that there was a uniform Muslim identity in Britain and thus adhered to a blind respect for the rights of 'Muslims' to practise their faith as they saw fit. Having embraced it, but still ignorant of its subtleties, many non-Muslim activists were then too scared of appearing exclusionary to question Islamic beliefs or practices even though they often privately expressed unease. Interviewees often specifically asked for their reservations about some Islamic practices not to be quoted.

What could have been a moment of dialogue was in fact a period of polite silence under the auspices of non-Muslims showing 'respect and tolerance' for Muslims. Few interviewees said they had learned anything about Islam as they had focused on 'being anti-war' as the commonality. However, this superficiality of dialogue and embracement of 'Muslim' as an identifying category has led activists down a difficult path which has failed to lead to lasting interaction.

If the distinction becomes between 'Muslim' and 'non-Muslim', as it has in the anti-war movement, then religion becomes central to any

discussion of commonality, and the categories oppositional; 'essentialisation thus reinforces the belief shared by many sectarians (both Muslims and non-Muslims) in the existence of two monolithic and antagonistic blocs that either coexist in separatist isolation or, if one of the groups dissolves, assimilates itself into the other' (Bouteldja 2007). But beyond a superficial understanding that Islam can teach peace and justice as much as can Christianity, religion is a rather non-negotiable entity through which to attempt a compromise. It can quickly become a highly emotive, intensely personal and polarized dialogue. If anti-war activists had been able to embrace other aspects of identity, such as diasporas, home-country links and place-based identities, there may have been more ground with which to find commonality beyond the temporality and superficiality of 'being anti-war'.

4. The complexities of Muslim politics in Britain

The argument that religion is a difficult entity through which to reach commonality has led critics to suggest that the anti-war movement has perversely aided fundamentalist expressions of Islam. Nick Cohen, for instance, argues that anti-war activists' unquestioning alliances with Muslim opponents of the Iraq invasion have led them into supporting those they would otherwise abhor. Thus he reckons that 'the anti-war movement disgraced itself not because it was against the war in Iraq' – there was always a case to be made for this – but rather 'because it could not oppose the counter-revolution once the war was over' (2007, p. 289). Cohen claims that, by supporting Muslims *tout court*, rather than those Iraqis who opposed religious sectarianism, Al Qaeda, and the heritage of the Ba'ath Party, the anti-war movement failed to show solidarity with those who struggled for a genuinely alternative Iraq, thereby siding with 'theocrats and fascists' who, in the name of Islam, are central to the civil war 'insurgency' (Cohen 2004; cf. Halliday 2007).

At the least critics such as Nick Cohen can help us to appreciate what many non-Muslim and Muslim activists already know: that the veneer of unity has prevented non-Muslim activists from engaging fully with the complexity of Muslim politics in Britain (cf. Anthony 2007). While some individuals have gone to great lengths to educate themselves, many more remain ignorant through fear of fracturing any perceived unity.

Given this, it is perhaps not surprising that anti-war groups have sought to avoid detailed debate about the principles and aims of the different Muslim organizations. As discussed in Chapter 3, Muslim identity politics are highly complex and contested, and the intersection between being British and Muslim has been problematic for

many, especially politically articulate anti-war activists. For many Muslim anti-war activists their politicization afforded an opportunity to create identities beyond that of their parents and conservative Islam and to at times challenge the hierarchies established by their elders. Ismail Patel of Friends of Al Aqsa and BMI, argued that 'after the 9/11 event, 7/7 took place a few years later that allowed us to be able to discuss politics much more openly on the platform of the Stop the War coalition than we would have be able to say, in a Mosque environment . . . because once you start defending Palestinians or the Iraqis and then you use language in which you have to confront the British Prime Minister and the British Government foreign policy, or even domestic policies, obviously then you're seen as a radical. And once you're seen as a radical, if you do not have a lot of people around you who are not of the same faith then you're in danger.'

The Muslim community is not the same community as it was before the war. Even the more traditional leadership within the Muslim community has had to address the anger and demands of Muslims who have become politicized through the anti-war process. For Saleem (2005), the Chair of JustPeace, it is the conflict of how to be British *and* Muslim which is exacerbating the alienation felt by some Muslim youth and creating a space for Islamist fundamentalism.

If such complexity could be embraced by non-Muslim activists, this would not only facilitate those Muslim activists seeking to articulate new forms of who they are, but also subvert those such as David Horowitz (2004), who appear to cast Muslim anti-war voices as supporters of terrorism. It would also support a more informed dialogue between multiple voices as to what commonalities exist between different forms of Islam and non-Muslim activists. Activists would then be in a better position to understand why some Islamic practices are supported, contested or rejected *by* Muslims and consequently more clearly support those with whom they felt most aligned. By moving beyond the self-limiting 'respect' for multiculturalism (which can ironically foster separatism), anti-war activists could engage in the detailed sharing and exchanging of ideas that are necessary to practicing interculturalism (Hussain et al. 2006).

Common tactics and conduct

Some groups come together round the cause of anti-war activism which they pursue with a shared commitment in terms of tactics and conduct. There is an acute consciousness among such activists of the symbolic

import of what they do and how they comport themselves in doing it. Faslane 365, a year-long campaign opposing the presence of nuclear weapons at a naval base west of Glasgow (and connected to Faslane Peace Camp, set up in 1982) provides an example of activism that seeks unity in shared practices. Faslane 365 invited groups of activists to hold a 'continuous peaceful blockade' of the base between 1 October 2006 and 30 September 2007 and offered the following guide to tactics and behaviour that should be adhered to by those who came to participate, decided upon by core members:

> *Faslane 365 non-violence guidelines*: We are committed to always acting in a way that causes no harm to ourselves or others. We ask that everyone taking part in Faslane 365 respect and follow these guidelines: Our attitude will be one of sincerity and respect towards the people we encounter; We will not engage in physical violence or verbal abuse toward any individual; We will carry no weapons; We will not bring or use alcohol or drugs other than for medical purposes; We will clear the blockade to allow emergency vehicles in or out of the base and then resume the blockade afterwards.
>
> (Faslane 365, 2006)

Such a code is offered by Faslane 365 campaigners as a basis for unity with others who share the conviction that 'one should never use a method [of protest] which one would not want used against oneself' (ibid.).

   Women in Black also projects and subscribes to a cognate set of shared tactics and conduct. Established in the Middle East in 1988, its groups are spread round the world (but with an international email list accessible from its website) with each enjoying a high degree of autonomy. Women in Black activists characteristically hold regular peace vigils in places such as central London and New York, where their soberly dressed and dignified protests may be witnessed (Cockburn 2007). The group insists that 'We are not an organization, but a means of mobilization and a formula for action. Women in Black actions are generally women only, and often take the form of women wearing black, standing in a public place in silent, non-violent vigils at regular times and intervals, carrying placards and handing out leaflets.' It continues to draw out the symbolic import of its tactics and conduct: 'We use non-violent and non-aggressive forms of action. In addition to vigils Women in Black groups use many other forms of non-violent direct action such as sitting down to block a road, entering military bases and other forbidden zones, refusing to comply with orders, and "bearing witness". Wearing black in

some cultures signifies mourning, and feminist actions dressed in black convert women's traditional passive mourning for the dead in war into a powerful refusal of the logic of war' (Women in Black undated).

Such groups are generally loosely organized, but they are not necessarily so. The pacifists in the Religious Society of Friends, for instance, also place emphasis on appropriate conduct and tactics of non-violence. Among Quakers there is concern to listen effectively, even – perhaps especially – to those whom one opposes, to remain calm however stressful the situation, and to 'bear witness' with dignity and sobriety. Steve Whiting of Turning the Tide,[4] for instance, assured us that to Quakers such as he 'bearing witness is key, because the Quaker approach is very much your own experience of the divine in your own life, which you then share in your meetings with other Friends, and you live it out as guided, as guided by the divine god, the spirit, whatever you want to call it'. This accords with the common practice of holding 'vigils' at military and at other locations. Quakers told us that it was important to be seen at such places, but also to be seen to be acting appropriately. Non-violence is crucial here, as is internal self-control, even when the issues are felt passionately. For this reason one can see Quakers at vigils and on marches, holding up signs proclaiming who they are (in unostentatious ways). This, it is said, is one way in which others are drawn to Quakerism, though the Society does not seek for converts, seeing faith as coming from within the individual rather than from external stimuli. Whiting went on to insist that in a protest one might be burning with anger and frustration, but for Quakers what is crucial is 'how you channel that anger into a positive energy'. This is not a matter of piety, but as Whiting added, more about 'becoming or being the change you wish to bring about, which is what non-violence is about for us, and it plays itself out in terms of group process, how we are as a group. So we work with action groups, campaigning groups to say "look if we're saying no to this, actually we can't be behaving like that ourselves, we have to become a model for an alternative"'.

Enacting solidarities

Solidarity activism, seeking change for the benefit of others rather than for oneself, often involves activism in one location to defend differently situated others (Passy 2001). This is more than just 'care at a distance' (Popke 2006), but an enactment of that care. Some groups, such as JNV, define their primary purpose as providing informational resources for other campaigners through effective use of ICTs. Other respondents referred to morale-boosting benefits of connecting to other anti-war groups online.

We conceive this as a desire to find and express solidarity. Following Bayat (2005), we might term this 'imagined solidarity'. Bayat draws on Benedict Anderson's (1991) work defining the nation as an imagined community 'because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members . . . yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (p. 5). Imagined solidarity may be achieved through projecting locally grounded actions into the global arena, thereby increasing the significance of a campaign for participants. Interviewees highlighted their ability to communicate their participation in protest: Chris Goodwin, for example, an LCSTW campaigner, told us that 'a lot of the big demonstrations have been coordinated around the world . . . if nothing else – if we don't stop the wars – at least you can hope that word about our actions gets out around the world'.

The need to show solidarity was felt especially keenly among activists who closely identified with those suffering in the Iraq war. In Britain this is most obviously represented by Muslim communities and reflects the Islamic concept of one *umma*, something Arif Sayeed articulated as 'the unity, the brotherhood, the sisterhood, of all Muslims, wherever you are, whatever colour your skin is, wherever you live'. This was extended to a concern for justice for all: 'You stand up for an injustice wherever it is – it doesn't matter whether they're Muslim or not' insisted Naazish Azaim of UoLISoc.

Building transnational networks

Barriers to forming and sustaining coalitions in the anti-war movement are imposing. There are issues of resources, ideology and outlooks that must be addressed. Building coalitions across national borders brings additional difficulties beyond those required for a domestic coalition such as further cultural and political diversity, extra economic costs to be met because of longer distances and variations in political contexts and power differentials between potential partner groups (Smith and Bandy 2004, 7–8). The particular context of the 'War on Terror' also militates against the conditions that have been previously conducive for some coalitions across national boundaries. Such coalitions have previously been encouraged by international governmental or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) seeking to facilitate network development. In addition, high-profile targets in the form of international financial or political institutions have also been relatively easily identified (Bandy and Smith 2004, 230–4). Yet formal international bodies provide neither shared allies nor shared targets for domestic anti-war movements.

Necessarily then anti-war movements have targeted their own national governments. Without a physical location where relevant decisions were being made, protesters have had to satisfy themselves by identifying national centres of power and demonstrating in capital cities.

In spite of this, Kahn and Kellner contend that 'the global internet . . . is creating the base and the basis for an unparalleled worldwide anti-war/pro-peace and social justice movement during a time of terrorism, war and intense political struggle' (2004, p. 88). If there are formidable substantive barriers to establishing transnational networks, perhaps the Internet can facilitate their being overcome in the virtual domain, which in turn has potential for transnational developments on the ground.

Rather than generating international organizational frameworks some anti-war activists have created transnational linkages of solidarity between local struggles. This might be conceived as a form of *decentralized transnationalism*. It is the ability to make connections between disparate causes and campaigns. These campaigns do not need to share explicit aims but rather agree upon an underlying commonality of perspective. For example, peace activists in Britain will likely support other peace campaigns internationally, bound perhaps by a unified pacifist ideology, even if they do not necessarily support the tactics or approach taken by the other group. In practice this solidarity is expressed through symbolic actions, the sharing of resources and skills and/or visiting and joining in different struggles (Cockburn 2007).

The importance of ICTs in building these global networks is obvious and explored more carefully in the following chapter. At its most basic it has involved the use of email and websites to share stories of struggle or to coordinate international days of action. For example, on 15 February 2003 millions of people took to the streets worldwide to voice their opposition to the impending war with Iraq, with over one million people gathering in Hyde Park, London. Such synchronization of actions is no longer viewed as particularly innovative or novel, yet this ability to organize simultaneous demonstrations in disparate locations relatively cheaply and quickly should not be undervalued.

Spaces for interaction

At a superficial level none of the reasons behind the lack of a more sustained interaction between different fractions of anti-war activists limit the power of groups to organize against war. A more unified movement

does not necessarily lead to a more powerful one and attempts to find that unity, as we have seen in our discussion of alliances, can lead to superficiality and a curtailment of debate. It is also important to note that we have focused here on the example of Muslim activists in discussing problems of forming alliances across difference. However, the perceived lack of debate about differences was not just about accommodating Muslims, rather it reflected many activists' desire to accommodate *everyone* within a diverse and heterogeneous movement. It was part of a deliberate strategy on behalf of many to create a welcoming and accommodating space of resistance to war. However, many interviewees felt that an opportunity to fully engage with Muslim activists especially had been lost, and that failure to make the most of this opportunity was consequential for Muslims' (in particular) understanding of their place within British society (Pickerill et al. 2007).

For stronger and deeper ties to be created more sustained interaction is needed. The transitory moments of interaction, be it on a bus to a demonstration or at a vigil have fostered some initial conversations. Many activists valued these interactions for the temporary exchanges that they were, articulating hope that they occur again sporadically without requiring them to continue in a long-term linear fashion. They viewed such exchanges as useful short-term alliances that could be re-ignited and effective when they needed to be, but did not require prolonged interaction. In arguing such, several evoked memories of participation in the coal miners dispute of the 1980s and peace campaigns in Northern Ireland to support the efficacy of this approach. There were others, however, who felt that far more face-to-face interaction was required to have meaningful communication and that it was important for those in the anti-war movement to continue this dialogue. There are three factors that seem especially important in creating more spaces for interaction: the Internet, the locality and the religious identities of spaces currently available.

The role of the Internet

Our study included examination of anti-war activism in a provincial city, Leicester. We found that there has been mixed use of the Internet as a communication facilitator in Leicester. Although email was used by many activists, few groups, Muslim or non-Muslim, had websites. Those that did post information online tended to have only a link from a national organization with contact details and a phone number. This use was also clearly demarcated by age, with younger activists embracing the technologies and the older generation preferring

face-to-face communication and the telephone. These divisions were despite attempts by activists to encourage mosques to use websites and email to speed up information dispersal. Sulman Nagdi of the Federation of Muslim Organizations Leicestershire explained that 'unfortunately my community has not quite become very technical. The mosques don't even have an emailing system . . . I think there's still that fear of technology, but I'm hoping with the new younger generation – as they come in and the older people disappear, it will come into being and we'll have a more efficient communication system in place. What the mosques do have at the moment is they have transmitters that transmit the sermon and the call to prayer, so they have an ideal opportunity, but it's only used for sermon and that's about it.' In London the young Muslim professionals played a key part in the mobilization against war as they were able to be the key link between imams, mosques and the traditional insularity of some Muslim communities, and the need and confidence of the younger Muslim activists to be political.

Resistance to embrace such technology seemed to stem from the belief that there was no need because the non-Muslim activist communities, and the Muslim communities more widely, were close-knit and highly networked. In Leicester Muslim populations are concentrated in the Highfields and Spinney Hills districts (all within one square mile of each other in central Leicester), and structured around numerous mosques, schools and community centres. For non-Muslim activists there was a belief that 'we all know each other' and that if anyone wanted to find out about activism in the city they would be reached through the weekly stalls held in the city centre. Thus websites were not available through which to act as advertisements for the various groups or entry points for those interested. Moreover, email lists were only used for discussion purposes by the Leicester Social Forum with most lists being used primarily for information dispersal. Chris Goodwin, of LCSTW, doubted the value of the campaign email distribution list because she no longer knew who was on it and had rather started a new list that was more readily accessible. In these ways the Internet has been a poor facilitator for communication beyond those already closely connected with other activists and it has not been used as a forum through which to make links across difference. Rather what email discussions do occur revolve between familiar voices and opinions, not as a space for difficult dialogue.

The importance of local networks

We have noted that place and particularly local networks are of great importance to interaction in Leicester. However, this is not to say

that Muslim and non-Muslim concerns are merely local. Non-Muslim activists often identified with feeling part of a national (though rarely international) anti-war movement. Muslim activists articulated their connection to the global Muslim *umma* at the same time as asserting their specific locale. International links were represented by a deep concern about wars in Chechnya, Iraq, Afghanistan and the proliferation of a number of Leicester-based global aids charities. At the same time interviewees spoke of the cultural particularities of being Muslim in Leicester dominated by Indian immigration via Uganda in the 1970s and the conservatism of the ways in which Islam is now practised. These particularities are expressed as cultural boundaries that impact upon gender roles and on nationalist divisions. Thus an interviewee argued that a key moment of socialization and information sharing occurred at Friday prayers, thus negating the necessity to post information online. This of course belies the inherent segregation of Friday prayers, not just excluding non-Muslims from that moment of exchange, but also those who attend different mosques, which in Leicester are segregated by national origins, sect and language. This importance of local networks is revisited in Chapter 5.

Closed spaces, owned spaces, new spaces?

Although there are many potential spaces for interaction, few have been utilized as such. Online spaces, especially among Leicester activists, were little used. Protest spaces, as illustrated by the diverse attendance at many in London and those in Leicester, were more open spaces of interaction. The identity of such spaces was claimed and remade by those attending through the act of demonstrating. This enabled diverse groups to walk side by side. However, these spaces were temporary, limiting the possibility of sustained interaction, and post-demonstration were reclaimed by others.

In Leicester most anti-war meetings have taken place in meeting halls that are owned, claimed or shaped by particular groups. Each has an identity that is likely to influence attendance. For example, the Town Hall (government), Secular Hall (secularist), Friends Meeting House (Quaker) and Highfields Community Centre (Muslim). Such spaces have religious or anti-religious identities, which may have been less important if the primary articulation for many had not been around being 'Muslim'.

In Chapter 3 we saw Asad Rehman argue that spaces for the complex articulation of what it means to be a Muslim anti-war activist are being created within the left and in contrast to Islamism. However, in Leicester Tove Dalenius, a Muslim convert, doubted such spaces had survived beyond the early anti-war demonstrations. As groups (Muslim and non-Muslim) have

reverted to more insular separate practices, the common spaces, those liberating open spaces of early protests, have been lost. These spaces were not only valuable 'avenues through which to explore the complexity of their identity' but, perhaps more damaging in the long term, they also lost 'avenues through which to express their thoughts and worries through political means'. In other words, these spaces are not just important for understanding identity, but also for facilitating and supporting a belief in the 'political process as a means to bring about change. For Tove, this was problematic for all activists, especially for young Muslims who had been politicized by the early marches, but were now left disillusioned and without avenues through which to explore the complexity of their identity. Asaf Hussain, a British Pakistani in Leicester, not only feared that young Muslims in the city were not being given opportunities to negotiate what it meant to be British, but that they were being actively encouraged by certain mosques to assert Islam as their primary identifier at the cost of any engagement with being British. This lack of spaces, for Hussain, is leading to alienation from broader society, ultimately creating an environment conducive to the growth of extremism and terrorism. What is clear is that there are few spaces within cities such as Leicester where interaction, unencumbered by a particular group's perspective, can occur. Without these spaces, enjoyed by many in the early protests, then the possibilities for interaction and sustained dialogue across difference within the anti-war movement remain limited. Although Muslim and non-Muslim activists may still walk side by side in protest against war, they are likely to continue to fail to talk to each other and is perhaps the responsibility of all activists to decide whether maintaining such spaces is an important component of anti-war alliance building today.

Conclusion

It is often suggested that the Internet readily leads to the forging of international alliances and coalitions, but our research leads us to believe that obstacles to this are formidable. To be sure, many informational resources are freely shared across space since the Internet means costs are near zero. If one conceives of alliances and coalitions as no more than the shared distribution of news items or even the joint scheduling of demonstrations across nations, then it is undoubted that the Internet facilitates such matters. However, coalitions typically involve the sharing of resources other than information, whether material, such as money or human resources, or less tangible, such as trust or political backing. Because such resources cannot be shared as freely, coalitions typically require a more

formal structure. Bandy and Smith are ambivalent about the power of the Internet to provide the basis for coalition building, arguing that face-to-face meetings are more conducive to the creation of trusting relationships (2004, p. 234). Mike Marqusee acknowledged the potential of the Internet to enable international coalitions, but stressed that 'there was a tension between sectarianism and . . . [the] internet . . . because sectarianism requires the channelling of communications between leaderships'. In his view StWC 'always wanted to just negotiate face to face with whoever they decided was their opposite number in the United States'. Even so, formal alliances across the Atlantic were not easily made and at times political differences may have been to blame.

At the national level wide-ranging political diversity came together in a relatively stable coalition, but regionally and locally the specifics and practices of such alliances become more contested. Unity through shared identity or tactics empowered activists to work well together, but simultaneously made working across difference all that much harder. While many activists celebrated the different practices which enabled alliances to be formed, many viewed such exchanges as temporary and by necessity superficial; only to be maintained when necessary for campaigning efficiency. The task of building longer-term, deeper alliances has not been undertaken by many, although some expressed regret at this, and even the large coalitions such as StWC have struggled to continue to encompass diverse perspectives in recent years.

Some links were made internationally between disparate grassroots groups and some activists sought to build a decentralized transnationalism, but such links remained reliant upon personal ties and rarely crossed ideological differences. Thus, diversity may limit the potential for transnational coalitions. As we show in the following chapter, hyperlink practices cross such boundaries with relative ease, creating a diverse issue network. That form of interaction may be possible partly because there is little need for a commitment of resources; indeed, one may link one's website to any other resource without the owner of that resource necessarily knowing. While the Internet may be celebrated for giving the user access to a diversity of opinions, and while anti-war website authors may link, promiscuously, to sites with a range of worldviews, such connectivity does not seem to encourage the creation of more formal coalitions. By enabling imagined solidarity, Internet networks may help the 'rooted cosmopolitan' (Tarrow 2005b) to *feel* global. Nevertheless, concrete action remains predominantly affixed to place and to the political context of the nation, something we explore in greater detail in the following chapter.

5
Power and Borders

The recent anti-war movement appears to have crossed boundaries in transnational collective action directed at the sphere of international relations. Commentary from within the movement, from mainstream media and from recent scholarly studies often highlights this transnationalism as a defining feature. In this chapter we identify those aspects of movement activity that do cross territorial boundaries with ease, differentiating them from activities that are fixed more strongly to national and local contexts. We find that in the symbolic realm – characteristically expressed on the World Wide Web (hereafter, Web) – connections are made in ways that offer potential for solidarity. Further, and as evidenced especially by several 'global' days of action, we find some evidence of international coordination. However, such activities are limited and the view from the ground – most certainly in the UK – has been more focused on national- and local-level mobilization to effect national policy change.

Analyses of contemporary activism that particularly highlight its transnational character have developed from study of the 'anti-globalization' demonstrations that have targeted a range of international political and economic institutions since the mid-1990s (Tarrow 1998, 2005a). Such protests are also a concern of literature on 'global civil society' which takes as its primary focus a set of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have made efforts to gain influence in international policy arenas (Anheier et al. 2004). As observed in Chapter 1, these phenomena form a valuable starting point in understanding recent anti-war movements, not least because many of the same organizations and individuals have been central mobilizers in both periods of activity. But we must also be alert to relevant differences in terms of both movement characteristics and the wider political context. The former point is considered throughout this book, particularly in Chapter 4. At this stage we comment briefly on the latter issue.

Those contesting the 'War on Terror' take on markedly different opponents than participants in anti-globalization activities. Those who protested against international financial institutions sought to change the actions of the World Trade Organization, IMF, World Bank and the like, rather than focusing on the activities of member states. Indeed, many shared the analysis found in some academic writings (e.g. Albrow 1996; Ohmae 1996; Giddens 2000) that such organizations indicated a major shift in power from the nation state to global institutions. Accordingly, agencies of globalization were countered by those who became labelled as anti-globalization protesters. However, the actions of the 'coalition of the willing' in invading Afghanistan and Iraq may be understood as a reassertion of power by particular nations, notably the US. Those who subsequently opposed the protagonists of the 'War on Terror' have, to some extent, shifted their focus back from the global level to the national.

This is, to be sure, a simplified picture. While it is beyond the remit of this book to offer a theory of globalization and the state, we might adumbrate our position. The analysis in this book comes from within the broad perspective that Held and colleagues label 'transformationalist' (Held et al. 1999). That is to say, globalization is understood as bringing about transformations in the exercise of powers in both international and domestic arenas. This does not spell the end of state power, but rather implies the need for state departments to work in new ways with multiple and overlapping constituencies and allies. The exercise of power has become less hierarchical and increasingly flows through centres at multiple levels of governance. Moreover, the effects of these changes vary between states and across state functions. From this perspective the fact that 'War on Terror' has brought states back into focus is unsurprising, since it is in their military guise that states have most clearly retained their particular role in international affairs. Yet for this very reason states have appeared more readily as possessors of agency within the international realm and are therefore more likely to attract criticism for their actions. Almost paradoxically, as the belligerent countries in the 'War on Terror' have sought to define an amorphous, global, networked enemy, it is national institutions that have stepped to the fore in battle.

It is from this perspective that we test the notion of transnational activism in relation to anti-war activities. Of course, even if states have re-emerged as pre-eminent powers on the world stage, one cannot assume that movement actors respond automatically to that political structure. Changes in structures are mediated through activists' understandings of their own behaviour and that of their opponents (Gamson

and Meyer 1996). In the following paragraphs we look to both the concrete actions of movement activists and to their interpretations of those actions in order to assess the extent of transnationalism within the anti-war movement. Because interpretations are made and re-made in communicative contexts, and because analyses of globalization and transnational activism highlight the importance of accelerated communication flows through new technologies, our first empirical examination looks to communications on the Web.

Crossing borders on the Web

This section offers the results of an analysis of hyperlinks connecting anti-war websites. Hyperlinks connect discrete structures of information and may be understood as the fundamental building block of the Web, giving it its central network characteristic (Berners-Lee 1999, pp. 17–33). We identify the hyperlink network that extends from key anti-war websites in the UK and classify the content of the websites in that network according to their geographical scale of focus and their political purpose. The structure of connections in the anti-war hyperlink network indicates two things: first, the preferences of website authors in linking to other groups and organizations in different locales; and second, the ways in which those engaging with the movement online experience the movement. An important caveat here is that hyperlink connections cannot serve as a proxy for coordination of movement activities.[1] This being so, we investigate concrete coordination through our qualitative data in subsequent sections.

Method

It is possible to identify, follow and analyse hyperlink networks using a software tool called Issue Crawler created by Richard Rogers and colleagues.[2] The founding assumption is that a hyperlink between sites indicates an association of content: they are, in part at least, oriented to the same issue. By selecting a seed set of URLs that point to websites characteristic of a particular issue, one defines the content that is of interest. The Issue Crawler then visits each site in the seed set, 'reading' the content of the homepage.[3] We set the software to visit pages in each set to a depth of two; that is, it followed internal links from the homepage, and internal links from each resulting page. It identified external hyperlinks from each visited page, creating a list of linked websites.[4] Through visiting every site in the seed set, Issue Crawler identifies a resulting 'issue network' through 'co-link analysis'. At this stage any pages that have

only one hyperlink reference from another site are removed. Sites that receive links from two or more other sites are 'co-linked' and considered to be members of the issue network. The procedure was reiterated using the identified issue network as a (larger) seed set. Through iteration we increase the potential to find websites not linked directly from the original starting set, thereby reducing the influence of the researcher's choice of URLs from which to begin the analysis.

Issue Crawler thereby provides a network of websites with content oriented to the same issue. The Issue Crawler additionally provides data on the number of links received by each website from other members of the issue network, which allows us to calculate the centrality of each site. That is, those websites that receive links from most other websites are most central, and are the sites that have the greatest probability of a user visiting them if they start browsing from any other point in the network. Moreover, these measures reflect the preferences of website authors in deciding which resources to link to.

The UK anti-war issue network

In October 2006 Issue Crawler was used in order to map anti-war movement websites. Thirty-four websites were chosen as starting points that had been identified as relevant to the anti-war movement and appeared to be of sufficiently high profile that they were likely to be linked to by other members of the anti-war movement. We ensured that all of these websites had been updated in the last six months. Not all of these websites necessarily represent significant anti-war organizations, but they do contain significant content that relates to anti-war arguments or activities. The seed set only contains sites that explicitly or implicitly indicate involvement in political protest, thereby excluding pure commentary found on weblogs and news sites. Sites that represented specifically local or regional sections of national organizations, and sites that could not be identified as UK-based, were also excluded.

The software returned a list of 100 websites as core members of the issue network; that is, websites that linked to, and were linked by, some other members of the network. Table 5.1, displays the ten websites most centrally positioned in the network. The top results in the table reflect what even a cursory examination of the UK anti-war movement would reveal: CND and StWC (in addition to MAB) were jointly responsible for all of the largest national demonstrations since 2001. It seems, therefore, that online, as well as offline, CND and the StWC are central players. The inclusion of Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) at the third highest rank is slightly surprising since their focus is not directly

Table 5.1   Ten websites at the centre of the online anti-war movement

Website URL	Website name	Rank	In-degree[a]
cnduk.org	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament	1	32
stopwar.org.uk	Stop the War Coalition	2	22
caat.org.uk	Campaign Against the Arms Trade	3	22
un.org	United Nations	4	21
oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk	Oxford Research Group	5	20
basicint.org	British American Security Information Council	6	20
hrw.org	Human Rights Watch	7	19
unitedforpeace.org	United for Peace and Justice	8	18
networkforpeace.org.uk	Network for Peace	10[b]	18
voicesuk.org	Voices in the Wilderness UK	11	17

[a] 'In-degree' refers to the number of links that the website has received from within the core of the network and is thus far lower than the total number of links that a site receives.
[b] The ninth ranking website appeared as 'Locata', which represented a generic Internet services company and is therefore excluded. Examining the out-going link data for key websites suggested that this was the result of automatic redirects from another website that had recently ceased to exist.

focused on the 'War on Terror', and they tend, in their publications at least, to be closely focused on anti-arms trade campaigns.[5] Nevertheless, they are a professionally organized NGO with wide-ranging support and their website contains useful resources that those in the anti-war movement might link to. From the fourth position in the network, the organizations represented become quite mixed. We immediately see representation of a governance institution (United Nations), a research organization that does not overtly engage in protest activities (Oxford Research Group) and groups that are not focused on the UK but internationally (Human Rights Watch) or on the US (United for Peace and Justice [UFPJ]). As we demonstrate next, this diversity of organizations represented at the heart of the anti-war issue network is duplicated throughout the broad core of 100 websites.

Each site in the issue network was coded as to its geographical focus (i.e. locale) and its apparent purpose. Geographical focus is divided simply into UK and non-UK. The latter category includes sites that are clearly international in their focus and those that focus on other nations (the US in all but one case). The apparent purpose of sites reflects both the issues they focus on (divided between peace and wider issues) and

the kinds of action they promote (divided between protest and lobbying). Categories were developed through initial visits to the websites returned as members of the issue network, in order to reflect the results in the most meaningful possible way. Thus, 'website purpose' was coded as follows. *Peace protest* sites espoused values on peace, anti-war, nuclear disarmament, anti-arms trade and so on. The sites either described the authors' involvements in non-institutional political activity, such as mass demonstrations or direct action, or they promoted such activities. *Peace lobby* sites, while containing similar value claims, either described the authors' involvements in more institutional forms of political activity, such as directly lobbying institutions of governance, writing letters to elected representatives and so on, or they promoted such activities, or they did not promote any sorts of actions for political change. The *wider protest* and *wider lobby* sites followed the above distinctions in their orientation to action, but had multiple political foci or an obvious primary focus on some other issue area such as human rights or the environment. *Alternative media* included sources from Indymedia to left-wing weblogs that were not related to large corporate news services and tended to display a bias towards the anti-war movement or to activism in general. *Mainstream media* sites represented established offline media outlets whether television channels (e.g. CNN) or newspapers (e.g. *The Guardian*). *Governance* sites represented organizations of national government (e.g. Ministry of Defence [MOD]) or international governance (e.g. United Nations). Finally, a small *miscellaneous* category was included to capture a range of websites in the analysis that bore little connection to the issues at hand.

Figure 5.1 gives us an idea of the structure of the anti-war issue network. Our starting points – UK-based, protest-oriented websites – took us to a much more diverse collection of websites. To be sure, peace protest and peace lobby sites are the largest categories and together make up 45 per cent of the sites. Yet this leaves the majority of sites in the network as focused primarily on something other than peace/anti-war issues, including many that are not oriented to social movement activities at all. Further, we can see that there is an almost equal split between UK and non-UK sites (52:48), although that ratio does vary across site categories. For instance, while most peace protest sites are focused on the UK (13 of 20), most peace lobby sites are focused elsewhere (17 of 25). This comparison also highlights that the largest single group of sites, by locale and purpose, is the non-UK peace lobby sites, thereby outnumbering the UK peace protest sites that were our initial bias when setting up the Issue Crawler software.
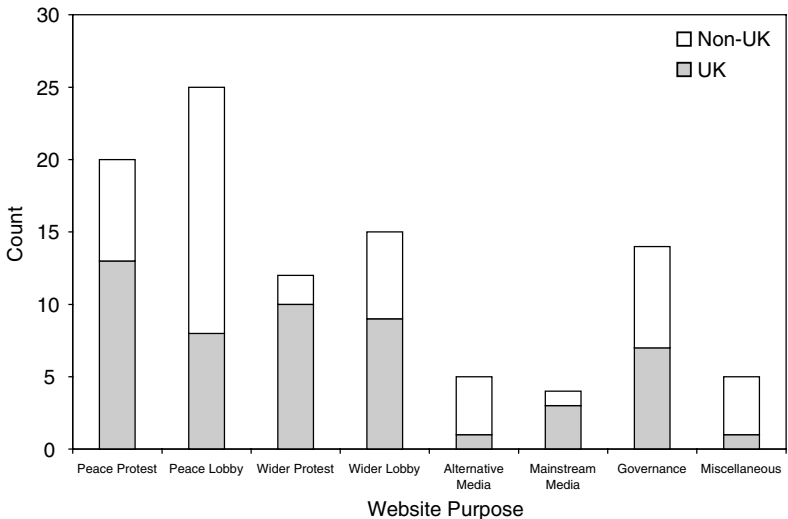
Figure 5.1   Locales and purposes of anti-war websites

In addition to simply providing a count of the different types of website in the anti-war issue network, it is also possible to examine their distributions with respect to centrality. The Issue Crawler software examines centrality via the number of links each site received from the other sites within the core network and ranks them accordingly. We can examine the distribution of websites through comparison of the average rank and in-degree count for websites grouped within each geographical focus (Table 5.2) and each purpose category (Table 5.3) with the average for the whole network.

In Table 5.2 we can see that neither rank nor in-degree count vary greatly from the average for the subgroups according to geographical focus. It confirms, therefore, that not only is there a nearly equal split between the sites focused on the UK and the sites focused elsewhere, but these sites are

Table 5.2   Average rank and in-degree count by website locale

	Cases	Rank		In-degree	
		Mean	**Median**	**Mean**	**Median**
UK	52	50.8	52.5	12.4	12.0
Non-UK	48	50.2	49.0	12.1	12.0
Total/Average	100	50.5	50.5	12.2	12.0

Table 5.3   Average rank and in-degree count by website purpose

		Rank			In-degree	
	Cases	**Mean**	**Median**		**Mean**	**Median**
Peace Protest	20	39.3	37.0		14.5	13.0
Alternative Media	5	37.6	32.0		12.8	13.0
Peace Lobby	25	46.0	41.0		12.5	12.0
Governance	14	54.9	57.5		11.6	11.0
Wider Protest	12	56.5	54.5		11.1	11.0
Wider Lobby	15	61.9	78.0		11.1	9.0
Miscellaneous	5	62.6	73.0		11.0	10.0
Mainstream Media	4	59.3	65.5		10.5	10.0
Total/Average	100	50.5	50.5		12.2	12.0

quite evenly distributed in terms of their ranking and in-degree counts. This finding relates to the boundaries of the issue network. In terms of hyperlink creation practices at least, the boundary between UK websites and those with either an international or US focus has very little effect.

By utilizing the rank numbers and in-degree counts, we can also get a view of any trends in the centrality of categories of site to the core network. Table 5.3 shows the relevant figures broken down by category. The categories are arranged in descending order according to the mean in-degree count. So, 'Peace Protest' websites tended to be linked to by other sites in the network more often than the others. The gap between this figure and that for 'Alternative Media' sites is explained partly by a small number of peace protest organizations with very high in-degree counts at the top of the list (CND, 32; StWC, 22; and CAAT, 22) which has the effect of 'dragging up' the value of the mean. As the median score shows, the majority of 'Peace Protest' sites, like the 'Alternative Media' sites, were actually distributed around a median score of 13 in-degrees. Indeed, the lower mean and median rank scores (with the lowest scores representing the highest ranking) for the 'Alternative Media' category suggests that the bulk of those sites actually appeared slightly more central to the network than the bulk of the 'Peace Protest' groups. To summarize this finding, a small number of 'Alternative Media' sites are linked to by many other sites related to the anti-war movement. Additionally, the relative positions of 'Mainstream Media' and 'Alternative Media' in the list show, within the online anti-war network, a marked preference for the latter.

In general, Table 5.3 shows that the differences between the numbers of links received by websites within the various categories were actually quite small. While sites focused on peace tended to get slightly more links than sites with wider political issues, the differences between sites oriented

to protest and those oriented to lobbying are almost negligible. That is, despite our initial bias towards peace protest websites focused on the UK, there are no strong boundary effects that differentiate protest and lobby sites, and only a small effect between peace and wider issue groups.

In sum, we find that for anti-war website authors, differences between the national locations and apparent political strategies represented on other websites have little impact on decisions concerning whether to create links to them. As a result, those exploring the anti-war movement through this particular medium find a movement that appears transnational in character and united across different political purposes and forms of action.

Transnational action and international coordination

Following Tarrow, we may consider a strong thesis of transnational movements to indicate the following process:

> growing out of a global economy and its attendant communications revolution, wound around the latticework of international organizations and institutions, drawing on the inequalities and abuses created by economic globalization and fortified by international norms, a web of new transnational organizations and movements is being formed.
>
> (1998, p. 182)

This description highlights the importance of communications of the kind described in the preceding section. But it also demonstrates the key connection with international institutions and the focus on globalization that appears central to the development of recent transnational contention. Groups and activities implicated in this process are reasonably diverse. On the one hand, we see the development of truly transnational organizations targeting the international policymaking context. Greenpeace International, for instance, clearly shows the ability of an organization to gather resources from many countries in order to work directly with international institutions and to take action anywhere in the globe. Both Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth have garnered enough respect in policy circles to serve as representatives on various countries' delegations to important UN summits such as the 'Earth Summits' in Rio in 1992 and Johannesburg a decade later (Willetts 1996). The numbers of movement organizations with such competencies has increased dramatically, along with the increasing opportunities for influencing policy at the international level (Smith and Bandy 2004).

More familiarly, the summit-hopping demonstrations of the late 1990s included a wide range of groups involved in the 'global days of action', often called by the international network People's Global Action (PGA) (Wood 2004).[6] These have often involved protesters travelling internationally to bring pressure to bear at the location of major international policy meetings. That is, again, the apparently transnational movements focus on the international policymaking structure, albeit with an outsider strategy that emphasized protest on the streets rather than compromise in the committee rooms. These examples demonstrate the possibility for taking advantage of a political opportunity structure that has been created at the international level. They also offer a point of comparison, against which we may evaluate the transnational nature of contemporary anti-war movements.

To what extent is this international political opportunity structure present in relation to the 'War on Terror'? Since neither the invasions of Afghanistan nor Iraq were authorized by the UN Security Council, the most obvious point of collective will formation proved less relevant than the determination of the 'coalition of the willing' to take action. The rapidity of action against the Taliban, together with the fact that the Security Council had already expressed its disapproval of the Taliban's operations in Afghanistan through creating sanctions against individuals and organizations associated with it, meant that there was relatively little focus on the UN in the initial debate about the invasion.[7] Of course, in the lead up to the invasion of Iraq the drawn out debates in relation to the Security Council and the weapons inspection regime did command enormous attention, both from the belligerent governments and the opponents of the war, as well as huge representation in the mainstream media. The sharp division among the permanent members of the Council, each with the power of veto over any collective decision, was the major point of reference for several crucial weeks. Yet the determination of the US and its allies to invade Iraq with or without UN backing is now clear.[8] In any case, unlike many UN structures, the Security Council is not an accessible point of struggle for non-state actors. With the key decisions concerning the invasion ultimately being made in private, any potential transnational anti-war movement lacked a readily identifiable transnational opponent.

In this particular political context, it is impossible for anti-war movements to wholly resemble the transnational nature of foregoing movements focused explicitly on global institutions. However, understanding transnational collective action as 'coordinated international campaigns on the part of networks of activists against international actors' offers a rather looser conception (della Porta and Tarrow 2005,

pp. 2–3). National governments may, of course, be considered 'international actors' inasmuch as they are clearly acting on the world stage. With worldwide media attention, the mass internationally coordinated demonstrations occurring regularly between October 2002 and March 2003 demonstrate the movement's ability, also, to act on the world stage. These demonstrations did, in some part, echo the form of the 'global days of action' against economic globalization referred to above and PGA's calls to 'make resistance as transnational as capital' (PGA 1998). While some participants in such demonstrations had travelled internationally, there were additional, simultaneous protests elsewhere. These allowed those who could not travel to participate, which ensured that the 'global' action was brought to a large number of local contexts and encouraged wider media coverage. The mass anti-war demonstrations of early 2003 were 'global days of action' in this latter sense. While international travel was not the norm, and there was no equivalent network to PGA to act as a central decision-making space, participants and the media were well aware that individual demonstrations were part of a much larger protest.

Without a unifying international anti-war organization, the coordination of these international demonstrations required networking among a large number of nationally based groups. The date for the biggest protest of all – 15 February 2003 – was set in meetings at the first European Social Forum, in Florence, in November 2002. Initial planning indicated a European protest, but as the news spread it became obvious that there was wider interest. Further planning took place at the World Social Forum in January 2003, bringing in potential participation from much wider constituencies (Waterman 2004, p. 58). With hundreds of protests organized on every continent – including, remarkably, a protest by scientists based on Antarctica – this was the most global protest in history. The social forums have continued to be an important site of anti-war organizing where, for instance, proposals were heard for coordinated demonstrations in March 2005 to mark the second anniversary of the invasion. The clear success of this later example of coordination is evident from the occurrence of around 260 protests across all continents, including some 50,000 to 150,000 people marching in London and tens of thousands marching in cities across the US.[9]

From the UK perspective, both CND and StWC have been actively involved in international coordination. For instance, Kate Hudson, Chair of CND described working with the French *Mouvement de la Paix* to organize events at some of the social forums. She explained that 'we've participated in the last three World Social Forums, although we're not going this year because we don't think that it will have sufficient relevance

in an African context because it's a nuclear weapons-free continent. Also, there's a chance to concentrate our efforts on Trident replacement, so it doesn't seem an appropriate use of our resources at the moment to go there' (Kate Hudson). The second half of that quotation refers to the domestic political context, where a debate on the renewal of the British nuclear weapons system was going through Parliament. So, even while Kate Hudson considers international links to be 'extremely important' for CND's goals, it is clear that domestic priorities may override such considerations; a point we will expand upon in the following sections.

Attempts have been made, at times, to extend the impact of international coordination beyond the setting of dates for demonstrations. A typical activity of international meetings is the production of declarations – short texts which offer a brief analysis of the global situation and suggest paths that movements might follow to make social change. Since such meetings may be infrequent, with little structured interchange between them, these documents are a way to establish a longer continuity. CND was represented at a conference in Hiroshima in 2003, organized by the Japanese peace group Gensuikyo (Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs). Kate Hudson described her work on the committee drafting the meeting's declaration:

> The draft they'd done, which obviously referred to the global situation because it was just after Iraq had been invaded, gave the impression that it was the traditional peace movements that were leading the anti-war campaigning. . . . which was clearly wrong. So me and this guy from the Focus [on the Global South] argued against the draft, as it was, and argued in favour of a incorporating a proper assessment of the new movements and their relationship to anti-neo-liberal globalization, and eventually we won, although it was perhaps not phrased quite how we would have put it. But it did recognize the role of the new movements and the anti-globalization aspect to the new movements as well. So I thought that that was a significant and important contribution from CND in terms of the international movement, to insert our analysis.

The quotation insists that the rising anti-war activity was interconnected with earlier high-profile contestation over economic globalization. Recognition of these 'new' movements is captured in the declaration's expression of 'solidarity with diverse campaigns against growing military spending, to eradicate hunger, poverty, evils of globalization led by big powers, destruction of the environment, discrimination against women and social injustice' (Gensuikyo 2003).

Similarly, StWC has been involved in a series of three meetings of anti-war organizations. The meetings took place in Cairo in December 2002, Tokyo in May 2003 and Cairo in December 2003. Their declarations have a more radical socialist character than that of the Hiroshima meeting and focused strongly on the Israel–Palestine conflict. The second Cairo declaration, for instance, was titled 'With the Palestinian and Iraqi Resistance – Against Capitalist Globalization and US Hegemony'. The position represented in this document was not a pacifist one, instead describing the 'heroic Palestinian Intifada' and expressing the need for anti-war movements to 'continue solidarity with the Iraqi people and its resistance against the occupation forces with all legitimate means including military struggle and helping the Iraqi people in sabotaging the American plan' (StWC 2003). This point highlights another aspect of diversity within the anti-war movements: not only would pacifist elements of the anti-war movement balk at such statements, but other parts of the anti-war far left criticized the Cairo project in strong terms. Writing in the *Weekly Worker*, for instance, Mike MacNair (2003) claimed that the 'recalled Cairo Conference will be a valueless jamboree'. Here we see that even while international discussions may have given a transnational character to anti-war activism, this is hardly generalizable across the UK movements as a whole. Indeed, the only UK signatories to the Tokyo declaration of 2003 are StWC and Just Peace, and the only UK participants at the 2003 Hiroshima conference were CND. Even while attempting to present a united front in the domestic sphere, therefore, these organizations appeared to be carrying out distinct (and potentially divisive) activities at the transnational level. That debates over political strategy have led to the dissolution of coalitions in the US, and that one can identify a broad diversity of political positions within anti-war movements in many countries suggests that these points are not only relevant to organizations based in the UK (Heaney and Rojas 2007b).

The strength of national boundaries

The preceding material makes it clear that not only have anti-war movements been operating in many countries but that some cross-border coordination has occurred. The massed demonstrations imply some level of agreement among organizers on strategies for affecting change, and there has even been agreement on protest slogans: 'No war in Iraq', 'Not in my name' and 'No blood for oil' were all heard across the globe in February 2003 (Walgrave and Verhulst 2003, p. 6). Beyond the coordination of occasional massed demonstrations, however, it is unclear

that the various attempts at international coordination have effects on either the actions of anti-war groups or on the pressure they can bring to bear on policymakers. The Cairo declarations, for instance, included ambitious nine-point plans for change and reference to an international steering committee to ensure they were met. However, such talk was dropped in the intervening Tokyo declaration and evidence of further progress of the process initiated in Cairo is absent.

In this section we argue that the lived experience of the vast majority of activists seems markedly disconnected from such meetings. In national-level organization, international coordination is one of many tasks for typically overworked officers with limited resources, and is easily dropped as domestic pressures and opportunities occur (an issue to which we turn in Chapter 6). In local groups – whether they are allied with StWC, CND or any other campaign – the drives for action rarely come from the kinds of meetings that the movement's elite may attend. There are both constraints and opportunities that encourage movement organizers to focus their work within the domestic sphere. Seen in a positive light, opportunities abound at the local level for successful mobilization. Indeed, many activists' commitment to mass mobilization as an inherently local activity is so strong that it becomes difficult to conceive of any other appropriate locale for the construction of a political movement.

Before detailing these commitments to the local, however, we will describe some of the constraints that reduce potential for transnational activism. Two sets of constraints seem to be particularly effective. First, attempts at continuous cooperation across borders face considerable practical and organizational difficulties. Second, the (perceived) domestic political context, in combination with movement organizations' defined roles and histories, tends to focus their activities at the national level.

Any ongoing coalition work between movement organizations that goes beyond the sharing of information must cope with political and strategic differences and must successfully build trust among participants. Typically, in those countries that have seen stable, national-level anti-war coalitions, there is evidence that member organizations share resources and have some regular, structured interaction through which conflict may be resolved (Levi and Murphy 2006). Creating coalitions across national boundaries increases the complexity of such relationships, since it increases the political and cultural diversity between movement groups. Furthermore, variable economic circumstances in different countries provide significant resource inequalities that may not be easily solved (Smith and Bandy 2004, pp. 7–8).

One example from the relationship between StWC and CND in the UK should suffice to illustrate this point. Kate Hudson, with an official position in both organizations, explained a financial connection between the groups. It is a statutory requirement on those organizing public events in the UK to ensure that proper public liabilities insurance is provided to cover the costs of accidents and related contingencies. For various reasons StWC was never able to purchase this insurance. Their cash flow was certainly less stable than CND's, and as a new organization they did not have relationships with insurers that might have eased this situation. CND, on the other hand, has an arrangement for the provision of insurance for CND events across the country on a continuous basis. By co-organizing the mass national demonstrations against the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, they were able to ensure that the public liabilities insurance was provided. However, such a relationship is difficult to apply to cross-border coalitions. Different regulatory and financial contexts create barriers, of course. But generally pertinent are possibilities for building trust through regular contact and cooperation. Because CND were represented within StWC, especially on regular planning meetings, they could ensure that their offered resources would not be used in a way that jeopardized their own operations. They also had the opportunity throughout to influence the political message being portrayed through the choices of slogans, location and timings for demonstrations. While it is conceivable that Internet communications could offer the possibility of having detailed, regular meetings across borders without long-distance travel, this is not something currently utilized to any great extent within anti-war activism (reasons why are discussed in depth in Chapter 7). But without regular meetings it seems impossible to build coalitions that share resources beyond those that are effectively free to exchange – that is, informational resources.

There is no necessary reason why international coordination must involve the kinds of resource sharing seen within stable, national coalitions. But such resource sharing would provide evidence of strong common ground and would likely encourage further participation in coalition activities. Achieving practical, organizational results would provide its own motivation for further organization. Nevertheless, rather than attempting to measure the inherent value of different kinds of arrangements, we make these points to describe the distinct characteristics of coalitional activities at different levels. That distinction, in turn, indicates the continuing relevance of national boundaries. While such boundaries are quite porous when evaluated in relation to the symbolic realm – as seen both in the structure of hyperlinks on the Web and the

content of slogans heard on the streets – when we look beyond the symbolic we find that nations continue to have boundaries that are far from porous.

The strength of national boundaries is further highlighted by a consideration of the interaction of movement organizations' relationships with domestic political structures. Earlier in this chapter we quoted Kate Hudson describing CND's decision not to participate in the World Social Forum of 2007 that was to be held in several African locations. Her reasons were, first, that CND's core messages were less relevant on a nuclear-free continent, and second, that all resources were being focused on parliamentary discussions of the British nuclear weapons systems. A CND activist based in Leicester, interviewed around the same time, explained his view of the continuing national focus of CND. When asked about whether CND's work should be focused on international activities, Richard Johnson explained:

> There's always a discussion about which to prioritize, and there'll always be people who stand up and say 'but our aim is to get Trident – it's a British issue – if our government moves that will affect the international situation, but that's what we should be focusing on.' And that's right of course at the moment . . . I've been very much in favour of campaigning about nuclear power and linking the issues, and have written things about it and been disappointed because that hasn't been taken up, but I absolutely understand why – you have to prioritize . . . at the centre there's a very clear sense of priorities.

Indeed, for most groups with their organizational roots in the UK, it can be difficult to overcome the barriers created by organizational and historical demands. For instance, David Gee noted that 'the idea of working internationally together, all the Quaker agencies doing international campaigns is a good one, but the opportunities for that aren't very big, because of the way that decisions are made at a national level . . . so it actually makes more sense to have a national campaign'. Yet the Quakers are one of the few groups we studied with any intra-organizational structure that crossed national borders. Other groups included within the broad anti-war and peace movements are nationally focused by definition, with Faslane 365 set up purely to mobilize in relation to one particular British policy decision. Those involved were well aware of the international ramifications of the campaign (as we will describe later, participants were even drawn from other countries) but the primary justification goal remained one of national policy.

StWC's overriding national focus is evidenced clearly in the book *Stop the War* produced by the Chair and Convenor of the organization. In nearly 300 pages, Murray and German (2005) barely mention anti-war contention outside the UK. John Rees, one of the contributors, offers a two-page box (pp. 207–8) concerning the Cairo process, asserting that 'The Stop the War Coalition model, uniting the left across Communist, nationalist and socialist lineage with Muslims facing persecution, was finding its echo in Cairo', but any suggestion that these conferences may have been a point of international coordination or mobilization, except with respect to the exchange of speakers for big events, is absent. Additionally, Chris Nineham offers a few paragraphs titled 'Going Global'. Nineham is in the leadership of Globalize Resistance, an SWP group operating within anti-globalization networks. Unsurprisingly, Nineham sees 'The great gatherings of the global justice movement' as 'the basis for this new kind of international [anti-war] protest' (pp. 106–7). Apart from these two short pieces highlighting the international character of anti-war protest, the bulk of the book deals exclusively with British processes and dozens of short sections highlight the activities of British local groups and organizations, British trade unions, British artists and British students.

The authors' focus is clear in the subtitle to the book, *The Story of Britain's Biggest Mass Movement*. Yet despite contributors' claims concerning the transnational nature of the anti-war movement in the book, readers of *Stop the War* would be pressed not to interpret it as a British movement. Furthermore, the analysis of war presented in the book reasserts the strength of the nation state in international affairs. While Nineham's short piece suggests a link between globalization and war, the main analysis for the reasons for the 'War on Terror', and the invasion of Iraq in particular, focus on 'US foreign policy and the "Bush doctrine", Tony Blair's new imperialism, and the history of Iraq'. The authors admit that 'Many people who support the anti-war movement would disagree on some points or place the emphasis elsewhere. Nevertheless, these views shaped the political judgement of the Coalition's leadership, and the rest of the story cannot be easily understood without them' (p. 5). And this is of signal importance. Since the leadership of the StWC saw the 'War on Terror' as a consequence of the imperialist policies of particular nation states, and given that the StWC was the primary source of strategic planning for the anti-war movement in the UK, the anti-war movement was bound to be oriented to changing the behaviour of individual nation states. Locating the power to make war at this level, the movement sought to stop war at this level.

Even where one might expect the particularities of national context to fade behind the international pressures of the 'War on Terror', domestic context continues to condition mobilization processes. Using a large dataset drawn from interviews with participants, in six countries, of demonstrations on 15 February 2003, Walgrave and Verhulst (2003) demonstrate the importance of the national government's stance on the war to the mobilization processes in those countries. Superficially, this was the pre-eminent example of transnational opposition to the 'War on Terror'. The identical timing of protests in all countries, together with the easy availability of global news sources, ensured that all potential protesters had access to similar information about the same transnational process. Moreover, joint coordination among mobilizing groups even meant that very similar slogans and images were being used in the mobilization effort: 'Triggering event, protest timing, issues, claims and goals were the same in all protest countries' (p. 7). However, the national–political contexts in the countries studied differed dramatically since two governments were initiators of the planned invasion of Iraq (US, UK), two were vocally supportive (Italy, Spain) and two governments vocally opposed the plans (France, Germany). The authors discover some striking differences in the mobilizations in these sets of countries. The level of mobilization, measured as a percentage of the population participating, varied with averages of 1.3 per cent for initiating countries, 2.6 per cent for supporting countries and 0.7 per cent for countries opposed to the war.[10] So the mobilization level was over three and a half times higher in supporting countries than opposing countries. Furthermore, participants in protest in these groups differed significantly on demographic and political variables. The profile of protesters in initiating countries was more distinct from each other pair of countries than those pairs were from each other. On the one hand, protesters in the UK and US were comparatively older, more highly educated, more likely to be professional workers, and participation was more gender equal (pp. 14–15). On the other, while they were quite likely to declare an affiliation to a new social movement such as environmentalism, UK and US protesters were more likely to be on their first demonstration than those in other countries and less likely to claim membership to one of the groups that organized the demonstration. They were also less likely to have a radical political stance as measured by responses to statements about whether war is *always* wrong, and whether their action was an act against neoliberal globalization (pp. 19–20).

These findings establish the importance of domestic context in the mobilization of the most apparently transnational of demonstrations.

The intervening variables are uncertain from the available data: it may be that mobilizing organizations in countries that supported the war stood a better chance of making action against the invasion appear relevant and potentially effective, or it may be that an individual's proximity to the relevant decision-making centres meant that 'the movement mobilised itself' (Murray and German 2005). Either way, it is clear that in those countries that initiated the war, participation against it took roots far beyond the 'usual suspects' of the far left. Participants in these contexts did not necessarily march because of a pacifist ideology, or to oppose one further instantiation of unjust globalization, but to oppose the particular actions of their particular governments.

Additionally, the context may be even more local. From our qualitative dataset, it is clear that many activists see the power of anti-war movements located in grounded, locally contextualized activities and networks. This is typically related to the potential for mobilizing action at the local level. For instance, in describing a meeting with a Pakistani government minister, Yvonne Ridley (of Respect and StWC) described the UK anti-war movement in such terms. She explained,

> He was wanting to know, 'so this anti-war movement, how is it funded, which businessmen are promoting it?' And I said 'oh it's funded through buckets and pennies. Yes, village halls, church halls, community centres, you know, the buckets passed round, you might get twenty- three pounds and fifty pence. Just out of people's pockets.' And he said . . . 'so the two million people who came to London, who told them to go to London?' And I said 'well, what we do is we go round all these little halls and towns and gather the movement', and I said, 'it really is people power'.

When Yvonne Ridley describes 'gathering the movement', practicalities mean that it is local organizers who bring local people together. When it came to the massed national demonstrations, these were essential in making arrangements to transport thousands of protesters to the capital: 'Usually our local mosques just organize coaches to go down, so we went down a couple of times with them, or once I remember me and my uncle went with Peterborough CND branch' (Arif Sayeed, UoLISoc). The pre-existing networks therefore offer a resource base. They clearly also offer the potential to persuade: 'two million on the streets of London, think of all those people . . . [that happened] through networking, people talking to their friends and family and it spreading out' (Anna Liddle, CND, Bradford).

Not only are pre-existing networks helpful for spreading information about actions, but they also tend to be connected to valuable resources. Sarah Cartin of Yorkshire CND described her attempt to get a Bradford-based affinity group together to take part in the rolling blockades being organized by Faslane 365:

> The Northern Quakers had agreed to support Faslane 365 as a project so the Quakers in Leeds gave us their Meeting House for meetings and so we had a central location for people to meet at. Then Bradford again, through the Stop The War group, the student network, there's a couple of sabbatical officers at Bradford that were tied into it as well so they could put a lot of materials out. The Peace Studies Department [at the University of Bradford] have a student liaison officer and she's great. She'll send stuff out round the whole department. And there's Bradford City for Peace and Leeds City for Peace as well so just using all those contacts to get the messages out to start the initial meetings going.

It is clear from this description that Sarah Cartin is a skilled networker with a wide range of links in the local area. An understanding of the potential utility of local networks drives organizers to form, extend and utilize these resources. As the quotation makes clear, the primary use of these contacts was as nodal points in wider networks who could 'send stuff out': that is, they could publicize the mobilization of the Bradford blockade group to people who were likely to have an interest. More than that, however, we also see the sharing of physical resources; as in so many places in the UK the local Quaker Meeting House was utilized for anti-war planning meetings. Utilizing such resources proved successful when the Leeds and Bradford blockade group took direct action against the Faslane base on 16 and 17 November 2006 and again on 23 March 2007.

Connecting levels: From the local to the global

The preceding sections have highlighted the distinctive character of anti-war activism at varying levels of analysis. The local alerts us especially to the mobilizing power of the movement, and its vital root in mass participation. The national directs us to the political context, and the continuing (or re-established) power of the nation state to act on our behalf, to command our attention, and to be the focus of our dissent. At the international level we see successful coordination on the simplest of terms, with more complex relationships more limited and disjointed. And in the more ephemeral arena of the Web, we have seen

anti-war activities at their most transnational, but also, perhaps, their least powerful in relation to opponents. Of course, these levels are not disconnected instantiations of anti-war feeling. But neither do they array themselves in a neat hierarchy from the local to the global. If we are to learn from the transformationalist understanding of the reconfiguration of power through globalization, as set out in the introduction to this chapter, then we need to appreciate that connections among different levels are empirically variable. Examining the reconfigured state shows that trade ministries work through different processes, guided by different rules, than finance ministries, different again from defence ministries, and again from police forces. Just as the fact that the nation state is not a unitary actor indicates multiple relationships to the global level, so too we find that the heterogeneous nature of contemporary anti-war movements feeds into multiple relationships to transnational collective action. For descriptive purposes we distinguish these different kinds of relationships by their tendencies to use *vertical* linkages, on the one hand, and *horizontal*, on the other.[11]

Vertical linkages between levels imply a flow of information or resources from local, to national, to (potentially) transnational levels. This is the image Yvonne Ridley conjures in her description of bucket collections in town halls. For some affiliated local Stop the War groups this was the primary mode of operation. National events gave local groups a reason to mobilize, and they took their lead, politically, from StWC. Lewisham Stop the War's relationship is clear: 'we're very much part of Stop the War nationally. And I think we reflect Stop the War nationally as well because we've got people from CND involved, Labour Party members and people from all different political groups, Greens and Trade Unionists. I think we try and mirror Stop the War nationally as well in composition' (Graham Kirkwood). Kirkwood went on to provide an example of the group's work at a local level, sending a delegation with a letter to the local council to ask them to sign a declaration in opposition to the national approach on the 'War on Terror'. Even here, 'the likes of what we deliver to the local council is what came from Stop the War nationally . . . pretty much, we do take on board the initiatives that Stop the War takes up'. This is not to say that influence runs only one way, since the group involves itself actively in the annual national conferences of the StWC as well as occasionally sending delegates to national steering group meetings. Such forums offer some opportunity to influence the direction of the movement nationally.

By following plans made at the national level, a local group can hope to have a broader impact. This makes sense particularly for those

who see the national government as the relevant point of decision-making:

> The main target is the Government, because obviously . . . they're the ones who want to go to war every single week and everything. So that's why we've always pushed for national demonstrations. You know, we think local demonstrations are important, but national demonstrations – when you get everybody together marching past the Houses of Parliament – that's when you're going to make a big impact.
>
> (Sadia Jabeen, District Organizer for SWP, based in Leicester)

From a different context, Maya Evans (JNV) discussed alternative strategies in opposing war. She supported a range of tactics, from lobbying an MP to breaking into an air base as potentially effective, but the most emphasis was on the national demonstrations. Referring to the 15 February demonstrations, she asserted, 'I'm sure if there was five million people in London before the Iraq war it could have tilted Tony Blair to not support George Bush. I'm sure if there were a larger number of people bombarding the Government with their complaints they wouldn't have gone to war.'

For those who see the national level as being crucial to political contestation, it is important to have a platform that reaches out to the nation. For instance, Anas Altikriti, of BMI and formerly MAB, said of arguments concerning Muslim public engagement, that 'before MAB, [voices] expressing those particular views were quite faint. They weren't as powerful and as forceful as, I think, the context needed.' Other Muslim activists we spoke to had different views, arguing that it was impossible for any one organization to represent the diversity of Muslim political opinion. But for Altikriti MAB was not intended to produce competition to represent all Muslims, but instead had a vision 'for all organizations to complement one another rather than to compete with one another'. Hence the mass mobilization strategy may ultimately depend on the effectiveness of the high-profile organizations at the centre. Essentially, what we see is the channelling of broad-based opposition to war through to a single point of pressure targeted at the national government. Under this strategy, transnational contention would require an international organization to achieve the kind of stability that some authors see as essential to developing individual protests into a coherent movement (Tarrow 1998, pp. 176–96). In its vertical linkages, therefore, contemporary anti-war activism seems better understood as a number of national movements with occasional and temporary connections in the transnational realm.

Undoubtedly there are important symbolic processes of diffusion of tactics, ideas and so on across boundaries. Nevertheless, the primary emphasis on activity at the national level – again, given the location of military power with the nation state – suggests that the movement's form is in some respects a reaction to the nature of its primary opponents.

In addition to these vertical linkages we see horizontal connections on, and across, a number of levels. In the previous chapter we pointed to instances of decentralized transnationalism whereby activists endeavour to reach out across borders to provide mutual support. This is one important expression of horizontal linkages in the anti-war movement, but there are others worthy of comment. Perhaps the most obvious of horizontal linkages occur through the Internet, making use of the border-crossing, anti-war hyperlink network described above. Informational connection can create a belief in being 'part of something bigger', potentially contributing to the development of the form of solidarity described in Chapter 4. This may give some individuals the confidence to become participants. In reflecting on the Internet generally, Tom Shelton of CND suggested that power might lie in 'the way you can connect with someone on the other side of the world who has the same views as you . . . like teenagers on MySpace saying "oh I feel this way emotionally, you feel that way emotionally, I'm not the only one, I'm not the odd one out."' He later clarified that this had direct application to political activism, since the Web enables 'creating areas where people can congregate to exchange information, compare political viewpoints, learn from each other, and forge new relationships based on commonalities that are uncovered in the process, kind of like a modern day town square'.

As we describe in Chapter 7, online interaction goes beyond the simple sharing of information to concrete planning of protest. There we highlight the fact that the majority of such planning takes place within the context of local or national groups, despite the potential for much wider communications. Nevertheless, there is some evidence of horizontal linkages being made across borders, taking advantage of new ICTs. David Webb, of Yorkshire CND, for instance, describes his connection with the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

> Email and the internet have transformed the way that we work . . .
> We get a huge amount of information from overseas through email.
> It connects us with other groups, much more than we've ever been
> before, and especially in the States, for example, where groups are very

active. You don't read about them in the newspapers. You wouldn't know they were there unless you actually had those contacts.

So we've got contacts now through networks in Europe, in the States and in Australia, around the world really, and it's helped I think an incredible amount in terms of awareness and feeling that you're not on your own, you know, there are other people, wherever they might be, who are doing the same, who believe the same as you and are trying to do the same as you.

Moreover, the network actually connects relevant locations in the development of space-based weapons systems. Yorkshire CND has a special role within the national organization because of its proximity to the US National Security Agency Menwith Hill listening station. The group was contacted initially by activists close to similar facilities in the US that had heard first about the 'spybase'. By sharing information gathered in different locales it becomes possible to get a fuller picture of what are obviously highly secretive processes. Additionally, regular international conferences are now convened at different facilities, usually including a day of direct action.

Other horizontal connections we have seen appear less systematic. An example here is the Faslane Academics Blockade (FAB) who organized a group of scholars and students, on two occasions, to carry out a seminar that blockaded the gates to the British nuclear submarine docks in Scotland as part of the ongoing Faslane 365 campaign. Participants included, in addition to around thirty academics from UK universities, a number international participants. Perhaps the furthest travelled was a professor of nuclear physics from Japan. And despite the event taking place in Scotland, and being ostensibly focused on British nuclear policy, it is remarkable that the organizational driving force came from an academic in Sweden. This was enabled, on the one hand, by the ready accessibility of modern ICTs to the far-flung academics involved, and on the other, by the existence of an efficient and experienced steering group near the site in Helensburgh, who could do the necessary preparations on the ground.

The Faslane 365 campaign has grown out of what we might call the grassroots peace movement. In the following few paragraphs we will show that this helps to explain why F365 has, across a range of blockades, shown a propensity to utilizing horizontal cross-border linkages. The grassroots peace movement may be understood as a long-standing, developing network of those for whom peace is always the pre-eminent political cause, no matter what the current political context. Ippy

(Peace News and Aldermaston Women's Peace Campaign), for instance, described 'the development of an anti-this particular war movement' after 9/11, adding, 'I don't like to call it the anti-war movement because it's not an anti-war movement; it's anti a particular war.' Zina (a peace activist from Leicester) makes a similar distinction: 'I'm part of the international Peace Movement. The anti-war movement overlaps with the Peace Movement, but there's a lot of people in the anti-war movement who do think it's justified to use military force in certain situations, and I don't. So there's an overlap. It's quite a big overlap . . . [but] they both have sections outside the overlap.'

Such distinctions are important since they indicate particular movement histories, connected with particular politics and strategies for action. Characteristic of this action is the attempt to connect with and support those facing a war situation. Ippy described her involvement in an organization called Women's Aid for Former Yugoslavia in the early to mid-1990s. They made connections with peace groups throughout the Balkans offering support through the delivery of donated resources. 'They said, "we're working in an office and we're trying to put out propaganda about the possibilities of peace-related stuff and we need toner cartridges," or "we're working with women's groups and refugees, women and kids, and we need soap powder, or knickers, or anything." And somehow we just kind of said "okay we'll try our best."' (Ippy). Other groups have made similar efforts in relation to Iraq with Voices in the Wilderness UK breaking the sanctions imposed on the country by delivering medical equipment and supplies during the 1990s.[12] Through different connections, as the build-up to war progressed, 'human shields' peace caravans set out, driving from London to Baghdad in a mission of solidarity and practical aid.

Among the largest networks that rest on this philosophy is Women in Black. Ippy referred to Women in Black in Belgrade when describing how the Women's Aid for Former Yugoslavia made connections across borders. The well-known group describes itself as

> a world-wide network of women committed to peace with justice and actively opposed to injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence… We are not an organization, but a means of communicating and a formula for action . . .
>
> Women in Black groups do not have a constitution or a manifesto – but our perspective is clear from our actions and words. It is evident for instance that we have a feminist understanding: that male violence against women in domestic life and in the community, in times

of peace and in times of war, are interrelated. Violence is used as a means of controlling women.

Women-only peace activism does not suggest that women, any more than men, are 'natural born peace-makers'. But women often inhabit different cultures from men . . . A feminist view sees masculine cultures as specially prone to violence, and so feminist women tend to have a particular perspective on security and something unique to say about war.

(Women in Black, undated)

Women in Black represents the way in which a particular political perspective can influence a decision to use horizontal, rather than vertical, linkages. They offer an analysis of militarism that links it squarely with patriarchy (Cockburn 2003). Since patriarchy highlights the domination of institutionalized structures of power by men, appropriate action circumvents those structures. The primary mode of interlinking struggles for peace becomes oriented to interaction among grassroots groups either in person through conferences, or symbolically through shared codes of dress and action.

There is, therefore, evidence of orientations to two kinds of linkages between levels of anti-war movement activity. On the one hand, organizations seek to move information and resources vertically, as seems to have been particularly effective in mobilizing large, national demonstrations. However, the lack of a single organizational centre, and abundance of political difference, at the international level makes it hard for such organization to operate transnationally. On the other hand, over a longer time frame, grassroots peace groups, and particularly women's peace groups, have developed substantial cross-border connections. Here, information and resources flow with little respect for territorial boundaries but a great respect for human well-being.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the anti-war movement may be understood as symbolically oriented to the transnational level, while simultaneously being politically and organizationally focused at the national level. Additionally, we have highlighted the importance of mobilization within more local contexts as vital to the possibility for significant action. Indeed, we find it impossible to consider transnational, national and local anti-war activity in isolation. A series of high-profile international, national and regional events drawing many thousands of participants punctuated the

local efforts to state the case against war. They offered a reason to mobilize and a timetable for action. The national demonstrations also offered activists the knowledge that their locality was not alone. Comparing 'scores' ('how many coaches from Birmingham?', 'how many from Manchester?') positioned the local organizers within a national movement.

Chapters 4 and 5, taken together, address two fundamental questions concerning movement activity. First, how does a diverse group of participants manage, practically, to work together towards common goals? Second, how does a diverse group of participants become a movement? In Chapter 4 the focus is on the construction of coalitions and alliances – primarily at national and local levels – that cross ideological, strategic and identity boundaries. We saw that the processes of working together and the formation of a coherent movement were made inherently problematic by the wide range of perspectives brought into recent anti-war protest. This chapter addressed similar questions through an examination of the operation of power – through the mobilization of resources, through the manipulation of information and in the action of movement opponents – at different levels. Like the processes it opposes anti-war activism has had to operate at local, national and transnational levels. Yet one does not find a smooth flow of action from local to transnational contexts. Given the limited resource base it has been difficult to connect discussions and decisions at the international level with actions at the local level. Indeed, for many analyses of the war, the primary focus of attention must remain the national level. It is here that the clearest political opportunities lie, and it is within national structures that the bulk of organizational resource is tied up. Yet, as we have seen, not all anti-war activism is so concerned with confronting political power head on, but rather seeks to aid the victims of warfare directly and through the transcendence of national boundaries.

The cross-cutting nature of the flows and boundaries in meaning construction, on the one hand, and the mobilization of movement power, on the other, adds a layer of complexity to our picture of contemporary anti-war activism. But this added complexity should sharpen our understanding of the phenomena under study and is a requirement of avoiding the fallacious reification of 'the movement'. The anti-war movement is both internally differentiated and operating at multiple levels of power. As consideration of the 'grassroots peace movements' above indicates, these distinctions interact such that the relationship between the local and the global are variable, and may be influenced by the structures of meaning by which actors make sense of their context and their behaviour.

6
Coping with Activism

There is a continuum of anti-war activism ranging from the person full-time devoted to the cause to the onlooker who is moved to do little more than sign a petition opposing the occupation of Iraq. Analysts try to distinguish activism by what people do, yet the notion must also involve people's own perceptions; since distinctions between 'adherents' and 'bystanders' rely significantly on the self-conceptions of those involved it is rarely possible to make straightforward categorizations. Nonetheless, at the least activism implies interest and some degree of engagement with anti-war issues. Minimally this requires that activists have some involvement with information about the wars and conflicts that move them; after all, there must be some awareness of the subject that motivates them to become involved in anti-war activities of some sort, whether this be attending a peace vigil, staffing a stall or leafleting a housing estate.

Depending on the level of involvement activists may have to handle greater volumes of information and be called upon to demonstrate their commitment in more practical ways; for instance, a branch committee member will process proportionately more information than the occasional demonstrator in helping to organize local affairs and liaise with national headquarters, as well as be expected to attend most local meetings. The more organizationally involved, and the more time activists dedicate to the cause as a result, the greater will be the speed and volume of information that needs to be handled by them, culminating in officers of groups such as StWC and CND whose daily routines demand analysing, absorbing and acting on seemingly relentless information flows. Officials, of course, are expected to be readily available as public representatives of their groups, willing to attend demonstrations as well as to address branch meetings across the country. And when they do

so, they are expected to comment on the latest twists and turns in the changing situation they confront.

We observed in Chapter 2 that the information domain in which anti-war activism operates is considerably more complicated, shifting and even chaotic than hitherto. It is a 24/7 ambience and one that is more globalized than even a decade ago. There is considerably more information available, via more channels, at a continuous rate of flow. This means that activists nowadays have many more information sources and resources than their predecessors, and we will have a good deal to say about these in what follows. On the other hand, it also means that activists must come to terms with the conditions of information intensity that now prevail, and this is not always a comfortable position in which to be.

In this chapter we reflect on the relations between anti-war activism and the informational circumstances they encounter, mindful of the variations across locations and political difference. Our key interest is in how information is accessed, selected and distributed within the anti-war movement. We address two related questions, in particular. First, how do activists get salient and timely information on which they can rely? Second, how do activists cope with this information without becoming swamped by what can easily appear an unceasing deluge demanding their attention and commitment?

It may appear obvious that new media have been nothing but advantageous to today's anti-war activists. Consider, for example, Audrey, a Quaker who works in housing regeneration in the English provinces. Electronic listservs to which she subscribes include Trident Ploughshares, Peace Exchange, Justice Not Vengeance, Turning the Tide, CND, StWC, Make Poverty History and Nukewatch.[1] Audrey reports that new media 'has massively increased my activism and my organizing of campaigns in general'. To her 'the improvements are being able to get in touch with a lot of people at the same time through email, instead of making individual phone calls – e.g. for notices of meetings, minutes, press releases'. Her involvement as a core group member of Trident Ploughshares also involves participating in 'fortnightly "virtual" meetings in a chat room, as well as communicating regularly through email', something Audrey sees as 'a brilliant way of making the more straightforward decisions and plans, and means we can meet less often, as we are spread throughout the UK, and one member [is] in Belgium'. In addition, she thinks 'it is great to have so much information on the computer, instead of in paper filing systems or random piles [since this] makes it easier to find information', an experience emulated by fellow peacemaker Rachel who has found the 'Quaker Peace and Social Witness' (QPSW) exchange lists and web pages

extremely useful during the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts, for when we have held meetings to discuss our response to events (because) I have been able to get appropriate information much more rapidly than I otherwise would'. Such testimonies to the efficiency and effectiveness of new media, freeing time for greater involvement, easing organizational problems and allowing activists to access information more readily, are commonplace.

We came across many such accounts in our interviews with activists, extending from full-time officials to members of local branches. We report more on these matters later in this chapter, but at the outset we enter a caveat against the opinion that new media are of unqualified benefit. On a relatively minor counter scale we might note Bruce Kent's (Vice-President of CND) conviction that 'people can say intemperate things on email that they wouldn't really say if they wrote and thought about it'. Anyone who has written a hasty email and hit the send key will appreciate this problem. More seriously, we often encountered heartfelt complaints from activists who were floundering in oceans of information. Martina Weitsch, speaking from Brussels where she works for the Quaker Council for European Affairs, explained that 'one of the biggest drawbacks of the growth of these new media is that we do get information overload and it means that it's very, very hard then to focus on the things that you actually want to focus on'. Such anxieties about how to stem the torrent of information, difficulties concerned with sorting the valuable information from less valuable, related questions regarding the reliability of information and even concerns about having a superfluity of information while remaining uninformed are of major consequence. Soon enough one is made aware that, while new media open up possibilities of improved information and communications, and by extension of organization and mobilization, they also have drawbacks. We examine some of these strengths and weaknesses in what follows.

Offices and organizations

The development of an organizational structure, with attendant offices and personnel, is an expression of activism's achievement and important for its continued health. This locale and these people are key for coordination of affairs, for effective campaigning and much else. The anti-war movement in Britain currently has a variety of institutions and associated organizational forms, ranging from the Society of Friends' listed-building premises in Euston Road, directly opposite the main line railway station, and CND's cluttered offices found above shops on

the Holloway Road in North London, to the front rooms and kitchens of JNV volunteers. Some of these groups are long established: Quakers have been prominent in peace activities throughout the 20th century, the WILPF originated in 1915 and CND celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2008. Others are more recent: Women in Black began in the late 1980s, StWC was formed late in 2001 and JNV came into being in the summer of 2003. Whatever their longevity or nascence, it hardly needs saying that what these institutions share is relative poverty of resources when compared with those whom they oppose, generally government, military establishments and defence industry interests. Nonetheless, within the anti-war movement these organizations do play a crucial role in spearheading campaigns, energizing activities and helping to orchestrate the efforts of members and sympathizers.

These organizations run on a shoestring, being largely reliant on collections made at demonstrations and/or donations from supporters. Their resources are internally differentiated, so an organization such as CND that has over 30,000 members has an assured income stream from subscribers and the Society of Friends flourishes due to the beneficence of its largely middle-class constituency, but more recent groups such as StWC function on a hand-to-mouth basis (with little income derived from members, StWC seeks funds wherever it can at events where the collection bucket is always in evidence) and one of JNV's few members simply pointed out that its bank account 'constantly hovered around the hundred pound mark' (Maya Evans).

Office space for these groups is cramped and cluttered, with equipment frequently cast-offs from elsewhere. There are few staff on the payroll (and these, if paid, receive minimal rates). Volunteers who come and go supplement these and the pace of work can be ferocious and frenetic. Take StWC: its spartan office near King's Cross is rented at a reduced rate from the University and College Union (UCU) that has lent its support to the anti-war group.[2] When we visited, this office accommodated three key staff – a convenor (Lindsey German), a press officer and an office and ICT manager – as well as various helpers who work largely for free. German's role is predominately that of leadership and strategy, the press officer deals with media relations, while the ICT manager is the main figure in terms of running the StWC office, he being responsible for maintaining the website and email lists as well as associated ICT matters, plus general office administration. This demands talents that are essential for the smooth running of such organizations. The post-holder combines skills and aptitudes that are of inestimable value: technical knowledge of ICTs, political awareness and nous, writing and

design capabilities, as well as experience of managing an office environment. He also works exceptionally hard, his working day beginning as early as 6 a.m. with a review from home of websites to make sure that key issues of the day are not overlooked and StWC's own website is up-to-the-minute. In the StWC office, where he arrives at around 8 a.m., there can be a thousand phone calls and hundreds of emails to handle on a daily basis, with all the latter 'filtered through me (which) I often forward to other people in the office for them to deal with'.

The StWC office is the organizational hub of a group that arranges regular demonstrations and protests round the country and works assiduously to ensure that the Palestinian conflict and Iraq and Afghanistan invasions remain in the public eye. Yet it is remarkable that such an office can produce and process so much information with so few staff. It answers huge numbers of queries, maintains a current website, fixes speakers for meetings at local venues, produces a host of posters and flyers and regular news bulletins, plans demonstrations and campaigns as well as develops and implements strategies and goals for the group.

We must note here the vital role of new technologies in allowing small numbers of personnel to manage informational and communications tasks that once would have demanded many times their number. Our informant at StWC with Internet responsibilities captured this when he recalled the astonishment of recent visitors to London from America. They had gained their impressions of StWC from media reports and by accessing electronic materials, but 'when they come here they walk in the office and they say, "It all happens from here?" Americans when they come into the office, they can't believe it. At times if they come in there's just two people in the office.' David Cortwright (2004) observed the same thing during the upsurge of American anti-war activism a few years ago, when a tiny staff equipped with powerful computers and appropriate software managed to coordinate an enormous national protest across the US without the need for membership groups (p. 22). This is also why some aptitude with ICTs can be enormously important since the reduction in personnel is compensated by adept use of new media. Lacking this technical facility, Ippy, an editor of *Peace News*, stressed to us the importance of having 'geeky friends' who can set up and run bulletin boards, create and upkeep websites and chart their way through software programmes.

One might situate this in wider considerations of what has been conceived as the debureaucratization of society (Albrow 1996), the reversal – or at least stalling – of a process Max Weber felt was the unavoidable consequence of organizational efficiency. Middle layers of the

bureaucratic pyramid can be done away with – or with *ab initio* organizations avoided – by judicious adoption of information and communications technologies that enable organizations to function with fewer staff while retaining high impact. This also helps make activist groups less reliant on extensive memberships that pay subscriptions, traditionally a major source of income to pay for office staff (Jordan and Maloney 1997). The anti-war movement organizations we have studied are all strapped for funds, so subscriptions and donations are always welcomed, but these are now somewhat less essential than formerly, now that the organization can operate reasonably effectively with few people at its heart. The availability of Internet connections might also mean that people may not feel quite the same compunction to become members of organizations to which they are sympathetic, since they can gain access to pertinent information once the prerogative of members only. Kate Hudson, an officer of StWC and Chair of CND, certainly thought this, feeling that 'in the past you probably had to join an organization in order to know what was going on', but 'now you can access just about everything that's going on without having to join up to it'. It is noteworthy in this regard that StWC has few subscribing members, whose contributions account for just a few hundred pounds of StWC's income, yet it is a major organizing force for the present anti-war movement.[3]

Not only can office staff be slimmed down, but also they can operate in 'flatter', more horizontal ways, now that there is a reduced need for a cumbersome chain of command. This in turn allows them to be more adroit and speedy in response to issues and events. In this regard Steve Whiting of Turning the Tide, a Quaker direct action group, drew attention to the mundane use of emails which he found 'amazing (because) they shorten the times, you can plan and organize quickly with people . . . You can make contact, so networking is being really accelerated as a result of these technologies. And so planning, planning anything basically we tend to do by email.' He went on to describe the web as a 'phenomenal resource' because of 'the information you can access (and) the networking you can do'. As an instance he recalled the production of a recent magazine for which he wanted to use an article he had read elsewhere: 'A quick email', said Whiting, and 'done and dusted inside a few days', leading him to opine that major events such as World Trade Organization protests at Seattle in 1999 and the mobilizations against G8 conventions such as took place in Genoa in 2001 could 'not have happened in the way they had without the web, without the internet, without email'.

Time and again we were told of the advantages ICTs provided in terms of rapidity of response and in its capacities to handle large volume

interchanges of information. As we have mentioned, the StWC website is updated on a daily basis, the person responsible going online to check out multiple sites of interest before coming to the King's Cross office. Counterpunch, ZNet and Indymedia are checked before he sets off to work and topical stories placed on StWC's site with easy click and go links.[4] In this way it is routine at StWC that 'if there's something big that breaks that day, then on our home page I might quickly write a short piece to do with that and links to do with that'. Milan Rai of JNV identifies a comparable advantage when he described producing documents for major campaigns. These required collaboration between several authors that Rai remembered as an 'incredibly painful process' before the Internet came into existence, but that is much easier 'now we are seeing the dawn of new tools on the web where you can be editing something in a costless way'. Similarly, at the Society of Friends, we learnt from Steve Whiting that while 'the basis of the website is to put on it the resources which we've got on paper anyway', another 'big advantage of the website will be when we put our training manual on it for our resource people and other non-violence trainers, who can then download whatever they want, as well as send in their revisions and additions'. In such a way, materials will be 'more accessible' to those who need it, while also saving 'postage and paper'.

The demonstrable improvements that ICTs can bring to organizations mean that these technologies are quickly integrated into everyday activities. Martina Weitsch put it straightforwardly when she said that 'the internet and email are kind of daily tools without which we would not exist, could not exist, couldn't do our work. Sometimes I feel like I spend all my time in front of the screen. So we use it a lot and clearly most of our communication with all the people that we communicate with other than face to face is by email. Very little that we do by post. Very little that we do by phone.' Not surprisingly then, officials at the centre encouraged colleagues and members to move towards electronic formats whenever feasible. For instance, Miranda Girdlestone, Information Officer of QPSW and an information scientist by education, told us that 'I see my role as continually asking programme managers why they're sending out via paper. I see my role as getting as much as that as possible on the website, so that all we have to send them [members] is a web link.'

We ought not to underestimate the cost-savings that can accompany adoption of ICTs. While there has been a massive growth of information production and dissemination, there can be no doubt that ICTs allow communications at minimal cost as well as making contributions towards other savings such as postage and record keeping.

Such matters are rarely lost on those working at the centre, though thorough cost–benefit analyses of technological innovation are rarely undertaken. We noted above that Steve Whiting commented, *en passant*, on savings on postage and paper being made when documents were made available electronically. Similarly, the convenor of StWC inserted into a discussion of the website's value in organizing an upcoming demonstration, the observation that electronic communication enabled headquarters to transfer costs of producing leaflets and posters from the centre to local branches. Hence 'we're only calling (the demonstration) at four days' notice. We have to have a PDF leaflet that people can download if they want to. Because that's the other thing you can do, which obviously is a lot cheaper than posting, and people can just get it tomorrow and download it and go out and give it out on Saturday.'

It might be added that at StWC officers were conscious that not everyone had Internet connections, so occasionally it undertook 'snail mail' distribution as a matter of policy. Our StWC informant added that hard copy letters could be more appreciated than email. Hence when StWC receives a donation or when a new member joins, it sends out 'a welcome pack or thank you pack', since in comparison an email acknowledgement 'seems rather flimsy'.

Filtering information

Anti-war movement organizations nowadays generate and process more information, more efficiently and effectively, than previously, while a nucleus of central office staff can act more speedily and adroitly than ever, largely because of new technologies. These capabilities, however, are not exercised in a void. We were frequently reminded, for instance, that while electronic technologies are important in communication and organization, they do not substitute for personal interaction. Maya Evans of JVC stressed the advantages of 'see(ing) each other face to face', while Tom Shelton a CND activist and Internet enthusiast nevertheless felt that 'in terms of actually making genuine or activist relationships, that's a lot to do with face to face contact, working together, protesting together'.

More than this, a group's goals and priorities influence what information is offered and how it is presented. For many the 'real work' of activism is encapsulated in the slogan of the email discussion list provider, Riseup.net, which on every page urges 'Get off the internet. I'll see you in the streets'. Consonant with this, StWC works on the assumption that *mobilization* is a requisite of achieving its aims. The presumption is that wars will be stopped only if people are marching

in large numbers, if they effectively harass leading politicians wherever they might appear, if they publicly express their anger for all to see. As our StWC informant stressed, it is a 'campaigning organization', and information that is distributed is created with that end in mind. Written material presented online is nearly always 'to support activity' since this is 'the main function of our website'. There is always an event, typically a demonstration or protest, to be planned for at StWC, something supplemented by announcements of public meetings that activists should, and others might, attend. Accordingly, the electronic newsletter that StWC distributes each week or so (more frequently in times of intense activity, less so when things go quiet) always highlights actions of one sort or another, urging participation. 'We need the biggest possible turnout on Saturday's emergency demonstration' against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, exclaims the bulletin of 1 August 2006, adding that 'what you do in the next few days can make a difference. Tony Blair is under the most intense pressure on all sides to detach himself from his master George Bush's catastrophic warmongering and call for an immediate unconditional ceasefire. His party wants him to stop. Our demonstration can intensify that pressure to breaking point.'

This priority of StWC guides information from the central office where news of travel arrangements and demonstration routes, encouragement to donate to the cause and stories that emphasize why activists should turn out at a protest meeting abound. Typical instances of events that StWC supporters are urged to attend, taken from the Newsletters circulated between March and June 2007, include: 'Say No to Trident emergency lobby of Parliament' (14 March), 'People's Assembly' to hold 'the debate Parliament won't have' (20 March), 'Military Families Campaign Day' (12 May), 'G8 Protests' (2/3 June), 'Enough National Demonstration' [against Israeli occupations of Palestinian lands] (9 June), and 'Iraq Demonstration' (24 June). In a similar manner CND also prioritizes mobilization, Kate Hudson distinguishing a 'campaigning' from an 'information organization'. This means that CND's website, while 'as accurate and up-to-date as possible', does not set out to be 'the last word in scientific information'. Instead it strives to be 'the last word in campaigning effectively on nuclear weapons'.

What gets selected for inclusion on StWC's website is shaped by this determination to mobilize opposition to war. Our anonymous informant with Internet responsibilities explained, for example, that during his daily review of online resources 'there are some (articles and news items) which I personally find very interesting and reported, but they might not actually fit in terms of what we do as an organization, because

our organization is very much based on campaigning, on activity and involving people and giving them the information that they need in terms of whatever level they're at in terms of how they're involved in the campaign that we're organizing'. The stress on action is underpinned by the conviction that mobilization is in itself educative and, as such, a form of consciousness raising. To this end Lindsey German emphasized the continuing importance of public meetings – even if these are diminishing somewhat – as a means of increasing motivation, StWC perceiving itself 'like the Suffragettes, if somebody asked them to do a public meeting they would go anywhere in the country and do a meeting, and we always do that'.

The requirement that information made available must conform to StWC's campaigning orientation also affects how it is presented. Our informant explained that items are 'dramatized' as a means of emphasizing their political salience and stirring the emotions of their recipients. Recalling the Israeli invasion of Lebanon over the summer of 2006, he told us that 'what we do is pull out the highlights and tend to dramatize those'. He recollected that StWC took 'a very stark position in terms of what was going on there and . . . we had quite a stark focus on the home page', but he judged this worthwhile because 'it generated an incredible amount of debate'.[5] StWC is primarily concerned with anti-war activism, not with provision of disinterested and impartial information to the public, so no one should look to it for authoritative information, though other anti-war groups are more concerned to enlighten audiences.

Websites contain enormous amounts of information, but regular emails and electronic newsletters are regarded as important in that they stimulate activists to look at the website and guide them to specific subjects. List mails of members, subscribers and sympathizers are developed so that reminders may be circulated at minimal costs to the organization. All the groups we examined are at pains to create listservs for their obvious benefits in terms of costs and efficacy. Whether the 20,000 and more claimed by StWC or as small at the 3000 at JNV, these lists were regarded as an essential means of communicating effectively with key audiences. David Gee, pioneer of the Society of Friends' Peace Exchange website, sends out emails to subscribers that provide an abbreviated list of issues in an effort to simplify use of the extensive Quaker website – within which Peace Exchange is embedded – that has a potentially off-putting 500 or so pages. Gee explains that 'Whenever there is an update with the Peace Exchange, an email update goes out to people, and without that, people just wouldn't look at the website. So they're prompted every fortnight, and they're told these issues, and then they

might look at the website. There's a very short bullet point, if there's an event here in London and there's a march or something like that, and then there's a link to go and find out more. So it's like a menu, you choose whatever appeals most.' StWC's flexibly produced yet regular newsletter has a similar function. It headlines items, provides hyperlink connections, and is, in the view of its producer, increasingly the route by which readers get to the StWC website itself.

Information is filtered from central points according to perceptions of recipients' needs. For instance, StWC ensures that it supplies information with campaigners' priorities and interests in mind. Accordingly, the website and newsletters are produced to equip activists with answers to objections they are likely to encounter from members of the public. Our StWC informant with Internet responsibilities recollected that 'what I used to do through the newsletter and through leafleting was to use the arguments to help people [respond to] arguments that they're going to face'. Much the same conviction was articulated by Milan Rai of JNV when he said that 'What we do with our website is we have material on it which we think will be useful for anti-war activists, and most of it is stuff that we think anti-war activists will be able to use in their face to face work locally, and that's why a lot of it is in PDF form and formatted so that it can be printed out double-sided A4, so that people can hand it to people that they know'.

When we turn to the Society of Friends, a pacifist organization, there are priorities other than mobilization onto the streets. While Quakers frequently protest against war by attending vigils and supporting demonstrations, and are diligent peace-builders, there is also among them a deeply felt responsibility to 'bear witness' (as discussed in Chapter 4), to reflect seriously and soberly on circumstances, as a prerequisite of taking any action. Quakers are, as Nik Dadson, web manager at Friends House, put it, 'very considered', being thoughtful and diligent in how they comport themselves, concerned to listen carefully and calmly and to respond purposefully while conducting themselves in a dignified manner. Information directed towards these from headquarters does refer to mobilizations, especially at the Peace Exchange website, but there is also a premium placed on equipping readers with deeper knowledge of events and issues that they may better understand them and their own responsibilities. As Martina Weitsch explained, as regards 'communication with Quakers and others in sympathy with our general view, the focus is to inform and educate, to make people more able to engage with the decision-makers in an informed way. Give them the information . . . so they can make their own voices heard if they want to.' Briefing

papers are an important element of this process. Put together on topics such as the Arms Trade and Iraq War, they are 'intended to be information to people who are not part of decision-making structures so that they understand what's going on' (Weitsch).

In addition to directing information to members and sympathizers in order to increase understanding, the Society of Friends also makes efforts to influence parliamentarians and civil servants. Reaching policymakers and their associates is an important dimension of Quaker peace advocacy that requires the production of well-argued papers as well as diligent lobbying to ensure, for example, that 'a Quaker perspective on nuclear disarmament or something like that' is well received and, perhaps, results in 'questions in Parliament that might not have otherwise been asked'. David Gee continued to say that this could also involve 'meetings with civil servants, and having a discussion or a dialogue', a point complemented by Martina Weitsch who talked of 'targeted advocacy' that frequently required the production of detailed documentation of a case. In this regard she referred to the European Peace Building Liaison Office that she described as a 'platform' of some 20-member organizations that produces policy papers and hosts events aimed at influencing decision-makers in Brussels and beyond. Such priorities are far removed from those of StWC.

Milan Rai, a key member of JNV, produces briefing documents as does the Society of Friends, but these are shaped by a significantly different perception of his audience's requirements. 'The purpose of the briefing', he explained, is 'to give an anti-war activist and groups something that they can give to an uncommitted or slightly hostile member of the public where the arguments and facts in it are such that they can't immediately be dismissed, and so all of the sources are completely mainstream'.

Reducing the information load

We have seen that anti-war movements create and distribute information in ways that reflect the priorities of the particular organization as well as the perceived needs of members and supporters. We also know that, especially with new media, it is possible to generate and transmit enormously increased amounts of information. Those at headquarters are conscious of demands placed on their members of coping with such volumes and they endeavour to reduce the information burden by a combination of brevity, succinctness and editorializing. On occasions they may need reminding of the burden of information, as our anonymous informant at StWC recollected when 'somebody wrote earlier in the year [2006] and

said in a very friendly way, "look, I've been sent all your newsletters but this one is just too long", and I just wrote and said, "you're absolutely right, I'll make sure the next one [is shorter]"'.

The Internet gives access to vast amounts of information that are germane to anti-war activism, so one may appreciate the temptation for officials to pass as much as possible onto ordinary activists. It is a relatively easy task – within the constraints of the compiler's time – to cut and paste from a wide range of electronically available sources. And anti-war websites such as StWC do indeed incorporate a great deal of this information, not least because those such as the StWC person responsible for maintaining the website are convinced 'how little information is actually available via the mainstream press in contrast to the quality and range and the depth of what is available every day online'. However, those responsible also know that activists lack the time and energy to access all that is available, so short cuts are provided on their behalf. A key one is newsletters and listserv bulletins that headline articles and supply hypertext links for those wishing to explore further with no more effort than a click of the mouse.

Information overload

Whatever measures to ease the information burdens that are taken by those at the centre of anti-war organizations, it remains the case that activists, at all levels, experience problems of coping with the sheer amount and complexity that comes available as a matter of course. David Gee voiced a common concern when he recalled that 'I used to get kind of hooked in, and there'd be like a whirlpool, and you'd just work as hard as you can until you can't work anymore and you'd just burn out'. Those in central offices must find ways of managing their information loads, just as must do local leaders and ordinary activists. Moreover, this need to cope is overlain by moral pressure that emphasizes the vital importance of the issues involved – war and the threat of war and all that this entails easily makes the committed activist feel guilty and reluctant to admit that she might be finding keeping up with her email account difficult.

Even experienced officers can find the work rate overwhelming. Nik Dadson was acutely aware of this in his role as web manager for the Quakers, complaining that when his job began 'it was a day a week, and now I've got this information flows project which takes up two days, but I can't cope'. Similarly, MEP Caroline Lucas, a leading Green, spoke of the 'enormous burden' that accompanied 'the sense that there are

so many things that one ought to read'. And, she added, 'it becomes utterly paralysing too sometimes, because I tend to be a perfectionist. I tend to want to know what the key issues are before I start putting pen to paper myself. And you can just postpone the moment when you ever do anything'.

Among Quakers volunteer branch 'clerks' are responsible for 'a huge volume of stuff' (Nik Dadson), 'a huge mountain of information' that they must 'sift through' to select 'what is appropriate and relevant for the Quakers in their meeting' (Steve Whiting). As onerous can be the role of Chair of a Stop the War branch. Isobel McMillan, Wandsworth's Chair, described hers as 'quite a big job really', going on to list that it entailed 'getting the agendas ready, having ideas, organizing them, getting speakers, mobilizing people, inspiring people and actually chairing meetings'. On top of that, she leaflets extensively in the locality and operates an email list of over 300 subscribers. Activists at street level can also feel deluged, Nova (a Quaker) reminding us of 'the feeling one is drowning in important information'.

So how do activists cope? We have already pointed out that there is sympathy towards the problem from officers, such that part of the purpose of electronic newsletters is to highlight issues, so that readers can be guided through a morass of detail. However, as we have also observed, officers themselves can experience problems of information overload that need to be addressed, so the problem cuts across the spectrum of activism. In discussions we came across many particular methods of coping at all levels of anti-war activism – we instance several below – but what they share is filtering to reduce the diversity and complexity of information, thereby to make it more manageable.

The web maintainer at StWC said that 'I can gut an article, I mean I don't have to read many articles all the way through and I can gauge very quickly whether or not they are useful'. Further, 'after a while you know where the best sources are', so he does not need to search widely for pertinent news and comment. He copes by having developed skills familiar to the experienced journalist and politician: he is primed to select the key issues, knows where to look for them, and has a framework within which to place and make sense of them. Branch Chair Isobel McMillan echoed these traits when, describing how she got her information from newspapers as well as from Internet sources, she asserted that 'with a political background like mine . . . it doesn't take long to analyse what's happening because you're so used to it'.

Even if some possessed these skills, many activists experienced problems dealing with the sheer volume of information they were

exposed to. Email excess was a particular gripe, especially from those working in anti-war offices. For example, David Gee of Quaker Peace and Disarmament spoke of the 'nightmare' of emails that have 'just got greater and greater, so I get masses of emails every day'. In response, 'I just read the subject lines across them' and make a snap judgement whether or not to open them. Tony Benn (President of StWC), though not fazed by information demands, did admit that 'I do skip my emails . . . I look at the headlines and if it's a strike in Mexico and I just delete and delete and delete, until I come to something that I want'.

Steve Whiting of Turning the Tide told a related story as regards email. He receives around a hundred per day and responds to as many as he can, but he is also a member of three e-lists solely as a 'lurker' because he finds this 'is a good way of getting information without seeking it'. Whiting is here allowing others to do his filtering, thereby saving himself time, without the need to participate in the list himself. In spite of this advantage, Whiting told us that he still experienced problems because 'I don't know where to file stuff for archive purposes'. Perforce 'at the end or the beginning of the year I'll just delete most of the year's correspondence, so that's my archiving, I just tip it in the bin'. Caroline Lucas, who also estimated she got 200 or more emails daily, was not quite so radical in her excisions, but she did tell us of her 'comfort blanket' which was that, failing to have the time to read all potentially important communications yet fearful of deletion, 'I do have a vast filing system [because] I just kind of quite like to know it's there when I need it'.

One radical, and probably increasing, response to information excess was avoidance of newspapers. Occasionally this stems from discontent with the established press, not least because of the increase in commentary in place of reportage that has been evident over recent decades. Tony Benn, for instance, wondered 'whether it's necessary to read the *Guardian*' and went on to note that 'I could live without Polly Toynbee . . . and I could do without Simon Jenkins, although I know him and he writes good stuff, and Max Hastings and Jackie Ashley I would do without'. He does still read the press, but also subscribes to the daily electronic newsletter from California, the Information Clearing House, which headlines a range of alternative anti-war news stories and provides hyperlinks, and is described by Benn as a 'brilliant thing'. Tom Shelton at CND admitted that 'I don't read a paper regularly'. Instead he relied on an email bulletin that is circulated daily round the CND offices. One person's job entails 'collating all the daily news that happens related to nuclear issues . . . and sends it round as a bulletin with a

series of links and a few bullet points abut the content of the article to our staff and to our officers'. Somewhat similar is David Gee's reliance on the 'headline news on Radio 4' as he rises. Gee avoids television and 'I don't read newspapers', but having been primed by the BBC radio news headlines, he goes to the office and, when there is a headline story about which he needs to know more, he will gather in-depth information as required from associates and the Internet. 'Otherwise', he said, 'I just get overwhelmed, and I can't cope'.

At the more local level of activism others also take steps to reduce their information loads. Quaker Martha, for instance, though she tries to listen to the news and read a newspaper, does not make much use of her mobile phone because she has 'no wish to be in constant communication'. Her colleague Audrey 'once joined a Quaker email list', but came off it because 'there were far too many postings for me to cope with'. Quakers tend to be assiduous, well educated, even somewhat earnest, so it is perhaps not surprising to come across Patience who insists that she never surfs the Internet, though it is an 'amazing source of information'. As she explained, 'I spend enough time at my desk on essentials without wanting to spend more on the computer than I need to'.

Information cocoons

What we have seen in this chapter is that anti-war activism involves considerable use of new media, but this is accompanied by extensive filtering of information by and on behalf of activists, not least as a coping mechanism to handle the enormous amounts nowadays available. It has to be conceded that each of us must take on filtering devices to find our way through the unprecedented volumes of material that is now available through television, email and the Internet. However, a danger with the pervasive filtering of information by and for the anti-war activist is that it may become self-confirmatory and readily exclusive of what might raise questions and doubts about its own position. Cass Sunstein (2006) coins the term *information cocoon* for this process whereby people can come to be wrapped in information that is comfortable because it is familiar, unchallenging of their world view and even prejudices. The website that reports on the latest horrors of the Iraq War, but repeatedly within an anti-American framework and the Newsletter that highlights, time and again, what the recipients have already seen, is at one with the Quaker Susan's 'relief to be able to talk to like-minded people' on the listserv of activists she has joined. But this often panders to preconceptions, encourages group think and moral superiority, and fails to

acknowledge alternative positions that might refresh imagination and help sort the more robust information from the less so.

To provide just one example we might instance here the arrest of 20 or so suspected terrorists in Britain around 10 August 2006 over an alleged plan to explode up to 12 US-bound planes over American cities (BBC News 2006b). John Reid, the then Home Secretary, described terrorism as probably the biggest threat Britain had faced since the Second World War and said that civil libertarians who criticized government measures to tighten security 'just don't get' the seriousness of the threat (Travis 2006). What was remarkable was how little the anti-war movements had to say about it. *Prima facie* this was a diabolical plan to kill large numbers of innocent civilians, hence an act of large-scale murder, which ought to elicit an urgent response from those committed to peace and avoidance of war. There was huge coverage in the mainstream media on both days of 12–13 August, but no statement from any of the anti-war groups in the UK. Nothing much followed to fill this absence in succeeding weeks. It was the same on websites of the anti-war movement such as StWC, Peace Exchange and Military Families Against the War (MFAW). The lack of comment indicates something of the limited framework of the anti-war movement, when a major terrorist plot seems not worthy of comment. There was, however, an open letter to the Prime Minister from three Muslim MPs, Muslim peers and almost 40 Muslim community groups, the thrust of which was to blame British foreign policy for these plots (BBC News 2006c).

A few days later the StWC Newsletter (15 August 2006) did raise the matter, but only to dismiss it as a conspiracy to deflect attention away from the Iraq invasion. It read as:

TERROR PLOT: WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON

How convenient. As the Bush/Blair wars in Iraq and Afghanistan sink ever further into mass slaughter and chaos, as the Bush and Blair supported Israeli attack on Lebanon achieves none of the warmongers aims and provokes worldwide revulsion and as Israel's daily brutality against defenceless Palestinians in Gaza intensifies, without a hint of condemnation from Bush and Blair, along comes 'another 9/11', aimed at justifying the 'War on Terror' and at diverting the media's attention from the disasters of the Bush/Blair foreign policy.

Former British ambassador, Craig Murray, who knows from the inside more than most about the spin machine behind the 'War on Terror', says, 'This is more propaganda than plot'. Of the over one thousand British Muslims arrested under anti-terrorist legislation,

only twelve per cent are ever charged with anything. That is simply harassment of Muslims on an appalling scale. Of those charged, 80 per cent are acquitted. Most of the very few – just over two per cent of arrests – who are convicted, are not convicted of anything to do terrorism, but of some minor offence the Police happened upon while trawling through the wreck of the lives they had shattered. Be sceptical. Be very, very sceptical.

Whatever the truth of the latest terrorism alert, George Bush and Tony Blair's aim in the media frenzy they have orchestrated over the last week is, in the words of writer Jonathan Cook, 'less about fighting terrorism and more about silencing those who dissent from the West's endless wars against the Middle East.'

Then, on 23 August 2006, StWC linked on its home page to another article arguing that the arrests were a conspiracy to engender the 'politics of fear'. The thrust of the article, titled 'Was British Terror Plot a Load of Crap?' was that it was technically infeasible to make explosives from these ingredients given the conditions on the planes.[6]

Quite how tightly bound are information cocoons varies with organizations. StWC's unrelenting reports about mendacious politicians, its insistent accusations of Islamophobia at mention of Muslim involvement in terrorism, and its repeated attention to atrocities and abuses in Iraq (particularly those perpetrated by American soldiers) and elsewhere lies at one end of the spectrum,[7] while the Society of Friends' briefing papers – though founded on resolute pacifist principles – endeavour to report more even-handedly on their subjects. Despite this range, it has to be said that the spectrum is somewhat narrow, concerned to highlight and make available information that marshals support for opposition to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars especially. One ought not to be surprised by this. After all, StWC is a campaigning organization out to mobilize that these wars might be brought to an end. Thus dramatization of issues, caricaturing of opponents, an urgent tone that helps galvanize, and selection of items that inflame consciousnesses may be appropriate. StWC is not out for academic credibility, but rather to Stop the War, while the Society of Friends is a pacifist organization that endeavours to make peace.

Nevertheless, there are problems with the information cocoons of anti-war activism. One involves the widespread abuse of opponents, particularly those regarded as responsible for war. In Britain the depiction of Tony Blair as a culpable and knowing liar – the sobriquet *Bliar* is widely adopted and advertised in anti-war circles – is familiar

enough (as illustrated in Figure 3.3a). A cognate dismissive attack is that made on television news, the BBC especially, which tends to be presented as an unreliable source that acts as a conduit for government and military mendacity. Moreover, journalists from the political left who yet supported the invasion of Iraq, such as Christopher Hitchens (a former member of SWP), Nick Cohen and David Aaronovitch, are caricatured as a 'shameful group' whose 'stupidity' is self-evident (Murray and Lindsey 2005, p. 5). Such abuse and questioning of good faith feeds into the widespread scepticism towards elected politicians and much else, making support for an anti-war position more comfortable for adherents because it is reassuring to think badly of one's opponents, but at the cost of a significant degree of intellectual simplification.

There is an irony here too. We live at a time when information is more readily available and easily accessible than at any time in history, yet in these activist cocoons, information often appears narrowed and excessively partisan. A good many activists may prefer it this way, being willing only to access sites and list mails where their views are confirmed (Sunstein 2001). We are not evoking here some unattainable utopia in which citizens might command full knowledge of all opinions and circumstances prior to making up their minds on matters of consequence. It is inconceivable that anyone could be informed about everything of weight. At the least, as we have suggested in this chapter, the sheer volume of information would be impossible to cope with. To concede this point, however, is not to abandon our apprehension about much of the circumscribed information that is being made available to anti-war activists in the current epoch.

Conclusion

It is difficult to imagine the anti-war movement functioning as it is without its extensive adoption of ICTs. These technologies bring major advantages in terms of efficiency and efficacy, allowing improved collection, communication and access to information about conflicts, protest and organizations. It is inconceivable that today's anti-war movement could cope as well as it does without list mails, electronic newsletters and website presence. We extend our analysis of technological adoption in the following chapter.

However, it is also evident that these opportunities also bring with them problems of too much information, too many emails and too much time having to be spent on the Internet. It is clear that people have different tolerances and ways of coping with this, ranging from

Tony Benn's conviction that 'the reward from it (the internet) is so great' that information overload could scarcely be admitted as a genuine problem to Quaker Martha's curt observation that 'I don't look at websites much [because] I find them confusing' since they contain 'so much information'. However, whether it is for one's own health or on behalf of others, a major feature of the management of information in the anti-war movement is assiduous filtering. This process of selection, editing and highlighting happens at all levels, from the branch member who assesses their pertinence by their title and deletes unwelcome emails without opening them to the full-time official who pulls together salient news and analysis on the basis of his political 'antennae'. Such filtering no doubt helps activists cope with the volume and velocity, but it carries the danger of enveloping recipients in an information cocoon that comfortably – and complacently – insulates activists from sources that might challenge their convictions.

7
Communication Practices and Technologies

A focal concern of this study has been activist uses of technology rather than the properties of technologies. Nevertheless, where activists are making use of ICTs they show considerable awareness of ways in which the properties of those technologies affect their practices. ICT use occurs on a number of levels and, in particular, we find a difference between practical, day-to-day organization of activities, on the one hand, and political debate and the mobilization of new activists, on the other. In the former case, the more obvious benefits of ICTs (what we call their *manifest functionality*) are adopted by activists in a straightforward manner: the mobile phone offers 'perpetual contact', email offers quick communication that overcomes difficulties of distance and scheduling and the World Wide Web (henceforth simply Web) offers a vast, inter-connected store of relevant information. However, at the more involved level of persuasion, debate and mobilization we find that activists are keenly aware of the limitations of text-based, on-screen, asynchronous properties of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Furthermore, we find activists' interpretations of the potential and difficulties offered by ICTs with respect to these more involved movement processes are coloured by the political nature of the projects in which they are involved. Consequently, we highlight some of the ways in which anti-war and peace politics can affect the adoption of new technologies.

This chapter is thus partly the story of how anti-war activists assess technologies and manage developing challenges. In telling that story, we offer indications of more innovative use of the technologies employed through activists' adoption of (what we will define shortly as) *latent functionality*. Here it is through connecting multiple technologies into relatively novel communication structures, or through blending the benefits of technologies with the movements' social and political

networks, that we can see the furthest horizons of technology use within anti-war activism.

Innovation and information technologies

In examining the interplay between the characteristics of emerging technologies and the developing character of anti-war groups themselves we are keen to avoid slipping into technological determinism. By examining both the political contexts of activists' technological choices and the innovative potential of activists' relationships with technologies, we provide a balanced view of that interplay. However, before doing so it will be necessary to reflect briefly on some of the broader arguments concerning the relationship between society and technology.

At their extreme, technological determinist arguments link the properties inherent in a technology to the utopian or dystopian futures that these properties will induce in society. This uni-causal analysis continues to have currency in popular commentary, as is evident from Jonathan Freedland's (2007) article, 'The Internet Will Revolutionise the Very Meaning of Politics', which suggested that technology enables the citizenry to bypass traditional government institutions and to break the link between democracy and territoriality. More measured analyses recognize that technology cannot be a single determinant of such striking changes. Instead, we find an intersection between social context, political purpose and technological possibility. Technologies reflect characteristics of the society in which they are produced. However, technologies are not entirely socially, economically or politically determined. Clearly, the rise of peer-to-peer file sharing that currently infringes copyright on film, music and software developed despite, not because of, the dominant socio-economic (capitalist) relations of the day, hence vociferous complaints of 'digital piracy' from corporations such as Disney, Sony and Microsoft. User innovation with respect to technologies thus becomes important in understanding the degree to which technologies can impact on society. However, just because user innovation can and does happen, it hardly follows that the nature of technology is irrelevant; the impact of technology remains a live issue. It is an empirical question whether, and to what extent, the uptake of new technologies has an effect on the nature of the anti-war movement and, more broadly, what it is to be an activist nowadays.

Answering that question rests partly on the possibility for innovation by users of a technology. Indeed, it is the notion of user innovation that is often mobilized in arguments against those labelled as technological determinists. Let us consider the often-cited example of the huge

popularity of the short message service (SMS text messaging). This innovation was first enabled by the inception of the *Groupe Spéciale Mobile* (GSM) protocol for mobile phone networks which came online in 1992, although it took until 1995 for coverage to extend across most of Europe. This was a project that had political as well as technical ambitions since a joint European protocol was expected to bring business closer together across the continent and thus increase integration within the EU. The GSM protocol enabled international roaming across many countries and introduced digital rather than analogue calls. With a digital signal the transmission of text became relatively straightforward. So, in what is frequently described as 'an afterthought', GSM instituted the SMS standard. International roaming was initially very expensive, and rarely used, but genuinely began to take-off in the late 1990s. Commentators were surprised that SMS became incredibly popular; 'enthusiastically embraced by partying twenty-somethings in Ibiza as much as by European business executives' (Agar 2003, p. 62). What we see happening here is the interaction between what is enabled by features intrinsic to the technology and the precise use to which it is put.

The everyday use of text messages for social networking was a genuine innovation by users, but it was not possible until the GSM protocol became embedded in the technological infrastructure. Additionally, the constrained length of SMS messages and the relatively cumbersome nature of the combined alphanumeric keypad makes other uses rather unlikely. So, for instance, even if journalists might benefit from being able to submit news articles from around the world with no more technology than a mobile phone, sending it by text message would be infeasible (we note how the contracted nature of the text message limits its potential in activism below). In sum, the huge popularity of social text messaging resulted from the uptake of *latent functionality* built into the technology itself, but the nature of the technology nevertheless constrained possibilities. Subsequent to the discovery of the popularity of SMS, of course, phone providers oriented their handsets more towards the text message with features such as predictive typing, the full qwerty keypad and charging plans including hundreds of free text messages per month. In this way the latent functionality was brought to the fore, and what had been a user innovation became mundane and standard; that is, it has become a *manifest function* of the mobile phone.

Similarly, in order to understand user innovation on the Internet it is necessary to consider the ways in which it structures possibilities and constraints. The Internet is a complex of technologies, the most important applications of which – for our purposes at least – are email and the

Web. However, the number of uses for the infrastructure of the Internet increases rapidly and this creative innovation results from the principles on which the Internet was developed, rather than from the precise technical infrastructure through which information flows. Lawrence Lessig (2002, ch. 3) describes the 'end-to-end' philosophy of the Internet, wherein complex processing takes place in the devices at outermost ends of the network and the joining nodes simply transfer data without discrimination. This allows data of any format to be transferred across the Internet and it will be usable to those who receive it, provided that their own computer includes the software required to make sense of that data format. Since software itself can be distributed as pure data, it too can be distributed across the Internet. As a result, innovators could experiment with new ideas and rapidly propagate them to whomever they found interested. This is how the Web developed after Tim Berners-Lee wrote the Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML) and the first piece of software to read, display and edit HTML webpages. The software and rules for constructing HTML documents were distributed freely across the Internet, and thus allowed anyone with sufficient technical knowledge to read, write, send and receive webpages (Berners-Lee 1999). In this way the Web was a user innovation of the Internet, resulting from the benefits of the end-to-end principle. And the development of the Web compounded those benefits since it made it less technically challenging to find and download documents and programs stored at different points on the network and so a much greater number of people could be included in informational innovations. Among the many different sorts of information the Internet currently carries, obvious examples include videos to be displayed on YouTube, social networking through Facebook, music to be bought through iTunes and voice conversations taking place for free via Skype. All these take advantage of the end-to-end principle and, according to Lessig, it is that principle that allows innovators to realize creative potential in a myriad of ways.

As we will see, projects on that scale of innovation are not within the realm of possibility for anti-war activists with their own more pressing concerns. However, we may conceive of the notions of 'latent functionality' and 'manifest functionality' as two ends of a scale that may be utilized by activists. Anti-war organizations mostly use the manifest functionalities of the technologies they employ. This book argues that a significant aspect of what it is to be an activist involves carrying out tasks related to gathering, processing and dissemination of information. The new ICTs have as their most manifest functions exactly such tasks. So we see activists making frequent use of the Internet for individual and

group email, for carrying out research and for representing themselves on the Web. By examining activists' choices regarding uptake of manifest functionality we can learn more about their wider ambitions in their day-to-day activities. Further, because we conceive of these technologies as enabling and constraining behaviour we examine the delights and frustrations experienced in making use of them, thus gaining understanding concerning the characteristics of technology and its impact on the contemporary anti-war movement. Where we examine the more innovative (which is not to say the most successful) uses of technology in anti-war activism we find the stretching of latent functionalities in ways that alter the communication structure attached to the technological medium. For instance, in utilizing mass-text messaging and combining the power of 'perpetual contact' with the value of social networks, we find that an individualistic one-to-one medium can be developed to become a collective many-to-many medium. Additionally, we find activists taking advantage of the convergence of digitization in order to create multi-modal communication structures, producing innovative flows of information. Innovative uses of latent functionalities demonstrate less constrained behaviour and are of interest, therefore, because they highlight preferences of anti-war activists with regard to information flow and communicative interaction. Such innovation carries the excitement of the new, but is also rare. Because this is so, it is to the adoption of manifest functionality in activism to which we turn next.

Old tasks, new technologies

A focus on 'resource mobilization' provided the dominant understanding of social movements in American scholarship through much of the 1970s and 1980s. The theory sought to explain the emergence and persistence of social movements through focusing on the ways in which movement organizations achieved relatively steady supplies of human and financial resources: 'the first principle of this approach is that the aggregation of resources is crucial to social movement activity . . . [which] requires some minimal form of movement organization without which protest will not occur' (Buechler 2000, p. 35; see also McCarthy and Zald 1977). The main drive of the approach was to explain the success or failure of particular movements in relation to the flows of resources across organizations, rather than to provide sociological understanding of movement organization *per se*. But to examine the relationship between technology and political activism it is necessary to look within the organizations and understand the fact that being

an activist is partly constituted by carrying out relatively mundane organizational activities – dealing with correspondence; arranging meetings, agendas and minutes; raising funds; purchasing goods; designing leaflets and so on – in addition to the development and dissemination of political critiques and engagement in protest behaviour. It is here that we first see the extent to which new ICTs have become central to activist groups. More formal organizations tend to have more formally organized offices, but the mobile and relatively cheap nature of modern ICTs makes it possible to equip an effective temporary office. For instance, in visiting a small flat near Faslane Naval Base, which was home to two members of Faslane365, we saw the following:

> This had become the central hub of activities for the first week of the campaign and was strewn with the paraphernalia of modern activism: in addition to banners and posters around the place, three laptops were on and networked, several mobile phones were charging as well as the landline and a dedicated campaign phone line.
>
> (Field notes, Helensburgh, October 2006)

This note indicates the informationally intense environment of a small campaign group and also highlights the importance of the telephone, in particular its newer mobile alternative. While the social and psychological aspects of CMC in general and the politics of the Internet in particular have come under scrutiny from scholars for some time, work on mobile phones has been slow to emerge. This may be because of the appearance that 'the mobile, resembling in part its ancestor the fixed-line phone, seems relatively transparent . . . speaking on the phone appears so natural that the mediating technology is often forgotten' (Cooper et al. 2002, p. 288). However, while the user's experience of talking on the phone may be familiar, the portability and pervasiveness of the mobile plus its many additional functions offer a new dimension of the intersection between technology, information and politics in contemporary social movements. In the following paragraphs we first consider the ramifications of specifically mobile communication for anti-war activism, before going on to discuss some of the benefits of other ICTs. In later sections we will consider the additional uses of the mobile phone emerging as the technologies available become increasingly complex and interconnected.

Micro-coordination and the mobile phone

As the titles of two recent volumes on the emergence of the mobile phone attest – Katz and Aarkhus's (2002) *Perpetual Contact* and Agar's

(2003) *Constant Touch* – an important feature is the fact that location and time have become less relevant to the possibility of communication. It was such benefits of flexible and efficient organization that were foremost in our interviewees' responses to questions about mobile phones. This confirms some of the emerging literature on the sociology of the mobile. Ling and Yttri, for instance, refer to 'micro-coordination': 'one need not take an agreement to meet at a specific time and place as immutable . . . mobile communication systems allow for the redirection of transportation to meet the needs of social groups. This is largely a functional and instrumental activity' (2002, p. 139). Such benefits offer particular value in political demonstrations. In describing the adoption of technology in general, David Webb (Yorkshire CND) told us that 'mobile phones were the first thing to occur . . . that was when we were going to bases and all trying to organize ourselves. If you're trying to blockade gates and so on, then mobile phones are obviously quite useful to communicate with different groups involved'. Similarly, a Society of Friends activist pointed out the strategic benefit of the mobile phone, vis-à-vis security services:

> What the police tend to do is block you off, and they form a kind of wall around all four sides of your block and won't allow you to get out. So mobile phones are very useful there because for those who are inside the block and can't get out they can make a phone call to others who can then organize in another place . . . So there's more spontaneity and flexibility. With the rise of the environmental activism like anti-roads and so on, that for me has been a feature, this kind of spontaneity, the 'hey let's do it.'
>
> (Steve Whiting)

Direct action protests like those against road construction projects have been noted for their speed and spontaneity in response to the police (Wall 1999). The ability to communicate while on the move, in combination with the loose-knit structure of affinity groups, has made that kind of protest activity easier (Meikle 2003). But the benefits of the mobile phone are hardly limited to particular styles of protest. In relation to the more orderly national march, 'we don't have the hassle any more like we used to. At the first Stop the War demonstration someone had to walk up and down the whole length of the Embankment to try and find the bus – it was a pain you know. Whereas now we can coordinate people to get back on the buses a lot more easily with mobile phones and I think that makes a difference to people coming because

they're not so likely to get lost' (Chris Goodwin, Leicester Campaign to Stop the War [LCSTW]). Given that the text message has only been a possibility since the mid-1990s, and the mobile phone call has been at all affordable for just a little longer, it is remarkable how central they have become through these benefits of micro-coordination. One of our most experienced respondents, Lindsey German of StWC, was blunt: 'you couldn't not have them, you'd be stuffed without mobile phones'.

Other analyses of mobile communications similarly stress social and psychological benefits of the ever-present possibility of connection where frequent short communications allow the 'maintenance of symbolic proximity' and allow the expansion of users' 'psychological neighbourhoods' (Licoppe 2004; Wei and Lo 2006). Kate Fox (2007) explains how the 'anytime, anyplace, anywhere' nature of the mobile phone facilitates 'social grooming' among close-knit social networks that had become more difficult in the 'fast-paced and fragmented modern world'. Comparable benefits may help maintain solidarity among collectives engaged in political campaigns. For instance, in discussing the first major demonstration against the 'War on Terror' which took place in London in September 2002, Lindsey German noted, 'we had no idea what it would be like, and it was very big . . . I always have the picture on my phone [of] the front of the demo'. The image serves as a reminder of being a part of a mass of people with a shared opposition to war, as a personal symbol of collective identity and the potential for collective action. More simply, it is common for activists to make use of national demonstrations to catch up with friends who live distantly. Perpetual contact makes it possible for the demonstration to become a site of the maintenance of friendships in a highly mobile and fragmented society. It has been demonstrated within social movement studies that networks are essential to mobilizing protest and to the transferral of oppositional political belief (McAdam 1982, 1986; Nepstad 1997). It seems likely then that to the degree that political action and social networking become intertwined, potential for the construction of collective identity and collective action frames increases. The perpetual contact made possible with the mobile phone, and its utility as a store of names and phone numbers, is beneficial in this sense.

Internet interactions: Decision-making, debate and mobilization

The developing feeling of dependence on technology noted with respect to mobile phones is also familiar from discussions of email and the Web. As Audrey, a Trident Ploughshares activist, said of anti-war

activism in general, 'it's hard to think how it worked before [the Internet], but of course it did'. With over four decades of experience of peace campaigning, Bruce Kent, of CND, has recently taken up the use of email, and noted, 'the advantage is certainly instant reply, can you do x on this day, yes/no, very good, I like that very much'. While this offers clear improvements over postal communication, respondents more commonly compared the use of email with the telephone. Here, one might expect the asynchronous nature of email to slow down communication. However, email was often the preferred medium because 'its so much easier to get something done, I'll send them an email . . . I don't have to catch them when they're in or when they're able to answer their mobile' (Denise Craghill, Yorkshire CND). Asynchronous communication is beneficial because one can communicate and then move on, picking up the original task as soon as a reply is received. Thus, 'you can all work at your own pace and your own timescale . . . and across time-zones as well' (Jane Tallents, Faslane 365) and 'decision making can happen where people don't have the same schedule' (Jesse Schust, Voices in the Wilderness UK).

As such, an obvious benefit from electronic communications is overcoming problems associated with time and distance. Audrey went on to specify that 'the improvements are about being able to get in touch with a lot of people at the same time through email, instead of making lots of individual phone calls'. Like the mobile phone, the ready possibility of combining the technology with an existing social network offers significant benefits to anti-war activists. Moreover, with email it is a straightforward matter to communicate with multiple recipients. Since *collective* action is a defining feature of social movements, it is clear that communication among groups is a central task. This communication could be towards several different purposes: micro-coordination around practical tasks, making decisions about group action, discussion of political issues and informing groups about relevant items of news or possibilities for taking action. Each of these tasks could potentially be carried out via a range of different interactive applications of Internet technology. The email discussion list attached to a named group – i.e. a listserv where sending email to a single address will result in all members of the list receiving the email – appears to be a mainstay of electronic group discussion. However, respondents also reported using Web-based forums and discussion boards or more specialist instant messaging software for similar tasks. The following paragraphs consider ways in which anti-war activists have made use of the different possibilities offered by Internet communication, highlighting some of the advantages and disadvantages that appear either to be

inherent to the medium or to the communication structure, or reflective of the composition of the social movement group.

Kate Hudson explained how email discussion aided work in the busy CND national offices:

> [Email] makes for ease of decision-making. Our Officer team is the centre of the decision making process, there are five of us, we meet less frequently physically because we're in email communication . . . And for things like getting agreement about leaflets, for example . . . our designer has designed the front side of the leaflet, so you can just email it to them and say could you twiddle it round like this . . . you can agree the whole thing in five minutes, whereas previously it would have taken much longer.

It is particularly the ability to have group communication among multiple members across email that aids this process, so 'distribution lists are really good . . . like today, someone had sent out a press release, and someone else sent an amendment' (Anna Liddle). The communication structure of email group discussions, which might best be labelled few-to-few, therefore has clear benefits over one-to-one communication in terms of speed and efficiency. A second benefit arises from the text-based nature of communication: 'you consider your position more carefully, writing something compared to when you're speaking' (Tom Shelton, CND). Similarly, Anna Liddle found email discussions 'an important way of people to share views who might not be confident enough to do it in person. I find it easier if I've got a problem or want to describe how I'm feeling to actually write it down and amend it a bit, so you actually know what you're saying.' So, in addition to improved efficiency, some respondents have detected improvements in expression and understanding. This is enhanced by the potential connection between different electronic media, such that 'you can actually research the facts and send what you mean, you can even add references if you want from the website' (Anna Liddle). This hints at the notion of information circuits described in Chapter 2, whereby the nature of the medium offers easy potential for connections between different information sources. By copying the URL references to specific websites into a discussion, activists can contextualize their opinions on a matter and offer supporting information. To the extent that this is done with a thoughtful selectivity concerning the relevance and reliability of information sources (which we discuss shortly) this may improve the quality, if not the speed, of activist learning and decision-making.

Text-based, on-screen interaction appears to produce a perceived increase in emotional distance between discussants. This may be seen as a benefit. For instance, Denise Craghill of Yorkshire CND hinted that email could be used to avoid telephone conversations that might present personal difficulties: 'sometimes you need an email, sometimes you use email conversations as a preference to a phone call. . . . You can keep at a distance with emails, can't you?' She noted that 'if you use [email] carefully, you could set out your position, and give the other people a chance to the think about it, rather than being put into a corner, which they would be on the 'phone'. Conversely, others argued that for more difficult policy or strategy debates, face-to-face meetings were preferable. Face to face is seen as a more creative way of discussing and deciding on issues: Maya Evans of JNV, for instance, thought that 'electronic resources are really important in organising. . . . But also it's equally important to come to meetings . . . whereby we see each other face to face, because it's really hard to bounce ideas off each other through emails'. Similarly, 'it's partly the feeling . . . you just don't get quite the same connection as you can get with a face to face . . . that you need for creative policy making. It is a discrete-step discussion, you don't quite get that free flowing thing' (Adam Conway, Faslane 365). This remark again highlights the asynchronous nature of email; here we see that the distance in time that divides participants' interventions can create an emotional distance that impedes creativity. Denise Craghill noted that the same characteristic can increase potentially divisive conflict:

> People can get really irate, really cross with each other, and that's when they should be phoning each other rather than emailing. Because . . . it's like lobbing a stone at them, now it's your turn, you lob one back, I'll lob mine back, then you lob yours back, whereas if you had a conversation, you could sort it out . . . if you get into a conflict over emails, you can polarize it fantastically.

Denise was not alone in simultaneously pointing to the potential benefits of keeping a distance over email and the danger of it polarizing conflict. Mike Marqusee (a founding member of StWC), for instance, criticized the StWC for not utilizing an open email discussion list for debate, before going on to explain how a dispute on another list 'became traumatic for the whole group, within hours . . . [it] became overloaded with questions of both anti-Semitism [and] Islamaphobia . . . if they want to have a fight privately, of course, that's completely up

to them, but this so demoralized all the rest of the people, it virtually wrecked the group.' Two sets of factors seem to be involved in determining whether the distanced nature of communication is beneficial for activist groups or not. The first set revolves around the character of the group communicating, and the second is connected with the nature of the task at hand.

First, the value of email discussion varies with the nature of the group involved. Activists involved in F365 referred to trust within a small group as enabling better email communication. For instance, in responding to a question about the quality of online decision-making, Jane Tallents stressed it was 'within a small group that know each other fairly well' that decision-making could be better by email because 'you all have a chance to take part' as opposed to face-to-face meetings where scheduling difficulties and physical distance inevitably make full participation impossible. Utilizing a custom-built virtual chat room for short-text communication via the Internet, she also pointed out that 'you can even crack the dilemma of being in two places at once', since simultaneous meetings could be taking place with overlapping groups and to attend both one simply needs to keep two separate chat room windows open on the screen. Elsewhere, in the CND national office described by Kate Hudson above, there is a structure to decision-making that appears to ease the difficulties of email communication; elected officers 'dictate and drive policy . . . But in terms of day-to-day, on-the-ground running campaigns, it's all done by the office staff with direction . . . And quite often decisions are made over email. That seems to work quite well, actually . . . it's time-saving' (Tom Shelton). It is not only that people associate small, structured close-knit groups with positive evaluations of electronic communication, but the reverse appears true as well. Where such communications – particularly through email distribution lists – are evaluated negatively, reference is often made to the broad-based nature of the group. A Leicester Respect activist, Chris Talbot, described 'a kind of general left list . . . [but] the trouble with those email lists were . . . conflicts seem to arise on email discussions much quicker than they do face to face . . . there are tensions between the different left-wing groups – there's no doubt about that'.

Second, the nature of the task at hand seems to impact on the value of email interaction. There is a divide between a group attempting to organize an action and a list on which social discussions and political debates might occur. As Denise Craghill explained, 'if you have a network of activists trying to do something, I think you need to limit how much your e-lists are for chat (because) you can just get the sort

of discussion they should be having in the pub'. Similarly, Anna Liddle noted that 'quite often people have theoretical debates on [email lists] but in the end I just stopped reading them. It was always just between a few people arguing.' However, list managers do recognize the need to clearly define the purposes of various communication forums because, as Jesse Schust put it, 'activists [can] get brought to a standstill by being on too many lists . . . a key is trying to minimize the flow of traffic for the people who need that, and recognising that some people need to have the discursive chatty thing'. The low costs of setting up email discussion lists allow the tailoring of different lists to different groups, and Schust recalled that 'there was a group where they wanted to have a kind of social aspect to the list, so we created a social atmosphere on the list, and then had a [separate] posting list just for information'.

When establishing lists these various issues may be taken into account in explicit or implicit rules of interaction. Several respondents referred to trying to keep general chat or political discussion separate from organizing. The Wandsworth Stop the War Coalition's email list, for instance, is 'mostly notification and organising things, who's going to do what, when. So debate happens in meetings or face to face' (Linda Heiden). The Quaker email list, Peace Exchange, is also 'explicitly . . . not for discussing issues, if they do, we'll come down on them [because] otherwise they get quite out of hand, and you tend to get very vocal people who will write their own views every other day, but everyone signs off' (David Gee). It should be noted that both of these lists allow all members to send email to the whole group and are therefore potentially interactive. This holds value for activists because it broadens the number of people who could be looking out for relevant news stories or possibilities for protest action. Where the work of investigation and communication is devolved in this way, however, sensitivity to the dynamics of email discussion lists is required in order to avoid some of the more problematic characteristics that typify that particular medium.

In addition to trying to 'minimize the flow of traffic', interaction might be avoided on a number of other grounds. Most simply, there are practical considerations. In discussing a very extensive re-design of the F365 website, Adam Conway pointed out that 'discussion forums actually take a lot of central maintaining . . . there will be people who just spam it, there will be people who accidentally spam it because they didn't figure out how it worked . . . so you do need people to be editors or moderators . . . and that's not a priority.' The important point here is that since the website re-design made use of a content

management system – software intended to make website maintenance easier and that offers the possibility of providing complex website functionality with minimal programming skills – it would have been relatively straightforward to install a forum or bulletin board. What was off-putting, therefore, was not a lack of technical resources, but rather the ongoing maintenance work. Since campaign groups typically stretch their human resources to the limit, prioritizing workload is crucial. And the priorities that different groups set often signal deeper political positions held within the group. Since activists' political world views typically involve understandings of power, agency and social change, their choices of action tactics can often be read as a statement of deeper political beliefs. It is hardly surprising that within F365 – a campaign focused on direct action to disrupt a military installation to the maximum possible effect – there were priorities other than maintaining discussions. Yet it should be understood that such priorities vary depending on the politics of the group involved, and their understanding of the possibilities for achieving their targets. Effective action, for F365, centres around directly targeting their opponents and, through blockading the nuclear submarine base, putting economic and political pressure on the government. Secondarily – but still of high priority – is the potential to influence others through gaining coverage in the mainstream media. Engaging in discussions through new media is low on the list of possibilities for change. Therefore, for Faslane 365 activist Adam Conway, 'if people want to comment on [the campaign], I would rather that they did it in a letter to their local paper than on the website, because that will reach a broader audience [and] be a more effective campaigning tool. If it was on our website, then it would likely become very much an internal discussion with probably a few people who [are] avidly anti us coming in'. For Conway at least, prioritizing workload meant either pressuring the government directly, or seeing the issue of Trident renewal receive broad-based media attention. Where discussion was most valuable was in a highly public forum and not in one so intricately tied to the campaign itself.

As a rather different example, we can consider the development of the Big Trident Debate website from the national offices of CND. Like F365, this initiative was set up in response to government plans for the next generation of nuclear weapons delivery systems. The 2006 Defence White Paper, 'The Future of the United Kingdom's Nuclear Deterrent', in fact proposed an updating and renewal of the submarines that carry American-built Trident missiles armed with nuclear warheads designed and built in the UK nuclear weapons research facility at Aldermaston.

The Big Trident Debate appears as a Web-only campaign ostensibly to increase discussions of the relevant issues. It claims:

> Last year, the government promised that there would be a full and open debate on the future of Britain's nuclear weapons. Since then, there has been considerable demand from all points of view for a genuine public and parliamentary debate but the government has done nothing to ensure that this happens.
>
> This Big Trident Debate website has been established, with widespread support, with the single aim of pressing the government to facilitate that debate, and to provide a public space for debate of the issues. It is not confined to any one point of view and we urge participation from all perspectives.
>
> (Big Trident Debate, undated)

In fact, as Tom Shelton explained, the website was set up from the national offices of CND. With five decades of campaigning for unilateral nuclear disarmament by the UK government, it is obvious that CND's position is resolutely against any renewal of Trident weapons and no amount of online debate will change the direction of that policy. Indeed, policy is set by CND's membership through voting on resolutions at their national conference. Yet the website claimed not to be 'confined to any one point of view'.

We do not make these points to suggest any attempt to deceive the public on CND's behalf, but to express surprise about the purpose of the website. Understanding CND's purpose here is possible with reference to the potential for interaction on the website; there are three possibilities. The first possibility is to sign a statement that argues that 'It is the responsibility of Government to facilitate a thorough, national consultation. This dialogue must inform the decision-making process and take place before the Government makes any decision on the way forward.' By taking part in this first option, one does not commit to a particular point of view on Trident renewal, but instead makes a public claim (since signatories are published on another part of the website) to the value of consultation in democracy.

The second potential interaction is provided by the website WriteToThem. com. Every page of the Big Trident Debate website shows an image of an envelope with a label saying 'Contact Your Politician'. It is possible to enter a postcode in a text box on the image, and clicking an arrow icon takes you directly to the WriteToThem website, where you are given the opportunity to contact the local, national or European representative for

that postcode area. Again, this form of political action does not force one to take a particular line on Trident renewal. However, one might expect that visitors with strong feelings on the issue might write to their representative with a very different opinion to that taken in the statement. So, rather than writing to appeal for a public debate, one might instead write to ask one's representative to argue for or against Trident renewal.

The third interactive possibility of the site was an online discussion board where visitors could read and reply to opinions others had written. Again, this offered visitors an opportunity to make a public statement on either side of the debate. By hosting the forum, the website attempted to offer the beginnings of the consultation that they demanded from the government. However, this aspect of the site appears not to have met with success and, by August 2007, it had been removed. An earlier interview with CND's Tom Shelton highlighted some of the problems of the online discussion: 'most people have logged on, posted one comment or a couple of comments and not returned regularly. Two main people have gone on there with polar opposite points of view and started a slanging match.' This polarization of debate, which we discussed earlier in relation to email discussion lists, appears to be a danger on interactive Web-based discussion boards too. This is particularly problematic for the Big Trident Debate, since 'we wanted to bring in people from both sides of the debate and provide a forum for discussion', but what in fact developed 'is very full in terms of messages and not very full in terms of users' (ibid.). However, the failure to achieve its aims is, for present purposes, less important than the decision to use the website in this way in the first place. CND made an attempt to publicize the website through a wide range of groups in order to ensure a diversity of views were represented. However, starting from a network of organizations attached to disarmament and peace issues it would always be easier for them to attract participation from organizations that are 'basically to the left of centre, so we haven't got organizations that are pro-Trident yet. We're trying quite hard.'

Tom Shelton recognized that a part of the difficulty of attracting a truly broad range of participation was awareness that the initiative was being driven by CND, 'it's not coming from someone who's in the middle of the debate; it's coming from one side and we're trying to stimulate debate'. This should hardly be surprising. The structure of CND ensures tight control of material publicized on the main CND website, with every document being checked by the Chair before publication. This is common where an organization is keen to present an unambiguous political line. What seems puzzling is why an organization which has opposition to Trident weapons as its central mandate for action

would expend resources attempting to give space for alternative points of view. Partly, this may be explained by the confidence with which the central CND activists have in the rectitude of their perspective, as Shelton observed, 'we think our arguments hold up against any of the arguments counter to it'. Furthermore, anti-Trident campaigners had taken a strategic decision to work towards delaying decision-making as far as possible. Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair was pro-nuclear weapons, but, as everyone knew, about to stand down; so the possibility of greater influence with a successor may have been attractive.

However, beyond the strategic reasons for CND to spend its resources in this way, 'I just think if you believe in democratic process then there should be a debate. You know, whether my opinion or another person's opinion eventually comes out on top is another matter really, but just having that debate is as important as the result' (Tom Shelton). Similarly, Anna Liddle (who had no connection to the Big Trident Debate website) used her role as CND Education Worker to teach campaigning and debating skills because she wanted 'children to be more democratic'; she argued that the views they ended up with were less important than the fact that they had come to them through questioning mainstream views, finding facts and thinking through their positions. From another angle, almost all of our CND respondents talked positively about the internal democracy of the organization; seeing it as not just a key organizational feature but a secret to success such that, for instance, after the challenge to peace movements after 9/11 it was only the 'mass democratic organizations [that] were able to rise to the challenge' (Kate Hudson).

It seems likely that the decision to utilize the interactive possibilities of the Web to encourage a genuine debate on the issue of Trident renewal was not only motivated by a strong conviction about the strength of the anti-Trident arguments, but also in the vision of democracy as a foundational value, and a belief that the Web offered potential for improving democratic debate. To be sure, not all activists see the Web in such a positive light; Chris Goodwin, for instance, said simply, 'I don't like discussing on the Internet – I don't think it's a very democratic way of doing things', and respondents from both Wandsworth and Lewisham Stop the War Coalitions preferred debates to be in face-to-face meetings. An anonymous interviewee from Friends of Al Aqsa considered the issues too sensitive to justify online discussions, 'it's such a difficult topic that I'm sure forums would get bloated'. However, Zulfi Bukhari of the MPACUK thought it best to allow such discussions to take their own course, less for the democratic value in doing so, but more for psychological benefits. Bukhari recognized the tendency of polarization

and described their forum as 'the Wild West, whoa, who knows what goes on there, there's some crazy stuff there. But that's really for people just to, I think, let off steam'. In sum, both the F365 and CND stories demonstrate that pragmatic, strategic and political values impact on choices regarding the provision of interactive spaces for debate on the Internet. As these comparisons suggest, the degree to which different pragmatic and political issues impact on the decision finally depends on the balance struck between these issues within the particular groups. Different political values and aims – even within the same movement – may lead to different uses of the available technology.

Decisions that groups make regarding the use of communication media have been the basis of a variety of critiques levelled at larger organizations. Nahella Ashraf, Chair of Manchester Stop the War (STW), criticized the email groups for lacking a more genuine connection between people, elaborating that 'Muslim Association of Britain [MAB] would send out emails about Stop the War, and give out mass leaflets, but never spoke to anybody. . . . Actually you don't develop your networks and your activists if it's just an email list . . . you'll send them an email telling them what to do, and they turn up. But actually it's not about them having the conversations and the discussions.' Mike Marqusee, conversely, considered that email discussions did hold the potential for a genuine interaction among movement participants, but intimated a similar critique of StWC saying that they 'actually did not welcome, and did not use the Internet possibilities that were there . . . it's all one-way. What they never wanted was . . . the kind of free-flowing open discussion on an e-list, which has become pretty much the standard practice through much of activist-land.'

What such comments hint at is a belief – quite common among activist groups – that discussion of political issues holds transformative potential and can thereby bring people into more active roles. The degree to which such transformations might occur without face-to-face interaction is, however, contested. Describing the attempts of the F365 coordinating group to find new blockading groups to organize days of action through the year-long campaign, Jane Tallents argued that 'the most effective thing is actually to speak to people . . . even emailing specifics – "dear Kevin we met once at a bus-stop and would you like to come and take part in this" – doesn't actually work, I've got to phone you up and say "hey, remember this" . . . and it's actually personal contact works much better to get those initial meetings together.' Similarly, Sadia Jabeen, District Organizer for SWP and based in Leicester, stated, 'we tend to use the good old-fashioned telephones to organize things really. The

Internet is useful but in terms of organising, it's better to phone people, because you get a much better response. . . . If I actually give you a call and have a discussion with you about why I think it's important for you to come [to a march], you might be more likely to come.'

Despite this, some positive evaluation of CMC in mobilization was apparent. Most often, this is in connection with possible speed of information flow, thus creating the potential for 'nimble campaigns'. That is, 'if you identify suddenly there's some campaign that needs to happen, it can materialize much more quickly if people have this [technology]' (Jesse Schust). This frequently leads to positive comparisons with past modes of communication, 'From my CND days, which was the 80s . . . we were contacting people through a telephone tree – now the net and mobiles and you think, "Oh God, it's so much easier." The telephone trees always broke down. It was so primitive [compared to] what you get on the net' (Isobel McMillan, Wandsworth STW). From the perspective of today's Yorkshire CND, 'we'd definitely use the email list if we wanted to organize quickly. And you can lobby your MP and things like that more quickly as well' (Denise Craghill).

When targeting information about the practicalities of protest to those who have been involved previously, CMC offers efficiency gains at little cost. It is now perceived to be essential to use technology in this way, as Leicester peace activist Zina Zelter conceded: 'I resisted getting email for years . . . [but] I couldn't have done the campaign I've just done – the Faslane stuff – without email. It made it possible because of sending out all that information.' However, enthusiasm for CMC was tempered when discriminations were made. Coordinating a meeting or arranging transport was mobilization of a sort, but when issues of galvanizing supporters were raised then CMC seemed much less valuable than interpersonal exchanges. David Webb, for instance, told us that 'certainly if you put a note out that a coach is available to go to London, say, you do get a lot of emails booking seats . . . or asking for more information'. But he went on to note that 'in terms of developing, trying to get more and more people involved, I'm not sure it does an awful lot with that [since] you get an awful lot more from meeting people than just exchange of information'.

Despite the difficulties of CMC for debate, decision-making and mobilization, its evident advantages seem to be driving activists to adapt their practice to suit the medium. While Ippy of *Peace News* recognizes that e-list discussions can 'go round and round and round and round', she also points out that 'it's not impossible and we do struggle along . . . It is sort of participatory, but sometimes it's participatory by silence . . . People have to develop how they use things to be more effective and to be

clearer about their participation in the decision making process'. In the process of learning, some groups have begun to take advantage of mixing communication media and matching them according to their best use. Jesse Schust claims that 'most of the groups that I've been involved with revolve around having meetings that are facilitated by someone . . . based around a consensus or near consensus decision making . . . And with email lists you can prepare for the meeting much more successfully, you can circulate agenda, get ideas out there before so people can think about things. Also you can decide simple things over the Internet.' Similarly, 'if it's something that involves us here, if it's sort of more the creative side of how to respond, or how to approach this problem, I'll talk to one or two other people in the group, either on the phone or face to face about it . . . And I have to go through that process a little bit, and then that process will become a proposal, which they'll refine and agree upon on email . . . which is better than just a couple of people having to make the decision . . . You can do combinations of methods in that way, it's often quite useful, because you start with a better proposal' (Adam Conway). Referring to the Trident Ploughshares virtual meetings, Jane Tallents pointed out that 'it doesn't replace having actual physical face to face meetings every few months . . . but it does have a place in between and we've got a protocol for how to decide things'.

In addition to the more specific points made throughout this section, the various quotations also demonstrate some more general features of activist uses of technology. First, as heavy users of email and the Web, activists have become sensitive to the ways in which CMC can effect the quality of communication – efficiency benefits are often weighed against the potential barriers to understanding and creation of conflict that may occur with asynchronous communication that lacks the non-linguistic information often required for nuanced expression. Second, in learning how to best make use of new communication technologies, activists have found ways to piece together different forms of communication within ongoing processes of debate, decision-making and mobilization. As we describe below, multi-modal communication structures can be created that demonstrate relatively high levels of innovation and seem to have particular benefits for particular kinds of campaigns.

Digitization and information gathering

In Chapter 3 we discussed the use that anti-war groups make of the Web for disseminating information, whether that be through presenting particular political arguments, providing information about the consequences of the 'War on Terror' or encouraging people to take part in protest.

That is, we considered use of the Web by activists primarily as creators of content. Activists are also the users of that content and many respondents reported using such information made available on the Web. There is evidence from the US to suggest that use of the Web has encouraged participation in anti-war protest, as Nah et al. (2006) argue, 'the Internet played an important role in spurring activism among individuals who opposed the war above and beyond what would have been explained by their demographic characteristics, their ideology, their concerns about war, and their opinion about US-led invasion of Iraq'. Furthermore, studies of participants at demonstrations against the 'War on Terror' in the US suggest that those activists who are closely connected with anti-war organizations are 'disproportionately likely to rely on digital communications media' and those with movement affiliations 'overwhelmingly received their information about the Iraq crisis through e-media' (Bennett and Givens 2006, pp. 1, 17). As users who seek information about protest, activists recognize the Web as a 'phenomenal resource, absolutely phenomenal, the links . . . what you can do, the resources, the information you can access, the networking you can do' (Steve Whiting).

This quotation does not refer exclusively to movement-created e-media. Activists are information hungry and seek material from a variety of sources ranging from television news to favoured websites, newspapers to blog commentaries, as well as anti-war sources such as Information Clearing House and ZNet. Several of our respondents began their everyday activities with trawls of websites they regularly used for relevant materials, which might include the likes of BBC news and the *New York Times*. Milan Rai pointed out that sources may also include official documents, describing how during one campaign,

> having the text of the UN Security Council resolutions was crucial . . . and the only way we could get those was from the UN information office in London, which had to request them from New York . . . it would be weeks of delay before we got these Security Council resolutions. Foundational documents like that suddenly became immediately accessible. And it did make a really big difference to our work.

As we observed earlier, the hyperlinked structure of the Web encourages the creation of links between anti-war organizations and a wide range of other entities, including websites that represent mainstream media organizations and institutions of governance. The fact that anti-war website authors' linking practices lead them frequently to link to the sites of organizations about which they might be critical, such as

government departments or news articles with which they disagree, indicates the value of information from multiple sources. Furthermore, in comparing the hyperlink activities of anti-war activists in Australia, Britain and the US, we describe elsewhere a substantial degree of agreement across movement websites about which sites to link to, which implies some commonality in the assessments made by activists about the nature of those sources (Gillan and Pickerill 2008). However, linking practices do not of necessity reflect the ways in which activists carry out information gathering in their day-to-day activities.

For a minority of activists, information gathering takes the form of finding original primary data. This is, for example, the role of NukeWatch. According to their own website, 'NukeWatch monitor and track the movement of British Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) from Aldermaston in Berkshire to Coulport on the West coast of Scotland.' The organization is described as 'a network of individuals who campaign against the convoys . . . because they are part of a system of weapons of mass destruction' (NukeWatch undated a). The website also contains information and advice about how to spot a convoy of nuclear weapons and how to prepare for and carry out convoy tracking and protesting at convoys. They note that 'a hands-free mobile phone is essential these days for keeping in touch. Make sure it is always charged or get a car charger . . . Programme a few essential numbers into your mobile for emergencies' (NukeWatch, undated b). One participant in our email discussion group mentioned NukeWatch explicitly; when asked about the value of new technologies Audrey said, 'Specific examples of major improvements are: NukeWatch – much easier to follow convoys and communicate with other nukewatchers through mobiles. The initial alerts are done by text message, and updates through email.' Jane Tallents, an F365 participant, also noted the use of mobile phones in following convoys of nuclear weapons: 'when there's a convoy, it's still down to some individual being out there and actually seeing it, but we send it on email lists, we do mass text messaging . . . and even being able to follow it with a mobile phone instead of a bag of bloody 10ps looking for phone boxes.' Further, she noted that 'information sometimes can be sent out about meetings of the MOD [Ministry of Defence], discussing warhead convoys . . . that they put up on their own websites, and they forget we can find it too'. This demonstrates again the practical benefits of the 'perpetual contact' available through the mobile phone. More interestingly, it also points to the ways in which activists can connect together various channels of communication to suit their particular circumstances. This aspect of technology use will be discussed further as 'multi-modal action' below.

New forms? Networked communication structures and multi-modal action

Thus far this chapter has concerned itself primarily with activists' uses of the manifest functionality provided by ICTs. Most engagements with technology within the anti-war movement in Britain are of this kind. By contrast, the following sections examine ways in which activists have engaged more innovatively, discovering latent functionality enabled by technology. We examine several moments where the furthest horizons of informational connectivity are exploited. Our intention is to suggest neither that these examples demonstrate a direction in which activism is headed nor that more technically sophisticated uses of technology are necessarily more effective than simpler methods of communication and interaction. However, reflection on these examples highlights two key ideas that have already been mentioned: first, the ways in which technology is embedded within the social and political networks utilized by activists, and second, the ways in which different technologies are connected in attempts to make best use of the particular characteristics of particular technologies. Interestingly, these two features connect with emerging ideas about changing uses of the Web that arguably make it more centred on people, and less on technology. We begin, therefore, with a brief description of the notion of 'Web 2.0'.

Web 2.0: An 'architecture of participation'?

The term 'Web 2.0' was coined in a meeting of influential Web industry experts, set up by the technical publisher Tim O'Reilly. The first Web 2.0 Conference, held in 2005, was hugely popular, allowing like-minded developers to consider the possibilities offered by improved technology and to renew the confidence of venture capitalists. Their discussions were propelled by O'Reilly's vision of the future of the Web. Much of that vision was focused on the new business and data management models represented by high-profile examples such as Google, Ebay and MySpace. However, it also focused on the interface with users. Developments in Web standards and infrastructure have allowed increasingly sophisticated interactive elements to be designed into Webpages. The web had already shifted from serving 'static' documents that appear the same regardless of viewer and context to dynamic pages, whose content takes account of the information the website holds about the user (e.g. age group, gender, nationality or shopping habits). Web 2.0 offers a vision of websites that allows far richer dynamic interaction with the webpage once it has loaded. Websites increasingly include the

ability for the user to manipulate elements of the page, thus bringing different or more detailed information to the fore. This increasing possibility of interaction essentially makes website more like applications on a desktop computer and less like documents that can only be read. An important corollary of that shift is that it enables users to affect, much more easily, the content of the website and to interact with each other through the site. Hence the slogan of the 'architecture of participation' and the demand for 'harnessing collective intelligence' that O'Reilly promotes (O'Reilly 2005; Singel 2005; Levy 2005).

We have seen some use of social networking sites within the anti-war movement, since both CND and StWC have set up groups on both MySpace and Facebook. However, we find little evidence that the shift to Web 2.0 has affected the kinds of website created by anti-war groups. Typically, anti-war websites are used for spreading news and analyses and offering a point of contact, but they are usually centrally controlled and do not allow users to comment. In this regard they operate with what Anastasia Kavada describes as a 'broadcast model' – from one to many – of communication (2005, p. 79). Interactivity rarely exists and where it does, it may be limited to signing an online petition. StWC, for instance, hosts a blog written by its convenor Lindsey German, but this does not allow readers to comment.

Other UK movements appear more focused on making use of up-to-date technologies. Parts of the Social Forum movement in the UK, for instance, have made much use of wiki technology. A wiki is a form of content management system that is structured with a strong emphasis on users creating both the content and the structure of the websites and is often integrated with a commenting system; editorial control is thereby consciously restricted. Growing out of the anti-globalization movement the globe-spanning network of Independent Media Collectives (IMCs) have created open publishing websites (Indymedia sites) which offer instantly updateable user-created content that ranges from written stories to still photographs, audio and video (Pickerill 2007). Emerging since 1999 these websites predated the moment that 'Web 2.0' became a buzzword, yet offered many of the functions of commercially oriented Web 2.0 websites such as YouTube. Anti-war activists do make use of Indymedia, and there are a number of other examples of take-up of ideas currently connected with the notion of Web 2.0. For instance, digital video recordings of speeches at anti-war rallies are frequently uploaded to the YouTube, with the video player now embedded in the national Stop the War Coalition website. Additionally, as the description of the Big Trident Debate website above makes clear, connections

with the constellation of citizen action sites around WriteToThem (formerly FaxYourMP) are also used by anti-war website designers. As Web users, some also espouse the virtue of Wikipedia – a website that is at the heart of attempts to harness collective intelligence through a high level of interactivity and open approach to publishing and copyright: '[it] just gets me really, really excited. I just love the idea of people sharing their knowledge in . . . such a free way' (Anna Liddle).

Nevertheless, examples of interactive, user-generated content on anti-war sites remain scarce. Preceding sections suggest explanations for this. For example, we saw that maintenance of user-generated content was off-putting to the F365 website manager when he was redesigning that campaign's website and described the ways in which political action was a higher priority than technical maintenance. We have also heard numerous arguments that CMC – useful as it is among relatively tight-knit groups seeking to organize practicalities or make simple decisions – do not prove effective in mobilizing support among new constituencies and can even lead to polarized and aggressive political debate. Another issue concerns the level of control that groups seek to have over the content of their sites. Within CND, for instance, demands of professionalism and 'uniformity of line' leads to a structure in which the Chair has 'final sight of everything' (Kate Hudson). Further, the interactive potential of weblogs is problematic since it may immediately draw criticism from opponents. For instance, Lindsey German noted that Andrew Murray's weblog, which is accessible on StWC's site but hosted by the interactive *Comment is Free* section of *Guardian Unlimited*, is 'very controversial, so they [commentators] accuse him of . . . rubbish' and '90% of them [comments] are kind of hostile'. Interactivity brings the possibility of subversion of one's message, and this is not often welcome to campaigners.

As we saw in relation to the use of CMC for decision-making, the kinds of political projects with which groups are involved affect their evaluation of the value of interactive technologies or user-generated content. The F365 website, while not offering open discussion possibilities, does devolve much of the content writing to autonomous blockading groups. Each group is given its own page on the site, with a username and password that allows participants to upload news stories, photographs and other documents relating to their protests. This matches the structure of the organization as a whole, which seeks to enable participating groups 'ownership' of their contribution to the year-long blockade. The central coordinating group encourages (and if necessary trains) blockading groups to do their own media work, so that each group can offer its own critique of the proposed renewal of the Trident system. *Peace News* also offers

some limited possibilities for user-generated content through a frequently updated newswire section that asks contributors to write in with stories of anti-militarist action. Nevertheless, editorial control is retained, as Ippy explained: 'there's a few people who are either former editors or former staff who . . . we obviously trust them to publish stuff. But then quite a lot of stuff will come through me, just because obviously there needs to be some kind of editorial oversight . . . it's not an open system.'

There are three implications of the ideas connected to Web 2.0 that aid understanding of contemporary activism's technological innovations. First, the notion of 'mashup' or 'remixing' refers to the design of software and content elements that can be recombined by others (developers or users) in innovative ways. This has been enabled by, on the one hand, a changing value structure with respect to 'ownership' of creative goods and, on the other hand, the technical ease with which such combinations may be created. In anti-war activities, similar processes further encourage the flow of information circuits as it becomes easier to move arguments and information from one place to another. For instance, in considering the Web as a source of information Korin Grant noted 'we copied and pasted text from [the national website] in order to write leaflets. I would have used that for the Leicester Radical Alliance as well'. The technical simplicity of reproduction, especially when combined with awareness of 'copyleft' and 'creative commons' licenses that encourage re-use of content, serves to increase the speed of information flow within the anti-war movement.

The second useful element of Web 2.0 recognizes the increasing convergence of different technologies on digital formats, and thus the increasing interconnectivity that is available between electronic devices. O'Reilly (2005) explains that useful Web applications need to be 'designed from the ground up to span multiple devices'; he uses Apple's iTunes as an exemplar, but suggests that 'this is one of the areas of Web 2.0 where we expect to see some of the greatest change, as more and more devices are connected to the new platform'. O'Reilly adds that iTunes has only made a little use of collective intelligence, however, and asks 'What applications become possible when our phones . . . are not consuming data but reporting it?' Throughout this chapter we have found examples of what we call multi-modal action. This is enabled by the same digital convergence and tendency to 'remixing' technologies that leads O'Reilly to anticipate radical changes.

The third relevant element of Web 2.0 is the potential power of social networks. O'Reilly goes as far as to predict that 'network effects from user contributions are the key to market dominance in the Web 2.0 era' because networks allow users to add value to data. Social networking websites have

boomed over the same period that Web 2.0 ideas have been influential. And in a clear combination of Web 2.0 principles telephone operators now seek to increase their revenue by combining the networking benefits of such websites with the perpetual connection made possible by the mobile phone (Wray 2007). We now turn to the benefits of networks.

Networked communication structures

As described earlier, the practical benefits of micro-coordination represent the most obvious use of the mobile phone, utilizing the technology more or less as intended by its inventors. There are examples of political uses of the mobile, however, that extend the technology in novel ways. The most often-discussed case is the role of text messaging in the campaign against Philippine President Joseph Estrada that forced him out of office. Throughout 2000, anti-Estrada text messages such as hostile slogans and satirical jokes were propagated across social networks. Anti-Estrada activists began to use 'phone trees to quickly organize massive demonstrations against Mr Estrada. When riot police would manoeuvre to contain demonstrators, protest leaders would use mobile phone messaging to redirect the crowds' (Katz and Aarkhus 2002, pp. 2–3). Additional information was spread by protesters through email discussion lists and websites, so 'mobile phones had to function in a particular media environment, which reflected the middle-class-dominated power structure at the time. It is within this larger framework that we should acknowledge that the mobile phone – as a medium that is portable, personal, and prepared to receive and deliver messages anytime, anywhere – can perform the mobilization function much more efficiently than other communication channels at the tipping point of a political movement' (Castells et al. 2007, p. 192). It seems that the combination of social networks and mobile phones, aided by their in-built record of phone numbers, contains significant potential for aiding mobilization. It appears that such mobilization is likely to benefit from the long-established 'strength of weak ties' (Granovetter 1973). If an individual forwards a text message to all of the people in their address book then they will send it to people with whom they have strong relationships and to those with whom they are likely to be less well acquainted. Because the sender is personally known to the receiver, this form of communication seems more conducive to producing a sympathetic response than in mass forms of communication. So, to the extent that the message seems to be true and important to the receiver, it is likely that it will be passed on beyond the densely networked clusters of friends and allies from which it originates, into the wider (mobile phone owning) society.

Such forms of networked communication problematize established ways of differentiating media in terms of one-to-one and one-to-many. This is because in examining the communication we broaden our focus beyond a single link (such as from broadcaster to audience) to many links from individual to individuals, thus it would need to be described as few-to-few-to-few- etc. This reflects a shift in the nature of the communication as the potential for control is dissipated across a broad network and the ability of the message to spread to thousands of recipients depends to a large degree on large numbers of individuals' evaluation of the content of the message, its potential for having an impact, its potential for getting the sender in trouble with security services and so on. Such networked communication appears to be more focused on activity than representation or deliberation. Yet this feature also makes it a riskier mobilization tool for groups with radical claims since, one might expect, messages that are furthest from mainstream opinion would be more likely to hit a high proportion of dead ends within the network as individual receivers evaluate the content as wrong, or as risking repression, and do not pass it on to their own networks.

The potential to use network forms of activism is partly limited, however, by the practical necessity of learning the technology. Tom Shelton noted that 'Ben in the office has used group text messaging to convene one small anti-war demo at university. That is something we thought about doing but we haven't. Partly, just you can't constantly expand into areas, learn new technology the whole time as an organization.' However, he also argued that asking people to pass on text messages, as a low intensity form of participation, could not build a sustainable movement: 'you could say x number of people have texted this thing on this day, which indicates a level of popular support . . . but I think it's a fairly transient kind of thing. It doesn't . . . stay in people's minds and I'm not really sure that it has any lasting effect.' Furthermore, the effects could potentially be 'detrimental in the sense that people feel like they've done something when actually they haven't really . . . [Text messaging] is basically the least involved type of political activism you could possibly have.' There are two points of interest here. Firstly, skills constrain the uptake of new technology. Secondly, communication as such does not count as activism to some commentators.

Multi-modal action

An illuminating example of the use of mixed technologies in protest comes from the 2004 demonstrations against the Republican National Convention (RNC) in New York. A graduate student, Joshua Kinberg,

designed and built a 'dot-matrix graffiti bike'; an extended pedal cycle mounted with computer-controlled chalk aerosol cans that could spray messages onto the pavement. Kindberg's website, Bikes Against Bush, enabled visitors to write short messages that could be transmitted directly to the 'printer' via his mobile phone and bicycle-mounted laptop. Messages could thereby be submitted from anywhere with Internet access and (almost) instantaneously sprayed as graffiti onto the pavements outside the convention. Kindberg demonstrated his technology, but was never able to use it in protest since in the lead-up to the demonstrations he was arrested, and his equipment was seized, by 'NYPD's "RNC Intelligence Squad," which had been travelling around the country infiltrating progressive groups and building secret files on potential rabble-rousers ahead of the convention' (Singel 2007).

This example is at the more creative end of technology usage: there is no sense in which the designers of the technologies Kindberg utilized had this end in mind. The latent potential existed in the technological infrastructure, but nevertheless needed a technologically adept, creative individual to bring these to the surface. But, because such creativity requires high levels of skill and financial resources, it is also relatively rare and highly unlikely to be taken up broadly. Nonetheless, this example can be used to examine some of the features of multi-modal communication. First, the range of modes of communications can be broad. Using graffiti as a medium, Kindberg's virtuoso design combined an ancient dimension of political communication (graffiti has been found from Roman times) with digital technology. Second, we should pay attention to Kindberg's position in the network of communication. His use of the website to garner messages of protest put himself in the position of a single node mediating a many-to-many communication system. The mobile phone is, of course, intended as a one-to-one communication device. By hooking it up to his website, Kindberg stretched its capabilities to allow many-to-one communications and by hooking it up to his graffiti printer he turned it into a one-to-many communication. In numerous political applications of the mobile phone beyond pragmatic micro-coordination, we see that the technology has been similarly stretched. For instance, the day before the Italian regional election of 2004, Silvio Berlusconi sent 13 million messages to Italian mobile phones, thus making use of the system for definitively one-to-many communication.

The third issue raised by the Kindberg example is that of the location of power in communication networks. Within any information network, densely connected nodes are potential points of control or the exertion of power. If Kindberg's system allowed him to intervene by selecting

some submitted messages to print and to discard others, his position in the network would allow him to change the meaning conveyed in this experiment of many-to-many communication. By, for instance, filtering out messages with expletives or that simply seemed 'whacky' he would, for better or worse, misrepresent the overall message conveyed against the RNC. Alternatively, he might not have included that possibility in his design, and the node would therefore be structurally transparent; in this case he would have created a truly many-to-many network, and one that roughly conformed to the 'end-to-end' principle described in relation to the Internet above. The concentration of power in a network is not simply a problem of distorting meaning, however. As this example demonstrates, it is also a point at which the network can be taken over or destroyed. The seizure of Kindberg's equipment by the police did just that, making it impossible for any messages to be relayed at all.

As introduced in Chapter 2, one of the more unusual actions by the StWC was the promotion early in 2007 of an anti-war single by a band spoofing Tony Blair's university rock group, Ugly Rumours. They produced a cover of the anti-war song, 'War (What is it Good For?)', which was made available as a download only release. An opportunity was spotted to gain publicity for StWC following changes in the rules of the official singles charts without the expense of producing and distributing a physical format CD. Further, the CD could be pre-ordered simply by text messaging the code 'Peace1' to an automated service that then enabled the messenger to download the CD from an online distribution outlet. The fact that Ugly Rumours performed at large national demonstrations in both Glasgow and London, with instructions for buying the single given repeatedly and shown on screen undoubtedly contributed to the success of the single, which reached sixth position in mid-week charts. The intention of the group was clear, to attempt to embarrass the Prime Minister and gain attention and significant funds for StWC. Moreover, this was seen by commentators as a bid to attract the attention of the younger generation of media-savvy teenagers. This example appears to have been StWC's most technologically sophisticated intervention into the information environment. Multiple modes of communication were used, utilizing the perpetual contact made possible by mobile phones to enable promotion at a public rally to have a wider impact. A video made for the single, along with a video of the live performance, made available via YouTube, quickly propagated across the Web, being linked to and discussed on music-related websites and weblogs as well as the 'usual suspects' on the political left. Additionally, the normal channels of communication through the email newsletters,

the national StWC website and various local anti-war groups were also used to promote the song.

Conclusion

We began this chapter by reflecting on the relationship between technology and social behaviour, arguing that the degree to which either technology or society determines technological use is an empirical question. We found a great many activists have embraced the benefits of new technology for general organizational and informational purposes. We have also seen that the inherent benefits of the technologies have altered the daily activity of members of the anti-war movement. We have seen ways in which perpetual contact is valuable and – whether in protest coordination, in blending social networks with protest activities or in gathering information – activists have begun to see mobile phones as essential equipments. Similarly, even those sceptical of email have come to recognize benefits in informing their networks of friends and colleagues either about relevant news or upcoming protest actions. As a result email appears as one key route for mobilizing protest. And again, the wealth of information offered up by the Web, its capacious reach and its hypertext links, are repeatedly praised by news-hungry activists keen to find points of view similar to their own or the latest information on the actions of their opponents.

   This is largely a story of activists adopting the manifest functionalities of a range of technologies – the benefits they are designed to deliver are the ones that are highly relevant to the information and communication demands of contemporary anti-war activism. At times, we have noted ways in which these features of technology can change the character of activism. As might be expected, there are relatively mundane changes – more time spent at the computer screen, more flexibility when protesting on the streets, less need for time-consuming and expensive circular letters and the like. There also appear to be some deeper changes. Social movement organizations lose some control of information as their potential audience finds many more outlets catering to their informational needs and individual activists no longer depend on membership newsletters. Information made available on the Web becomes – whether intended or not – open to copying and 'remixing' by unknown others, comments appear on weblogs and news sites, just a few clicks away, that may offer damning critiques of the author's position. Again, these changes are related largely to the inherent features of the technologies through which activists are communicating.

Yet it is clear that activists as users of technology are not unaware of the limitations. In particular, attempts to use email discussion lists as spaces for structured political debate or complex decision-making have met with mixed results. Inherent features of the technology appear to throw up difficulties. These include: the lack of non-verbal information in text-based communication; the asynchronicity that means one cannot be sure whether another participant has read, let alone agrees with, some particular proposal; the lack of certainty over who the other members of the discussion are; and the emotional distance that appears to come from disembodied communication methods. All such militate against creative, sensitive, cooperative discussions. We have seen, on the one hand, attempts to get around these problems by setting rules, structuring debates or utilizing other communication modes to enhance CMC and, on the other, some groups simply rejecting this as a non-democratic space. We have suggested that these approaches are in part determined by qualities inherent, not in the technology, but in the social movement groups that engage in technological use and in the tasks typically required of activism.

At the start of this chapter we described user innovation as a key way in which one can see the non-determined features – the latent functionalities – of technologies produced for other reasons. One might argue that all use of these technologies in the pursuit of social change is innovative, since they were designed primarily for business, military, entertainment and research purposes. However, this does not describe something particular to activism since the Internet and mobile phones were rapidly adopted for a wide range of social functions. Technological innovation – the creation of new tools out of the ingredients of the old – is limited within the anti-war movements. This is partly because the resource costs of such innovation are very high. Yet – as is clear from the free software movement, the success of Indymedia and the secondary material presented in the final substantive section above – technological innovation within social movements is possible. Within the anti-war movements, however, political priorities and the urgency of the cause often outweigh using resources in this way. Nevertheless, we do see some forms of innovation wherein activists string together multiple modes of communication in ways that are particularly suited to the tasks at hand or take the 'network-ready' features of new ICTs and bend them to the task of political mobilization.

8
Conclusions

Opposition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan produced the largest-ever protest movement in British history, a massive upsurge in peace campaigning that has been replicated around much of the world. It led on 15 February 2003 to an estimated one million people demonstrating in London to protest the immanent invasion of Iraq, dwarfing such landmark campaigns as those for universal suffrage, women's rights and the anti-Vietnam opposition in the late 1960s. On the third anniversary of the war, 18 March 2006, thousands once more took to the streets to demand an end to the Iraq occupation.[1] Throughout this time, though the protest had its peaks and troughs, there was never a time when it was not a presence, whether in peace vigils, direct action against military institutions, lobbies of Parliament or marches against the war. This surge in anti-war activism took place alongside an apparently continuing decline in formal political engagement (evidenced in falls in voting turnout, party membership and esteem of political representatives), but also in a context of a decade of internationally coordinated anti-globalization activism. It also coincided with the continued and accelerating development of new media, notably the Internet.

This is the milieu in which we undertook our study of the anti-war movement. Our primary interests were in the movement itself, the character of political involvement and the features of protest during a period of increasing information intensity and technological change. Our study leads us to make the following observations.

External factors are crucial to this protest. The wars themselves, especially the Iraq invasion and occupation and cognate geopolitical actions, are the major spur to the anti-war movement. This is an obvious point, yet too often research focuses on the internal character and dynamics of protest, thereby turning attention from more telling external factors.

Perhaps 'It's the war, stupid' should be to the fore of any adequate account of the anti-war movement.

In this regard it is important to register that from the outset involvement in Iraq divided public opinion, and opposition increased as the occupation faltered.[2] The British public was split broadly in half about the initial military action in March 2003. Support rose to two-thirds approval after the rapid fall of Baghdad that April, but thereafter it diminished as causalities mounted, sectarian conflict raged and torture and prisoner abuse were exposed. The anti-war movement draws on and stimulates this divided and changing opinion. Its capacity to mobilize inevitably ebbs and flows, but there can be little doubt that its momentum will increase should war activity rise – perhaps were Iran to come under attack because of its development of nuclear capabilities.

Concern about the Iraq and Afghanistan situation reflects *widespread anxiety about the dangers of war* more generally. There is a perception, much commented on by sociologists such as Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, that now is a time of heightened insecurity and risk. Yet analysis of conflicts shows there has been a sustained decades-long decline in armed conflict, indeed that we are witnessing the 'remnants of war' (Mueller 2004) following the colossal losses that went with the interstate wars that so scarred the 20th century, the wars of national liberation that accompanied decolonization struggles, and the proxy wars that characterized the Cold War (Human Security Centre 2005). Notwithstanding escalating violence in Iraq and the genocide taking place in Darfur, this decline continued through to at least the end of 2005, such that by late 2003 'there were 40 per cent fewer state-based conflicts being waged around the world than in 1992', with a consonant sharp reduction in casualties of organized violence (Human Security Centre 2006, pp. 4, 6).

To be sure, there has been a three-fold growth of international terrorism since the millennium, sometimes associated with (and more frequently inspired by) Al Qaeda, some of which has resulted in deadly attacks in metropolitan centres, though the likelihood of these endangering the lives of even a tiny minority of British citizens is small. This is in no way to deny that the bomb attacks on the London Transport network in July 2005 and during the summer of 2007 on nightclubs and Glasgow airport are heinous and terrifying. It is also not insensitive to the likelihood of further attacks from such terrorists or to the increased dangers should they be able to gain access to weapons of mass destruction.

However, it is to insist on the need for proportion and perspective when it comes to analysis of war in the present epoch (cf. Hobsbawm 2007), and it does help us better acknowledge issues that are important

to our understanding of the anti-war movement today. In Chapter 2 we argued that these include three key claims.

First, we highlight the need to appreciate fully that knowledge of *war is mediated* for those outside the 'theatre' of conflict, much more so than in the past when citizens were often mobilized to fight in conscript armies and the demands of war called for the active participation of very large bodies of men. Nowadays most people are far removed from the actual conduct of war, even if it is fought ostensibly on their behalf, yet they are intensively exposed to it in a variety of media. This is a situation where war appears simultaneously up close yet far away, highly proximate in terms of consciousness, though it brings little existential threat to publics that are implicated primarily as spectators (Tomlinson 2001).

Second, there has been, and continues to be, an *explosive growth of new media,* from satellite broadcasting to digitization of television, that means media is now pervasive, always available on the Internet, rolling news channels, round-the-clock television and even the mobile phone. War commands enormous amounts of media time and space; for well-attested reasons it is significant, dramatic and compelling. Reportage of war flows through media from around the globe, where correspondents, equipped with video phones and laptops, converge and file a continuous stream of reports.

Third, we find ourselves in a *new information environment* in which the control paradigm that has dominated media research requires revision (McNair 2006). It is not that actors do not seek to control information. Government tries to spin the news, so does the military, so do just about all political players. Moreover, some agencies and organization have considerably more power than others to effect this control. However, attempts to control information are much more difficult to bring off successfully in the new information environment of global and instantaneous reportage, of alternative information outlets and of ready means to access, alter and disseminate information. This is not just a matter of the availability of information and communications technologies since it is also a consequence of globalization processes that mean information can no longer be contained within the boundaries of nation states. When journalists converge on a trouble spot from around the globe, they are unlikely to be controllable by patriotic appeals to the 'national interest', just as it has proved impossible to stem the circulation of photographs via email of prison guards torturing Iraqis in Abu Ghraib during the spring of 2004.

This is the ambience in which people's consciousness of and concerns about war are located. And it is also where the anti-war movement operates and situates itself, engaging, as it must, in *symbolic struggles* of great moment.

It is worth saying something more on this matter. Over the past five years or so anti-war opposition has been readily available in Britain, especially – but by no means solely – via the Internet. On any given day it is scarcely a minute's effort to access information online that claims the war in Iraq is going badly, that government policies are fatally flawed (and even duplicitous), that soldiers are despondent, with their senior officers admitting Iraq is a lost cause, and that the terrorist threat has been made worse by a misconceived 'War on Terror' launched by George W. Bush. Generally in a less bald manner, similar criticisms commonly appear on television and in newspapers, to be rapidly amplified by hyperlink connection to websites, electronic newsletters and weblogs. Never before can it have been easier to get hold of such detailed and up-to-the-minute criticism and condemnation of one's own (and others') nation's involvement in war.

Opinion poll evidence charts a clear decline in support for war in recent years, especially for the occupation of Iraq. British public opin-ion, like that of the US, had become overwhelmingly against the war by early 2008, with President Bush recording the lowest ever measures of public confidence, the last months of Tony Blair's ten-year tenure at Downing Street tarnished by the legacy of the occupation of Iraq and Gordon Brown actively reducing British troop numbers in Iraq with clear public support.

There will be several factors effecting this transformation, but what we want to stress here is that the change, for the vast bulk of people, has been a matter at the level of conscience, rather than due to manifest implications for the British public. For the overwhelming majority of the populace there have been scarcely any practical effects of the Iraq war. Under two hundred British military personnel have been killed in Iraq and many more Americans – over 4000 – while the uncounted deaths of Iraqis (though certainly at least in the hundreds of thousands) dwarf both. But this has had no direct consequences for the citizenry as a whole, whose ways of life have been practically unaffected. Few families have suffered, there is no increase in taxation and there is no hint of negative effects on jobs. There will be many reasons why people have developed misgivings about the Iraq affair, but given the lack of substantive consequences of the war for the British people, it is surely reasonable to suggest that the changes in consciousness have been influenced by the ready availability of persistently negative information about the reasons for and progress of the war.

A supplementary question then needs to be asked: Why, given this change of opinion, has there not been more practical demonstration of

opposition to the Iraq war in (and beyond) Britain? Enormous numbers demonstrated around the globe on 15 February 2003, so much so that a *New York Times* writer at the time termed this a 'second superpower' (Tyler 2003). Yet since then – in sharp contrast to voluminous opposition available throughout in the symbolic arena – the anti-war movement has not reproduced anything on the February 2003 scale. For sure, vigils, lobbies, demonstrations and direct actions have taken place that have attracted thousands of protesters, but a burning question remains: Why has manifest public disapproval not been translated into more overt opposition to the war? Why does the public appear to disapprove of the war, but seem unprepared to do much about it? The absence of practical effects is pertinent. Further, diminishment of the institutions of civil society – a loss of voluntary associations – may be part of an answer (cf. Putnam 2000) and this was an explanation raised by some of our interviewees who lamented the decline of public meetings since the 1960s. Other analysts suggest that Information Age campaigning fits comfortably (and complacently) with 'lifestyle politics' that require from most little personal commitment beyond checking a website, signing a round robin circular or telling a pollster what one thinks (Bennett 2003). The absence of conscription, in the US the draft, surely also plays a major role: were the sons of the middle classes likely to be endangered then we might anticipate more vigorous protests, even disruption, on and beyond the campus. Whatever the reasons, we need to acknowledge a gap between the public's attitudes to war and its preparedness to take action on the basis of those beliefs.

Anti-war activists have been at the heart of these symbolic struggles and themselves prepared to do a good deal more than merely talk and write about the subject. Their organizations are comparatively impoverished (their offices, when they have them, are shabby and small, their well-qualified and able officials paid a pittance, their equipment often hand-me-down), but all have access to, and make heavy use of, computers, email and the Internet. In Chapter 2 of this book we described the emergence of an *alternative information environment* among the anti-war movement that is expressed in the websites of activist organizations, the daily newsletter of Information Clearing House and in email bulletins from StWC. This reaches out to resources such as Indymedia, ZNet, AntiWar.com and Counterpunch as well as to more recent developments such as YouTube and Facebook. These enable easy collation and dissemination of information that feeds anti-war sentiment, challenges the interpretations of government and military accounts and amplifies counter explanations. New media enables them to amass information

from far and near, to reassemble it in ways they decide and to redistribute it expediently. This provides readily available sources of alternative information to supporters and sympathizers.

Anti-war activists do not limit themselves to alternative sites and networks. They tend to be information hungry, so they also draw heavily on established media that are themselves being transformed by digitization. The information circuits that operate here give some space for anti-war messages and allow activists to advance their views. Thus organizations like the BBC News and newspapers in electronic format are searched and scrutinized and, where it is deemed appropriate, adapted for the alternative information networks of the anti-war movement and elsewhere challenged by counter information. Since the Iraq War itself is divisive, there is considerable dissent within what one might conceive as the mainstream media, so anti-war messages are often available in the likes of the *Independent*, *Daily Mirror* and *Guardian* newspapers and the interactivity of websites hosted by such as the BBC, *Guardian* and *Times* allows readers to comment on news items and features.

In Chapter 3 we looked more closely at how the anti-war movement goes about *representing itself and the issues* that most concern it. Although there is a commonality of resistance to the Iraq War across anti-war groups, their framing and self-presentation differ. On their websites materials are, by and large, testimony and confirmatory of the rectitude of their own positions, presumably because their audiences are assumed to share these views. They do not attempt to persuade, appealing rather to the already committed. StWC, for instance, stresses the atrocities and setbacks taking place during the occupations, the accumulation of casualties, the need to resist Islamaphobia and hostility towards George Bush and Tony Blair. The website also proclaims the immorality of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, emphasizes that the Palestinian – and hence Israeli – cause is central to the present crises, exposes the wrongdoing of the invaders, and insists on the moral superiority of its own position. Alternatively, Women in Black gives priority to advertising actions round the world in which it is involved and to recording the history of its participation in peace-making initiatives. Neither site is likely to persuade the uncommitted visitor.

Reflecting the different political character and tactical choices of anti-war groups, their control over their representations varied considerably. Thus CND, for example, ensured a professional and unambiguous political line with the Chair personally approving all material. Whereas Faslane365 sought to facilitate collective representation of the year-long campaign by providing space for the autonomous groups to post text

and images onto the central website. Moreover, control over such representations became complex given the multiplicity of online interventions, with Yorkshire CND having a MySpace presence and people such as Anas Altikriti of the British Muslim Initiative having a website, a page on wikipedia and regular features of the *Guardian's* Comment is Free.

Thus representations are neither as controlled nor part of as careful a strategy as they might at first appear. This is further complicated by groups at times struggling with the context and importance of particular places to their campaigns. In particular Muslim activists talked of mosques as being simultaneously powerful places of mobilization against the wars and yet also insular spaces fostering an unhealthy siege mentality. Such representations and their contestation contributed to a tension for many Muslims over the import of their religious identity in their anti-war activism. The construction of such an identity was construed to be both valuable and problematic, but crucially as underdeveloped and in need of further consideration and negotiation.

The anti-war movement, so described, conjures a unified body. It is, in fact, a highly diverse and frequently an *uneasy alliance* of variegated groups. Individuals and organizations may come together over the issue of opposition to the Iraq invasion, but there remain enormous differences between these participants. It is more accurate to describe the anti-war *and peace movements* to acknowledge a spectrum that ranges from those who would have the war in Iraq end in the defeat of the occupiers to those pacifists who are opposed to all military action. In Chapter 4 we endeavoured to capture this diversity and to describe how people worked together on anti-war issues.

The anti-war and peace movement ranges along several continua, from civil libertarians to anti-imperialists who encourage the defeat of America by Iraqi 'insurgents'; from feminist-inspired groups that contrast with macho demonstrators who shout for vengeance and even contain at the extreme some who dress as suicide bombers;[3] from the religiously motivated to the secular; from direct action advocates to those committed to the power of persuasion; from the extra-parliamentary left to peers of the realm; from right-wing nationalists through centrist Liberal Democrats to coteries of anarchists; from organized groups such as StWC to loose virtual networks like Network for Peace; from those with a specific remit such as CND to broad-based anti-war groups like pacifists; and from groups with wide political and programmatic ambitions such as the Labour Party and MAB to those with more particular agendas such as Friends of Al-Aqsa that participates in StWC, but it is primarily concerned with supporting Palestinian claims.

While the original CND developed in different circumstances, and took as its goal opposition to nuclear weapons, it aimed to convert the Labour Party to its policy. The present anti-war and peace movement is not only considerably more diverse than its predecessors, but also somewhat more jaundiced about established political parties. There are lobbies of Parliament, of course, and scores of Labour MPs opposed the war in Iraq, while the Liberal Democrats were all against it. Nonetheless, the anti-war and peace movements have an extra-Parliamentary focus that its predecessors lacked (cf. Heaney and Rojas 2007a). It is a social movement whose centre of gravity may be towards the left (insofar as this category continues to have salience), but which extends far across any easily identified political spectrum. It is joined together only by the common concern to oppose the 'War on Terror', and pursuit of this goal operates outside party political aegis.

In many ways the anti-war movement is a union of opposites. Feminists march with determinedly patriarchal Muslim elders; pacifists ally with Trotskyites who hope for the demise of American militarism; Jews for Justice for Palestinians marched on 5 August 2006 in London with those who held placards calling for 'Victory to the Resistance' in Lebanon and proclaiming that 'We are all Hezbollah'; and middle-aged members of Women in Black quietly walk for peace alongside those who angrily chant 'George Bush: Terrorist' and carry garish effigies that express their antipathy for Tony Blair and his counterparts.

Despite new media allowing the anti-war and peace movements to switch adeptly their campaigning agendas to include the most topical of issues such as the more recent threats of attack on Iran by American or Israeli forces, it is difficult to envisage the movements remaining united. To be sure, pacifist groups such as the Quakers and anti-nuclear activists like CND will continue, driven by their focus, faith and less immediate remit than the present Afghan and Iraqi wars. However, the largest of the formal coalitions, StWC, must encompass contradictory constituencies, not least the Trotskyite organizers of the SWP and members of the BMI. Without the impetus of the particular wars it is difficult to see such a coalition enduring.

From our research we were able to see various ways by which groups managed to work together: by joining a coalition, by shared identity (which we found especially problematic), by common tactics and conduct, by acts of solidarity, and by developing transnational networks. We found that coalitions and alliances are difficult to create and maintain. While new media allows anti-war information to be collected and disseminated across borders with ease, cooperation generally calls for

less ethereal connections. Here were reasserted the primacy of inter-personal relationships, shared political outlooks and the importance of trust. In keeping with this we were reminded that the anti-war movement's focus is on national government and its agencies, at once because particular targets could be identified and because mobilization for protest, as well as engaging people in alliances, relies heavily on personal networks. The anti-war movement is comfortably transnational online, but more substantive action and organization returns one to the nation state.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the anti-war movement in recent years has been the participation of significant numbers of Muslims, something we have discussed at several points in this book, and especially in Chapters 3 and 4. This too we have found to be a homogenizing term, disguising a considerable degree of difference among Muslim groups. We discerned a willingness for Muslims and non-Muslims to demonstrate together, yet there was a paucity of dialogue between the allies. In part this was for the sake of maintaining a fragile unity and to avoid the risk of giving offence, yet the failure to engage also functioned to perpetuate a distorted notion of what it means to be Muslim.

Nevertheless, in our study of the anti-war movement we were concerned to examine its *transnational character,* especially when it came to accessing information. Chapter 5 reported the results of a hyperlink analysis investigation that highlighted the ease and frequency with which transnational information sources are connected. Such a point fits readily with Information Age accounts that stress the immediacy of information flows that transcend borders. There is ample evidence of international coordination of protests. At first sight the anti-war movement appears to offer a fine example of transnational collective action, and when looking at the online level this is apparently so. However, when it comes to organization, action and goals, then *the priority of the national is reasserted*. At one level this is obvious since the nation state is where political leverage is most readily achieved. Sidney Tarrow's (2005b) concept of 'rooted cosmopolitanism' appears apposite since it acknowledges that transnational protest grows out of local settings that can harness domestic resources and engage in transnational action by virtue of social networks among activists and the increased ease of communications connections. These latter stimulate – and benefit from – feelings of global solidarity, yet are also profoundly shaped by national concerns and priorities. The anti-war movement in Britain moves adeptly along information circuits that transcend frontiers at the virtual level, but when it comes to the substantive domain national

issues come much more prominent. Indeed, we noted the *continued importance of place* among activists, observing the critical role played in mobilization and organization of neighbourhood location and community institutions among protesters.

Nonetheless, care needs to be taken to think of this beyond a straightforward equation of transnationalism at the virtual level and national when it comes to substantive and tractable matters. We might more usefully conceive of it as multi-layered protest that echoes trends toward multi-level governance in an era of globalization. Anti-war protest might better be interpreted as involving a complex repertoire of actions that ranges from a decidedly local campaign, to participation at the Faslane peace camp protest, to attempts to liaise with sympathizers in France and Italy in expressions of the decentralized transnationalism we described in Chapter 4.

Activist is a capacious label that might be applied to a participant in a demonstration as well as to someone who is a local officer of an anti-war or peace organization. All such, however, have to handle large, if variable amounts of information insofar as they are active against war. This can range from information sufficient to arm them in discussions with people with whom they may not agree to the continuous stream of reports and instructions that flows through the offices of CND and StWC. ICTs have both eased and increased this considerably. New technologies allow information to be assembled, stored and transmitted efficiently at little cost, but they have also enabled a vast increase in information volume and velocity. We recurrently encountered complaints of *information overload* during this research, respondents telling us that they received too many emails, that there was too much material to read, that list emails could leave them feeling swamped. In Chapter 6 we identified *filtering processes* operating at many levels as efforts aimed at coping with potential information deluge. These ranged from deleting emails without opening them, selecting and editing items for inclusion in newsletters to drawing on one's 'antennae' to judge whether something merited reading or including on the website. Such filtering is unavoidable in an information rich environment, but we were struck by the presence of what Cass Sunstein (2006) has called 'information cocoons' that make activists comfortable by presenting confirmatory materials while restricting oppositional information that might disconcert.

The rich, diverse and manipulable information environment nowadays available is essential to the anti-war movement. However, we emphasized that, for most activist organizations, it is not a priority for them to enlighten the public. This no doubt matters, but their primary

concern is to *Stop the War,* hence information is marshalled that will assist in *mobilization of protest,* the presumption being that opposition on the streets is essential to effect a change in government policy.[4] Indeed, we encountered irritation with those users of ICTs who limited their opposition to the cyber realm of weblogs and websites. Among activists substantive matters are what count most, whether it be a peace camp, a vigil or attendance at a demonstration. This is why, as we saw, the anti-war movement uses new media to stimulate and organize protest, dramatizing news from and about Iraq and transmitting information about the next demonstration and rally. Particularly in Chapter 7 we detailed the anti-war movement's adoption of ICTs to aid their goals. There we described heavy use of email and the Internet across the anti-war and peace movement. This confirms the finding that the more active the protesters, the more reliant are they on ICTs (della Porta et al. 2006, p. 98; Bennett and Givens 2006), such that one may conceive of organizations having an 'electronic spine' (Kavada 2005) connecting officials and key activists while the broader constituencies access the web and receive email on a less regular and intense basis. But we also noted the importance of mobile phones, a 'new media' that is easily overlooked by analysts, but which provides an important addition to the activists' tools, allowing 'constant touch', whether arranging transport to and from events, warning one another of barriers to the effectiveness of a protest blockade or alerting fellow protesters of the movement of nuclear missiles round the country. At the same time, our research demonstrated that, by and large, the anti-war movement uses the *manifest* rather than *latent functionalities* of new media. It tended to adopt ICTs in orthodox and predictable ways – for instance, email was enthusiastically embraced because it was cheap and effective in terms of arranging events and sending out newsletters to subscribers, websites were created very much on a broadcast – one to many – model of communication. More imaginative uses of technology that might, for example, exploit interactivity far beyond allowing readers to send in their email address and/or register support to allow critical exchange and even contribute to the content on wiki-type lines were scarce. There are reasons for this conservatism, ranging from lack of resources and skills to manage such facilities, dissatisfaction with virtual discussion compared to face-to-face interaction, to the prime concern of anti-war organizations to mobilize opposition offline rather than engage in potentially diverting and divisive electronic dialogue.

We end by returning to the frequency with which the idea of democracy is evoked. It is a vital, and a complex, concept about which a great

deal has been said and written on both the pro and anti-war side. In Britain the cause of democracy was a recurrent theme of Prime Minister Blair's justification for the removal of Saddam, from before the invasion and with increasing emphasis afterwards where he defended his strategy of interventionism in the name of 'universal values' at the core of which was democracy along with tolerance and freedom (e.g. Blair 1999, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2007). Elections held in Iraq during 2005, the first in January for a National Assembly to draft a constitution, and the second in December of that year to elect members to the new National Assembly, were greeted enthusiastically (not least for turnout well in excess of 70 per cent for the later one that compared favourably to those in the UK and US).

At the same time, critics voiced concern about Britain's entry into the Iraq War in the very name of democracy, arguing that the government was failing to do what the majority wished. From the outset of protest, activists proclaimed 'Not in my name', evoking the principle that majority opinion ought to prevail. On the streets a common shout is 'this is what democracy looks like' – chanted by activists when asserting their voice during demonstrations. One does not have to share any particular conception of democracy adhered to here to appreciate that democracy is a vital concern.

Beyond core features such as universal suffrage, secret ballots, plural parties, the rule of law/freedom from violence and regular elections, there is considerable debate about what other constituents democracy entails and how central particular elements are to it (Dunn 2005). The role of media, the separation of religion and state, the adequacy of the nation state as democracy's container, the impartiality of public servants and the import of education are all pressing matters in this debate. Behind them lie questions not just of the presence of democracy, but of the quality of democracy. Moreover, democratization is an ongoing process, such that in recent decades issues once ignored have come to be seen as central. Race, gender and disability, as well as tolerance of varieties of lifestyle, are increasingly recognized as constituent elements of a fully democratic order that recognizes the import of differences and the capacity to live with difference in liberal democracies.

It is widely acknowledged that representative democracy is enormously strengthened by strong civil society in which citizens engage in variegated groups in discussion and debate about matters of concern to them. Social movements, in our view, need to be placed in this setting. Established forces may regard them as an irritant, and condemn them as disruptive of smooth proceedings. But a vibrant democracy needs

the dissent of social movements, and it is in that context in which we would wish to locate the anti-war and peace movements. To be sure, social movements, however urgent the issue on which they come together, cannot overrule Parliament, but they ought to be recognized as a vital part of a healthy democratic system. The anti-war and peace movements, whether one agrees with them or not, play an important role in stimulating argument and calling to account decision-makers.

We conclude with one further comment. In this book we have observed the presence of large numbers of Muslims in the anti-war movements. It is well known that these constitute a substantial and marginal minority in the United Kingdom. The involvement of Muslims, in large numbers, was a singular feature of the British anti-war and peace movements in recent years. Among anti-war activists there has generally been enthusiasm towards participation of Muslims, but a reluctance to engage in serious dialogue, not least for fear of giving offence and seeming to be exclusionary on grounds of religion. Concern has combined with eagerness to maintain unity as well as to resist signs of Islamophobia. We fear that this has been a missed opportunity to bring into the polity Muslim groups. For sure, engaging in debates on issues in which religion is a presence will be fraught, but even a cursory review allows one to appreciate that within the Muslim realm there are a wide range of different positions just as there is within the Christian constituency.[5] Paradoxically, because non-Muslim activists have been apprehensive about even raising issues such as the connections between Islam and democracy, they have perpetuated a flat and undifferentiated idea of what it is to be Muslim that leads Muslims further into insular involvement with social movement activism that deals almost exclusively with their own ethnic community in face-to-face ways.[6] Unless the opportunity is seized, and dissent seen as a positive chance to engage in politics, constituencies – especially youth which encounters particular problems of defining Muslim identity – that seem estranged from the mainstream will continue to be vulnerable to subversion by terrorist groups.

Appendix 1
Interviewees

Altikriti, Anas	British Muslim Initiative and formerly Muslim Association of Britain, London
Anonymous	Federation of Muslim Organizations Leicestershire and Friends of Al-Aqsa, Web developer, Leicester
Anonymous	Stop the War Coalition, member with Internet responsibilities
Asad	Stop the War Coalition, former member, London
Ashraf, Nahella	Manchester Stop the War, Chair, Manchester
Azaim, Naazish	University of Leicester Islamic Society, member, Leicester
Benn, Tony	Stop the War Coalition, President, London
Bere, Jemma	Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, volunteer, Bradford
Bukhari, Zulfi	Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK, CEO, London
Cartin, Sarah	Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Development Officer, Bradford
Conway, Adam	Faslane 365, steering group member and website designer, Helensburgh
Craghill, Denise	Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Fundraising Officer, Bradford
Dadhiwala, Yaqub	University of Leicester Islamic Society, President, Leicester
Dadson, Nik	Society of Friends, Website Manager, London
Dalenius, Tove	Independent Muslim peace activist, Leicester
Evans, Maya	Justice Not Vengeance, activist, Hastings
Fisher, Peter	Society of Friends, Leicester Meeting House member, Leicester

Gee, David	Society of Friends, Joint Manager of Peace and Disarmament Programme and originator of Peace Exchange Portal, London
Gerard, Michael	Secular Society, Leicester
German, Lindsey	Stop the War Coalition, Convenor, London
Girdlestone, Miranda	Society of Friends, Information Officer of Quaker Peace and Social Witness, London
Goodwin, Chris	Leicester Campaign to Stop the War, co-ordinator, Leicester
Grant, Korin	Leicester Campaign to Stop the War, ex-Chair, Leicester
Heiden, Linda	Wandsworth Stop the War Coalition, member, London
Hodkinson, Stuart	Stop the War Coalition, former member, Leeds
Hudson, Kate	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Chair and Stop the War Coalition, officer, London
Hussain, Asaf	Academic and writer, Leicester
Ippy	Peace News (former) editor and Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp(aign) member, London
Jabeen, Sadia	Socialist Workers Party, District Organizer, Leicester
Jackson, Claire	Just Peace Leicester, member
Johnson, Richard	Leicester Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Treasurer, Leicester
Kent, Bruce	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Vice-President, London
Kirkwood, Graham	Lewisham Stop the War, London
Liddle, Anna	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Education Officer, Bradford
Lucas, Caroline	MEP, Green Party and Stop the War Coalition Vice-President, London
Marqusee, Mike	Stop the War Coalition, founding (former) member and writer and activist, London
McMillan, Isobel	Wandsworth Stop the War Coalition, Chair, London
Moghal, Manzoor	Muslim Forum, Chairman, Leicester
Nagdi, Suleman	Federation of Muslim Organizations, Press Officer, Leicester
Naima	Stop Political Terror, activist, London
Patel, Ismail	Friends of Al-Aqsa Chairman and British Muslim Initiative spokesperson, Leicester
Pearson, Helen	Just Peace Leicester, member

Qureshi, Asim	Cage Prisoner, volunteer, London
Rai, Milan	JNV, activist and writer, Hastings
Ridley, Yvonne	Stop the War Coalition, Respect and Islam Channel, London
Rundberg, Anna-Linnéa	Faslane 365, steering committee member, Helensburgh
Sayeed, Arif	Respect and Treasurer of University of Leicester Islamic Society, Leicester
Schust, Jesse	Voices in the Wilderness UK, Fairford Coaches, World Naked Bike Ride, participant, London
Scott	LCSTW, e-group moderator, Leicester
Shelton, Tom	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, London
Soulsby, Peter	MP, Labour MP, Leicester
Talbot, Chris	Respect, Leicester
Tallents, Jane	Faslane 365, member, Faslane
Tejabwala, Farida	University of Leicester Islamic Society, Chair of Justice Campaign, Leicester
Webb, David	Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Convenor, Leeds
Weitsch, Martina	Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA), Brussels
Whiting, Steve	Society of Friends, Peace Campaigning and Non-Violence Manager, London
Zelter, Angie	Faslane 365, steering committee member, Helensburgh
Zina	Independent peace campaigner, Leicester

Appendix 2
Anti-War and Peace Groups

A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) is a Marxist-led American protest organization prominently involved in the post-9/11 anti-war movement. It was formed on 14 September 2001 with a national steering committee that sought to incorporate a broad range of organizations that campaigned against US intervention worldwide and for social and economic justice within the US. http://answer.pephost.org

Act Together: Women Against Sanctions on Iraq is a group of UK-based Iraqi and non-Iraqi women working against war on Iraq. They formed in 2000 to campaign against the economic sanctions on Iraq and the subsequent US invasion. Since then they have focused on the occupation and seek to support independent grassroots women's initiatives in Iraq. http://www.acttogether.org

ARROW (Active Resistance Against the Roots of War) is a non-violent direct action affinity group set up in September 1990 to oppose the Gulf War (called Gulf War Resisters at the time). From July 1991 until May 2003, ARROW kept a weekly vigil going every Monday evening outside the Foreign Office opposing economic sanctions and war on Iraq. ARROW has also taken action on other issues, including Hawks to Indonesia, National Missile Defence and Northern Ireland, but its main focus has been US/UK military intervention in the Third World.

Bare Witness is a small, artistically oriented group that works to communicate messages of peace by, for instance, holding nude protests that spell out protest messages. http://www.barewitness.org

British Muslim Initiative (BMI) was formed in February 2006 from members once involved in MAB, BMI seeks to fight Islamaphobia and racism, encourage the integration of Muslim concerns and politics into British society and improve relations between the West and the Muslim world. It has consistently been involved in anti-war campaigns and co-sponsored a number of London marches with StWC. http://www.bminitiative.net

Cage Prisoners is a human rights organization which campaigns for the release of detainees from Guantánamo Bay. They are predominantly a Muslim group, though

have a number of non-Muslim supporters. They are based in the UK, though do not have a central office, rather they are a virtual network of volunteers. Their key aims are to educate the public about detainees, campaign for their repatriation, support detainees families, motivate others to take political and legal actions and prevent similar treatment of other communities in the future. http://www.cageprisoners.com

Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) was founded in London in 1974 and works to limit the arms trade through information briefing and some involvement in direct actions. Their aim is for the reduction and ultimate abolition of the international arms trade. It was created by a broad coalition of groups and individuals in the UK and is funded primarily by individual supporters. Its specific aims are to end government support for arms exports, end exports to oppressive regimes and end exports to countries whose social welfare is threatened by military spending. http://www.caat.org.uk

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was founded in 1958 with the aim of convincing the British government to support unilateral nuclear disarmament, and utilizing mass demonstrations as one means to do so. In both its first and second waves of popularity – early 1960s and early 1980s – CND's strategy was to win the Labour Party to its cause, and through the Labour Party, the government. http://www.cnduk.org

Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases is a campaign which raises public awareness, scrutiny and accountability of American bases in the UK and opposes weapons of mass destruction. It evolved out of the long campaign of protest at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire. http://www.caab.org.uk/

Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army is a performance-based anarchist-orientated network of activists who use clown costumes to transgress the seriousness of protest while also providing anonymity to those involved during actions. They have been involved in a number of anti-war protests in the UK. http://www.clownarmy.org

Code Pink is a predominantly American and female peace and social justice anti-war network, founded late in 2002, that is characterized by often extrovert protests such as wearing flamboyant clothing and parodying symbols. http://www.codepink4peace.org

Faslane 365 was a campaign aiming to mount continuous protests, in groups of 100 or so activists, over a whole year (1 October 2006 to 30 September 2007), outside the Faslane Naval base in Scotland. The campaign stems from the Faslane Peace camp which was established in 1982 to protest nuclear facilities at Faslane. http://www.faslane365.org

Friends of Al-Aqsa is a small Muslim voluntary organization based in the UK which supports Palestinians, and in particular stands for the protection and safety of Al-Aqsa Haram Sharif (The First Qibla) in Al Quds (Jerusalem). http://www.aqsa.org.uk

Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp lasted from 1981 to 2000 as an all-women protest against nuclear facilities at RAF Greenham Common in Berkshire. http://www.greenhamwpc.org.uk

Helping Households Under Great Stress (HHUGS) was set up in September 2004 in response to the increasing number of 'anti-terror' arrests across the country. HHUGS provides practical support and advice to households devastated by the arrest of a family member. http://www.hhugs.org.uk

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) is an NGO based in London working to prevent the spread of small arms and weapons. It is recognized by the United Nations and has several hundred affiliations worldwide. http://www.iansa.org

Just Peace (Leicester) calls for peace and justice for all people in Israel/Palestine. It is a group of mainly, but not exclusively, Jewish people based in Leicester and Loughborough. They aim to promote awareness of a Jewish voice which speaks out against human rights abuses and racism in Israel/Palestine. They are opposed to the unlawful occupation of the West Bank and to the building of the separation wall. Just Peace Leicester was launched in June 2003. http://beehive.thisisleicestershire. co.uk/default.asp?WCI=SiteHome&ID=11983

Just Peace was a London-based Muslim group who campaigned against the Iraq war. It was specifically aimed at promoting Muslim participation in the anti-war movement, articulating a shared concern for freedom from oppression and injustice.

Justice Not Vengeance (JNV) is an anti-war group that developed out of ARROW (Active Resistance to the Roots of War) in 2003. JNV opposes the US–UK 'War on Terror' and campaigns for a peaceful resolution of international conflicts based on justice and equality. It provides a number of anti-war briefings and analysis and instigated a number of protests, often in London. http://www.j-n-v.org

Labour Action for Peace was founded during World War II (in 1940) and is a lobby group of members, trade unionists and socialists working for peace, though it is not pacifist, seeking to influence the Labour Party. http://www.labour-peace-action.org.uk

Labour Against the War is a group in the Labour Party campaigning against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq especially. http://www.labouragainstthewar.org.uk

Leicester Campaign to Stop the War is an autonomous non-party group loosely affiliated to the national StWC. It served as the main coordinating body for anti-war protests in Leicester and was formed in 2001 in response to the US-led attacks on Afghanistan.

Military Families Against the War (MFAW) was founded in the UK, some time after similar organizations in the US (e.g. Military Families for Peace, Military Families Speak Out), campaigning for troop withdrawal in the name of participants (partners and relatives) in the Iraq War. They are opposed to the continuing involvement of UK soldiers in the Iraq war. http://www.mfaw.org.uk

Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) was established in 1997 to advance Islamic causes and promote Muslim interaction within British society. It called demonstrations to support Palestine and worked with StWC to co-organize anti-war

demonstrations against the Iraq invasions. It aims to represent Muslim interests politically (through lobbying and involvement in protests) and to the media. http://www.mabonline.net

Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) was formed in 1997 to raise Muslim concerns with the wider society. It was favoured by Labour as a key Muslim ally until October 2006. It is a national body with over 500 affiliated national, regional and local organizations, mosques, charities and schools. Its key aims are to promote cooperation on Muslim affairs in the UK, be an advocate for Muslim communities and Islam, and to eradicate discrimination experienced by Muslims. http://www.mcb.org.uk

Muslim Network was a network established with the support of StWC in 2006 to help strengthen anti-war organization in Muslim communities and the coordination between Muslims and non-Muslims in the movement.

Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK (MPACUK) is a civil liberties group that began with a focus on the distorted media presentation of Muslims, but has since widened to broader political lobbying and grassroots community action, much of it a response to the 'War on Terror'. http://www.mpacuk.org

Network for Peace is a contact point for queries about peace organizations and activities. It is a network set up to continue the work of the National Peace Council, one of the oldest peace organizations in the UK. http://www.networkforpeace.org.uk

Nukewatch is not a membership organization, but a network of individuals that monitors and tracks weapons of mass destruction being moved in Britain between Aldermaston in Berkshire to Coulport on the West coast of Scotland. http://www.nukewatch.org.uk

Peace Pledge Union was formed in 1933, asking men to pledge not to engage in war. It is the oldest secular pacifist organization in Britain. http://www.ppu.org.uk/

Reclaim the Bases organizes protests, direct action and civil disobedience against military bases across the UK. http://www.reclaimthebases.org.uk

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is a pacifist denomination of Christianity, established in England in the 17th century. Quakers are notable throughout the history of British peace movements and the various Friends' Meeting Houses across the country are often familiar spaces of peace organizing. http://www.quaker.org.uk

Respect Party was founded in 2004 as a left-wing socialist party. It has associations with StWC and the Socialist Workers Party as well as with such notables as Harold Pinter and Ken Loach. Its best-known member is George Galloway, who has been Respect's MP for Bethnal Green and Bow since the 2005 election. http://www.respectcoalition.org

Rhythms of Resistance (ROR) is an anti-capitalist activist samba band network, established around 2000, of carnivalesque musicians often appearing on anti-war

demonstrations. There are groups in several European cities. http://www.rhythmsofresistance.co.uk

School Students Against the War (SSAW) is a self-organized group of young people, based all around the UK, campaigning against the 'War on Terror' and for peace. They joined national anti-war demonstrations, held benefit gigs and sought to mobilize school students against war. http://www.ssaw.co.uk

Stop Political Terror was established in December 2003 to campaign against the criminalization of the Muslim community under the anti-terror laws and for the release of Muslim detainees from Guantánamo Bay. It did not officially have a religious affiliation, but was Muslim orientated.

Stop the War Coalition UK (StWC) is the dominant umbrella organization in the UK movement opposing the 'War on Terror'. StWC was created in late 2001, days after the September 11 attacks, with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) taking a lead in bringing together a range of campaigners and creating a durable working relationship with both CND and the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). http://www.stopwar.org.uk

StopWarOnIran.Org is a New York-based group encouraging people to sign an online petition and to lobby politicians against a US-led attack on Iran. http://stopwaroniran.org

Students against the War is a site of first-hand reports from student and school pupil protests, and calendar of forthcoming actions. http://www.studentstopwar.org.uk/

Trident Ploughshares is an anti-nuclear weapons campaigning group formed in 1998 specifically to oppose the Trident nuclear weapons system. It is known for its acts of civil disobedience which are non-violent, open and accountable. http://www.tridentploughshares.org

Turning the Tide is a non-violent activist group within the Society of Friends which seeks to help Quakers translate their faith into action. They promote the use of active non-violence as a strategy for enacting social change. http://www.turning-the-tide.org

United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), established late in 2002, is the leading US coalition opposed to the Iraq War and US involvement in war more generally. More than 1400 local and national groups are affiliated. http://www.unitedforpeace.org/

Voices in the Wilderness UK is an organization concerned with the humanitarian crises in Iraq. It has broken economic sanctions by hand-delivering medical supplies to children's hospitals. http://www.voices.netuxo.co.uk

War on Want is a group asking people to sign up to a campaign saying that 'the only war worth fighting is the war on poverty'. http://www.waronwant.org/

WOMBLES (White Overalls Movement Building Libertarian Effective Struggles) are a small anarchistic group centred in London who once dressed in white overalls

with padding and helmets at protests. They are chiefly anti-capitalist, but involved in some anti-war activities. http://www.wombles.org.uk

Women in Black is a loose-knit international network of (predominately middle-aged and educated) women who are anti-war. Its groups have a high degree of autonomy, but characteristically hold peace vigils in locations such as Jerusalem, New York and London and maintain regular contact through email and the Internet. http://www.womeninblack.org.uk

Women Praying for Peace is a loose organization of women linked by the Internet, all praying for peace at the same time of day.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is the oldest women's peace organization in the world, headquartered in Geneva and established in 1915. http://www.wilpf.org

Yorkshire CND is part of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament network, fighting for the abolition of nuclear weapons. It plays a major role in campaigns against Menwith Hill and they have organized major demonstrations, conferences and events in Yorkshire and the UK. They use lobbying, public speaking, organizing demonstrations and stunts, leafleting, letter writing and non-violent direct action. http://www.yorkshirecnd.org.uk

Notes

1 Post 9/11

1. Socialist Alliance brought together radical socialist groups operating on the far left from around 1992. A significant element, encouraged by the SWP, joined together to form the Respect Party in 2004 and fought the 2005 General Election. Respect's only MP is George Galloway, who represents Bethnal Green in the East End of London.
2. The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) was established in 1997 to advance Islamic causes. The British Muslim Initiative (BMI) was formed in February 2006 from members once involved in MAB who wanted more assertive leadership. Neither group should be confused with the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), formed in 1997 to raise Muslim concerns with the wider society, and regarded in policy circles as the moderate voice of Islam in the UK, although its moderation has since been challenged.
3. See, for instance, BBC News 2006a, 2007a, 2007b.
4. We are conscious that 'terrorism' is a contested term, conceptually and substantively, just as there are different degrees of terrorist activity. Here we use the term to designate non-state violence directed against non-combatants and civilians that aims at generating fear and intimidation in order to advance a cause (Schmid and Jongman 1988; Townsend 2002).
5. We acknowledge that the label 'anti-globalization movement' is somewhat misleading, since many involved celebrate a different vision of increasingly global interconnectedness. However, all alternative labels are also loaded with additional political meaning that makes them more applicable to some groups than others (see Gillan 2006, pp. 78–82). Throughout we simply use the most instantly recognizable moniker for the period of activity to which we are referring.
6. Such is the superiority of the US in the military domain that Mohammed Ayoob and Matthew Zierler suggest that most other nations have been 'overawed' to such an extent that some seek Weapons of Mass Destruction, notably nuclear missiles, as 'the only equalizers against the precision-guided conventional weaponry that can be unleashed by the United States' (2005, pp. 38–39).
7. The coexistence of these policies sometimes results in rival impulses, so that at any time one or other is dominant. In this regard it is noteworthy that in specific areas the US has retreated from a fully liberal economic agenda, which is usefully captured by Mary Kaldor et al.'s (2003) characterization of 'regressive globalization' as the most recent phase of this policy.

2 Changing Information Environment

1. These figures were garnered from several sources, including Kiss (2007) and two websites that offer Internet activity statistics: ABC Electronics (www. abce.org.uk) and Alexa (www.alexa.com).

2. Adoption of the Internet does not mean that campaigners neglect mainstream media, as our informant reminded us, 'That said, despite all the problems involved, StWC works hard every day to catch the attention of both the broadcast and print media. It's a tribute to the tireless efforts of its press officers (one paid part-time, the others volunteers) that StWC still gets its voice heard occasionally in the mainstream media. Rarely a day goes by without some request for a radio or TV interview from somewhere around the world and StWC certainly cares when a request arrives – albeit rare – for a spokesperson to appear on Newsnight or Question Time'.

3. Hutton refers to a judicial inquiry conducted during 2003–4 at the behest of the British government. It examines the circumstances of the death of Dr David Kelly, a scientist employed by the Ministry of Defence, who apparently took his own life after being named as a source for a BBC news report alleging that the Blair government 'sexed up' information about the threat of weapons of mass destruction prior to the invasion of Iraq. Lord Hutton's report exonerated the government and criticized the BBC, leading to the resignation of its Director General, Greg Dyke.

4. Justice Not Vengeance (JNV) is an anti-war group that developed out of ARROW (Active Resistance to the Roots of War) in 2003. JNV opposes the US–UK 'War on Terror' and campaigns for a peaceful resolution of international conflicts based on justice and equality.

3   Representation, Beliefs and Identities

1. Much work has been carried out to identify a range of processes by which the frames activists present are aligned with more generally available cultural understandings (for reviews see Benford 1997; Johnston and Noakes 2005). This influential body of literature has not, of course, been without its critics, both conceptually and methodologically (Steinberg 1998; Gillan forthcoming b). The framing approach is certainly conducive to understanding claims made by social movement organizations that have readily identifiable boundaries, constituents and adherents. The variegated character of the present subject of study, however, is not amenable to that form of analysis. In any case what we investigate in this chapter is, on the one hand, relationships between movement claims and the forms of representation through which they are made and, on the other, relationships between representations and deeper structures of values attached to identities. For these reasons we do not enter into the crowded territory of theoretical debate on frame analysis.

2. ARROW (Active Resistance Against the Roots of War) grew from a group called Gulf War Resisters, set up in 1990 to oppose the first US-led invasion of Iraq. They use a variety of strategies for action and included enough committed members to have kept a weekly vigil outside the Foreign Office from 1991 to 2003. Their choice of prioritizing activity away from the Web is clearly, therefore, not a matter of lack of resources, but rather a political and strategic decision about what kinds of action are likely to be most effective.

3. For this reason, hyperlink structures have an impact on the way people may come to an understanding of the anti-war movement as a (more or less coherent) whole; we examine these structures in detail in Chapter 5.

4. Reasons adduced for this include increased lawlessness, violent crimes, violations of international humanitarian law, mass imprisonment, unemployment, oppression and migrations of professional classes, chronic malnutrition and preventable diseases from the dearth of drinking water, electricity and effective sewage disposal.
5. Yorkshire CND's MySpace profile is available at http://www.myspace.com/yorkshirecnd.
6. MPACUK began as a group aiming to counter negative portrayals of Muslims in the mainstream media. Suspicion of Muslims after the series of Al Qaeda attacks heightened the importance of their chosen task, and they broadened their role to focus on the 'War on Terror' and its attendant impacts on civil liberties.
7. Naturally, this affects integration within anti-war activism: 'I wouldn't say they're isolationist but I would say they . . . HT [Hizb ut-Tahrir] are elitist. And so they will attach themselves to the Anti-War Movement marches, but they won't mix, you know, they'll be very much a separate identity' (Yvonne Ridley, StWC and Respect).
8. Bruce Kent has been an active member of CND through most of its history; he was General Secretary of CND from 1980 to 1998 and Chair from 1987 to 1990.

4   Alliances and Fractures

1. The Communist Party of Great Britain (Provisional Central Committee) formed in 1991 (taking its name from an older, disbanded group) and is Marxist Leninist in orientation, producing the *Weekly Worker* newspaper.
2. Stop Political Terror was established in 2003 to campaign for the release of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. As a Muslim-oriented group they have also confronted the impact on Muslim communities of new anti-terror legislation.
3. Friends of Al Aqsa is a human rights organization focused on Palestine. It also works to protect the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, which is considered one of the three most holy mosques in Islam.
4. Turning the Tide are an activist group within the Quakers, translating elements of their faith into action for social and political change. They carry out training open to a wide variety of campaigners for social justice. Their website explains that they 'promote the understanding and use of active nonviolence . . . a way of confronting injustice – not responding violently, not doing nothing, but creatively engaging to transform the situation'.

5   Power and Borders

1. This is not *necessarily* the case. For instance, analyses of political parties with structured criteria for linking to organizations from their own websites can make larger assumptions about underlying motivations that structure hyperlink networks (Ackland and Gibson 2006). However, our interviews with anti-war website authors suggested much greater variability in motivations to create particular links and the absence of any consistent structure for deciding to create links, even within single organizations.

2. The software is available at http://www.issuecrawler.net; for discussion and examples of use, see Gillan forthcoming a; Rogers 2002; Rogers and Marres 2000.

3. Issue Crawler creates its own index, rather than relying on that of a major search engine such as Google. Thus all link data refer to the hyperlinks present while the software runs the analysis (typically less than 24 hours), rather than the index period for Google of approximately one month.

4. A website is defined here by domain name, thus 'internal hyperlinks' refer to pages with the same domain (e.g. stopwar.org.uk) and 'external hyperlinks' refer to pages with different domain names.

5. CAAT was set up in 1974 in response to growing concerns about the arms trade following the Arab–Israeli war the previous year. They focus attention particularly on the role of governments in facilitating the arms trade to oppressive regimes or countries involved in conflict.

6. People's Global Action (PGA) is a loose federation of anti-globalization activists that began in 1996 from a meeting called by the Zapatista Army of Liberation in Mexico. A launch conference was held in Geneva in early 1998. Its website is http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp.

7. Anti-Taliban sanctions were provided by UN Security Council Resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1333 (2000).

8. The records of a meeting of senior government and defence officials (including Prime Minister Blair) held on 23 July 2002 in Downing Street appeared to confirm that the decision to invade was made months before the Security Council debates. The Head of British Foreign Intelligence (MI6), Richard Dearlove, reported there, on the basis of his recent visit to Washington, that 'Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy'. The then Foreign Secretary Jack Straw was recorded as saying that it 'seemed clear that Bush had made up his mind to take military action', though the case was weak. The 'Downing Street memo', later leaked to the *Sunday Times* newspaper on 1 May 2005, is available at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1593607,00.html.

9. As always, obtaining accurate counts of participants is difficult. An approximate guide for March 2003 has been compiled by Doug Nesbitt and is available at http://www3.sympatico.ca/djnesbitt/ (consulted 20 December 2007).

10. These figures are adapted from Walgrave and Verhulst 2003, pp. 11–12. Their analysis begins with eight countries, including Switzerland and the Netherlands, in the measurement of mobilization level. However, these governments' positions on the war (against and supportive, respectively) were far less vocal than the others in the groups. The authors therefore removed those countries for subsequent analyses.

11. The descriptors 'horizontal' and 'vertical' have been used by activists within the European Social Forums to indicate different organizational styles. These differences were a source of great tension in the period leading up to the 2005 edition of the European Social Forum held in London (Gillan 2006, pp. 276–84). Our use of the terms here maps only imprecisely onto activists usage, since we apply it particularly to groups' transnational relationships and understandings, rather their internal methods of working. We do not

intend to imply that groups working in these different ways are necessarily in tension.

12. Voices in the Wilderness UK were inspired by a US group of the same name. They have campaigned against international sanctions on Iraq since the early 1990s, taking sanctions-busting actions such as transporting medical supplies into the country.

6   Coping with Activism

1. Trident Ploughshares is an anti-nuclear weapons campaigning group formed in 1998 specifically to oppose the Trident nuclear weapons system.

   Make Poverty History was an international campaign against absolute poverty that ran during 2005 involving a coalition of pressure groups, charities, trade unions, celebrities and religious groups. The campaign involved hundreds of organizations, including CND, though StWC applied for membership and was refused.

   Nukewatch is not a membership organization, but a network of individuals that monitors and tracks weapons of mass destruction being moved in Britain.

2. Between January 2005 and April 2006 the total cost of rent was £3600 (around £200 per month), an extremely cheap rate for office space in central London.

3. At StWC's 5th Annual National Conference held in June 2006 at Friends House in Euston Road, a Financial Report was distributed (covering 1 January 2005 to 30 April 2006). This reported that £6810 in income came from membership. Since individual membership is £24 per year (£12 concession) this suggests there were then about 300 paying members of StWC. The reported annual income was in excess of £160,000 (with income from donations – at £32,000 – much more than from membership). In terms of expenditure wages accounted for £23,000, design and printing £34,000 and office costs (supplies, computers, postage, phone etc.) about £20,000.

4. Founded in 1994 as an outlet for left-wing journalism, Counterpunch is located in the US and associated strongly with the efforts of journalists such as Alexander Cockburn and Robert Fisk.

   Founded in 1995, ZNet is a website, focused on journalism, which is updated daily to provide information to the left and progressive causes.

5. That bluntly tied the issue to Israeli treatment of Palestinians and presented the invasion as wholly without warrant on the part of Israel, thereby ignoring Hezbollah's deep-seated hostility towards Israel, Hezbollah's ambition to eliminate that nation from the region and establish an Islamic state in Lebanon and its paramilitary campaign of launching katyusha rockets and mortars at Israeli border villages from the Lebanese side of the border.

6. The article, by Geov Parrish, appeared in a US outlet, *Working for Change*, at http://www.workingforchange.com/printitem.cfm?itemid=21261.

7. Characteristic name-calling of politicians of whom it disapproves in its Newsletters includes 'Blair's war mongering' that is 'nauseatingly hypocritical' (22 February 2007). Similar language is exemplified in 'scurrilous politicians trying to divert attention from their war crimes' (30 November 2006), the Iraq invasion and occupation is routinely described as an 'illegal and

unnecessary war' (27 February 2007) while 'the scale of death and destruction reaches new levels of horror' (11 February 2007), and 'insurgents' are presented as acting legitimately.

8 Conclusions

1. Numbers are disputed for the London march, estimates ranging from 15,000 (from the police) to 100,000 (from the organizers) (BBC News 2006d).
2. Polls across Europe in February 2003 showed majorities opposed to invasion (BBC News 2003). As time went on this opposition increased, as clearly demonstrated by YouGov poll data (YouGov 2007, c.f. Travis 2004).
3. The 'suicide bombers' example comes from a protest against cartoons published in a Danish magazine that caricatured the prophet Muhammad in London on 3 February 2006. The protest was called by the banned Islamist group Al Ghurabaa in. See Cowan 2006, Guardian Unlimited, 2006.
4. A view shared by influential commentator Tom Friedman (2007), who writes that 'Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy didn't change the world by asking people to join their Facebook crusades or to download their platforms. Activism can only be uploaded the old-fashioned way – by young voters speaking truth to power, face to face, in big numbers, on campuses or the Washington Mall. Virtual politics is just that – virtual'.
5. Though most of us have little difficulty in distinguishing, for instance, between the Christian Socialism of George Lansbury and R. H. Tawney that had and continues to have an enormous influence on the Labour Party in Britain and the right-wing Christian Fundamentalism of the likes of Jerry Falwell and America's Moral Majority.
6. Sarfraz Manzoor reminds us that such an idea may also be found within Muslim groups. Reared in Luton by Muslim parents who came from Pakistan, the writer insists that Islam remains important to his identity, but he ran away from it when young because 'I wanted to be a Muslim like Philip Roth was a Jew or Bruce Springsteen was Catholic' (2007, p. 263), but he was told repeatedly that 'there was only one way to be a Muslim'.

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N.B. Place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

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