

Ramsey Clark, enemy of imperialist war and racist oppression

written by John Parker
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Ramsey Clark and John Parker speak about their fact-finding trip to Syria at an event hosted by Arab Americans for Syria, Oct. 19, 2013.

On April 9, a dear friend and inspiration of mine died: former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. I traveled with him to many targets of U.S. imperialism and met heads of state. He had the clout to go anywhere and didn't mind being vilified by the corporate media that slavishly toed the line of the U.S. State Department, impugning his integrity simply because he refused to go along with the lies of U.S. imperialism when they wanted to go to war, either overtly or covertly, against countries that insisted on their sovereignty and their orientation toward various aspects of socialism.

Clark was, and will be remembered throughout human history as, a person of principle. He turned his back on his privilege and connections to the ruling class. During the Lyndon Johnson administration, he refused to go along with the bombing of Cambodia and the Vietnam War. He turned his back on Johnson's cabinet position and instead put his body in harm's way to stop the U.S. war drive, whether in Sudan or Vietnam, Syria or Iraq, or anywhere he felt he could use his status to stop his country, which he often quoted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as saying, is the greatest purveyor of violence today. And he wanted to save children's lives.

He assisted and led legal battles that were instrumental in helping to expose and hamper the FBI, CIA and State Department in their attacks against the democratic rights of workers and oppressed people here and abroad. And he still remained approachable, comforting and gentle to me and anyone he deemed as working for the good of the planet. On our trips, in spite of his notoriety, he refused to fly first class and carried with him only one outfit: a modest jacket and tie with pants to match.

I gave him a call four weeks ago — probably one of the best decisions I've made in life. I needed to ask about an endorsement for an anti-imperialist webinar, but

mainly wanted to touch base and make sure he knew how important and loved he was to our movement even at 93 years old. He mainly wanted to talk about the right-wing riot at the Capitol, so I didn't bring up the endorsement request, and just enjoyed hearing his reflections on it. When the call ended, I made damn sure he knew how important he was to all of us in the movement and to human history.

Ramsey Clark, presente!



Ramsey Clark, right, and John Parker, left, with a Sudanese doctor at the site of the El Shifa pharmaceutical factory, destroyed by a U.S. cruise missile attack ordered by Bill Clinton in 1998. Some called it a “wag-the-dog” bombing — an action meant to deflect attention from political troubles — as it happened one week after Clinton’s statement on national TV that he had engaged in an “improper physical relationship”

with Monica Lewinsky. The plant provided 50% of Sudan's medicines and all of the country's anti-malaria drugs. In 2001, Germany's ambassador to Sudan reported that there had been "several tens of thousands of deaths of Sudanese civilians" caused by a medicine shortage.

