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U.S., Big Oil exploit Guyana border dispute to attack Venezuela

written by Scott Scheffer
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Genocide Joe Biden is sending weapons to Israel to continue its brutal ethnic cleansing of Gaza and its rampage against Palestinians in the West Bank. The entire world is aghast and angry. Millions are protesting globally, demanding a ceasefire.

At the same time, Biden is demanding that Congress provide billions more for weapons to continue the dangerous proxy war against Russia via Ukraine.

Now, almost unbelievably, the U.S. machinery of state is trying to set up an opportunity for yet another U.S. war – this one against Venezuela using that country's neighbor Guyana as a proxy, by reviving a centuries-old border dispute

that lay dormant for decades.

The exploitation of newly found oil reserves larger than those of the United Arab Emirates or Kuwait by U.S. oil giants triggered the escalating aggression by the White House.

After decades of economic punishment, coup attempts, and all manner of threats by the Pentagon, the U.S. State Department and the White House, Venezuela is not taking this situation lying down. President Nicolas Maduro called a referendum on the issue of the disputed area, Essequibo, on Dec. 3.

The vote confirmed [near-total support from the Venezuelan people](#) for defending against the imperialist plans to establish a hostile presence on their border while further enriching the biggest energy corporations in the world.

This latest imperialist adventure has transformed what had been amicable discussions between two neighbors for decades into a flashpoint for war. Part of the Venezuelan referendum asked for approval to declare Essequibo the 24th state of Venezuela and grant citizenship to the 125,000 inhabitants.

Messaging from the Maduro leadership has pointed to the deep poverty in Essequibo and has aired a video showing a group of indigenous people lowering the Guyanese flag and raising the Venezuelan flag.

U.S. military in Guyana

The Pentagon has been boosting its presence in Guyana for months. The website [Searchlight reported on Dec. 1](#) that “The United States Army’s 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB), which is a specialized unit of the U.S. Army, arrived in Guyana this week. ...

“The top brass from the SFAB and the GDF [Guyana Defence Force] have been

engaged in talks since Monday and ... the two sides discussed upcoming engagements that will include strategic planning sessions and processes to enhance both countries' military readiness and capabilities to respond to security threats."

Joint U.S./Guyana military drills, including U.S. bombers flying next to the disputed border, were announced for Thursday, Dec. 7.

The escalation of threats and hostility is driven by U.S. imperialism's desire to destroy the revolutionary process taking place in Venezuela, where millions of people's living standards have been lifted like never before.

A series of U.S. administrations have tried everything and the determination of the Venezuelan people to hang on to their sovereignty has thwarted the imperialists at every turn. The drive of ExxonMobil, Chevron, Hess and others to exploit new oil resources found to exist in Essequibo dovetails with White House attempts to bring Venezuela back under U.S. control.

Until recently Guyana was the third-poorest country in Latin America. U.S. business journals have been painting a picture of Guyana potentially becoming the richest country in Latin America. An ExxonMobil exploration found what is likely to be the largest oil reserve in the world in Essequibo in 2015. It was supposed to be both underground and offshore.

Recently the data proved that the offshore reserves were largely unproductive. Exxon-Mobile and Chevron were the biggest investors, at 45% and 25% respectively. Last week, upon learning that their initial data was incorrect, they pulled out of the offshore operations, turning it over to oil enterprises owned by Guyana.

The fact that scraps from the potentially massive profits are left for Guyana while the U.S. oil giants grab the massive profits from the reserves underground shows that the relationship will remain unequal. The people of Guyana will not benefit.

Dispute rooted in colonial plunder

The Essequibo region has been in dispute since the early 19th century. During the time of Spain's colonization, the river appeared on all maps as the eastern border of Venezuela. After Venezuela declared its independence from Spain in 1811, European powers moved in on all the territory now known as Guyana, swapping parts of the entire region back and forth between France, the Netherlands and Britain at a dizzying pace.

In 1899 the issue was brought to the fore again in a tribunal organized by the colonizers.

Not one Venezuelan was present. The decision was favorable for the British Empire. It was justified using a map by a cartographer employed by the British that showed the border of Venezuela to the west of the river, handing Essequibo over to the control of the British. Venezuela never accepted the decision.

Fifty years later, a U.S. lawyer who participated in the 1899 arbitration revealed that the outcome had already been decided amongst the colonizers beforehand. Any discussions that took place were a charade.

In 1914 the Anglo-Dutch treaty resulted in Britain purchasing what is now Guyana, including the Essequibo region.

In 1966, as a result of powerful peoples' liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the pendulum swung in favor of Venezuela's side of the issue once again. The governments of what was still then British Guiana, Britain and Venezuela signed the Geneva Agreement, with the backing of the U.N, to seek an amicable settlement, thus reversing the blatantly imperialist and rigged decision at the 1899 tribunal.

It is only now that the White House saw the opportunity to try to inflict further

damage to Venezuela that the issue has escalated, risking another terrible U.S. war.

This is a dangerous time for imperialism. The horrors in Gaza have prompted a global anti-imperialist uprising. Solidarity with Venezuela is the only force that can defeat U.S. attempts to overturn revolutionary Venezuela.

Viva Chavismo! Down with U.S. imperialism! Abolish the Pentagon and the oil companies!

