

United People's State of the Philippines Address in Washington D.C. defies Duterte and Secret Service

written by Struggle - La Lucha

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There is a rumor that Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte “doesn’t do mornings.” This must be why he schedules all his press releases for the afternoon and keeps his staff in meetings until the wee hours of the night. Then he will spend the rest of his night watching gangster movies until he falls asleep. These are only rumors, of course.

But it might be why, as Philippines news outlet Rappler [reports](#), he used seven expletives during his State of the Nation Address on the morning of July 22 — which

is actually less than the twenty five he used last year. It could also be why he ended his address saying that he was tired and unhappy with the presidency, and would welcome a military coup.

Perhaps more troubling was when Duterte begged Congress to reinstate the death penalty to help him win the drug war. Of course, we know this would make his extrajudicial killings judicial, and allow him to avoid accountability in the forthcoming [U.N. investigation](#).

If you can imagine the outrage of the Filipino people at this display, then you can imagine the tenor at the People's State of the Nation Address (PSONA) in Washington, D.C. The sun shone hot — with temperatures reaching above 100°F — and hot ran the blood, too.

Monday, July 22, started in front of Trump's White House, where several Pakistani political groups were gathered, some of them hostile to each other to the point of shouting matches. But as more Filipinos gathered, the Secret Service, seemingly overwhelmed at the number of people, shut down the street in front of the White House. Shortly after, they shut down the entirety of Lafayette Park. But the PSONA crowd held their ground on H Street.

Speakers from the Malaya Movement, Bayan USA, Migrante USA and Gabriela USA, among others, gave speeches to directly counter Duterte's State of the Nation Address. While Duterte tried to explain away bureaucratic inefficiency by blaming individual leaders, PSONA speakers identified that the whole system of government, by and for big landlords and comprador capitalists, cannot provide for the needs of the people.

With chants of "Tama na! Sobra na! People power na!" ("Enough already! It's too much already! People power now!") everyone marched through D.C. to the Philippines Embassy. There, we gathered to hear more talks, as well as a street

performance, which included a huge papier mache Duterte, which the performers ripped down from the stage. Cultural groups played revolutionary Filipino songs throughout the day. Andre Powell of the Baltimore People's Power Assembly gave a solidarity statement, wishing victory to the National Democratic Movement.

Eventually, D.C. police and the Secret Service started to itch and wanted everyone to clear out. But, instead of ending the demonstration, the people defied the state: they marched across the street to the Philippine Embassy's annex and occupied its front lawn. The embassy staff-representatives of Duterte's fascist regime-promptly shut down its operations for the day. Despite Secret Service attempts to disperse the crowd, they stayed to chant: "Tama na! Sobra na! Oust Duterte now!"

For many Filipinos who attended PSONA, this was their first interaction with the Malaya Movement and the associated Philippines organizations. Despite the heat, PSONA raised their spirits, and surely, it would not be their last time beneath the Malaya banner. Satisfied with the victory of shutting down the annex and a huge, well-organized demonstration and march, the crowd finally dispersed and ensured everyone made it to their transportation safely.

Check out [Malaya Movement](#) to watch for updates.



Roots of the crisis over Kashmir

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Colonial rule, class and national oppression

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U.S. and British imperialism are working overtime to utilize the present crisis between India and Pakistan to their own advantage. Meanwhile, the reactionary regimes in Islamabad and New Delhi are vying with one another to gain the favor of the Bush administration in their struggle against one another in general and in the struggle over Kashmir in particular.

It is possible to engage in extended analysis and speculation about the immediate cause of the crisis. There is of course a decade of reactionary, anti-Muslim, Hindu

revivalism led by India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party since 1990—including the destruction of the Babri Masjid Mosque in 1992.

There is also the ascendancy of reactionary Islamic fundamentalist forces that had been nurtured and supported by the CIA and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan was the staging ground for an \$8-billion counter-revolutionary war against the progressive socialist Afghan government and the Soviet Union. These forces, many now opponents of the U.S., have inserted themselves into the struggle against the repressive Indian regime in Kashmir.

Some try to explain the present struggle over Kashmir by starting with 1947, when India was partitioned, Pakistan was created, and Kashmir became a disputed territory occupied by both countries.

However, one can't understand the 1947 partition and the horrendous religious conflict that followed — which dealt a great blow to the world forces of national liberation — without taking into account the 250 years of machinations by British colonialism that preceded.

British East India Company

It is useful to start the analysis in the middle of the 18th century with the predatory campaign of the British East India Company to conquer and plunder India. The EIC, which dated back to the days of Queen Elizabeth, was given a monopoly to conduct business in India by the British Parliament, acting on behalf of the financial and commercial interests of London. It was backed by the Royal Navy. It was given the right to raise troops and to undermine the Indian economy, to interfere in social and political relations and do anything necessary to bring a handsome profit back to its investors in London.

But military force alone was insufficient for a small island in the North Atlantic to

dominate such a vast landmass as India. Fortunately for the British ruling class, the EIC found a society that was fragmented into hundreds of states ruled over by a variety of petty rulers, held together only nominally by the declining Mogul empire.

The British conquered Bengal in 1757 and embarked on a century of creating “subordinate alliances.” The EIC would bestow local sovereignty on a ruler, make him subordinate to the company and to the British government, allow him some autonomy and guarantee protection against his enemies.

Whenever possible, the company would try to place a Muslim ruler over a majority Hindu population or a Hindu ruler over a majority Muslim population. They carried on this policy for over 100 years as they consolidated their conquest over the country. These subordinate alliances came to be known as “princely states.”

When India was partitioned in 1947, 550 such “princely states” were divided between India and Pakistan. This was the product of centuries in which the British colonialists brought the art of “divide and rule” to perfection.

British sold Kashmir in 1846

Kashmir is a vivid, concrete example of such subordinate alliances. With the infamous Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, the British created the present-day state of Kashmir, both geographically and socially, by selling part of the state of Lahore, which they had conquered, to a Hindu maharajah. This was in a territory that had been ruled historically by a Muslim empire and was predominantly Muslim in population.

The Treaty of Amritsar of 1846 declared that “The British government transfers and makes over, forever, independent possession [of the territory between the Indus River which constitutes Kashmir] to Maharajah Gulab Singh, and the male heirs of his body.” The surveying of the land was done by the British and the Gulab Singh

was obliged to recognize the British-defined borders. Gulab Singh paid the British government 7.5 million rupees and agreed there would be no changes without the consent of the British.

The British had the right to settle any disputes with neighboring states. The maharajah was required to send his military to serve the British military in case of any conflict. The maharajah could not hire any European or American without British permission. And in exchange “the British government will give its aid to Maharajah Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies.”

It was not long after the creation of Kashmir that the greatest uprising in Indian history took place, the Great Rebellion of native-born soldiers in the 150,000-man British colonial army. It is derogatorily called the “Sepoy Mutiny” by the colonialists. But it was a rebellion against the brutality and racist insensitivity of the British rulers, and it lasted from 1857 to 1859. In this rebellion Indian troops took over New Delhi and other cities and were only defeated after a furious struggle.

The rebellion was the first major manifestation of broad anti-British resistance, spontaneous and not politically organized. Soon a nationalist movement was born. It was moderate at first, seeking incremental change by which Indians could gain representation in the governing of India. By 1885 the first meeting of the Indian National Congress took place.

Formation of Congress Party

The Congress was composed of a majority of upper-caste Hindus. While there were Muslims in the Congress, other elements within the Muslim upper classes formed the Muslim League in 1906, with the encouragement of the British. For the following decades the fate of the anti-colonial movement in India hung on the relationship between the League and the Congress. Progressive forces in both organizations strove for unity. There were many progressive-minded Muslims with the Congress

Party on the basis of secular national unity.

Once they felt the rumblings of even the moderate bourgeois nationalist, reformist movement, the British imperialists went to work trying to divide it. On the one hand they showed their utter intransigence. Lord Hamilton, then secretary of state, sent a message to the viceroy in India on April 14, 1899, saying: "We cannot give the Natives what they want: representative institutions or the diminution of the existing establishment of Europeans is impossible."

On the other hand, they created separate election rolls in 1909 where those few who could vote — 1 percent — had to vote for candidates by religion. Under the guise of insuring the rights of minorities, the British channeled politics into the confines of religious rivalry rather than genuine representation. This process was deepened in 1919 when the colonial authorities were compelled to make reforms under the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

The forced participation of Indian troops on the side of their British oppressors in World War I, the support of the Russian Revolution for oppressed peoples of the world struggling to overthrow colonialism, and the 1919 anti-imperialist upsurge in China reverberated in India. The first trade unions were formed and mass resistance to British rule flowered. But Indian communists were unable to take root in a political environment dominated by the entrenched bourgeois nationalist movement led by the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi put himself at the head of the mass movement. He brought pacifist tactics and moderate religious ideology to the struggle. His economic goals were reactionary: going back to a village economy.

Communist Party — gains and setbacks

In the late 1920s the Communist Party of India (CPI) made progress in the trade

union movement and the organization of the workers. In the 1930s it made a leap forward as a mass party in the struggle for class unity and national independence. But it suffered a huge, historic setback during World War II.

The war was a time of tempestuous mass struggle. Despite its moderate inclinations, the Congress was compelled to militantly oppose the British war effort. It had agreed to support the British if London would promise India independence. Whitehall stonewalled the movement and the Congress withdrew from all government posts. It began the “quit India” movement to force the British to withdraw.

By 1942 the British imperialists were in the worst crisis of rebellion since 1857. They had jailed over 60,000 people, including the entire Congress leadership. The Muslim League supported the British war effort and did not participate. The Soviet leadership pressed the CPI to support the war effort and suspend its struggle for independence until the war was over. The rationale was that since British imperialists were fighting the Nazis and the German imperialists were invading the Soviet Union, suspending the national struggle would be in defense of socialism.

This policy had similar tragic implications for the struggle of communists elsewhere in the British Empire, and in the French colonies and Latin America as well.

What Moscow did not take into account was that a revolutionary India could have been the greatest asset to the world revolution since 1917. In any case, the CPI lost an opportunity for revolutionary leadership at a moment of mass struggle.

The Congress, in spite of its militancy, was preparing for a negotiated withdrawal of the British and a managed transfer of power, rather than a revolutionary victory in the spirit of a genuine national liberation struggle. Bourgeois forces, dedicated to the preservation of capitalism, were fully in command and, as subsequent events proved, even the most progressive of them, represented by Jawaharlal Nehru, were

incapable of overcoming the communal divisions sown by British colonialism.

In 1940, at the Lahore conference, the die was cast when the Muslim League and its leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, abandoned once and for all its ambivalence about staying within a united India and declared for a separate Muslim state. Although this split was managed behind the scenes with the connivance of British imperialism, the groundwork was laid by the Hindu bourgeoisie, particularly the right-wing nationalists, who promoted religious chauvinism and persecuted the Muslim majority.

The last act of the British imperialists in India was to dictate the terms of the division between India and Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten, the last British viceroy, laid down the rules and they were accepted by the League and the Congress. All majority Muslim provinces under the British crown would go to Pakistan. All majority Hindu provinces would go to India. And the 550 “princely states” would choose, the decision being made by the ruler of each state.

Kashmir, strategically situated between India and Pakistan, was one of the largest “princely states.” It was over 70 percent Muslim and ruled by a Hindu feudal landlord, Maharajah Hari Singh, a descendent of the original ruler who had bought Kashmir from the British in 1846. Singh was trying to preserve maximum power and was toying with remaining independent.

The most popular leader in Kashmir, Sheik Abdullah, was a secular Muslim, the head of the All Kashmir Conference, which had had previous alliances with Nehru. Abdullah was dedicated to land reform and even raised the slogan of “Land to the tiller.” He was leaning towards independence because he was opposed to being put under the landlord regime of the Muslim League in Pakistan but was also opposed to being ruled by a landed aristocracy represented by the maharajah. He was thrown in jail.

The Pakistanis, using British military vehicles, sent military forces into Kashmir. Nehru consulted with Mountbatten and airlifted thousands of troops. Hari Singh, afraid for his throne, acceded to India. Sheik Abdullah was let out of jail and sent to New Delhi, where he agreed to accede to India on the basis of autonomy for Kashmir and the promise of a plebiscite to determine the final status. He became prime minister.

The war ended in 1948. The Indian forces gained the lion's share of the territory. The issue was referred to the UN, dominated by U.S. and British imperialism. There never was a plebiscite. The autonomous provisions agreed to by the Congress were gradually violated and the Indian bourgeoisie consolidated its control over Kashmir. A Hindu ruling group controlled a majority of Muslims. Sheik Abdullah was jailed off and on throughout the years by Nehru.

The issue of Kashmir stands unresolved today.

Nehru, the most progressive of the bourgeois leaders of the Congress, justified the takeover of Kashmir on his historic position that India should be united and that it was possible to build a democratic, secular society of national unity in which Muslims would be equal with the Hindu majority.

However, the deadlock gave rise to a national struggle and to repression by the Indian government.

A tide of reaction has now swept over the region; fundamentalist forces from Pakistan and Afghanistan are waging a struggle that amounts to an annexationist war, just as the Indian bourgeoisie de facto annexed its portion of occupied Kashmir in 1947. The genuine struggle for self-determination of the Kashmiris has become more and more difficult.

But the fundamental reason why the Congress in its most progressive phase could

not win the hearts and minds of the oppressed people of Kashmir is the same reason that it could not win the struggle for a unified India against the machinations of British imperialism: it represented the exploiting bourgeoisie.

India under Nehru

The Indian state was founded in a global environment of socialist revolution and national liberation. The Soviet Union had defeated the Nazis and was once again championing the anti-colonial struggle. The Chinese Revolution had driven out the landlords and, like the USSR, was embarking upon constructing a planned economy with cooperatives and collectives in the countryside and five-year plans in industry.

Under Nehru's guidance India was declared to be "socialist oriented." But this was just a cover for the Indian bourgeoisie and landlords to use state capitalist methods to overcome the deficit in industry and infrastructure inherited from British rule. Private Indian industrialists drew up three five-year plans for national development based on retaining capitalist exploitation. Known as the "Bombay Plan," the first was drawn up in 1944. It was modified after the new state was established.

The most urgent question in India for the masses was the land. Some landowners lost their most outrageous privileges. The government bought out many of the richest feudal landlords. But when the issue of limiting the amount of land that one person could have came up, the landlords in the Congress vetoed it.

The only way to overcome the 200 years of division sown on the Indian subcontinent by the British was to appeal directly to the class needs of the Indian workers and peasants of all religions, languages and nationalities. This was impossible for the exploiting classes of India, in spite of their socialist rhetoric and their diplomatic friendship with the USSR and with China in the early years. They had made a political transformation, not a social revolution.

Bourgeois experts will cite the complexities of Indian society and politics as the fundamental reason for the failure to unite. To be sure, India is an extremely complex social formation. It has 17 major languages and 35 others spoken by more than a million people. It has most of the major religions on the planet—Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Jainism, Christianity, Judaism and more. It has numerous national and linguistic groups. Furthermore, it is torn by the caste system, with thousands of sub-castes.

But for all its complexity, the problem in India reduces itself to the problem of class exploitation and private property. All propertied classes, no matter how oppressed and abused they may have been by imperialism, require the obfuscation of class relationships of exploitation. They require the fog of religion, or ideological backwardness and confusion, to mask the fact that the substructure of society is built on accumulating the labor of the workers and the peasants in one form or another-on appropriating to the ruling class the social surplus.

Why Bolsheviks could but India couldn't

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was confronted with enormous national, linguistic and religious complexity that had been compressed into the tsarist empire, the “prison house of nations.” The revolution unearthed over 200 distinct language groups in its early days.

The Bolshevik government under Lenin declared to all the oppressed peoples of the empire that the Russian proletarian revolution would honor their right to self-determination. They had the right to decide whether to leave or join the Soviet Union—even though this ran the risk of having the oppressed nations abandon the revolution and leave the USSR truncated.

In fact, many of the national groups were Muslims who had been oppressed by the tsar and persecuted by the Russian military. They also had to fear the Russian

Orthodox Church. The Bolsheviks called a conference of Muslim communists in 1918 in order to show solidarity and make them feel comfortable within the framework of the new proletarian revolution, which was thoroughly internationalist.

Why could the Bolsheviks solve the national question, bringing all the oppressed peoples into a secular Soviet state with a Great Russian majority, while the Indian bourgeoisie could not? Because they not only offered to do away with tsarist oppressors, they also eliminated the exploiting capitalists and landlords. They could offer to honor all the national, linguistic, ethnic, and cultural characteristics without qualification. In other words, the Bolsheviks could overcome all divisions and antagonisms by meeting the concrete national demands of the oppressed. The proletariat, as a revolutionary class whose mission was to destroy class exploitation, had no interest in dividing the oppressed and the exploited.

National antagonisms only reemerged in the Soviet Union when capitalist elements took hold of the apparatus, beginning the degeneration that ultimately led to its collapse.

This historical experience is priceless, not only for oppressed countries like India and Pakistan, but for the United States, which has truly become the oppressor of all nations both at home and abroad. A class understanding of the national question shows that the struggle against national oppression is the indispensable first step on the road to uniting the workers and oppressed. But it cannot be fully consummated unless it is indissolubly linked to the struggle to end class exploitation.



Why Hiroshima and Nagasaki were incinerated

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Barack Obama visited Hiroshima on May 27, 2016, the first sitting U.S. president to do so. Obama's visit to the Japanese city revived the question of whether killing hundreds of thousands of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atom bombs was a military necessity.

Dwight Eisenhower didn't think so. The former president and five-star general wrote in his autobiography "Mandate for Change" that dropping atom bombs on Japan "was completely unnecessary." Ike claimed that he said this to War Secretary Henry Stimson.

General Curtis LeMay told a Sept. 20, 1945, news conference, "The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war at all." Even President Truman declared that dropping the bombs "did not win the war." ("Hiroshima in America, Fifty Years of Denial" by Robert Lifton and Greg Mitchell)

A big reason why Japan surrendered was that the Soviet Army and Mongolian, Korean and Chinese allies rolled through northeastern China and all of Korea. This not only destroyed the biggest Japanese army but threatened a socialist revolution in Japan itself.

Yet talking heads at Fox News still claim that burning babies alive in Hiroshima and Nagasaki “saved the lives of U.S. soldiers” by averting an amphibious invasion of Japan.

Complete barbarism

After breaching the walls of a besieged city, Roman soldiers killed or enslaved every human being they could find. Even cats were sliced in two. Among their victims was the famous mathematician Archimedes, killed by a legionnaire after Syracuse in Sicily was overrun in 212 BCE (Before the Common Era).

Two thousand years later, international law was supposed to prevent such war crimes. Nazi leaders were hanged in Nuremberg for deliberately killing civilians.

But U.S. war leaders committed war crimes, too. General LeMay burned alive over 100,000 people during the March 9-10, 1945, firebombing of Tokyo.

At least 200,000 people, including thousands of children, were killed by the atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and Nagasaki three days later. Even decades later people died from radiation-caused illnesses.

A diplomat from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea told this writer that 30,000 of the people killed in Hiroshima were Korean forced laborers. Truman murdered these Korean workers held hostage by the Japanese emperor and big business.

President Teddy Roosevelt turned Korea over to the Japanese Empire in the 1905

peace treaty, signed in Portsmouth, N.H., that ended the Russian-Japanese war. Teddy got a Nobel Peace Prize for his crime.

People's Korea has found it absolutely necessary to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the Pentagon. This is not only because of U.S. nuclear missiles aimed at Korea.

At least 4 million Koreans were killed during the Korean war. Using napalm and white phosphorous bombs on human flesh didn't satisfy U.S. generals and politicians. Then Texas Congressperson Lloyd Bentsen can be seen in "The Atomic Cafe" demanding that atom bombs be dropped on Koreans.

This didn't stop Bentsen from being the Democratic candidate for vice president in 1988 or from serving as President Bill Clinton's first Treasury Secretary. Korea also remembers the Hiroshima holocaust.

The Manhattan Project's real target

More than 100,000 workers were mobilized by the U.S. Army's Manhattan Project to build the death bombs. At least \$2 billion was spent, which, as a percentage of the U.S. economy, is equal to \$180 billion today.

The excuse for the Manhattan Project was that the U.S. had to "beat Hitler" at developing the atom bomb. This was the reason given to scientists like the young physicist and future Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman.

But the real target of the Manhattan Project was the Soviet Union.

According to William Shirer in "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," U.S. brass hats expected the Soviet Union to collapse within six weeks of Hitler's invasion in June 1941.

A representative of Kansas City's corrupt Pendergast Machine — Sen. Harry Truman — declared, "If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and that way let them kill as many as possible." (New York Times, June 24, 1941)

The Soviet Union didn't collapse. At a cost of 27 million Soviet lives, Nazi forces were forced back from Stalingrad to Berlin. It was the Red Army of workers and peasants that liberated Auschwitz on Jan. 27, 1945.

Despite pleas from Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, War Secretary Stimson refused to bomb the railroad lines to Auschwitz that took millions of people to their death.

USSR deterred nuclear war

The Manhattan Project was Wall Street's response to the phoenix-like resurrection of the Red Army. The U.S. and British ruling classes dreaded Soviet forces marching all the way to Paris and being welcomed by workers.

Capitalists also feared a revival of the German working class who had been crushed by Hitler.

During World War II, Time magazine publisher Henry Luce proclaimed an upcoming "American Century." The Pentagon was planning to confront the USSR not just with the bomb, but also with military forces numbering 16 million GIs and the biggest air force in history.

This immense power was also to be used against the Chinese Revolution and as a threat to all oppressed people.

Super-racist U.S. General George Patton talked about rearming Nazi SS troops and marching to the Volga. Winston Churchill considered an invasion of the Soviet Union

in “Operation Unthinkable.”

The U.S. had half the world’s industrial capacity in 1945. President Kennedy correctly noted in 1963 that the Nazi destruction of the Soviet Union would have equaled everything in the United States east of the Mississippi River being destroyed.

But the millions of GIs whom Wall Street wanted to use against the Soviet Union wanted to go home. Even though it was still a Jim Crow army, tens of thousands of soldiers demonstrated in Paris, Manila and other cities demanding to go home. This GI revolt was the greatest gift of the U.S. working class to the world revolution — and probably the least known.

Despite billions of aid lavished on Chiang Kai-shek, the Pentagon couldn’t stop the Chinese Revolution.

The only reason that a nuclear holocaust hasn’t destroyed humankind is that the Soviet Union, at tremendous cost, was able to develop a deterrent nuclear force against a Pentagon attack.

Strategic Air Command head Curtis LeMay and Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lyman Lemnitzer both wanted to launch a nuclear first strike on the Soviet Union. In 1968 LeMay was George Wallace’s running mate during the segregationist’s fascist presidential campaign.

LeMay actually had hydrogen-bomb-equipped planes continually in the air ready to attack. Inevitable crashes happened, including one off Spain’s Mediterranean coast in 1966. It took 12 weeks and over 20 naval ships to recover the bomb.

A 1958 accident dropped a Mark 15 thermonuclear bomb off the Atlantic Coast of Georgia. It has never been recovered.

That unexploded bomb is a real threat to people in the U.S., not the small number of nuclear weapons that People's Korea needs to defend itself.



Washington's long war in the “Middle East”: It's not the oil, it's the money

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“Only Iran-U.S. tensions supporting crude oil prices; outlook bearish” Economic Times, July 23, 2019

U.S. warships are not prowling the coast of Iran to protect navigation and the free flow of oil. That's a lie. For decades, Washington has used wars and sanctions to stop the flow of any oil or gas not owned by U.S. corporations.

The name of the game is monopoly. It's a global version of what John D. Rockefeller

did when he set up the Standard Oil trust — ancestor of ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco — in the 1870s. But much, much bloodier. Rockefeller's goons sometimes torched or dynamited competitors' drilling rigs and refineries. The Pentagon and its proxies have murdered hundreds of thousands of people in the past 30 years to keep the world's energy revenues flowing to U.S. banks and corporations.

The U.S.-Israel-Saudi axis

Who are those proxies? First and foremost, the racist state of Israel and the brutal House of Saud. Gen. Alexander Haig, Ronald Reagan's secretary of state, called Israel ["the biggest U.S. aircraft carrier in the world and the only one that can't be sunk."](#) The Zionist state has been in a state of war since it was created on the stolen land of Palestine. And every war it has waged has benefited U.S. corporate interests.

Saudi-occupied Arabia is a U.S. tribute state, a cash cow for U.S. banks, and oil and arms companies. So are the other five kingdoms on the Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. For decades their ruling families have put their oil revenues and production policy at the service of Wall Street and Washington.

Saudi ARAMCO, the world's richest oil company, was originally the Arabian-American Oil Company. Now, it is supposedly owned by the Saudi royal family. But its top executives are U.S. and British citizens. Four Western monopolies — ExxonMobil, Chevron, BP and Shell — control and market its output. U.S. bankers invest the kingdom's oil revenues, and U.S. contractors run its military.

The Saudi kingdom is the biggest overseas customer of the U.S. military-industrial complex. For the past four years the kingdom has used its U.S.-made weaponry to murder and starve the people of neighboring Yemen. The United Nations has

described the situation in that impoverished land as “the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the world.” President Trump has vetoed two congressional resolutions to limit U.S. involvement in the war. The Senate upheld the vetoes.

The United Arab Emirates, also involved in the war in Yemen, is the world’s third biggest purchaser of U.S. arms. General Dynamics keeps an F16 production line open to fill a contract from Bahrain. On July 27, Bahrain’s ruling Al Khalifa family executed two young pro-democracy activists, Ahmad al Malali, 24, and Hakim Al Arab, also 24, who had been tortured and convicted with 56 others in a mass trial. Bahrain is under Saudi military occupation. It is also home to the U.S. Naval Central Command and the U.S. Fifth Fleet, whose ships are off the coast of Iran.

Why they hate Iran

Before the 1979 Revolution, the Shah of Iran was the U.S. arms industry’s biggest overseas paying customer and Chase Manhattan Bank’s largest depositor. At Henry Kissinger’s request, the shah bailed the U.S. arms industry out of the slump that followed the end of the Vietnam War.

Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (“King of Kings, Shadow of God, Light of the Aryans”) was put on the throne by British troops in 1941. The CIA kept him on it. In 1953, as the monarch hid out in Rome, a CIA-organized coup overthrew Iran’s elected prime minister, Mohammed Mossadegh. Mossadegh’s government had nationalized Iran’s then British-owned oil industry. The grateful shah cut the Gulf Oil Company, now part of Chevron, in on Iran’s oil reserves. And Kermit Roosevelt, the CIA agent who ran the coup, became a vice president of Gulf Oil.

The 1979 Revolution, which threw out the shah, ended Iran’s subservience to Washington and Wall Street. The country’s oil revenues no longer went into U.S. bankers’ pockets. The Islamic Republic has been on Washington’s enemy list ever since.

There are a lot of differences between Islamic Iran, Bolivarian Venezuela, Baathist Iraq, Jamahiriya Libya and Putin's Russia. But in the eyes of the U.S. ruling class they are all guilty of the same sin: using their oil revenues for their own interests and not those of Wall Street.

Something more urgent than greed for lost tribute drives the Trump regime's desperation to confront Iran. It's the same thing that drove the U.S. to attack, sanction and invade Iraq, sanction Venezuela and Russia, bomb Libya and launch proxy wars in Syria and Ukraine. It's the desperate struggle of capital against that crisis unique to the capitalist system, what Karl Marx called "an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of overproduction."

The 'end of history' and endless war

Let's go back 30 years, to the summer of 1989. The so-called Cold War, which was hot and bloody in most of the world, seemed to be ending. The Soviet Union was imploding under the impact of Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika. Politicians promised a "peace dividend" as military budgets would supposedly be slashed. A State Department employee named Francis Fukuyama wrote an essay called "The End of History." Its theme was that 'the triumph of the West,' of capitalism, would usher in an epoch of global stability.

As the corporate media oohed and aahed over Fukuyama's words, a Defense Department employee was engaged in a different task. Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. Central Command, was drawing up plans to attack Iraq.

The general was carrying on a family tradition. His father, [Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf Sr.](#), first served in Iran in the 1940s. He organized the shah's brutal security forces and helped crush independent republics in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. During the 1953 coup, he was liaison between the CIA, the shah and Iranian security officials. After the coup, Schwarzkopf Sr. trained the shah's dreaded secret police,

later known as SAVAK.

Gen. Schwarzkopf Jr. drew up his war plans more than a year before Iraqi troops entered Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990. That Iraqi action was deliberately provoked by Kuwait's British-installed royal family and manipulated by the first Bush regime. (A detailed [description of Washington's maneuvers can be found in the book "The Fire This Time](#) by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark.)

On Aug. 6, 1990, the U.S. pushed sanctions against Iraq through the U.N. Security Council. Five million barrels a day disappeared from the world market. The sanctions were followed by a devastating U.S. bombing campaign against the Iraqi people. The U.S. military has been at war in West Asia and North Africa ever since.

It's not the oil, it's the money

In January 1991, as the U.S. war machine began bombing Iraq, hundreds of thousands marched in Washington chanting, "No blood for oil!" It's a catchy slogan but a misleading one.

Iraqi troops withdrew from Kuwait on Feb. 27. U.S. planes napalmed retreating soldiers and civilian refugees on Highway 8, the "highway of death," killing thousands. But the Bush regime did not seize Iraq's oil fields. Nor did it allow Iraq's oil back on the world market. Instead it — and the Democratic and Republican administrations that followed — bombed and sanctioned Iraq for 12 more years.

A December 1995 U.N. report found that sanctions had caused the death of 587,000 Iraqi children. Commenting on the deaths, Bill Clinton's secretary of state, [Madeleine Albright, told CBS 60 Minutes](#), "We think the price is worth it."

The tragedy in Iraq was indeed worth it to the U.S. corporate ruling class, especially those most invested in oil. They had "won" the Cold War. But their "victory" only intensified the crisis of their system.

Big Oil desperately needed respite from the oil glut of the 1980s. That glut, aggravated by Saudi and Kuwaiti overproduction, seriously damaged the Soviet economy. But it also played havoc with oil profits.

The end of the Soviet bloc's planned economy and state-owned industries drove down the price of labor on a world scale. It opened up new markets for the U.S. dollar and for capitalist investment and exploitation.

It however caused a huge drop in global demand, threatening to drive energy prices lower still. And it left the U.S. military-industrial complex without an enemy to justify bloated budgets and new contracts. The children of Iraq were collateral damage in a desperate attempt by the wealthiest U.S. corporations to salvage their bottom line.



Imperialism and Sudan, Part 3: The true architects of terror and poverty

written by Struggle - La Lucha
August 16, 2019



In 1999, the European Sudanese Public Affairs Council published an article by David Hoile entitled [“Farce Majeure: The Clinton Administration’s Sudan Policy 1993-2000.”](#) This is a thorough documentation of the contradictory policies of President Bill Clinton’s administration, desperate to control the resources and set the political agenda of the Sudanese government, as the administration of George H.W. Bush had previously tried to do.

Clinton used the excuse of Sudan’s so-called sponsorship of terrorism to justify U.S. military support of opposition groups, and general support to both political and military groupings in oil-rich southern Sudan.

Clinton’s terrorism charges against Sudan were never backed up with any verifiable

evidence. The administration was forced to admit this, even to former President Jimmy Carter.

It's also important to understand that starting earlier, under Bush the elder, the main charges against Sudan followed President Omar al-Bashir's refusal to join the U.S. Gulf War coalition against Iraq, and his continued support of Palestinian organizations.

But, in spite of a lack of evidence, the devastating economic sanctions would not be denied.

Writes Hoile: "The 1993 listing of Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism ended any prospect of bilateral American aid and related assistance as well as restricting American economic investment in Sudan."

By 1998, this included comprehensive trade and economic sanctions blocking "all property and interests in property of the Sudanese government, its agencies, instrumentalities and controlled entities, including the Bank of Sudan, that were in the United States." Pressure was also put on private banks to discourage loans to Sudan.

Any goods or services of Sudanese origin and the exportation or re-exportation of goods, technology, or services to Sudan or its government, along with any grants or extension of credits or loans by any U.S. citizen, were banned, including any transactions relating to the transportation of cargo — all amounting to a secure economic cage around one of the poorest countries in the world, a definite act of genocide.

Propping up allies of convenience

By the early 1990s, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had lost its major support from Ethiopia due to a change in government there. That, however, did not

change its posture toward the Sudanese government.

Hoile writes: "By 1994, while the Administration's propaganda campaign against Sudan was intensifying, things within Sudan had settled down markedly from a political and a security point of view. The military situation was better than it had been for many years and the Sudanese Government's attempts to secure 'peace from within' were gaining momentum.

"It became increasingly evident that the SPLA, weakened by splits and expelled from Ethiopia following the fall of the Mengistu regime, was very unlikely to bring any further significant military pressure to bear on the Sudanese government.

"It is a matter of record that from 1994 until the present, the Clinton Administration has followed a policy of assisting the SPLA militarily and politically, actively encouraging the rebels to continue, and intensify, their involvement in what is clearly a no-win war."

Keep in mind that the developments described below also reflect the political confusion and contradictions resulting from the then-recent collapse of socialism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and its repercussions in North Africa and throughout the world.

According to Hoile, the U.S. united the various opposition parties in the south, along with northern opposition groups like the Umma Party, the Democratic Unionist Party and the Sudanese Communist Party, together with the SPLA under John Garang, under the umbrella of the newly established National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The NDA was founded in Eritrea in June 1995.

Hoile writes: "The National Democratic Alliance established a political-military committee, committing the organisation to the violent overthrow of the Sudanese government. The American ambassador was, in the words of the London-based

newsletter, Africa Confidential, ‘conspicuous by his presence.’

“The Clinton Administration,” he continues, “in 1996, openly and unambiguously encouraged the governments of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda not only to afford the SPLA safe rear bases, but also to both spearhead and support rebel military incursions into Sudan. This led to attacks into border regions of southern and eastern Sudan by Ethiopian, Eritrean and Ugandan military forces, often in brigade strength.”

Yet no charges were brought by the International Criminal Court against former presidents Clinton, Bush I and Bush II, Obama or any of those U.S. officials who continued the genocidal sanctions and military destabilization campaigns, causing the deaths of many hundreds of thousands during Sudan’s long civil wars.

The economic and political foundations of the crisis in Darfur, established by former colonial rulers Britain and France, are telling.

Darfur and Sudan’s colonial legacy

After 1916, when Britain militarily gained full control over the Sudan as its colony, British rule depended on creating conflict and dividing the primarily Muslim north from the Christian and animist south. It left isolated and unnourished what were then thought to be unprofitable regions like Darfur.

In other words, the British Empire did not allow the creation of an infrastructure facilitating government assistance to the region. These regions contained people who were all Muslim and possibly harder to divide.

In 2007, the George W. Bush-endorsed Save Darfur Coalition, a grouping led by Christian and Zionist organizations along with some Hollywood celebrities, promoted U.S. military intervention and sanctions against the government of Sudan.

But the crisis in Darfur preceded Omar al-Bashir's consolidation of power in 1989 and his 1996 election as president, when Sudan began holding regular elections up until the military takeover in April 2019.

According to ["Sudan, A Country Study,"](#) published by the Library of Congress: "At the time of the Bashir coup in June 1989, western Darfur was being used as a battleground by troops loyal to the Chadian government of Hissein Habre and rebels organized by Idris Deby and supported by Libya."

During the civil war in the former French colony Chad in the 1980s, both France and the U.S. sent hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid annually to prop up Hissein Habre, including fighter planes and troops.

The CIA's covert military aid to assist Hissein Habre's "Army of the North" consolidate power in Chad began in 1981, according to David Isenberg's article, ["The Pitfalls of U.S. Covert Operations,"](#) published by the Cato Institute.

By the late 1980s, those weapons — and the fighting — spilled over into Darfur and into the hands of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Says the "Country Study": "In May 1990, Chadian soldiers invaded the provincial capital of Al Fashir. ... During the summer, Chadian forces burned eighteen Sudanese villages and abducted 100 civilians.

"Deby's Patriotic Movement for Salvation (Mouvement Patriotique du Salut) provided arms to Sudanese Zaghawa and Arab militias, ostensibly so that they could protect themselves from Chadian forces. The militias, however, used the weapons against their own rivals, principally the ethnic Fur, and several hundred civilians were killed in civil strife during 1990."

Rarely is any blame attributed to France or the U.S. for inflaming the sectarian violence and exploiting the desperation in Darfur.

'IMF will arrive at the doors'

In his [March 2019 article](#) for the Review of African Political Economy, Magdi el Gizouli correctly points out that whichever entity takes control of the Sudanese government, "the IMF men will arrive at the doors of the finance ministry the day after the regime is toppled, with their infamous prescription, 'your subsidies or your loan!'"

Whatever agents of imperialism may arrive at the doors of oppressed nations pushing austerity and poverty, a thorough understanding that the greatest threat to humanity today and to the sovereignty of any people is Western imperialism, especially U.S. imperialism, cannot be hidden or denied. Only through understanding this truth can we find solutions.

Most importantly, it is up to all of us living in the Western imperialist countries, especially the U.S., to build the necessary solidarity with those oppressed countries forced into making deals with the devils of capitalism, who use the starvation and desperation they create as weapons to ensure the continuous flow of profits into imperialist banks.

The greater our fight to defend our international family against the ruling-class weapons of sanctions, war and poverty, the more options our international working class and oppressed peoples in the targeted countries will have in their fight for self-determination.

Here in the belly of the beast, our demands should be to turn those IMF loans and World Bank austerity plans into IMF and World Bank reparations, especially in relation to the continent of Africa.

Let's fight the terrorist and genocidal ideology of sanctions. Let's no longer tolerate any U.S. attempts at denying people their right to self-determination and unhindered

development of their economies and infrastructure.

U.S. hands off Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan — and the world!

Imperialism and Sudan

[Part 1: What is the U.S. role in Sudan's crisis?](#)

[Part 2: Roots of Sudan's economic woes](#)

[Part 3: The true architects of terror and poverty](#)



Imperialism and Sudan Part 2: Roots of Sudan's economic woes

written by Struggle - La Lucha
August 16, 2019

Most timelines of today's crisis in Sudan start with rapid price increases for wheat and fuel under President Omar al-Bashir beginning in 2018. It is, however, important to take a look at what other forces may have triggered this inflation.

A thorough analysis done last March [by Magdi el Gizouli](#) drew on International Monetary Fund (IMF) correspondence with the government of Sudan in 2017. Gizouli is a fellow of the Rift Valley Institute who regularly writes on Sudanese affairs in the Review of African Political Economy.

Regarding the economic turmoil of 2018, Gizouli writes: "Sudan's post-oil economic woes came to a peak in 2018 with the collapse of the Sudanese pound, an acute shortage of foreign currency, runaway prices and inflation rates beyond 60 percent. The rise in prices is the third-fastest in the world in recent months, behind war-torn South Sudan and Venezuela." (Venezuela has also been suffering under severe U.S. sanctions.)

"To protect the Sudanese pound, the Bank of Sudan ordered severe restrictions on cash withdrawals, resulting in an extreme liquidity crunch. Bank customers were initially barred from withdrawing more than the equivalent of US\$160 in February and March 2017 going down to no more than US\$17 a day in September 2017." This further especially frustrated the professional sectors of the Sudanese and spurred them to action.

According to Gizouli, as of March 2019: "So far, army officers are the only absentees from the list of modern professionals, doctors, lawyers, engineers, judges, etc., who constitute the umbrella Sudanese Professionals Association."

The foundation of the current economic crisis severely affecting all Sudanese had its start in 1978, according to Gizouli, when an earlier Sudanese government signed a series of agreements with the IMF and World Bank called the Economic Recovery Programme:

"The highlights of this agenda included currency devaluation; liberalization of trade; bank credit restrictions; interest rate increases; curtailment of the money supply; reduction of the government's budget through social spending cuts, massive layoffs and removal of subsidies on goods and other consumption items; removal of all controls on profit repatriation; privatisation of government-owned enterprises and social services."

This policy occurred under the government of Jaafar Nimeiry and points to the fact that the hands of the U.S.-dominated IMF and the World Bank can be found at the root of this latest turmoil in the Sudanese economy.

IMF 'suggests' repealing subsidies for staples

In November 2017, the IMF presented their "suggestions" to the al-Bashir government regarding the removal of subsidies, including for staples like bread and fuel. Remember, these "suggestions" from financial powers like the IMF can determine whether or not a country receives a loan.

The government therefore decided in January 2018 to devalue the Sudanese pound by around 60 percent, as the IMF suggested, "and launched a new unified official exchange rate while the parallel rate continued to jump ahead."

This fluctuation in currency rates contributed to the lack of confidence of international investors, exacerbating Sudan's financial woes. And the desperate attempts by Omar al-Bashir to manipulate currency and raise taxes to make up for the economic sabotage created by the IMF also exacerbated the situation and reduced investor confidence still further.

The IMF stated in its November 2017 report which social programs they were going after: "Sudan maintains a number of consumer subsidies which ostensibly are aimed at protecting socially vulnerable groups. These primarily include subsidies on energy

(fuel products and electricity) and wheat products. However, there is a large body of international experience showing that subsidies are an inefficient policy instrument to protect lower income groups.”

In spite of the IMF caring so much for “lower income groups,” it admitted that cutting those and other programs targeted would result in a 216 percent increase in retail prices of fuel products, bread and electricity tariffs, with a real income loss of about 15 percent per capita, considering indirect effects of this policy.

Most of the wheat consumed by Sudan is imported-around 2.5 billion tons per year. When South Sudan chose independence in 2011, after years of civil war-some of which was promoted by U.S. military support for various factions there-the north lost most of its oil and gas resources and could no longer produce the amount of fuel needed domestically.

The breakup of Sudan was devastating. The Khartoum government in the north lost 75 percent of its foreign exchange earnings and 45 percent of general government finances immediately, a loss equivalent to \$300 million per month. Inflation rose to 40 percent and currency was devalued by 60 percent.

In the years after South Sudan’s independence, and as the situation economically worsened in the north, Gizouli points out, Sudan made the decision to favor subsidizing import traders over subsidizing bread.

However, the roots of this crisis go even deeper than 2011 or 1978. We need to back up even further.

U.S. role in civil war and environmental devastation

Former President George W. Bush, representing a U.S. ruling class that has committed and enabled genocide all over the world, killing tens of millions with nuclear bombs, invasions, sanctions, proxy wars, covert interventions and direct

military support to fascist governments and monarchs, tried for the second time in 2007 to level charges of genocide against Sudan.

The first attempt was made by former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell in 2004. However, a United Nations commission in 2005 investigating alleged atrocities said the Sudan government was not guilty of genocide. Many in the international community agreed with this U.N. commission.

What the U.N. said about the crisis in Sudan after the second U.S. charge in 2007, however, points the finger of guilt right back at the U.S. and other imperialist countries.

In June of that year, the U.N. Environmental Program (UNEP) published an 18-month study that blamed environmental factors as the root causes of the violence in Sudan. It warned that inaction would spread violence well beyond Sudan's borders. The U.N. report found that the desert in northern Sudan had advanced southwards by 60 miles over the past 40 years and that rainfall in the area had dropped by 16 to 30 percent.

"It [the U.N. report] illustrates and demonstrates what is increasingly becoming a global concern," [said Achim Steiner](#), UNEP's executive director. "It doesn't take a genius to work out that as the desert moves southwards, there is a physical limit to what systems can sustain, and so you get one group displacing another."

The U.N. study also found that there could be a drop of up to 70 percent in crop yields, devastating areas from Senegal to Sudan.

Before rebel groupings attacked government forces in 2003, sparking another civil war in Sudan, the rains had diminished and the desert was growing by over a mile per year.

Why didn't the government of Sudan do more to avert this environmental crisis? One

thing is for sure—British, French and U.S. interference, past and present, in the affairs of Sudan had an extremely draining effect on its resources and ability to develop economically, let alone defend itself from natural disaster. Sanctions, especially those from the U.S. that intensified from 1997 to 2017, made this an “unnatural” catastrophe.

Regarding more covert U.S. interference, in 2003 the intensified spread of war from the southern Sudan to the Darfur region was exacerbated greatly by the U.S. supporting the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in southern Sudan. The SPLA was the nucleus for the Sudanese Liberation Army fighting in Darfur. Fueled by U.S. dollars, that war in the south helped drain Sudan’s economy and discouraged the development of its oil resources.

In fact, according to the book “Dangerous Liaison” by Alexander Cockburn, collaboration between the CIA and Israeli intelligence to support a secessionist movement in Sudan can be traced back to at least 1968.

Over the years since then, the U.S. kept up a campaign to destabilize Sudan. On Nov. 10, 1996, the Washington Post reported that the U.S. would send \$20 million in military equipment to Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda, even though these three countries were embroiled in a bloody war in southern Sudan.

The paper said its congressional sources doubted the aid would be kept from rebel forces fighting the Sudanese government—virtually an admission that the aid was for that purpose.

Africa Confidential wrote on Nov. 15, 1996, “It is clear the aid is for Sudan’s armed opposition,” adding that U.S. Special Forces were on “open-ended deployment” with the rebels.

Next: Colonialism’s legacy in Sudan

Imperialism and Sudan

[Part 1: What is the U.S. role in Sudan's crisis?](#)

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ILPS International Assembly calls for unity against imperialism

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 16, 2019

Hong Kong

It was a global gathering of fighters for labor and the oppressed: workers on sugar cane plantations and in textile mills, domestic workers and dockworkers, Indigenous people, peasants and urban poor, fighters for women's and LGBTQ2S rights, health

care workers, students, environmental activists and others. They came from the Philippines and Philadelphia, Indonesia and Ireland, Central America and Southern Africa, South Korea and West Papua, from every corner of the world. They were united by the theme, “Win a bright socialist future for humanity! Unite the people to fight against imperialist plunder, war, racism and fascism!”

The occasion was the Sixth International Assembly of the International League of Peoples’ Struggle, held in Hong Kong from June 23 to June 26. The ILPS, founded in 2001, describes itself as “the largest and most consolidated global formation of militant, anti-imperialist and democratic organizations in the world today.”

The 6th IA bore out that description. There were 400 delegates and guests from people’s organizations in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Burma, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kawthoolei-Karen State of Burma, Saudi Arabia, Kurdistan, Laos, Luxembourg, Macau, Malaysia, Manipur, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sabah, South Korea, Thailand, Netherlands, Togo, Venezuela, United States, West Papua and Zambia.

The assembly opened with the League’s stirring anthem, sung by migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong.

Some came despite fierce political repression in their home countries. Prospective participants from 15 more countries could not attend due to visa denial or repression where they live. Some who might have attended have been martyred by state terror. Philippine human rights workers Randy Malayo, Ben Ramos, Nelly Bagasala and Ryan Hubilla are among the dozens of unionists, farmers, lawyers and church people murdered over the past year by the death squads of the U.S.-backed Duterte regime.

‘A reliable force for people of the world’

Among those unable to attend in person was outgoing ILPS Chair Jose Maria Sison, world-respected hero of the Philippine revolutionary movement, now in political exile in the Netherlands. Speaking by video, Sison said that since its founding the ILPS has grown in “strength and proven itself as a reliable force of the people of the world in their struggle for greater freedom, democracy, social justice, all-round development and international solidarity against imperialism and all reaction. ...

“We have stood firmly, spoken clearly and acted militantly in defense of the political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of the people against the depredations of monopoly capitalism, the unbridled greed unleashed by neoliberalism, the ceaseless wars of aggression, and the plunder and environmental ruination by U.S. imperialism and its allies and puppets.”

Sison discussed the current global crisis of the capitalist system, the intensifying exploitation and oppression of the people by imperialism and reaction, and the growing popular resistance. After announcing that he would not run for re-election after 15 years as chair, the assembly overwhelmingly approved a resolution designating Sison as Chairperson Emeritus of the ILPS. He will be succeeded as chair by Australian labor leader Len Cooper, president of the Communications Workers Alliance and previous vice chair of the league.

Also barred from attending was planned keynote speaker Khaled Barakat of the International Campaign to Free Ahmad Sa’adat. A Palestinian refugee living in Germany, Barakat has been threatened by the German state with a year of imprisonment if he speaks publicly or by video. Charlotte Kates of the Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network addressed the final plenary on Barakat’s situation and the growing repression facing the Palestine solidarity movement by U.S. and European imperialism and the racist Israeli state.

Other keynote addresses were given at the opening plenary by Nilufar Koc of the Kurdistan National Congress and Pedro Rosas of the Movement Gayones in

Venezuela, and by Helda Khasmy of the Indonesian Women's Union and Raphael Chiposwa of the Socialist Party of Zambia at the closing one.

In between, the bulk of the assembly consisted of meetings of the commissions, which featured lively discussions and debates. The ILPS has 18 commissions addressing such concerns as national and social liberation, human rights, trade unions and workers' rights, the fight against war, the rights of peasants, farm workers and fisher folk, women's liberation, refugees and migrants, the rights of the elderly and differently abled and LGBTQ2S rights. A newly formed commission on the right to housing held its first workshop.

Michael Africa Jr. of the MOVE Organization in Philadelphia was among the presenters at Commission Three, on human rights and fighting state repression. Born in prison, he is the son of MOVE 9 political prisoners Debbie and Michael Africa Sr., who were just paroled after 40 years in Pennsylvania concentration camps.

There were also stirring cultural events and forums on such topics as the struggle in Africa and West Asia, the freedom struggle in West Papua and the future of socialism. The latter featured author and former Soviet citizen Irena Malenko speaking on life under socialism and an extensive online talk by professor Sison on the history of socialism and prospects for its resurgence.

Looking toward 'great resurgence of revolutionary forces'

On the final day, the delegates adopted a general declaration and elected a new International Coordinating Committee for the league. The general declaration reflected the work of the commissions and the debate and discussions during the assembly. It put the concerns addressed by the commissions in the context of the global capitalist crisis and projected global revolutionary struggle as the only solution. Here is an excerpt:

“U.S. imperialism, although on strategic decline due to its internal problems, remains as the most dangerous, the most destructive imperialist power, and the number-one enemy of the people of the world.

“The triumphalism of the apologists for capitalism upon the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries has long worn off. Amidst the new world disorder under capitalism, characterized by endless wars and social, economic and political crises around the world, no one can now take seriously the claim that capitalism is the end of history.

“In the wake of the crash of 2008, interest in Marxism and socialism has grown. There is now a widespread and profound disillusionment in capitalism and the people are looking for an alternative. That alternative is socialism.

“More than ever, the proletariat and the people of the world need to further build their unity to resist imperialist plunder, war, racism and fascism. They have to strengthen and steel themselves by waging various forms of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles.

“We are in a period of transition from unprecedented imperialist dominance, interimperialist contradictions, social and political turmoil, state terrorism and aggressive wars to a period of great resurgence of the revolutionary forces of the anti-imperialist resistance and the world proletarian revolution.

“We call on all progressive, democratic and anti-imperialist forces around the world to unite in a broad anti-imperialist and anti-fascist united front to stop imperialist wars and the growing trend toward fascism in many countries.”

‘Make the final blow’ against imperialism

The 6th International Assembly concluded on a bright note with all the participants in high spirits as they joined in a Solidarity Night of rousing speeches and moving

cultural numbers. Through dance, songs, poetry and drama, the assembly participants depicted the sufferings inflicted on the people by imperialism and reaction, and the struggles of the people to win liberation.

A highlight of the Solidarity Night was a tribute to outgoing Chairperson Jose Maria Sison for his invaluable contributions to the ILPS since its founding and his outstanding contributions to the overall anti-imperialist movement.

The Solidarity Night was also an occasion to celebrate the success of the 6th International Assembly in uniting the entire ILPS for the work and struggles ahead and inspiring them to carry on the work of advancing the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the people.

The spirit of the assembly was well expressed in the keynote talk by Indonesian Women's Union chair Helda Khasmy. Indonesia, the fourth most populous country in the world, has suffered centuries of plunder by West European and U.S. colonialism and imperialism. The people's movement there suffered some of the most brutal repression in history following a U.S.-backed coup in 1965 and under successive U.S.-backed regimes. Today, however, it is undergoing a revival.

"With full spirit we come together for the 6th International Assembly of the ILPS, united under the theme 'Win a bright socialist future for humanity! Unite the people to fight and end imperialist war, racism and fascism,'" Khasmy said. "This theme made me very excited, remembering the recent national and global occurrences showing the brutality of imperialism in its war of aggression and intervention, as part of its efforts to mask and cover up the worsening economic and political crisis.

"Parasitic imperialism is increasingly decaying, it is indeed moribund. And as it rots it worsens further the condition of the people of the world. But imperialism, however, will not annihilate itself. It will not just die on its own. In Bahasa we say, 'hidup segan, mati tak mau,' which means 'life is reluctant to end willingly.' It will

continue to rot and as it does it will destroy the productive forces of our society, and also those who try to rebel out of the restraints of imperialism.

“What is absolutely needed is to make the final blow! A blow that will be delivered by the oppressed and exploited people of the world-the proletariat, the peasants, the Indigenous people, women, youth, migrants, LGBT, all of us!” Khasmy concluded.

[Visit the ILPS website](#) to learn more about the Sixth International Assembly.



Imperialism and Sudan, Part 1: What is the U.S. role in Sudan's crisis?

written by Struggle - La Lucha
August 16, 2019

On Aug. 20, 1998, then-U.S. President Bill Clinton bombed the Al Shifa Pharmaceutical Plant in Sudan with 16 cruise missiles. I was part of a delegation, headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, that traveled to Khartoum

after that attack to expose the lies that were used to justify this horrendous and genocidal action against the Sudanese people.

Walking amongst the rubble of that cruise missile attack, with the knowledge that this plant was supplying some of the most vital medicines fighting malaria and other deadly diseases to one of the poorest countries in the world, demands something from you.

While in Sudan, we also visited a displaced persons' camp. Walking through a field full of mud huts sheltering families of refugees enduring over 106-degree heat with not even a fan, nor refrigerators, nor pediatric or general hospitals nearby for toddlers — nothing but oppressive heat — is also an experience that demands something from you.

What these experiences demand is solidarity. And today the world must be in solidarity with the people of Sudan who, following the military ouster of elected former President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, face increased repression and continue to demand a just economy that does not deny them basic necessities like wheat and fuel.

According to data from the [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#) and reported by Business Insider, 21 of the 28 poorest countries in the world reside on the continent of Africa. The criteria used included any Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of less than \$1,000 per year per capita. The list starts with Sudan, where the average person makes \$992 per year, and ends with South Sudan, where the average is \$246 per year.

It's no coincidence that, on the flip side, France, Britain and the U.S. fall in the category of the top 29 richest countries in the world — despite the fact that these countries also have many people living in poverty.

It begs the question: Where did these highly developed capitalist countries get their wealth from?

Western imperialism and Sudan

The grip of Western imperialism that robbed the Sudanese people of their right to self-determination began long ago with colonial takeovers by France and Britain. And, in more recent history, that dictatorial role was passed on primarily to the U.S. and its Saudi Arabian client state, with Washington's approval.

Unfortunately, in the reporting of the corporate media around the crisis in Sudan today, and in the messages we're allowed to hear coming from inside Sudan, that reality is lost. But in order for real change to reverse the denial of self-determination for the people of Sudan, the essence of the crisis in Sudan must be exposed.

Last year, increased fuel and food prices were the last straw for many Sudanese, reflected by a coalition representing students, professionals, trade unions, community groups and various political organizations demanding a new government.

Last April this alliance, the Forces of the Declaration of Freedom and Change (FDFC) coalition, whose leading force is the Sudanese Professionals Association, was successful in forcing President Omar al-Bashir out of office, though his removal took the form of a military coup. Afterward, a coalition of military and paramilitary forces took over as the Transitional Military Council (TMC), promising to facilitate a gradual move to civilian rule.

Negotiations between the military council and the coalition broke down. This was followed by the shooting of coalition protesters in early June while they were, by most accounts, peacefully assembled outside of the TMC's headquarters in the capital. Those who carried out the attack were security forces that are part of the

military council.

Most of the reports from protesters, both in Sudan and those here in the U.S. that this reporter spoke to recently, put the number killed at between 100 and 300. That number includes killings by security forces in other parts of the country where a crackdown occurred simultaneously. The government claims 61 were killed but has not denied the shooting of unarmed civilians.

On June 27, a joint proposal from the African Union and the government of Ethiopia was presented to the FDFC and TMC, reflecting past negotiations and allowing for a leadership panel of mostly civilians with military representation as a path toward civilian rule. A previous Ethiopian proposal was accepted by the coalition; however, the military had rejected it.

On the basis of this proposal, the military council and protest groups [reportedly reached an agreement](#) on July 5. The agreement calls for a three-year transition period before elections. The New York Times reported: "The protest leaders involved in the negotiations did have to make a significant concession: An army general will run Sudan for the first 21 months of the transition, followed by a civilian for the next 18 months. But many had been skeptical the military would share power at all. Now, the ruling council will have five civilians, five military leaders and an 11th member jointly agreed on.

"The agreement started to take shape at a secret meeting," the Times added. "Diplomats from the United States, Britain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates convened Sudan's military and protest leaders."

How protesters view imperialism's role

Although Omar al-Bashir was not president at the time of the June 3 crackdown — he has been [held in Khartoum's Kobar jail](#) since he was deposed in April — he

remains the political target of the protesters, who cite his leadership as the reason for the inflated prices for food and fuel and the country's economic collapse, especially after 2011, when South Sudan, containing most of the country's oil resources, became independent from the north.

On June 20 in Los Angeles, at a protest outside the Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates, which I attended, protesters echoed that sentiment, blaming the TMC and former President al-Bashir. The demonstration was organized by the Sudanese Information Center located in Southern California.

"For the past 30 years we've been trying to get rid of this guy [al-Bashir] because there have been a lot of killings. He has killed 300,000 in Darfur alone with the Rapid Support Forces," said one of the protesters leading the action, a Sudanese student visiting on vacation. The Rapid Support Forces are the group mainly cited for the recent killings by the military government in June. They are a paramilitary arm of the government and part of the TMC.

For security reasons, this person did not want to be identified, since he still lives in Sudan. He said he's experienced beatings, been run out of his university with teargas and witnessed horrors like rape by the Rapid Support Forces.

When asked who is to blame for the economic crisis and if he was concerned about the involvement of the Troika of the U.S., Britain and Norway (and now Canada) in the current negotiations with Sudan, he said: "We blame mainly the UAE and Saudi Arabia because of weapons, cash and exchange of money for child soldiers by Saudi Arabia."

Another leading protester spelled out the damage done by Saudi Arabia and others, but failed to include the U.S. in that mix. "We're out here in front of the United Arab Emirates Consulate because the UAE, along with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, all have lots of interest in Sudan. They were allowed to invest in Sudan by the Sudanese

government, to invest in our land, in our children. They have bought child soldiers to fight in wars in Yemen. ... We want other Arab countries to stop infiltrating our country."

When I asked this person and others at the protest if they had any concerns regarding Western interference or the role of longstanding U.S. sanctions and IMF policies in contributing to Sudan's economic problems, those I spoke with were either not aware of any interference or sanctions, or called for the Western governments to help. In fact, the lead banner of the protest had a Sudanese flag on one side and a U.S. flag on the other.

The lack of knowledge about or dismissal of the negative U.S. and IMF influence on Sudan was surprising, especially given the 1998 bombing by the Clinton administration, which sparked mass protests in Khartoum and other cities. However, all of the youth and others I spoke to at the demonstration seemed well educated and very knowledgeable about the role played by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. This probably reflects how the news media are dominated by corporate interests that have a stake in Western investments, and which conveniently leave out any traces of the negative fallout from Western imperialist intervention, past and present.

U.S. supplies weapons to Saudi Arabia

Although this was just one demonstration, the narrative of Omar al-Bashir being solely responsible, along with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, is echoed by most of the coalition forces' statements — even by the most progressive amongst them, like the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP), an organization with a long history of political struggle in Sudan and a leading member of the FDFC coalition.

The SCP issued a statement welcoming the participation of the imperialist Troika, with no qualifications about past Western interference, and criticizing only the UAE, Saudi Arabia and China, which has competing interests with the U.S. in Sudan.

Even when leaving out the history of colonialism in Sudan, the role of U.S. sanctions and Washington's covert arming of various factions in southern Sudan, one would still expect to find blame with the U.S. for supplying weapons to Saudi Arabia.

One activist voice sharing a view not heard often was quoted in [The Globe Post](#): "The weapons that are being used to massacre innocent, non-violent, unarmed protestors in Sudan are American weapons that were sold to the Emirates and Saudi Arabia," stated Dimah Mahmoud, a Sudanese activist with a doctorate in Sudanese foreign policy.

Next: Imperialist roots of Sudan's economic woes

Imperialism and Sudan

[Part 1: What is the U.S. role in Sudan's crisis?](#)

[Part 2: Roots of Sudan's economic woes](#)

[Part 3: The true architects of terror and poverty](#)



Struggle-La Lucha statement: No to U.S. war on Iran!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 16, 2019

End U.S. sanctions from Iran to Venezuela, Cuba, Zimbabwe and People's Korea

Stop the war on workers from Iran to the world's im/migrants and refugees

"I was the CIA director. We lied, we cheated, we stole. ... We had entire training courses." That's what Trump regime [Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told students](#) at Texas A&M University on April 15.

On June 14, [Pompeo told reporters](#) that "Iran is responsible for the attacks that occurred in the Gulf of Oman today." On June 16, [he told Fox News](#), "There's no doubt. The intelligence community has lots of data, lots of evidence." He didn't give any.

Embarrassed by the lies of U.S. officials about the supposedly ever increasing

threats coming from Iran, a senior British commander of the Combined Joint Task Force, which the U.S. leads in its military operations in Iraq, felt compelled to state in an [interview in the Guardian](#) on May 14 that he had no evidence of any escalation of the war threat from Iran, directly contradicting the U.S.

This – like countless prior war drives promoted by the U.S. government, from both Democratic and Republican presidents – is built on lies, and a repeat of the current period of endless wars, starting against Afghanistan and Iraq.

The cost of war in Iraq alone is staggering and, including all U.S. wars since 2001, the figure [tops \\$6 trillion](#). Seven thousand U.S. soldiers have died and 600,000 were injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. But this pales in comparison to the lives lost by Iraqis, especially children. The best estimates now put the cost of war in Iraq since 2003 to [2.4 million lives lost](#), with at least 500,000 of them being children. Add to that the worldwide refugee crisis resulting from Bush's war in Iraq and Obama's wars in Libya and Syria.

You don't need an economics degree to understand and see the cost of these wars in terms of poverty, homelessness, and lack of suitable health care, especially for children.

War breeds migrant crisis – and more concentration camps

In June, a physician visiting a detention center on the southern border of the U.S. compared it to a "torture facility." And the number of children dying in these facilities continues to rise.

Today's migrant and refugee crisis is a direct result of U.S. wars, a crisis catapulting as a result of U.S.-led wars and coups from Iraq to Libya, Honduras and Syria. The privatized detention centers — like the privatized jail industry in the U.S. — are making record profits derived from overcrowded and underserved facilities that

reflect a history of concentration camps and genocide.

A war with Iran, by all measures, would make things much worse. According to [former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates](#), “If you think the war in Iraq was hard, an attack on Iran would, in my opinion, be a catastrophe.” According to a 2013 study by the [American Federation of Scientists](#), a new war on Iran would likely cost up to \$2 trillion. That’s just within three months. Just imagine how those dollars translate into blood and misery and more concentration camps.

Already, the U.S. military is the [single greatest producer of greenhouse gases](#) in the world. This would increase that manyfold – a real threat to our very existence.

Both Trump’s administration and the Democrats – who often justify the pretext for war, then support it – are motivated by their corporate sponsors, especially the oil monopolies. They see these wars as opportunities to increase their profits and use them as justifications to encourage further cutbacks to vital social services.

After the Great Depression and up until 1973, the share of wealth of the 1% vs. the 99% was decreasing. Since then, that trend has reversed, allowing the pay of CEOs to increase up to 271 times greater than that of the average worker. The spending on war is a big business and a great contributor to stealing the wealth created by the workers for the sake of profits soaked in the blood of children.

Iran – a country whose development was hijacked for 26 years by the U.S. installment of the Shah of Iran until the revolution of 1979 — is surrounded by U.S. bases. No such threat to the U.S. exists. And in regards to terrorism, it is Iran that has been fighting the spawn of U.S. wars, from ISIS to al-Qaida, instead of supporting them as the U.S. and Saudi Arabia do in Syria and Yemen.

Endless war is how the ruling class in this country deals with a system that does not work – a system facing a global crisis of overproduction caused by the private

ownership of the means of production, by bosses who care about nothing but ever increasing profits. But, as the profits increase, especially through war, so does the looming and greater economic crisis around the corner.

The war threat is real, and it's coming from these shores. Trump states that he can unilaterally declare war on Iran with no congressional approval. We know that Congress serves at the pleasure of its corporate sponsors, so any real fightback against war will depend on the determined and loud voices of the people, demanding money for jobs, education, housing and health care - not war.

Here in the U.S., we play a crucial role in standing up to the war profiteers. We need to take action. Taking our opposition to war to the streets is crucial. We should follow the example of the workers who walked off their jobs after Wayfair refused to stop selling furniture to Immigration and Customs Enforcement for their concentration camps. Call on your family, friends and coworkers to put a halt to the war industry however they can.

U.S. imperialism— Hands off Iran!



Falling oil profits drive U.S. war threats against Iran

written by Struggle - La Lucha

August 16, 2019

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The Trump regime is desperately escalating confrontation with Iran in coordination with Israel and Saudi Arabia. Why? The answer can be found in the headlines.

Not the headlines parroting Washington’s claim that Iran attacked tankers in the Gulf of Oman. The answer is in the headlines that bankers and CEOs worry about.

Headlines like these:

“Oil Prices Are Falling Because Fears of a Glut in Supplies Are Growing,” [Barron’s, May 22.](#)

“Oil Prices Tumble, U.S. Crude Slides Under \$60, as Trade Wars Clip Global Demand,” [The Street, May 23.](#)

“Gas Prices Could Fall Below \$2 For Many Americans,” [CNN Business, June 12.](#)

[On June 13, Barron’s financial weekly wrote](#), “Oil Prices Keep Falling, Something’s Got to Give.”

Something did. Later that day, explosions disabled two tankers in the Gulf of Oman. Within hours, [Trump’s Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed Iran. On June 18, the Israeli press reported](#) the U.S. was preparing air strikes on Iran.

This is the second attack reported on shipping in the Gulf region since May 7, when the Pentagon announced a military buildup there. At the request of the U.S. Central Command, British units also deployed to the Gulf. Among them were members of the Special Boat Service, which specializes in covert operations at sea.

Japan disputes U.S. version

One of the tankers attacked was Japanese-owned, one Norwegian. [Both carried “Japan-related” cargo, according to Japan’s Foreign Trade Ministry.](#) The attacks happened while Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was in Tehran trying to defuse tension between Iran and the US.

Both the crew and the owner of the damaged Japanese ship, the Kokuka Courageous, contradict the Trump regime’s version of the attack. [They say their ship was hit by a flying missile, not underwater mines as the U.S. claims.](#) Japanese and

European Union officials have said they are not ready to accept the U.S. version of events.

Japan and the EU have good reason to fear a U.S. attack on Iran. So do the majority of the world's people, who live in oil and gas-importing countries. So do working-class and oppressed people in the United States. Some in the U.S. ruling class fear it as well.

The Arab-Persian Gulf holds 55 percent of the world's known oil reserves. Thirty-five percent of the world's seaborne oil shipments come from there. [A regional war could push the price of oil up to \\$200 a barrel, analysts say.](#) Some say more.

All that money wouldn't go up in smoke. It would be a massive transfer of wealth into the vaults of U.S. oil companies and banks and hedge funds that speculate on oil. For the trillion-dollar U.S. fracking industry — and the big banks that finance it — this could be a lifesaver. Fracking companies are struggling to keep prices over the cost of production. Hundreds of billions in investments are at risk.

Pompeo, Bolton and the fracking Kochs

The Koch brothers, Charles and David, are big investors in the U.S. fracking industry. Before he was hired by the Trump regime, first as CIA director, then secretary of state, Mike Pompeo was called "the congressman from Koch." He got \$1.1 million in donations from the oil and gas industry during his six years in Congress. Over a third, \$375,000, came from Koch Industries, which is based in his Wichita, Kan., home district.

Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, was a fellow at the Koch-funded American Free Enterprise Institute. As an undersecretary of state for the George W. Bush regime, he helped fabricate "evidence" to justify the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Sen. Tom Cotton, who is leading the charge against Iran in the Senate, has gotten

over \$1 million from oil and gas interests during his six years on the Hill.

Trump's secretary of the interior, David Bernhardt, was a lobbyist for Noble Energy. Noble is the main U.S. investor in Israeli gas projects in stolen Palestinian waters.

The fracking industry is much bigger than the "new money" robber barons around Trump. "Chevron, ExxonMobil Tighten Their Grip on Fracking," the Wall Street Journal reported on March 5. Those oil majors control much of Saudi Arabia's output as well. Four giant banks, JPMorganChase, Wells Fargo, Citibank and Bank of America, have poured over half a trillion dollars into the industry.

The hydraulic fracturing — fracking — technology in use today was first tested in June 1998. In August of that year, the collapse of the Russian ruble dropped oil prices to \$11 a barrel. That was despite the murderous sanctions and deadly bombing of Iraq by the U.S. It took the energy-price bubble created by the 2003 U.S. invasion and devastation of Iraq to make fracking profitable.

The "fracking revolution" is slowly destroying North America's water supply. But it has made the U.S. the world's top oil and gas producer. It is central to the Trump regime's proclaimed goal of "U.S. energy dominance." It is the product of three decades of war, sanctions and covert operations, hundreds of thousands of deaths and nearly six trillion dollars spent on war. It can only be sustained by more war and destruction. Which is what we will get unless we build a people's movement that can turn things around.

