

YANKEE GO HOME



A BRIEF GUIDE TO US MILITARY
INTERVENTION SINCE WWII

A pamphlet by the Santa Barbara Chapter of
the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League.

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Special thanks to the Maoist Internationalist Movement.

WHY SHOULD YANKEE DOODLE GO HOME?

The new global economic order that arose at the end of WWII now reaches into every corner of the earth. For upper and middle class Americans, this means a life of buying, consuming, and wasting: All of which serve to isolate individuals from ruling institutions, while a highly effective indoctrination system teaches them to love and protect the “democracy” that operates outside the domain of their control. For the masses living in the so-called developing nations—who make up the majority of the world’s population—this new era of “freedom and prosperity” means a life of toil, poverty, and unnecessary starvation.

The poorest people on the earth are forced into further poverty as their economies are transformed to meet the demands of the global market. In Peru, 80% of the population does not have steady work. More than ten thousand children die of malnutrition every year, while the majority of Peru’s fish harvest goes to the United States... to make cat food. The Philippines once was a large exporter of rice, but now has to import rice or starve. This is because US-backed dictators geared the Philippine economy to meet the needs of foreign investors. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank cripple the poorest countries’ economic growth. The “first world” nations that dominate these institutions demand social services to be slashed in order to gear the economy to paying interest on the loans.

The major benefactors of this poverty are imperialist countries like America, Japan, and Western Europe. For the dominant forces in these nations, the globally dispossessed serve the function of cheap labor while resources are sucked out of their countries. The drainage of human and natural resources creates the exorbitant amount of wealth found in the elite nations while leaving the poor states without the means of producing for themselves. The “Third World” did not exist prior to colonialism. Extreme poverty, the kind of which is portrayed as almost inevitable in developing countries, is maintained by Western economic hegemony.

An honest examination of America’s history as global policeman reveals that the greatest crime a poor country can commit is to attempt to rise above its servitude. Capitalism means dire poverty and misery to the masses of the servant states, a fact that is conveniently forgotten when the rhetoric of elite US interests mobilizes the most powerful nation in the world to crush revolutions in undeveloped countries. A variety of revolutions all have equally been demonized, whatever their origins or perspectives: The anti-US revolution in Cuba; the Viet Minh, whose leader Ho Chi Minh modeled Vietnam’s Declaration of Independence after America’s; the democratically elected Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz; etc. etc. It did not matter that Arbenz was democratically elected or that Ho admired the principles in the Declaration of Independence. The fact is these interventions did not happen in order to protect “democracy and freedom,” rather in order to extend Western economic hegemony in the face of local resistance and global competitors.

Americans are responsible for perpetuation of this economic order. It was American soldiers that imposed terror on Vietnam in order to “save” the Vietnamese from their aspirations of self-determination. The example of

Vietnam is only one of many. All the rhetoric and propaganda aside, the Vietnam war was really just a large scale intervention to prevent the Vietnamese from achieving the independence that they fought for. Allowing a Communist government to be democratically elected in Vietnam — which was internationally perceived as what would happen — was something that the US could not tolerate.

During the Vietnam War students, hippies, radicals, ordinary people, and even soldiers saw beyond the deceptive propaganda and blinding patriotism that was used to justify the war and saw the intervention for the atrocity it was. The amount of violence necessary to keep the Vietnamese in their place was intolerable, as was the function they were being forced to serve. But new Vietnams happen regularly. The most recent examples are Kosovo and Iraq. Both of these interventions have been cloaked in media lies in order to fabricate a consensus of support by the people who must fund and participate in these atrocities.

This pamphlet provides information on the truth of US military intervention around the world. If you take nothing else from reading this, know simply that imperialism—capitalism dominated by a handful of monopolies in the rich countries which control investment, production, and trade—means war. To keep the majority of the world people in misery requires massive violence and state terror. As Americans, we are complicit in the global robbery from the world's poorest people. It is therefore our duty to fight imperialism at home. The war protests of the late 60s and early 70s were just the beginning.

The Gulf War: Made in the U.S.A.

The United States does not hate Saddam Hussein because of any alleged human rights violations or acts of “unwarranted” aggression. The former is true but still beside the point while the latter justifies the bulk of anti-Iraq actions by the US even though it is largely a fabrication.

When Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1991, it was described as an unprovoked act of aggression of a large country invading a smaller. This rendition is particularly useful to create support for an imperialist war as it functions only within an ahistorical framework. The war against Iraq and the eight years of sanctions that have ensued are not isolated events. They are part of a larger plan of the United States and its Western allies to break down and control the middle east. The region is, after all, in Eisenhower's words, the “most strategically important area in the world.” The purpose of being involved in Middle East politics is not to ensure alleged humanitarian goals, but rather to weaken states, break them apart, pit them against one another, or simply dismantle them. Israel functions as the primary US client state in the region which maintains a nuclear arsenal Iraq could only dream of. The fact that US allies are far more dangerous to their neighbors than Iraq is of no importance and will not be admitted into the framework for justifying the war. When Iran's Mossadegh nationalized British oil industries in 1951, Western powers enacted an economic embargo that weakened the country enough that in two years the CIA successfully overthrew his government and installed the Shah Reza Pahlavi. Under the Shah, Iran was America's closest ally in

the region for 25 years, opening itself for US use in Cold War objectives. More importantly, the oil industries once controlled exclusively by the British were now being shared with US companies.

The Iranian revolution ended the relationship with Iran. In 1980, a year after the Iranian revolution, Iraq invaded Iran with tacit consent from the US. During this eight year war, the Iraqi arsenal that causes such alarm today was stocked by the US in support of its war against the rebel state of Iran. Evidently, Hussein was not as trustworthy as the Shah since at the same time the Reagan administration was covertly selling arms to Iran to fund its terror campaign in Nicaragua. During the Iran/Contra hearings, state department officials claimed that the reason arms were sold to the Iranian military was in hope of forging alliances with member of the Iranian military to stage a successful coup against the Islamic government of Iran. With all of this aside, the most fundamental analyses of the situation shows how the US funded both sides of the war to weaken the states. The US funded the destruction of Iran, while at the same time creating a new enemy who was already being weakened by funding the current enemy.

In 1988, after the Iran-Iraq war ended, Iraq was the largest threat to US oil interests in the region. Immediately US policy began working against Iraq. Old ideas of invading Iraq and seizing its fields were entertained in military circles. Two years later, US Central Command (CENTCOM), which had secretly been expanding military and surveillance bases in Saudi Arabia since 1983, revised War Plan 1002 into War Plan 1002-90 which replaced the Soviet Union with Iraq as the primary enemy. This predates Iraq's attack on Kuwait. That same month Hussein gave a speech to an Arab League summit stating:

“If the gulf people, along with all Arabs, are not care-

ful, the Arab Gulf region will be governed by the United States' will. If the Arabs are not alerted and the weakness persists, the situation could develop to the extent desired by the United States; that is, it would fix the amount of oil and gas produced in each country and sold to this or that country in the world. Prices would also be fixed in line with a special perspective benefiting US interest and ignoring the interests of others.”

The speech is the same crime committed by Mosedegh forty years earlier—unwillingness to let ones resources be dominated by a foreign power. Hussein was no longer a controllable ruler. General Schwarzkopf noted the threat to the “West's lifeblood.” After supporting Iraq in an eight year war, it had become the “pre-eminent military power in the Gulf” with the “capability to militarily coerce its neighboring states should diplomatic efforts fail to produce the desired results.” This is an important remark knowing that one of Iraq's reasons for invading Kuwait was in fact the country's production of oil above OPEC quotas which caused a drop in prices and a recession for Iraq.

That Hussein warned the Arab League about US hegemony in the Middle East the same month the Iraqi threat replaced the Soviet threat should not be ignored. It is evidence of deliberate planning against Iraq prior to any act of aggression. All subsequent history should be considered in this light.

Although Kuwait was made to appear an innocent country, it had been provoking Iraq since the Iraq-Iran war by drilling in the Rumaila oil field that ran beneath the somewhat ambiguous border between Iraq and Kuwait. Using equipment bought from the oil company of National Security Council chief Brent Scowcroft, Kuwait had pumped nearly \$14 billion worth of oil from underneath

territory claimed by Iraq. As mentioned earlier, Kuwait had been exceeding OPEC production quotas which caused the price of oil to plummet.

In addition to wanting reparations, Hussein wanted possession of two islands that blocked Iraq's access to the gulf. This appears expansionist and to some degree it is, but the historical record shows that Kuwait has, until after the first world war, been part of Iraq. The consciousness of the "Kuwaiti" people had always been the same as the Iraqi's. This fact was disregarded by British Colonial Office official Sir Percy Cox who arbitrarily set the boundary of Kuwait, cutting off most of Iraq's traditional access to the Gulf. Kuwait was created as a protectorate of British oil interests in the region. After independence was granted to Iraq in 1932, Kuwait was governed by a British-appointed royal family that allowed for a permanent naval base.

All of this was omitted from the official account of the invasion. Instead there were fabrications of atrocities, such as mass rapes and torture. One of the most famous was that Iraqi soldiers tore new born infants from their incubators and threw them on the ground to die. This was later revealed as a lie and the nurse who had witnessed it turned out to be the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United States.

The historical record shows Iraq was provoked into invading. While this does not justify the aggression it explains it in terms the American public were not told. More importantly, the provocation had been promoted by the US government. After the invasion of Kuwait, Iraqi officers discovered a memo from a November 1989 meeting between the head of Kuwaiti state security and CIA Director William Webster. In it was written:

"We agreed with the American side that it was important to take advantage of the deteriorating economic situation in Iraq in order to put pressure on

that country's government to delineate our common border. The Central Intelligence Agency gave us its view of appropriate means of pressure, saying that broad cooperation should be initiated between us on condition that such activities be coordinated at a high level."

The CIA called the memo a fraud but several sources affirm its authenticity.

After instructing Kuwait on how to provoke Iraq, the US claimed to "have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts," a statement made by US Ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie to Saddam Hussein himself. Glaspie told Hussein that "your [Saddam's] border disagreement with Kuwait" was among the Arab-Arab conflicts of which the US government had no opinion (despite the fact that it had helped in creating the conflict). The day before Iraq invaded Kuwait, John Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, assured Congress that even if Iraq invaded Kuwait the United States did "not have a treaty commitment which would obligate us to engage US forces." The US had all but given Iraq the green light, and when it responded to the provocation and stuck out its head, the US was there to chop it off immediately.

The US war completely annihilated Iraq, bombing nuclear facilities despite UN resolutions against the practice. Chemical facilities (including chemical warfare manufacturers) and alleged biological weapon factories were also bombed and released the deadly chemical agents, which were detected by European scientists but denied by US military officials. The use of Depleted Uranium (DU) shells, rockets, and missiles also devastated the civilian population. Uranium is a known carcinogen and is toxic if inhaled. Although the Pentagon claimed that all the attacks

were against military targets, this was only another in a long line of lies. The day after issuing such a statement a civilian air raid shelter was bombed killing 1,500 civilians, many of them women and children. While Baghdad was daily bombarded, the civilian population attempted to flee to Jordan. Buses, taxis and other automobiles were bombed on the highway into Jordan killing more civilians. The *LA Times* reported February 5 that the tonnage of bombs dropped on Iraq had “exceeded the combined allied air offensive of World War II.” The amount of Iraqi casualties is hard to calculate since there was no official count. Either the US generals did not care about the number of lives they had taken in the name of oil or they believed it was a number that must be suppressed for their own political skins. General Colin Powell stated the number of Iraqi military and civilian deaths is “really not a number I’m terribly interested in.”

After the country was destroyed, its economy ravished, heavy sanctions were imposed that continue through today. On average, 250 Iraqi civilians die everyday from hunger or lack of medical supplies which result from the sanctions. In the US these are regarded with a moral (self)righteousness, but their reality is appalling. Saddam Hussein is portrayed as an evil man, which is true, but that does not mean that his people must suffer horrendously. The people of Iraq are suffering today just as the people of Arab countries have suffered at the hands of Western imperialism since oil became the life blood of the west. The concern Saddam expressed over US control of their oil production has become a reality as the US has used the Gulf crisis as an excuse to strengthen its military presence there. The planning and logic is as deceitful as it is disgusting. As a result, the US was able to make or strengthen agreements for bases in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Bahrain, Kuwait, Pakistan, and Oman. Also, it can exert

even more control over Iraq as the conqueror and keeper of the peace. With the Soviet Union out of the picture, the US can now dictate the terms for the global order. Iraq shows this with dismal clarity.

Resources

1. William Blum, [Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II](#)
2. Ramsey Clark, [The Fire This Time: US War Crimes in the Gulf](#)
3. Mark Zepezauer, [The CIA's Greatest Hits](#)

Also see Alan Friedman, [Spider's Web: the Secret History of how the White House Illegally Armed Iraq](#)

Organizations:

Iraq Action Cetner

Voices in the Wilderness

Adapted from MIM Notes 41.

Capitalism Breeds Militarism

Amerikan imperialism attacks Yugoslavia

by MIM, printed in MIM Notes 184

15 April, 1999

On March 24th the United States and its military alliance called NATO started bombing Yugoslavia. Six B-52 bombers, four American ships, two American subs, a British sub and 2 Stealth B-2 bombers took part in the attacks. According to the Serbs of Yugoslavia, the NATO attacks hit targets in at least nine different geographic locations in Kosovo.

President Clinton claims to have acted in the name of preventing further massacres of Albanians in Kosovo by the Serbs.

Nine of 10 people in Kosovo are Albanian, but Serbs consider it a birthplace of their nation.(1) Kosovo borders Albania and Macedonia.

The most important thing we have to say about the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and former Soviet countries is that all the peoples involved are oppressed and exploited people. The only war possibly worth having is for socialist revolution. The wars as they have occurred under Western tutelage have been wars of proletarians and other oppressed peoples against proletarians and other oppressed peoples.

It's not often that MIM will agree with the reactionary rock band "Guns N' Roses," but we "don't need your civil war. It feeds the rich and it buries the poor." Specifically these wars enrich the arms merchants and do nothing to move the Balkans forward.

Geopolitical overtones

It would be wrong to say the United States is "taking advantage" of internal conflicts in Yugoslavia; although its military manufacturers certainly are. The United States is the main prop in the system that produces Yugoslavian types of conflicts—capitalism.

The imperialists occasionally try to blame the communist movement for the national conflicts arising in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. However, what we are seeing in the former Yugoslavia was happening before there was a Soviet Union. Specifically, World War I arose out of the tensions in the capitalist Balkan countries and it was World War I which produced the Soviet Union as the first socialist country. Hence, the cause of the conflicts amongst exploited peoples must be sought in capitalism, not socialism.

When President Clinton says he is bombing the Serbs to keep Albania, Macedonia and others from entering a war in Yugoslavia, we have to admit that such a widespread war is a possibility. It's like when the drug kingpin says that without him there'd only be much smaller ones fighting it out over their turf. That's why we revolutionaries shoot to destroy the whole underlying system and we don't just oppose one bombing or put faith in single-issue movements.

Capitalist system breeds militarism

Even though the Cold War is over, we see that capitalism just cannot provide peace. Multi-billion dollar weapons manufacturers are one obvious reason why. Socialism will put an end to arms trade for profit.

Ethnic conflict too is ultimately rooted in conflict over resources. Socialism will make a dent in that and prepare the ground for an internationalist communist economic cooperation of all peoples.

Edited for space by Los Angeles RAIL. Full text of this article is available on-line at <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mn/kosovo/>

Notes:

1. New York Times 25Mar99, p.1, a12.

KOSOVO LESSON

PEACE MOVEMENT NEEDED

by MIM

1 May, 1999

The Clinton administration says that it is going into Kosovo on a humanitarian mission. Yet there are so many humanitarian missions that need to be done in this world that are not done, that no principled person takes the Clinton administration seriously. If Clinton were serious, he would preface his remarks with self-criticism for not taking up humanitarian concerns in the past consistently.

NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) talks about how the Russians should not side with the Serbian president Milosevic. No doubt most of the world has a low regard for him; yet, when a white minority ruled the apartheid system in so-called South Africa, we did not see Uncle Sam send troops. In fact, the United States sent the white fascists weapons. Such situations of Milosevic or worse abound in the world, but most of them do not result in U.S. bombing. In fact, most of the worst criminal rulers receive U.S. backing.

As some have pointed out, Bush would not have stood for the New World Order in Kuwait if all Kuwait had was broccoli. The U.S. Government is not principled in a humanitarian way or in a way concerning self-determina-

tion of nations. It deserves no respect for bandying about these concepts whenever it needs to cover up its true compulsions.

What's at stake in the anti-militarist movement

The anti-militarist movement in the imperialist countries needs to connect with the masses on how the system is irrational for them. Even if capitalism were as efficient in making people work as the capitalists say, it is not worth the war that comes with it. The people with a self-interest in having wars are the people who do not fight the wars and the elderly rich who are willing to compromise with the devil to live a few years of luxurious life. We must think more of future generations.

Already the Balkans caused two world wars this century. Now the masses are giving the capitalist politicians a chance to do it again. The imperialist politicians gamble with everyone's lives.

The fact that it is legal to sell arms for profit means that there are very rich people with an incentive to instigate war. . . For this reason alone we must be rid of capitalism.

The proletariat and oppressed masses are being far too generous in withholding violence against this system that threatens human existence.

Many Euro-Americans spend thousands of dollars on suburban homes and burglar alarms and commute many miles to avoid just a small probability of street crime. George Bush beat Michael Dukakis in 1988 elections just by mentioning a Black rapist. Yet when it comes to war

risks, Euro-Amerikans hardly raise a peep that cost them nothing but maybe an hour of their time at a demonstration.

If there is a five percent chance of nuclear annihilation each year, there is only a 7.7% chance of surviving 50 years from now. (That is .95 raised to the 50th power.) If it is only a two percent chance we face each year, then after 50 years the probability of surviving is 36.4%. (That is .98 raised to the 50th power.)

Socialism is outlawing production for profit. If socialism could reduce the causes of war just one percent each year, it could prove to buy us the time we need as a species to learn to cooperate.

If socialism got us from a two percent chance of annihilation to a one percent chance each year, our probability of survival after 50 years would rise from 36.4% to 60.5%.

By the standards of the Iroquois people who do not do anything that would have negative implications for people seven generations from now, a one percent chance of nuclear war would mean only a 17.2% chance of humyn survival 175 years from now.

The fact that even a mere 1% chance of nuclear annihilation each year spells doom is something known to engineers who design systems and to people who study processes involving entropy. It is actually very difficult to design a system that fails only 1% of the year.

The profit motive is an indiscriminate motivator. When Yugoslavia shot down a Stealth Fighter F117A, U.\$. taxpayers footed the bill for \$45 million — and Third World superexploitation footed the bill of the taxpayers' pie. Lockheed made the profit. Social-democratic critics of us communists targeting the system say that the capitalists can be reasoned with when war gets too expensive. The question is too expensive for whom? War is only expensive in the ruling class mind when its rule is threatened.

The fact that it is legal to sell arms for profit means that there are very rich people with an incentive to instigate war. They act through their lobbyists in legislatures and executive branches but also behind-the-scenes stoking up war hatreds. For this reason alone, we must be rid of capitalism. We must design an extremely stable system with no motive for war—communism.

Edited for space by Los Angeles RAIL. Full text of this article is available on-line at <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mn/kosovo/>

NATO demanded occupation of Yugoslavia, not just Kosovo

by MIM

12 May, 1999

Diplomats offering Serbian leader Milosevic a peace treaty knew all along they would fail, because they offered impossible terms for him to sign before the bombing started. It is a real testimony to the ignorance and imperialist chauvinism of the major media outlets that no one checked on the Western side of the story. Now it is clear that no leader would have signed the peace treaty offered by NATO. NATO asked to occupy all of Yugoslavia, not just Kosovo.

The facts about the NATO peace treaty offered support to Noam Chomsky's contention that U.\$. diplomacy often uses the tactic of making a situation worse in order to step in as a savior.

Phony Maoists in Germany have pointed out the relevant facts to MIM. The truth is the truth, even when it comes from phony Maoists and homophobes.

Walter Grobe of verlag@neue-einheit.com pointed

out the following:

But NATO goes much further, in the Appendix B of the draft treaty of Rambouillet:

“8. NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY including associated airspace and territorial waters. This shall include, but not be limited to, the right of bivouac, maneuver, billet, and utilization of any areas or facilities as required for support, training, and operations.”

The complete document can be downloaded from (among others): <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/kosovo.htm>, or from

http://members.tripod.com/foreignaffairs/armillotta/kos_kla4.html, a site which runs under “KLA”.

There are further points of this Appendix B:

“3. The Parties recognize the need for expeditious departure and entry procedures for NATO personnel. Such personnel shall be exempt from passport and visa regulations and the registration requirements applicable to aliens. At all entry and exit points to/from the FRY, NATO personnel shall be permitted to enter/exit the FRY on production of a national identification (ID) card. NATO personnel shall carry identification which they may be requested to produce for the authorities in the FRY, but operations, training, and movement shall not be allowed to be impeded or delayed by such requests.”

“6. (a) NATO shall be immune from all legal process, whether civil, administrative, or criminal.

(b) NATO personnel, under all circumstances and at all times, shall be immune from the Parties’ jurisdiction in respect of any civil, administrative, criminal, or disciplinary offenses which may be committed by them in the FRY. The Parties shall assist States participating in the operation in the exercise of their jurisdiction over their own nationals.”

An A-Z of US aggression

Adapted by MIM from an article by Zanny Begg

Below is a partial list of US military interventions through-out its history and around the world. This list provides an overview of and introduction to the systematic nature of US imperialism from its inception to the present time. It neither captures the full list of how many countries the US has plundered militarily to support its economic interests, nor tells the full story of each individual country. And we need to keep in mind that independent of any one military action, the status quo of US imperialism means violence, starvation, labor exploitation and death for millions around the world. -MIM

ANGOLA — 1975: Civil war breaks out after Portugal is forced to withdraw. The US backs the right-wing Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA). Angola is invaded several times by South Africa with covert support by the US. Hundreds of thousands are killed.

BOLIVIA — 1950s: the US armed and trained the Bolivian military, in a successful effort to make the country more favorable to US capital. 1967: Around 100 US advisers are part of the military force which murders Che Guevara and his comrades in Bolivia.

CUBA — 1899: US occupies with 18,000 marines. 1902: Cuba is forced to sign the Platt Amendment, giving the US the “right” to intervene in Cuba’s internal affairs at any time. 1906, 1916 and 1917: US troops invade and occupy Cuba. 1933: US government over-throws Cuban government. 1959: Cuban revolution. 1961: US attempts to invade

Cuba to overthrow the revolutionary government. 1999: the US still maintains a blockade against Cuba and an illegal military base at Guantanamo.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC — 1965: The US sends 22,000 troops to support a military regime that had recently overthrown a civilian government.

EL SALVADOR — 1981-92: US backed a right-wing military dictatorship in its war against the anti-U.S. Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). 75,000 people are killed during this so-called civil war.

FIJI — 1987: The US offers tacit support to the leaders of the military coup against the Fiji Labour Party government.

GRENADA — 1983: US forces invade Grenada when conflicts within the government, including the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, created an opportunity to install a pro-US regime.

HAITI — US invades in 1915 and 1918, leaving occupying troops to directly rule until 1934. The US then backs a series of dictators including the father and son Duvaliers, until 1990, when Aristide won a presidential election. In 1994, 6000 US marines invade Haiti to pre-serve US domination of the island.

IRAQ — 1991: US uses its dominance of the United Nations to launch a war for oil profits and political-economic hegemony in the Persian Gulf. At least 200,000 Iraqi civilians are killed. US-imposed sanctions kill more than 1 million people. “No-fly zones” continue to be enforced over northern and southern Iraq.

JAPAN — 1945: US drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the two atomic attacks alone, approximately 150,000 people were killed. Earlier in the war, conventional bombings of Japanese cities yield a death toll of 80,000 in one night alone in Tokyo.

KOSOVO — 1999: the US-led NATO alliance bombs Serbia and Kosovo.

LEBANON — 1958: 10,000 US marines invade. 1982-84: US sends troops to expel Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) fighters and Arab rebels.

MEXICO — 1845-1848: US steals one third of Mexican territory, to become the state of California. 1914: US warships attack Vera Cruz and send troops to occupy the province.

NICARAGUA — 1927-33: US forces occupy Nicaragua to fight revolutionary leader Augusto Sandino's liberation army. Late 1970s: The US backed Somoza dictatorship's National Guard kills tens of thousands of civilians in a war against the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), which overthrows Somoza in 1979. The US backs a covert war against the new government, arming and funding the contras until the Sandinista government loses the elections in 1990.

OMAN — 1962: US oil companies discover oil in Oman. 1965: the people of Oman rise up and form the Liberation Front for the Occupied Arabian Gulf. The US pressures Iran to intervene. It is subsequently revealed that the sultan of Oman had signed a secret deal with the Iranian monarchy to aid the anti-guerrilla war.

PANAMA — 1901: After engineering Panama's separation from Colombia, the US takes control of the Canal Zone. 1918: US forces invade five cities in Panama. 1964: US troops attack protesters who attempt to fly the Panamanian flag in the Canal Zone. In December 1989 the US invades Panama, killing 2000 people.

QATAR — 1995: US stores equipment to supply armored brigades in Qatar.

RWANDA — 1994: the French-backed Interahamwe government commits one of the worst massacres in this century. During the 1980s, the CIA helped funnel arms to the Interahamwe through Zaire. US officials now admit that the US tried to cover up the extent of the massacre.

SOMALIA — 1995: under the guise of a "humanitarian mission", 35,000 US-led troops occupy Somalia after food "aid" helped destroy the local economy. Troops land on a beach in Mogadishu to coincide with prime time TV broadcasts.

TIMOR — 1975: the US dramatically increases its military aid to Indonesia, enabling the Indonesian government to invade to quell the East Timorese resistance. Until 1991, the US was the main provider of military aid and training to the Indonesian regime. More than 250,000 East Timorese have died since the Indonesian invasion. In 1999, following the East Timorese vote for independence in August, as many as 200,000 East Timorese have been driven out of their territory by the US-backed Habibie regime, and there have been reports that 10,000 have been killed.

USSR — 5,000 troops were sent to the Arctic ports in 1919 and 10,000 to Siberia in 1920 in an unsuccessful attempt to crush the Russian Revolution.

VIETNAM — 1954-1976: US initially sends military advisors to the occupying French government in Vietnam, eventually sending in hundreds of thousands of ground troops and conducting massive air raids against North Vietnam. The US drops the equivalent of 620 Hiroshima bombs over the next 10 years in an unsuccessful attempt to crush the Vietnamese revolution. The US kills more than one million Vietnamese and displaces millions more.

WAKE ISLAND — 1899: US annexes Wake Island.

XIENG KHOUANG — 1960s: US Special Forces established a base in this northeastern Laos province as part of its intervention in a civil war.

YUGOSLAVIA — 1992: UN/US arms embargo allows the chauvinists backed by the Serbian regime to massacre the multi-ethnic Bosnian forces. US forces down jets over Bosnia in 1993. More bombing in 1999.

ZAIRE — 1998: one of the world's longest serving dictators, Mobutu, backed by the US, falls. During the 1980s, the US loaned Mobutu over \$40 million a year.

COLOMBIA

A War on Drugs?

President Clinton recently announced plans for a sharp increase in military and development aid to Colombia, from \$289 million last year, to \$1.6 billion over the next two years. The increase means that between 1997 and 2000, aid to Colombia has jumped from \$85 million over \$500 million annually .(1) According to the Los Angeles Times, about \$600 million of the money would be used to train Colombian “counter-narcotics” battalions and buy 30 Blackhawk helicopters. Pentagon officials added that the money would also be used to fund a new air base in Ecuador near the Colombian border and radar for the Colombian military, allegedly to intercept suspected drug flights.(2)

The recent escalation of US military aid and intervention in Colombia should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the history of US intervention in Latin America. The shameless US government tries to convince people that the reason for sending hundreds of millions of dollars, military equipment and military personnel to Colombia is to fight the “war on drugs”. In reality, the US is more concerned with the rapidly increasing strength of Colombia's two largest guerrilla groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Spanish acronym, FARC) and the National Liberation Army (Spanish acronym, ELN). These movements, both labeled “terrorist” by the US government, directly threaten the current US backed puppet government in a populous country that is rich in natural resources and of strategic importance to US control over Central and South America.

The two groups, with armed combatants numbering between 15 and 20 thousand, have won a number of key military victories in the last few years and have increasingly used the hundreds of millions of dollars in “taxes” collected from coca producers to finance their struggle to overthrow the Colombian government. A number of US and Colombian officials have voiced concern that the guerrilla forces may actually have the ability to defeat the Colombian army and topple the comprador government in Bogota. Whether or not this is true, the claim is part and parcel of a concerted effort to justify increased US military intervention in the nation’s internal affairs, and in the region generally.

It is the link between the guerrillas and drug smuggling, however, that the US government always trots out to specifically justify the increasing militarization of the drug war. According to the government, the rebels are nothing more than drug smuggling terrorists who need to be crushed. Of course, the mainstream US media are more than happy to spoon feed this line to a receptive public. As a result, the governments in Bogota and Washington can escalate what is ultimately a war against the masses in Colombia with little opposition.

Background

Colombia’s people are poor, although the nation is rich in natural resources. In a country of about 39 million people, the official estimate is that 18% of the people live below the poverty line and that the top 1% of the population receives 47% of the nation’s household income.(3) The landed elite (less than 3% of the population) control over 70% of arable land while 57% of the poorest farmers subsist on less than 3%.(4) The official unemployment rate is expected to reach a record 20% within the next

year.(5) Unofficially, the unemployment rate has been put at twice the official rate, and closer to 50% of the population are reportedly living in poverty.(6)

The response of Colombia’s reactionary government has been to impose the same neoliberal austerity measures implemented by the lackeys of imperialism all over the Third World. President Pastrana has vowed to cut social spending and tighten the government’s budget so the international lending community (re: the IMF and World Bank) will see that Colombia is committed to free market reforms.

US involvement in Colombia has a bloody history, reaching back decades. Colombia, like much of the Third World, became a battleground in the American led war on communism during the Cold War. The US proxy war has been particularly devastating for Colombia. The country has one of the worst human rights’ records in the world and is the global leader in political killings and assassinations. Between 1988 and 1995 over 67,000 people were killed in political violence, averaging 23.4 people per day.(7) In 1998, the Colombia Support Network recorded 3,382 political murders, including 1,500 individual assassinations, 1,000 cases of social cleansing (killing of beggars, prostitutes, homosexuals and street children) and 1,332 people killed in massacres.

The US has consistently backed, trained and equipped the right wing death squads responsible for most of these killings, and the state army that supports them (as have Britain, Israel and Germany). During the Cold War the justification for American involvement was the fight against communism. Since the end of the Cold War the justification has been the fight against “narco-terrorism”.

Successive Colombian governments have employed the same low intensity counter insurgency warfare techniques developed by the United States around the world to

combat “internal enemies”, primarily armed national liberation movements. A former Minister of Foreign Affairs for Colombia wrote that during the heart of the Cold War, “Washington took great pains to transform our regular armies into counterinsurgency brigades, accepting the new strategy of the death squads.”(8)

The use of counterinsurgency tactics expanded under the Reagan administration. Between 1984 and 1992, almost 7,000 Colombian soldiers were trained under the US international Military Education and Training Program and over 2,000 Colombian officers were trained by the US between 1990 and 1992, “as violence reached unprecedented levels.”(9) Although the State Department cited improvements in Colombia’s human rights record as justification for increasing the flow of military aid and equipment, evidence presented by Human Rights Watch in 1996 shows that Washington was both aware of and involved in the expansion of the paramilitary networks and the counterinsurgency war.(10) The report documents:

the disturbing role played by the United States in Colombia’s military-paramilitary partnership. Despite Colombia’s disastrous human rights record, a U.S. Defense Department and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) team worked with Colombian military officers on the 1991 intelligence reorganization that resulted in the creation of these killer networks. In addition, the U.S. provided weapons ostensibly to fight drugs to Colombian military units with a record of serious and continuing human rights violations without establishing mechanisms to ensure that U.S. aid is not used to commit these violations. U.S. military aid has gone to at least twenty-four Colombian army units primarily devoted to fighting guerrillas, not drugs. Most of these units have been implicated in human rights violations. Massacres committed by just one of the units that received U.S. military aid, the Palace Battalion, claimed the lives of at least 120 noncombatants since 1990, killings that remain largely unpunished. Nevertheless, U.S. arms grants and sales to Colombia not only continue unimpeded, but are expected to reach a record level. The Pentagon estimates

sales in FY [fiscal year, ed.]1996 at \$84 million and in FY 1997 at \$123 million — the highest level ever.

The astronomical level of political killings in Colombia is a direct result of the political policies developed by the US imperialists, and the equipment and training provided by the Pentagon. Simply put, the heart of counter-insurgency is the terrorization of the civilian population, especially peasants who may support the guerrilla movement. Counter-insurgency tactics include intimidating, imprisoning and killing any and all leftist opponents of the government, be they union organizers, social workers or progressive clergy, on the grounds that they are aiding and abetting “communist extremists”. The idea is to destroy the broad based popular support networks (re: civilians) that allow guerrilla armies to effectively challenge technologically superior armies of the imperialist aggressors. Therefore, it is the incredibly wide range of legitimate “military” targets under counter-insurgency programs that accounts for Colombia’s unsurpassed body count.

US Involvement and the “War on Drugs”

The end of the Cold War has not meant an end, or even a decrease, in US military intervention in Colombia. Citing yearly increases in coca and poppy cultivation (clear evidence of the bankruptcy of a militaristic approach to the drug trade), the US continues to pour more and more military resources into the country. In addition to the \$1.6 billion Washington plans to spend over the next two years, the US continues to use its special forces to train Colombian commando units, allegedly to fight the drug war. Amerikan intelligence planes also routinely fly counter-narcotics missions over Colombian airspace (2,000 at last count) and use these flights to gather information on

guerrilla activity. The information is then passed on to the Colombian army and national police. (11)

Amerikan involvement doesn't end there. Already between 150-200 military "advisors" are in Colombia and 1,000 U\$ marines are stationed at a military base on the Colombian Pacific coast at Bahia Malaga. Furthermore, citing reports that U\$ patience for a negotiated settlement between the guerrillas and the government is wearing out, Nikolas Kozloff writes that US leaders have been actively "courting Latin American leaders to organize a military intervention force to pacify Colombia." The force would intervene at President Pastrana's request.(12)

U\$ military intervention and involvement in supporting Colombia's reactionary regime is directed and coordinated by Miami South Com, in Miami, Florida. This is significant for two reasons. First, Miami South Com is the site of the U\$ Southern Command, which is responsible for all Latin American and Caribbean military operations. Miami Com had a 1998 budget of \$566 million and, according to Charles Wilhelm, South Com's commander, the center is the "most technologically advanced military intelligence facility in the world."(13)

The second reason is that Wilhelm has collaborated with top Colombian officials and ex-officials, some with alleged connections to right wing death squads. Wilhelm has, for example, reportedly met with former Colombian Defense Minister Harold Bedoya Nava in 1997 to discuss the need for U\$ military involvement in Colombia.(14) Nava, a graduate of and instructor at the U\$ School of the Americas (re: School of Assassins), was one of the worst human rights offenders in the Colombian military. According to School of the Americas Watch, "[Nava] was believed to be the founder and chief of the paramilitary death squad known as 'AAA' (American Anti-Communist Alliance)."(15)

According to the Colombian government and U\$ imperialists, there are four sides in the armed Colombian conflict: the leftist guerrillas, the right wing paramilitaries, the narco-traffickers, and the Colombian government. According to the official story, the Colombian government is attempting to build a modern, multi-party democracy, but is held back by chaotic violence committed by these other groups fighting each other for control of the drug trade.

This scenario is a total fabrication. In reality, all available evidence links the right wing paramilitaries with the Amerikan and Colombian governments. Because of the intimate link between the drug trade and the paramilitaries, there is also significant evidence linking the government to the drug trade. In fact, a number of right wing paramilitaries are made up of former drug cartel forces.(16)

The lie serves a number of important purposes. First, it obscures the role and extent of state sponsored terror. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), only 2% of the human rights violations in Colombia are directly attributable to the government, while 78% can be attributed to the right wing death squads (the remaining 20% is attributed to the various rebel groups). However, as HRW points out in its 1999 report on Colombia, "the percentage does not reflect state forces that routinely assisted paramilitary atrocities. Indeed, cooperation between army units and paramilitaries remained commonplace."(17) What has been happening is that the death squad activities routinely carried out covertly by the government during the Cold War are being farmed out to the "independent" paramilitaries.

The appearance that the death squads and the government are in fact two unrelated forces serves as a ploy to keep U\$ guns, advisors and mercenaries flowing into the country. As mentioned earlier, alleged improvements in human rights abuses reported by the State Department in 1989 were fabricated so as to justify increased

military aid in the early 1990's. In reality, all that happened was that a few prominent government butchers were moved behind the scenes and stripped of their official titles. As HRW documented, human rights violations were actually increasing during that period.

The current escalation of Amerikan imperialism in Colombia relies on the same game of smoke and mirrors. This time the ruse is the issue of "certification", a process by which the Washington decides who is a fully cooperating partner in fighting the drug war. Colombia was certified for the first time in three years in 1999, immediately after a one to two year period of significant guerrilla gains. As the LA Times reports, "Without certification, the US was limited to providing only aid directly linked to the war against drugs and some training under a program that is supposed to benefit mainly US soldiers who participate. Certification allows Washington to offer any aid it wishes." (18)

There are restrictions on paper as to who can receive this aid. Because all but two battalions in the Colombian army have been linked to human rights abuses, and are therefore ineligible for aid, most of the money has gone to the national police force. In reality, as HRW and others have pointed out, there is no mechanism in place to ensure that aid and equipment don't end up in the wrong hands. Furthermore, the national police and the army are increasingly working together, making the distinction between them less and less relevant.

More importantly, the distinction between "good" and "bad" battalions, police forces and commando units is meaningless in the long run, as all are involved in a counter-insurgency campaign against peasants, guerrillas, and their supporters. The nature of the campaign, developed and orchestrated by US imperialists, is to subdue the population, destroy the guerrillas and make the country

stable and safe for foreign investment. This, by definition, is a violation of human rights. In a typical example of imperialistic doublespeak, Secretary of State Madeline Albright recently said that "this is not a counterinsurgency program. This is a counter narco-trafficking program." Just a few months prior, the US drug czar, Geneal McCaffery, claimed that it no longer made sense to distinguish between the drug war and the war against the guerrillas.

The crisis in the Colombian government stems from its inability to meet the people's basic needs — food, jobs and real economic development for people's needs. This inability in turn stems from the fact that the government is in the hands of corrupt and reactionary bourgeois elements, which ultimately allies with Amerikan imperialists to preserve their power and wealth. This is why Communism, and in particular, Maoism, remains of utmost relevance to the oppressed and exploited masses, the majority of whom live in neo-colonies like Colombia. Because the imperialist-backed puppets will defend the status quo with arms, Protracted People's War is necessary to mobilize the masses to overthrow them and institute a socialist government. A socialist government could address the people's needs, unhampered by the need to defend a tiny minority's "right" to profit off of the working and toiling masses. Mao's theory that class struggle continues under socialism is the best weapon for preventing the rise of new bourgeois elements inside the revolutionary state, who would then sell the country back to the imperialists.

NOTES

(1) LA Times "US Losing War on Drugs in Colombia" Aug. 8th, 1999; LA Times "Clinton Backs \$1 Billion for Colombia" Jan. 8th, 2000

(2) LA Times "Clinton Seeks \$1.6 Billion for Colombia" Jan. 12th, 2000

- (3) CIA World Factbook, 1999
- (4) Noam Chomsky in Colombia: The Genocidal Democracy by Javier Giraldo S.J. Common Courage Press: Monroe, ME 1996 p.14
- (5) LA Times "Doubts Swirl Around Colombian Leader" Aug. 25th, 1999
- (6) LA Times op-ed, Alexander Cockburn "Drug War Masks US Aid to Thugs" Fall 1999
- (7) Data Bank of the Comision Inter-Congregacional de Justicia y Paz. Reprinted in Giraldo, op. cit. p.16
- (8) Chomsky in Giraldo op. cit. p.10
- (9) ibid., p.12
- (10) Human Rights Watch "Colombia's Killer Networks" 1996
- (11) Time Magazine 8/9/99 A Carpet of Cocaine Tim McGirk p.51
- (12) Nikolas Kozloff Z Magazine Dec. 1999 "Miami South Com" pp.11-12
- (13) ibid., p.11
- (14) ibid., p.12
- (15) reprinted in ibid.
- (16) The links between the government, the paramilitaries and the drug lords are discussed and documented in Javier Giraldo's , Colombia: The Genocidal Democracy
- (17) Human Rights Watch, 1999 Report on Colombia
- (18) LA Times 8/8/99 "US is Losing War on Drugs in Colombia" pp.A1/A11,12 emphasis added

Starvation: Everyday violence under capitalism

This pamphlet documents merely some of the wars of aggression launched by Amerikan imperialism in the last forty years, which killed millions. Such barbarity is the inevitable product of a social system dominated by monopoly capital and war profiteering. This is one reason why we oppose imperialism and organize to take away the "right" of a handful to profit off of the suffering of the many.

But even if there were not shooting wars raging across the world right now, we could still say that capitalism in general and imperialism in particular kills millions every year - through starvation. In fact, the numbers killed by bullets and bombs are tiny compared to those felled by this "hidden" violence. Over 14 million children die each year from starvation. That's more than 26 every minute.(1)

These deaths occur despite the fact that the world grows enough food to give every person five pounds of food every day. Ten percent of the grain fed to livestock in the rich countries of the world would solve the hunger problem. Why do those who need the food the most not receive it? Because, in the eyes of the capitalists who produce it, that would not be profitable.

So if imperialism is so bad, what is our alternative? For starters, countries can achieve political and economic liberation from the dictates of imperialism and focus on meeting the needs of their people. This can be best achieved by implementing self-reliant socialism. One of the best historical examples of this is China, from 1949 to 1976.

By breaking away from imperialism, China gained a

lot of ground on the much richer countries of Western Europe in reducing violence. The median life expectancy in Western Europe was 74 in 1989. In China, life expectancy was 69. So even compared with countries much richer, China was not doing so badly in keeping its citizens alive.

The effectiveness of national liberation and socialism in eliminating poverty and other “hidden” forms of violence can be demonstrated by comparing China and India. Both countries were very poor at the time of their independence. Both populations were three-quarters peasants. Both gained independence at about the same time, with India taking the capitalist path and China the socialist.

Since independence, China has made more progress than India, as is illustrated in the following table.

TABLE: Comparison of social indicators in India and China

| | India | China |
|---|-------|-------|
| | ===== | |
| Under 5 mortality rate, 1945 | 430 | 520 |
| Under 5 mortality rate, 1945 | 158 | 50 |
| Infant mortality rate, 1945 | 203 | 280 |
| Infant mortality rate, 1985 | 105 | 36 |
| Life expectancy at birth, 1985 | 57 | 69 |
| Percent of adults who are literate, male/female, 1985 | 57/29 | 82/56 |
| Daily per capita calorie supply as percent of requirements, 1983 | 96 | 111 |

Source: Vincent Navarro, “Historical triumph: Capitalism or socialism?” Monthly Review, 1989.

When China was capitalist, India enjoyed better health than China. Now each year India suffers 2.92 million deaths because it does not do as well as China - mainly thanks to its private property in land which results in landlessness, unemployment and starvation.(2) The story is similar in other Asian countries with large, poor, peasant populations, like Bangladesh. Bangladesh had a life expectancy under 50 in 1986.

Even China itself is going back to the dangers of famine as a result of the counter-revolution that brought Deng Xiaoping and his successors into power. According to the Chinese government itself, 20 million people faced starvation in 1988.

The world’s starving people would surely seize the food they need if they could. But, as some of the examples in this pamphlet illustrate, the imperialists and local capitalists use force to keep them in their place and prevent the poor from eating. Yet, somehow, when revolutionaries use force to ensure that the poor can have food and can produce goods for their own needs, they are labeled “terrorists” or worse. We disagree, and think that the real terrorists and butchers are those who deprive people of their basic rights to eat and survive.

Adapted from MIM Notes 39.

Notes:

1. Ruth Sivard, “World Military and Social Expenditures 1987-8.”
2. World Almanac and Handbook of Facts 1989.