

Anti-Imperialist News Service

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Some History of U.S. Aggression and Pressure Against Iran

Since the heroic Iranian Revolution 30 years ago, every administration of the U.S. government has been determined to overthrow the new Iranian regime and reassert its former domination over the country.

On February 7, U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden reaffirmed the new administration's aggressive stance towards Iran and declared that Iran has, "a very clear choice: continue down the current course and there will be continued pressure and isolation; abandon the illicit nuclear program and your support for terrorism, and there will be meaningful incentives." Since occupying Iraq, the U.S. government has been stepping up its pressure and threats against Iran by accusing it of "sup-

porting terrorism" and "building nuclear weapons," despite the facts that Iran is in full compliance with the regulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency and that it has long opposed the al Qaeda network.

Of course, the real motive behind increasing U.S. economic, diplomatic and military pressure against Iran is the drive of the U.S. monopoly capitalists to dominate that country's vast natural resources and its strategic location. (Iran holds 10% of the world's oil reserves, is second, only to Russia, in gas reserves, and offers potential control of the vital Straits of Hormuz.)

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Bolivia Set to Carry Out New Constitution

Bolivia's president Evo Morales ratified the country's new constitution on February 7, marking a milestone in the country's project of making profound changes in the structures of the state and recovering Bolivia's natural resources from the multinational corporations.

A constituent assembly elected in 2006 drafted the new constitution which the people approved in a referendum on January 28 of this year.

Morales describes the constitution as one which will "refound Bolivia as a new state with

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U.S. Admits Plans to Continue Strikes into Pakistan

Barack Obama's Defense Secretary Robert Gates admits the U.S. will continue to extend its war into Pakistan and said on January 27, "Both President Bush and President Obama have made it clear that we will go after al Qaeda wherever al Qaeda is and we will continue to pursue that."

The U.S. military is regularly extending the war into Pakistan and committing atrocities. Three days after Obama took office, he ordered missile strikes into Pakistan which killed over 20 people. The U.S. has launched at least 30 missile strikes into Pakistan since August of last year.

History of U.S. Aggression and Pressure Against Iran

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In honor of the 30th anniversary of the Iranian revolution—one of the great anti-imperialist victories of our time—and in order to assist the ongoing struggles of the people against every aggressive step taken by the U.S. government towards Iran, the staff of the AINS has chosen to reprint some introductory material on the history of U.S. imperialism in Iran, previously published in *The Worker*, newspaper of the Workers Party, U.S.A.

Some History of U.S. Aggression and Pressure Against Iran

1950's: CIA Overthrows Nationalist Government

With the end of World War II, the U.S. replaced Britain as the dominant imperialist power in the Middle East.

The eyes of the U.S. monopolies were fixed on the region's vast oil wealth. In 1947, the government's special Interdepartmental Committee spelled out the official United States Petroleum Policy: "to seek the removal or modification of existing barriers (legal, contractual or otherwise) to the expansion of American foreign oil operations and facilitate the entry or re-entry of private foreign capital into countries where the absence of such capital inhibits oil development . . . [and] promote the entry of additional American firms into all phases of foreign oil operations." This policy was officially codified in the Truman Doctrine which declared that "The Near and Middle East . . . Contains vast natural resources [and] . . . Lies across the most convenient route of land, air and water communication."

The major roadblock to U.S. capitalism's thirst for Middle Eastern oil was the rising national movements of the peoples who were determined to throw off the yoke of Western colonialism. In the words of Truman's Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, George McGhee the "threat" to the penetration of U.S. firms "lay in the possibility of a handful of nationalist leaders moving to upset regimes which were relatively inept and corrupt." Thus, Truman adopted a 3-pronged U.S. strategy, including direct military intervention, building up reactionary local regimes, and supporting the aggressive Israeli state, in order to "protect" the region's "great natural resources . . . From armed minorities or

outside pressure."

Iran was one of the first countries militarized by U.S. imperialism in its struggle for Middle Eastern oil and domination. In 1946, the U.S. military provided advisers and support to help the Iranian monarchy defeat a popular insurgency. The U.S. not only feared the nationalization of Iranian oil but that this could establish a precedent inspiring other nationalist movements in the region. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in reporting on its intervention in Iran, wrote: "as a source of oil Iran is an area of major strategic interest to the U.S." and that the "loss" of Iran could also threaten U.S. holdings in Saudi Arabia "a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history."

In 1953, U.S. imperialism's fears were realized when the elected Iranian government headed by Mossadegh nationalized the vast oil holdings of the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The Eisenhower administration reacted by organizing a C.I.A. coup d'etat which employed U.S. military advisers and reactionary Iranian military leaders to overthrow Mossadegh and restore the monarchy headed by Shah Reza Pahlavi. Within weeks after the coup, the Eisenhower administration sent millions in military aid to build up the Shah's army. Over the next 10 years more than \$2 billion in U.S. economic and military aid was sent to build up the new, pro-U.S. regime. By 1954, the grateful Shah had signed a new contract ceding control over Iranian oil to a new international consortium - 40% went to U.S. oil companies, 40% to the British, 14% to the Dutch company Shell and 6% to the French.

From 1953 until the Iranian revolution in 1979, the U.S. and British oil companies pumped 25 billion barrels of oil out of Iran and the entire economy was taken over by such U.S. banking and business interests as Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank, Westinghouse, Pan-Am, the Heinz investment group, Allied Chemical, etc.

The U.S. government armed the Shah to the teeth in order to suppress the Iranian people. Tens of thousands of U.S. military advisers and CIA operatives directed the

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Shah's military and police network. The infamous SAVAK, the Shah's secret police, systematically suppressed any internal dissent, killing and imprisoning tens of thousands of Iranians. In addition, the Shah's armies were used as a regional police force on behalf of U.S. interests, occupying several islands in the region, invading Oman in 1972, etc.

Iranian Revolution

Despite the fascist repression of the Shah, backed by the military might of the U.S., in 1979 the Iranian people overthrew the monarchy through a popular revolution.

The Iranian revolution was a hammer blow against U.S. imperialism. The U.S. government saw the fall of the Shah not only as a loss of the vast oil wealth of Iran and a loyal regional policeman but also as a dangerous inspiration to the peoples throughout the region to rise in struggle against U.S. domination and local reactionary regimes. Ever since, the U.S. has been determined to overthrow the new Iranian regime and reassert its domination over the country.

The Carter administration, which supported the Shah to the end, reacted to the Iranian revolution by attempting a failed coup d'etat and invasion of the country and instituting a wide array of economic sanctions. In the "Carter Doctrine," the U.S. again declared that it considered the entire Persian Gulf as part of the "vital interests of the United States," and that the U.S. was prepared to use military force to protect these interests. Carter initiated the Rapid Deployment Force and began strengthening U.S. military bases in the region in order to replace the loss of Iran with the direct presence of U.S. troops.

In hopes of removing the Iranian government or at least undermining the country's strength, U.S. imperialism supported Iraq's invasion of Iran in 1980. The U.S. sent sophisticated weaponry to build up Saddam Hussein's army and also provided billions in economic credits during the war. The Reagan administration removed Iraq from its list of state sponsors of terrorism, resumed diplomatic relations with Saddam Hussein, encouraged other governments to blockade Iran, and provided U.S. naval escorts to Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil tankers. The U.S. also provided Iraq with military intelligence gained by U.S. AWAC flights in the

region. The Iraq-Iran war claimed the lives of at least 2 million people.

In 1991, when the growth of Iraq's regional power was perceived as a potential threat to U.S. domination, the Bush administration launched the first Gulf war to assert its domination over Iraq and further project its military power.

After the first U.S. war against Iraq, the U.S. adopted the policy of "dual containment" aimed against both Iraq and Iran. The U.S. strategy has been firstly to undermine the strength of these countries in order to prevent them from becoming regional power centers outside of the U.S. orbit of control and ultimately to overthrow the regimes and recolonize both countries.

Under the policy of dual containment, the U.S. stepped up its propaganda war against Iran, initiating the themes heard today.

For example, Warren Christopher, Secretary of State in the Clinton administration, said in 1995:

"Iran is the foremost state sponsor of terrorism in the world . . . [and] Iran is a major proliferation threat and is pursuing a determined course to acquire nuclear weapons."

Using this as its justification, the Clinton administration stepped up economic sanctions against Iran. In 1995, Clinton issued an executive order "to cut off all trade and investment with Iran and suspend nearly all other economic activity between our nations. . . . I am convinced that instituting a trade embargo with Iran is the most effective way our nation can help to curb that nation's drive to acquire devastating weapons and its continued support for terrorism. The Executive Order I plan to sign next week will cover not only the energy sector but all U.S. exports to Iran and all investments by American firms and the branches they own or control." (Clinton speech, April 30, 1995).

Altogether, between 1984 until 2003, the U.S. government adopted at least 19 major economic sanctions against Iran which even mandate U.S. sanctions against any foreign firm which invests more than \$40 million in Iran's energy sector in a given year.

Human Rights Report Reveals Israeli Atrocities

An annual report released on February 5 by Israeli human rights group B'Tselem revealed that at the end of December there were 7,904 Palestinians imprisoned by Israeli authorities. Of these, Israel detained 548 Palestinians without trial, including 42 who have been held for over two years. Six of those detained in December without trial are minors, including two girls.

Imprisoning thousands of Palestinians is part of Israel's systematic program of targeting the Palestinian political, economic, and social infrastructures in order to destroy the very fabric of Palestinian society. This program includes assassination of political and religious leaders, closing and bulldozing educational institutions, destroying

homes, agricultural lands and so forth.

The B'Tselem report highlights other atrocities carried out by Israel during 2008. Before Israel launched the war on Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on December 27, Israeli security forces already killed 455 Palestinians, including 87 minors. During 2008 Israel increased restrictions on movement of Palestinians by limiting and forbidding their movement on roads in the occupied West Bank, by increasing the number of physical barriers, and by keeping dozens of checkpoints. Israel also carried out more house demolitions, the continued construction of the apartheid wall within the occupied West Bank and extensive settlement expansion.

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Bolivian Constitution

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equal opportunities, a new state where everyone will have the same rights and duties." The constitution extends democratic rights in Bolivia, including by granting new electoral and autonomy rights to Bolivia's indigenous populations. It also extends the social sector of the economy, especially in the areas of health care and education.

The new constitution also guarantees the Bolivian people ownership of natural resources and state enterprises, marking, in the words of Morales, "the end of the colonial and neoliberal state represented by governments that do nothing more than to auction off our natural resources."