

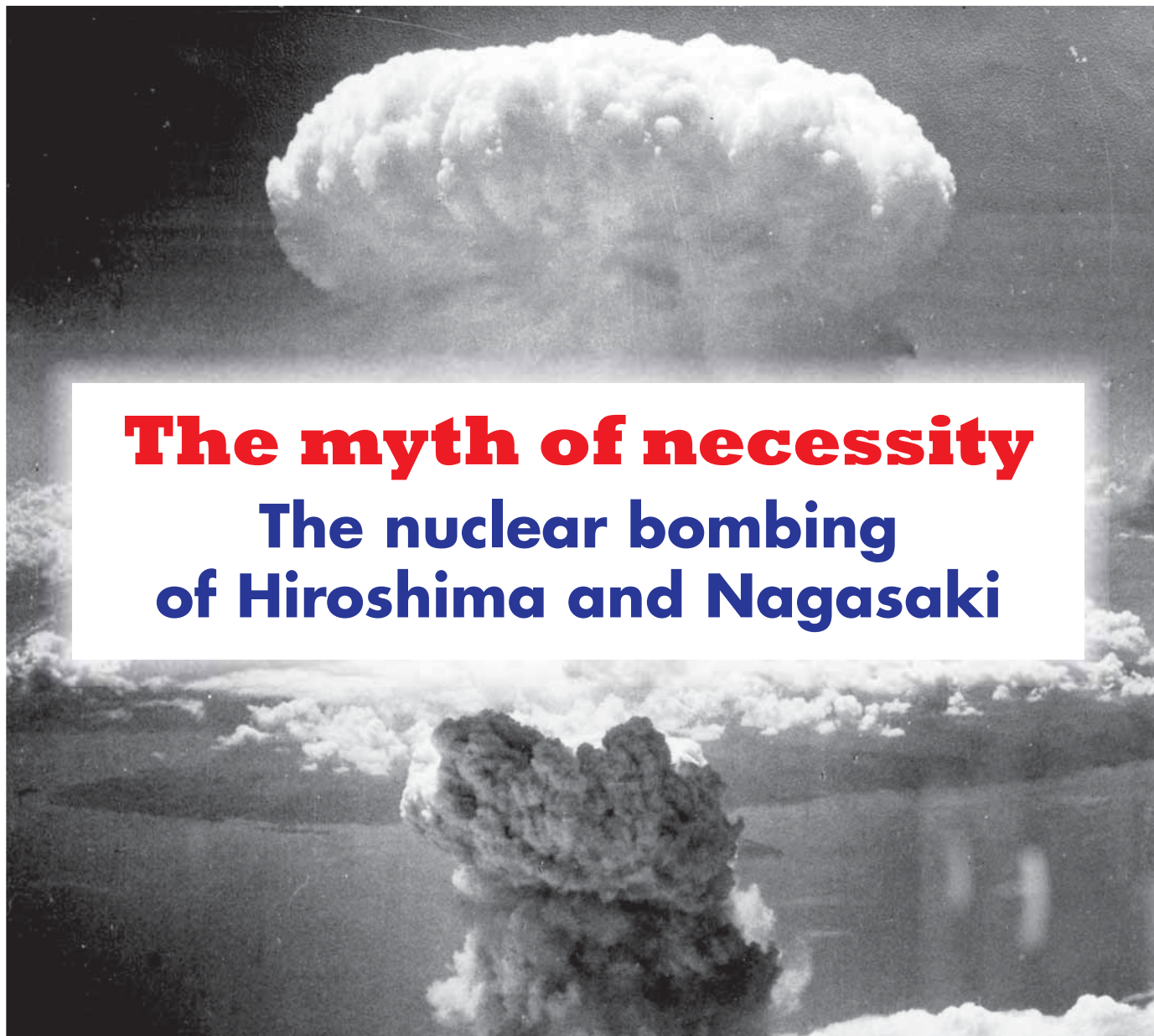
# AMR

Australian Marxist Review — Journal of the Communist Party of Australia



#59 October 2015

\$5



## **The myth of necessity**

**The nuclear bombing  
of Hiroshima and Nagasaki**



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## Editorial Notes

On the 9th of May, 70 years ago, the Soviet Union and its Western Allies liberated the people of Europe from the horrors of Fascism. In the same year, on the third of September, Asia was freed from a decade of suffering at the hands of Japanese Militarism. While the 9th of May and 3rd of September saw the victory of humanity in the world anti-fascist war, it did not mean an end to the constant machinations of the class enemy. As the articles by Yuriy Rubtsov and Ekaterina Blinova will show, the imperialist powers, particularly Britain and the United States had already begun planning the destruction of the Soviet Union before the fall of Berlin. With allies like these, who needs enemies?

The necessity of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to forestall the foretasted millions of casualties that an invasion of the Japanese home islands would result in, is a common myth that has long been used to justify a horrifying act of barbarity. If the bombings were not necessary, then why were they carried out? A contribution from Washington's blog sheds light on the real reason for the nuclear bombing using extensive historical evidence collected from US generals, scientists and top level politicians, demonstrating that the real purpose was to demonstrate the power of the US to the Soviet Union. In essence, it was the first shot of the Cold War.

The brazen use of military power by the United States without any regard for civilian deaths or the sovereignty of other countries is nothing new, but what has changed is the increasing role of Special Forces in US foreign policy. Nick Turse's piece *The Golden Age of Black Ops* is a comprehensive account of the structure of US Special Forces and their actions across the globe. From seemingly mundane training exercises to kidnapping missions and assassinations carried out illegally in the

territory of other countries, these US commandos carry out the foreign policy objectives of their masters in Washington, completely unaccountable to the US public.

The aforementioned special forces were but one of the tools used by imperialist powers in their quest to dominate the Middle East. In her book review of *Genocide of Iraq*, Dr Vera Butler presents the rise of Arab Nationalism following World War Two and the actions of people throughout the Middle East to create, secular, free and democratic countries with independent foreign policies. Such a move towards a better world is an inherent threat to Imperialism, and as Dr Butler demonstrates in her review, the reaction by imperialists was to use any means necessary to crush any aspirations of freedom, democracy and an escape from theocracy.

Imperialism not only wages war with guns and planes, it also carries out a global ideological war. In his article *War on Progress by other means*, Bob Briton introduces readers to a worrying failure by previous and existing socialist societies to adequately protect themselves from the effects of imperialist cultural and ideological invasion. The survival of socialist societies will depend on the ability of communists to carry out ideological work in a new way.

As long as imperialist powers continue to spread war across the planet, it is the task of communists to cooperate with all progressive people to oppose them. As our forebears took up arms in the anti-fascist struggle 70 years ago, comrades today must arm themselves with a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the actions of modern Imperialism and fight against it! In the final article of this issue of the *AMR*, Jerónimo de Sousa of the Communist Party of Portugal explains the situation facing communists today and the need to fight back against the class enemy.

# AMR

# Operation Unthinkable – allies were bearing secret malice

**Yuriy Rubtsov**

*Strategic-Culture Online Journal*

In late May 1945 Josef Stalin ordered Marshall Georgy Zhukov to leave Germany and come to Moscow. He was concerned over the actions of British allies. Stalin said the Soviet forces disarmed Germans and sent them to prisoners' camps while British did not. Instead they cooperated with Germans troops and let them maintain combat capability. Stalin believed that there were plans to use them later. He emphasized that it was an outright violation of inter-government agreement that said the forces surrendered were to be immediately disbanded. The Soviet intelligence got the text of secret telegram sent by Winston Churchill to Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, the commander of British forces. It instructed to collect the weapons and keep them in readiness to give back to Germans in case the Soviet offensive continued.

According to the instructions received from Stalin, Zhukov harshly condemned these activities speaking at the Allied Control Council (the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France). He said the world history knew few examples of such treachery and refusal to observe the commitments on the part of nations that had an allied status. Montgomery denied the accusation. A few years later he admitted that he received such an instruction and carried it out. He had to comply with the order as a soldier.

A fierce battle was raging in the vicinity of Berlin. At his time Winston Churchill said that the Soviet Russia became a deadly threat to the free world. The British Prime Minister wanted a new front created in the east to stop the Soviet offensive as soon as possible. Churchill was overwhelmed by the feeling that with Nazi Germany defeated a new threat emerged posed by the Soviet Union.

That's why London wanted Berlin to be taken by Anglo-American forces. Churchill also wanted Americans to liberate Czechoslovakia and Prague with Austria controlled by all allies on equal terms.

Not later than April 1945 Churchill instructed the British Armed Forces' Joint Planning Staff to draw up Operation Unthinkable, a code name of two related plans of a conflict between the Western allies and the Soviet Union. The generals were asked to devise means to "impose upon Russia the will of the United States and the British

Empire". The hypothetical date for the start of the Allied invasion of Soviet-held Europe was scheduled for 1 July 1945. In the final days of the war against the Hitler's Germany London started preparations to strike the Soviet Union from behind.

The plan envisioned unleashing a total war to occupy the parts of the Soviet Union which had a crucial significance for its war effort and deliver a decisive blow to the Soviet armed forces making the USSR unable to continue fighting.

The plan included the possibility of Soviet forces retreating deep into the territory according to the tactics used in previous wars. The plan was taken by the British Chiefs of Staff Committee as militarily unfeasible due to a three-to-one superiority of Soviet land forces in Europe and the Middle East, where the conflict was projected to take place. German units were needed to balance the correlation of forces. That's why Churchill wanted them to remain combat capable.

The War Cabinet stated: "The Russian Army has developed a capable and experienced High Command. The army is exceedingly tough, lives and moves on a lighter scale of maintenance than any Western army, and employs bold tactics based largely on disregard for losses in attaining its objective. Equipment has improved rapidly throughout the war and is now good. Enough is known of its development to say that it is certainly not inferior to that of the great powers. The facility the Russian have shown in the development and improvement of existing weapons and equipment and in their mass production has been very striking. There are known instances of the Germans copying basic features of Russian armament." The British planners came to pessimistic conclusions. They said any attack would be "hazardous" and that the campaign would be "long and costly". The report actually stated: "If we are to embark on war with Russia, we must be prepared to be committed to a total war, which would be both long and costly." The numerical superiority of Soviet ground forces left little chance for success. The assessment, signed by the Chief of Army Staff on June 9, 1945, concluded: "It would be beyond our power to win a quick but limited success and we would be committed to a protracted war against heavy odds. These odds, moreover, would become fanciful if the Americans grew weary and indifferent and began to be drawn away by the magnet of the Pacific war."

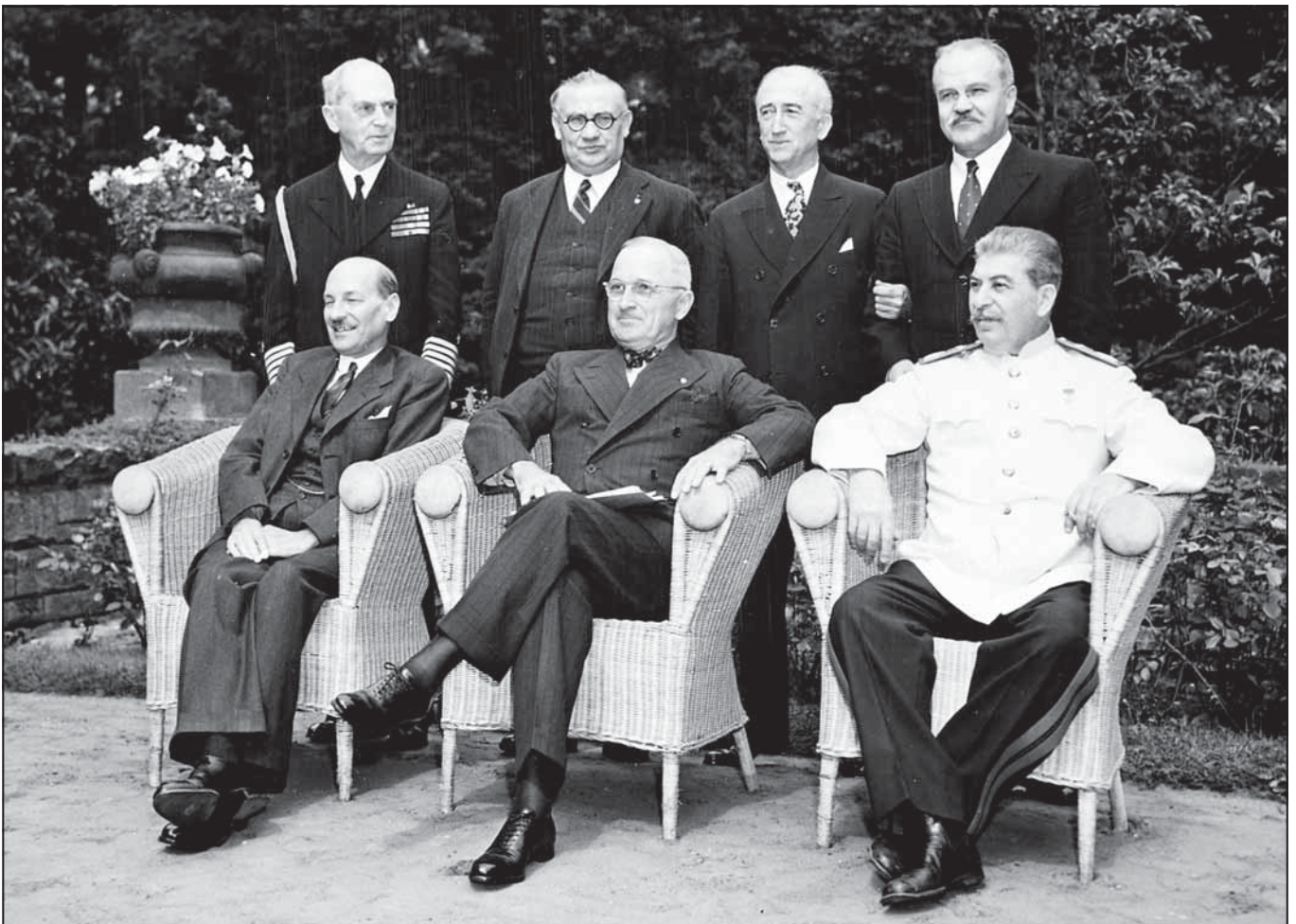
The Prime Minister received a draft copy of the plan on June 8th. Annoyed as he was, Churchill could not do much about it as the supremacy of Red Army was evident. Even with a nuclear bomb in the inventory of US military Harry Truman, the new American President, had to take it into account.

Meeting Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov, President Truman took the bull by the horn. He made a thinly veiled threat to use economic sanctions against the Soviet Union. On May 8, the US President ordered to greatly reduce the lend-lease supplies without prior notification. It went as far as return US ships already on the way to the Soviet Union back to home bases. Some time passed and the order to reduce the land lease was cancelled otherwise the Soviet Union would not have joined the war against Japan, something the United States needed much. But the bilateral relationship was damaged. The memorandum signed by Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew on May 19, 1945 stated that the war with the Soviet Union was inevitable. It called for taking a tougher stand in the contacts with the Soviet Union.

According to him, it was expedient to start the fighting before the USSR could recover from war and restore its huge military, economic and territorial potential.

The military received an impulse from politicians. In the August of 1945 (the war with Japan was not over) the map of strategic targets in the USSR and Manchuria was submitted to General L. Groves, the head of US nuclear program. The plan contained the list of 15 largest cities of the Soviet Union: Moscow, Baku, Novosibirsk, Gorky, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Kuibyshev, Kazan, Saratov, Molotov (Perm), Magnitogorsk, Grozny, Stalinsk (probably Stalino – the contemporary Donetsk) and Nizhny Tagil. The targets were given descriptions: geography, industrial potential and the primary targets to hit. Washington opened a new front. This time it was against its ally.

London and Washington immediately forgot they fought shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet Union during the Second World War, as well as the their commitments according to the decisions of Yalta, Potsdam and San-Francisco conferences.



Attending the Potsdam Conference in Germany, July 1945, left to right seated, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, President Harry S. Truman, and Soviet Prime Minister Josef Stalin, and behind them, Admiral William Leahy, British foreign minister Ernest Bevin, Secretary of State James Byrnes, and Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov.

# Was the US deterrence military doctrine aimed against the Soviet Union during the Cold War era really “defensive” and who actually started the nuclear arms race paranoia?

**Ekaterina Blinova**  
*Sputnik News*

Just weeks after the Second World War was over and Nazi Germany defeated Soviet Russia's allies, the United States and Great Britain hastened to develop military plans aimed at dismantling the USSR and wiping out its cities with a massive nuclear strike.

Interestingly enough, then British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had ordered the British Armed Forces' Joint Planning Staff to develop a strategy targeting the USSR months before the end of the Second World War. The first edition of the plan was prepared on May 22, 1945. In accordance with the plan the invasion of Russia-held Europe by the Allied forces was scheduled on July 1, 1945.

## Winston Churchill's Operation Unthinkable

The plan, dubbed Operation Unthinkable, stated that its primary goal was “to impose upon Russia the will of the United States and the British Empire. Even though ‘the will’ of these two countries may be defined as no more than a square deal for Poland, that does not necessarily limit the military commitment.”

The British Armed Forces' Joint Planning Staff underscored that the Allied Forces would win in the event of 1) the occupation of such metropolitan areas of Russia so that the war making capacity of the country would be reduced to a point to which further resistance would become impossible”; 2) “such a decisive defeat of the Russian forces in the field as to render it impossible for the USSR to continue the war.”

British generals warned Churchill that the “total war” would be hazardous to the Allied armed forces.

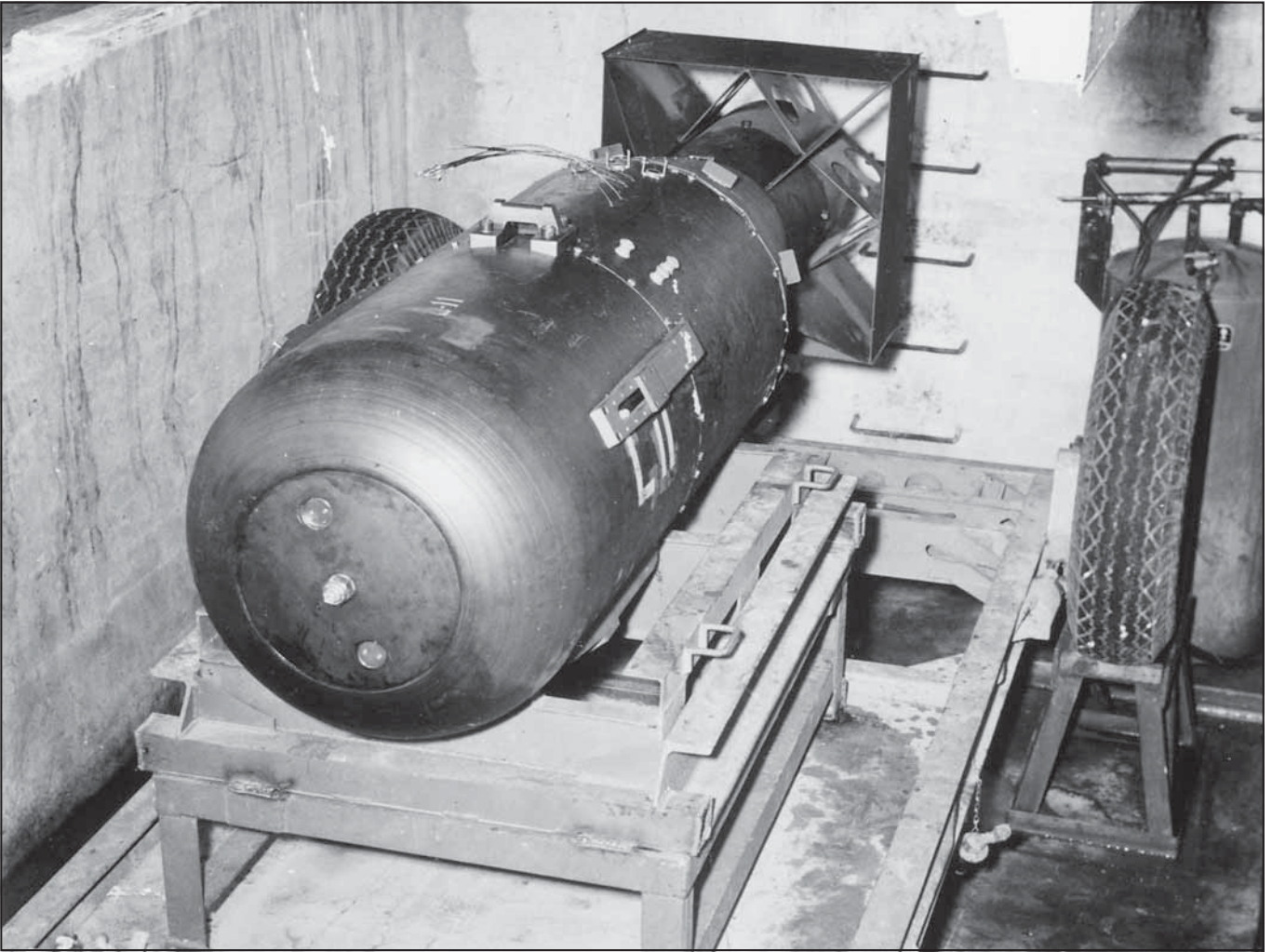
However, after the United States “tested” its nuclear arsenal in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, Churchill and right-wing American policy makers started to persuade the White House to bomb the USSR. A nuclear strike against Soviet Russia, exhausted by the war with Germany, would have led to the defeat of the Kremlin at the same time allowing the Allied Forces to avoid US and British military casualties, Churchill insisted. Needless to say, the former British Prime Minister did not care about the death of tens of thousands of Russian peaceful civilians which were already hit severely by the four-year war nightmare.

“He [Churchill] pointed out that if an atomic bomb could be dropped on the Kremlin, wiping it out, it would be a very easy problem to handle the balance of Russia, which would be without direction,” an unclassified note from the FBI archive read.

## Following in Churchill's footsteps: Operation Dropshot

Unthinkable as it may seem, Churchill's plan literally won the hearts and minds of US policy makers and military officials. Between 1945 and the USSR's first detonation of a nuclear device in 1949, the Pentagon developed at least nine nuclear war plans targeting Soviet Russia, according to US researchers Dr. Michio Kaku and Daniel Axelrod. In their book *To Win a Nuclear War: the Pentagon's Secret War Plans*, based on declassified top secret documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, the researchers exposed the US military's strategies to initiate a nuclear war with Russia.

“The names given to these plans graphically portray their offensive purpose: Bushwhacker, Broiler, Sizzle, Shakedown, Offtackle, Dropshot, Trojan, Pincher, and Frolic. The US military knew the offensive nature of the job President Truman



“Little Boy” was the nickname given to the atomic bomb which was dropped by the US Air Force on Hiroshima, Japan, August 6, 1945. Here photographed in the bomb pit on Tinian Island, before being loaded into Enola Gay’s bomb bay.

had ordered them to prepare for and had named their war plans accordingly,” remarked American scholar J.W. Smith (*The World’s Wasted Wealth 2*).

These “first-strike” plans developed by the Pentagon were aimed at destroying the USSR without any damage to the United States.

The 1949 Dropshot plan envisaged that the US would attack Soviet Russia and drop at least 300 nuclear bombs and 20,000 tons of conventional bombs on 200 targets in 100 urban areas, including Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg). In addition, the planners offered to kick off a major land campaign against the USSR to win a “complete victory” over the Soviet Union together with the European allies. According to the plan Washington would start the war on January 1, 1957.

For a long period of time the only obstacle in the way of the US’ massive nuclear offensive was that the Pentagon

did not possess enough atomic bombs (by 1948 Washington boasted an arsenal of 50 atomic bombs) as well as planes to carry them in. For instance, in 1948 the US Air Force had only thirty-two B-29 bombers modified to deliver nuclear bombs.

In September 1948 US president Truman approved a National Security Council paper (NSC 30) on “Policy on Atomic Warfare,” which stated that the United States must be ready to “utilize promptly and effectively all appropriate means available, including atomic weapons, in the interest of national security and must therefore plan accordingly.”

At this time, the US generals desperately needed information about the location of Soviet military and industrial sites. So far, the US launched thousands of photographing overflights to the Soviet territory triggering concerns about a potential Western invasion of the USSR among the Kremlin officials. While the Soviets hastened to beef up their defensive capabilities, the military and political decision makers of the West used their rival’s military buildup as justification for building more weapons.



Meanwhile, in order to back its offensive plans Washington dispatched its B-29 bombers to Europe during the first Berlin crisis in 1948. In 1949 the US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed, six years before the USSR and its Eastern European allies responded defensively by establishing the Warsaw Pact – the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation, and Mutual Assistance.

Just before the USSR tested its first atomic bomb, the US' nuclear arsenal had reached 250 bombs and the Pentagon came to the conclusion that a victory over the Soviet Union was now "possible." Alas, the detonation of the first nuclear bomb by the Soviet Union dealt a heavy blow to US militarists' plans.

"The Soviet atomic bomb test on August 29, 1949 shook Americans who had believed that their atomic monopoly would last much longer, but did not immediately alter the pattern of war planning. The key issue remained just what level of damage would force a Soviet surrender," Professor Donald Angus MacKenzie of the University of Edinburgh remarked in his essay "Nuclear War Planning and Strategies of Nuclear Coercion."

Although Washington's war planners knew that it would take years before the Soviet Union would obtain a significant atomic arsenal, the point was that the Soviet bomb could not be ignored.

The Scottish researcher highlighted that the US was mainly focused not on "deterrence" but on "offensive" pre-emptive strike. "There was unanimity in 'insider circles' that the United States ought to plan to win a nuclear war. The logic that to do so implied to strike first was inescapable," he emphasized, adding that "first strike plans" were even represented in the official nuclear policy of the US.

Remarkably, the official doctrine, first announced by then US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1954, assumed America's possible nuclear retaliation to "any" aggression from the USSR.

## US' Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP)

Eventually, in 1960 the US' nuclear war plans were formalized in the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP).

At first, the SIOP envisaged a massive simultaneous nuclear strike against the USSR's nuclear forces, military targets, cities, as well as against China and Eastern Europe. It was planned that the US' strategic forces would use almost 3,500 atomic warheads to bomb their targets. According to US generals' estimates, the attack could have resulted in the death of about 285 to 425 million people. Some of the USSR's European allies were meant to be completely "wiped out."

"We're just going to have to wipe it [Albania] out," US General Thomas Power remarked at the 1960 SIOP planning conference, as quoted by MacKenzie.

However, the Kennedy administration introduced significant changes to the plan, insisting that the US military should avoid targeting Soviet cities and had to focus on the rival's nuclear forces alone. In 1962 the SIOP was modified but still it was acknowledged that the nuclear strike could lead to the death of millions of peaceful civilians.

The dangerous competition instigated by the US prompted Soviet Russia to beef up its nuclear capabilities and dragged both countries into the vicious circle of the nuclear arms race. Unfortunately, it seems that the lessons of the past have not been learnt by the West and the question of the "nuclearization" of Europe is being raised again.

AMR

# The real reason America used nuclear weapons against Japan (It was not to end the war or save lives)



Posted on October 14, 2012 by *WashingtonsBlog*

## Atomic weapons were not needed to end the war or save lives

Like all Americans, I was taught that the US dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to end WW2 and save both American and Japanese lives.

But most of the top American military officials at the time said *otherwise*.

The US Strategic Bombing Survey group, assigned by President Truman to study the air attacks on Japan, produced a report in July of 1946 that concluded (pages 52-56):

Based on a detailed investigation of all the facts and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved, it is the Survey's opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945 and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, **Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped**, even if Russia had not entered the war, and **even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated**.

General (and later president) Dwight Eisenhower – then Supreme Commander of all Allied Forces, and the officer who created most of America's WW2 military plans for Europe and Japan – said:

The Japanese were **ready to surrender and it wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing**.

Eisenhower also noted (page 380):

In [July] 1945 ... Secretary of War Stimson, visiting my headquarters in Germany, informed me that our government was preparing to drop an atomic bomb on Japan. I was one of those who felt that there were a number of cogent reasons to question the wisdom of such an act. ... the Secretary, upon giving me the news of the successful bomb test in New Mexico, and of the plan for using it, asked for my reaction, apparently expecting a vigorous assent.

During his recitation of the relevant facts, I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to him **my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. It was my belief that Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of 'face'**. The Secretary was deeply perturbed by my attitude ...

Admiral William Leahy – the highest ranking member of the US military from 1942 until retiring in 1949, who

was the first de facto Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and who was at the centre of all major American military decisions in World War II – wrote (page 441):

**It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing with conventional weapons.**

The lethal possibilities of atomic warfare in the future are frightening. My own feeling was that in being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children.

General Douglas MacArthur agreed (pages 65, 70-71):

MacArthur's views about the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were starkly different from what the general public supposed ... **When I asked General MacArthur about the decision to drop the bomb, I was surprised to learn he had not even been consulted. What, I asked, would his advice have been? He replied that he saw no military justification for the dropping of the bomb.** The war might have ended weeks earlier, he said, if the United States had agreed, as it later did anyway, to the retention of the institution of the emperor.

Moreover (page 512):

The Potsdam declaration in July, demand[ed] that Japan surrender unconditionally or face 'prompt and utter destruction.' MacArthur was appalled. He knew that the Japanese would never renounce their emperor, and that without him an orderly transition to peace would be impossible anyhow, because his people would never submit to Allied occupation unless he ordered it. Ironically, when the surrender did come, it was conditional, and the condition was a continuation of the imperial reign. Had the General's advice been followed, the resort to atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki might have been unnecessary.

Similarly, Assistant Secretary of War John McLoy noted (page 500):

I have always felt that if, in our ultimatum to the Japanese government issued from Potsdam [in July 1945], we had referred to

the retention of the emperor as a constitutional monarch and had made some reference to the reasonable accessibility of raw materials to the future Japanese government, it would have been accepted. Indeed, I believe that even in the form it was delivered, there was some disposition on the part of the Japanese to give it favorable consideration. When the war was over I arrived at this conclusion after talking with a number of Japanese officials who had been closely associated with the decision of the then Japanese government, to reject the ultimatum, as it was presented. **I believe we missed the opportunity of effecting a Japanese surrender, completely satisfactory to us, without the necessity of dropping the bombs.**

Under Secretary of the Navy Ralph Bird said:

I think that the Japanese were ready for peace, and they already had approached the Russians and, I think, the Swiss. And that suggestion of [giving] a warning [of the atomic bomb] was a face-saving proposition for them, and one that they could have readily accepted.

**In my opinion, the Japanese war was really won before we ever used the atom bomb.**

Thus, it wouldn't have been necessary for us to disclose our nuclear position and stimulate the Russians to develop the same thing much more rapidly than they would have if we had not dropped the bomb.

*War Was Really Won Before We Used A-Bomb*, US News and World Report, 08/15/1960, pages 73-75.

He also noted (pages 144-145, 324):

It definitely seemed to me that the Japanese were becoming weaker and weaker. They were surrounded by the Navy. They couldn't get any imports and they couldn't export anything. Naturally, as time went on and the war developed in our favor it was quite logical to hope and expect that with the proper kind of a warning the Japanese would then be in a position to make peace, which would have made **it unnecessary for us to drop the bomb** and have had to bring Russia in.

Alfred McCormack – Director of Military Intelligence for the Pacific Theater of War, who was probably in as good position as anyone for judging the situation – believed that the Japanese surrender could have been obtained in a few weeks by blockade alone:

The Japanese had no longer enough food in stock, and their fuel reserves were practically

exhausted. We had begun a secret process of mining all their harbors, which was steadily isolating them from the rest of the world. If we had brought this project to its logical conclusion, the destruction of Japan's cities with incendiary and other bombs would have been quite unnecessary.

General Curtis LeMay, the tough cigar-smoking Army Air Force "hawk," stated publicly shortly before the nuclear bombs were dropped on Japan:

The war would have been over in two weeks.  
... The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war at all.

The Vice Chairman of the US Bombing Survey Paul Nitze wrote (pages 36-37, 44-45):

[I] concluded that **even without the atomic bomb, Japan was likely to surrender in a matter of months.** My own view was that Japan would capitulate by November 1945.

Even without the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it seemed highly unlikely, given what we found to have been the mood of the Japanese government, that a US invasion of the islands [scheduled for November 1, 1945] would have been necessary.

Deputy Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence Ellis Zacharias wrote:

Just when the Japanese were ready to capitulate, we went ahead and introduced to the world the most devastating weapon it had ever seen and, in effect, gave the go-ahead to Russia to swarm over Eastern Asia.

Washington decided that Japan had been given its chance and now it was time to use the A-bomb.

I submit that it was the wrong decision. It was wrong on strategic grounds. And it was wrong on humanitarian grounds.

Ellis Zacharias, *How We Bungled the Japanese Surrender*, Look, 06/06/1950, pages 19-21.

Brigadier General Carter Clarke – the military intelligence officer in charge of preparing summaries of intercepted Japanese cables for President Truman and his advisors – said (page 359):

When we didn't need to do it, and we knew we didn't need to do it, and they knew that we knew we didn't need to do it, we used them as an experiment for two atomic bombs.

Many other high-level military officers concurred. For example:

The commander in chief of the US Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations, Ernest J. King, stated that the naval blockade and prior bombing of Japan in March of 1945, had rendered the Japanese helpless and that the use of the atomic bomb was both unnecessary and immoral. Also, the opinion of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was reported to have said in a press conference on September 22, 1945, that "The Admiral took the opportunity of adding his voice to those insisting that Japan had been defeated before the atomic bombing and Russia's entry into the war." In a subsequent speech at the Washington Monument on October 5, 1945, Admiral Nimitz stated "The Japanese had, in fact, already sued for peace before the atomic age was announced to the world with the destruction of Hiroshima and before the Russian entry into the war." It was learned also that on or about July 20, 1945, General Eisenhower had urged Truman, in a personal visit, not to use the atomic bomb. Eisenhower's assessment was "It wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing ... to use the atomic bomb, to kill and terrorize civilians, without even attempting [negotiations], was a double crime." Eisenhower also stated that it wasn't necessary for Truman to "succumb" to [the tiny handful of people putting pressure on the president to drop atom bombs on Japan.]

British officers were of the same mind. For example, General Sir Hastings Ismay, Chief of Staff to the British Minister of Defence, said to Prime Minister Churchill that "when Russia came into the war against Japan, the Japanese would probably wish to get out on almost any terms short of the dethronement of the Emperor."

On hearing that the atomic test was successful, Ismay's private reaction was one of "revulsion."

## Why were bombs dropped on populated cities without military value?

Even military officers who favored use of nuclear weapons mainly favored using them on unpopulated areas or Japanese military targets ... not cities.

For example, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy Lewis Strauss proposed to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal that a non-lethal demonstration of atomic weapons would be enough to convince the Japanese

to surrender ... and the Navy Secretary agreed (pages 145, 325):

I proposed to Secretary Forrestal that the weapon should be demonstrated before it was used. Primarily it was because it was clear to a number of people, myself among them, that the war was very nearly over. The Japanese were nearly ready to capitulate ... My proposal to the Secretary was that the weapon should be demonstrated over some area accessible to Japanese observers and where its effects would be dramatic. I remember suggesting that a satisfactory place for such a demonstration would be a large forest of cryptomeria trees not far from Tokyo. The cryptomeria tree is the Japanese version of our redwood ... I anticipated that a bomb detonated at a suitable height above such a forest ... would lay the trees out in windrows from the center of the explosion in all directions as though they were matchsticks, and, of course, set them afire in the center. It seemed to me that a demonstration of this sort would prove to the Japanese that we could destroy any of their cities at will ...

**Secretary Forrestal agreed wholeheartedly with the recommendation ...**

It seemed to me that **such a weapon was not necessary to bring the war to a successful conclusion**, that once used it would find its way into the armaments of the world ...

General George Marshall agreed:

Contemporary documents show that Marshall felt "these weapons might first be used against straight military objectives such as a large naval installation and then if no complete result was derived from the effect of that, he thought we ought to designate a number of large manufacturing areas from which the people would be warned to leave – telling the Japanese that we intend to destroy such centers ..."

As the document concerning Marshall's views suggests, the question of whether the use of the atomic bomb was justified turns ... on whether the bombs had to be used against a largely civilian target rather than a strictly military target – which, in fact, was the explicit choice since although there were Japanese troops in the cities, neither Hiroshima nor Nagasaki was deemed militarily vital by US planners. (This is one of the reasons neither had been heavily bombed up to this point in the war.) Moreover, targeting [at Hiroshima and Nagasaki] was

aimed explicitly on non-military facilities surrounded by workers' homes.

## Historians agree that the bomb wasn't needed

Historians agree that nuclear weapons did not need to be used to stop the war or save lives.

As historian Doug Long notes:

US Nuclear Regulatory Commission historian J. Samuel Walker has studied the history of research on the decision to use nuclear weapons on Japan. In his conclusion he writes, **"The consensus among scholars is that the bomb was not needed to avoid an invasion of Japan and to end the war within a relatively short time. It is clear that alternatives to the bomb existed and that Truman and his advisors knew it."**

J. Samuel Walker, *The Decision to Use the Bomb: A Historiographical Update*, *Diplomatic History*, Winter 1990, page 110.

## Politicians agreed

Many high-level politicians agreed. For example, Herbert Hoover said (page 142):

The Japanese were prepared to negotiate all the way from February 1945 ... up to and before the time the atomic bombs were dropped; ... if such leads had been followed up, **there would have been no occasion to drop the [atomic] bombs.**

Under Secretary of State Joseph Grew noted (pages 29-32):

In the light of available evidence I myself and others felt that if such a categorical statement about the [retention of the] dynasty had been issued in May, 1945, the surrender-minded elements in the [Japanese] Government might well have been afforded by such a statement a valid reason and the necessary strength to come to an early clearcut decision.

If surrender could have been brought about in May, 1945, or even in June or July, before the entrance of Soviet Russia into the [Pacific] war and the use of the atomic bomb, the world would have been the gainer.

## Why then were atom bombs dropped on Japan?

If dropping nuclear bombs was unnecessary to end the war or to save lives, why was the decision to drop them made? Especially over the objections of so many top military and political figures?

One theory is that scientists like to play with their toys:

On September 9, 1945, Admiral William F. Halsey, commander of the Third Fleet, was publicly quoted extensively as stating that the atomic bomb was used because the scientists had a "toy and they wanted to try it out ... ." He further stated, "The first atomic bomb was an unnecessary experiment ... It was a mistake to ever drop it."

However, most of the Manhattan Project scientists who developed the atom bomb were opposed to using it on Japan.

Albert Einstein – an important catalyst for the development of the atom bomb (but not directly connected with the Manhattan Project) – said differently:

"A great majority of scientists were opposed to the sudden employment of the atom bomb." In Einstein's judgment, the dropping of the bomb was a political-diplomatic decision rather than a military or scientific decision.

Indeed, some of the Manhattan Project scientists wrote directly to the secretary of defense in 1945 to try to dissuade him from dropping the bomb:

We believe that these considerations make the use of nuclear bombs for an early, unannounced attack against Japan inadvisable. If the United States would be the first to release this new means of indiscriminate destruction upon mankind, she would sacrifice public support throughout the world, precipitate the race of armaments, and prejudice the possibility of reaching an international agreement on the future control of such weapons.

*Political and Social Problems*, Manhattan Engineer District Records, Harrison-Bundy files, folder # 76, National Archives (also contained in: Martin Sherwin, *A World Destroyed*, 1987 edition, pages 323-333).

The scientists questioned the ability of destroying Japanese cities with atomic bombs to bring surrender when destroying Japanese cities with conventional bombs had not done so, and – like some of the military officers quoted above – recommended a demonstration of the atomic bomb for Japan in an unpopulated area.

## The real explanation?

*History.com* notes:

In the years since the two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, a number of historians have suggested that the weapons had a two-pronged objective ... . It has been suggested that the second objective was **to demonstrate the new weapon of mass destruction to the Soviet Union**. By August 1945, relations between the Soviet Union and the United States had deteriorated badly. The Potsdam Conference between US President Harry S. Truman, Russian leader Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill (before being replaced by Clement Attlee) ended just four days before the bombing of Hiroshima. The meeting was marked by recriminations and suspicion between the Americans and Soviets. Russian armies were occupying most of Eastern Europe. **Truman and many of his advisers hoped that the US atomic monopoly might offer diplomatic leverage with the Soviets. In this fashion, the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan can be seen as the first shot of the Cold War.**

*New Scientist* reported in 2005:

The US decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 was **meant to kick-start the Cold War** rather than end the Second World War, according to two nuclear historians who say they have new evidence backing the controversial theory.

Causing a fission reaction in several kilograms of uranium and plutonium and killing over 200,000 people 60 years ago was **done more to impress the Soviet Union than to cow Japan**, they say. And the US President who took the decision, Harry Truman, was culpable, they add.

"He knew he was beginning the process of annihilation of the species," says Peter Kuznick, director of the Nuclear Studies Institute at American University in Washington DC, US. "It was not just a war crime; it was a crime against humanity."

[The conventional explanation of using the bombs to end the war and save lives] is disputed by Kuznick and Mark Selden, a historian from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, US.

New studies of the US, Japanese and Soviet diplomatic archives suggest that Truman's main

motive was to limit Soviet expansion in Asia, Kuznick claims. Japan surrendered because the Soviet Union began an invasion a few days after the Hiroshima bombing, not because of the atomic bombs themselves, he says.

According to an account by Walter Brown, assistant to then-US secretary of state James Byrnes, Truman agreed at a meeting three days before the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima that Japan was “looking for peace”. Truman was told by his army generals, Douglas MacArthur and Dwight Eisenhower, and his naval chief of staff, William Leahy, that there was no military need to use the bomb.

**“Impressing Russia was more important than ending the war in Japan,” says Selden.**

John Pilger points out:

The US secretary of war, Henry Stimson, told President Truman he was “fearful” that the US air force would have Japan so “bombed out” that the new weapon would not be able “to show its strength”. He later admitted that “no effort was made, and none was seriously considered, to achieve surrender merely in order not to have to use the bomb”. His foreign policy colleagues were **eager “to browbeat the Russians with the bomb held rather ostentatiously on our hip”**. General Leslie Groves, director of the Manhattan Project that made the bomb, **testified: “There was never any illusion on my part that Russia was our enemy, and that the project was conducted on that basis.”** The day after Hiroshima was obliterated, President Truman voiced his satisfaction with the “overwhelming success” of “the experiment”.

We’ll give the last word to University of Maryland professor of political economy – and former Legislative Director in the US House of Representatives and the US Senate, and Special Assistant in the Department of State – Gar Alperovitz:

Though most Americans are unaware of the fact, increasing numbers of historians now recognize the United States did not need to use the atomic bomb to end the war against Japan in 1945. Moreover, this essential judgment was

expressed by the vast majority of top American military leaders in all three services in the years after the war ended: Army, Navy and Army Air Force. Nor was this the judgment of “liberals,” as is sometimes thought today. In fact, leading conservatives were far more outspoken in challenging the decision as unjustified and immoral than American liberals in the years following World War II.

Instead [of allowing other options to end the war, such as letting the Soviets attack Japan with ground forces], the United States rushed to use two atomic bombs at almost exactly the time that an August 8 Soviet attack had originally been scheduled: Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9. The timing itself has obviously raised questions among many historians. The available evidence, though not conclusive, strongly suggests that the atomic bombs may well have been used in part because American leaders “preferred” – as Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Martin Sherwin has put it – to end the war with the bombs rather than the Soviet attack. Impressing the Soviets during the early diplomatic sparring that ultimately became the Cold War also appears likely to have been a significant factor.

The most illuminating perspective, however, comes from top World War II American military leaders. The conventional wisdom that the atomic bomb saved a million lives is so widespread that ... most Americans haven’t paused to ponder something rather striking to anyone seriously concerned with the issue: Not only did most top US military leaders think the bombings were unnecessary and unjustified, many were morally offended by what they regarded as the unnecessary destruction of Japanese cities and what were essentially noncombat populations. Moreover, they spoke about it quite openly and publicly.

Shortly before his death General George C. Marshall quietly defended the decision, but for the most part he is on record as repeatedly saying that **it was not a military decision, but rather a political one.**

AMR

# The Golden Age of Black Ops

Nick Turse

First Published at *TomDispatch.com*

In the dead of night, they swept in aboard V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft. Landing in a remote region of one of the most volatile countries on the planet, they raided a village and soon found themselves in a life-or-death fire-fight. It was the second time in two weeks that elite US Navy SEALs had attempted to rescue American photo-journalist Luke Somers. And it was the second time they failed.

On December 6, 2014, approximately 36 of America's top commandos, heavily armed, operating with intelligence from satellites, drones, and high-tech eavesdropping, outfitted with night vision goggles, and backed up by elite Yemeni troops, went toe-to-toe with about six militants from al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. When it was over, Somers was dead, along with Pierre Korkie, a South African teacher due to be set free the next day. Eight civilians were also killed by the commandos, according to local reports. Most of the militants escaped.

That blood-soaked episode was, depending on your vantage point, an ignominious end to a year that saw US Special Operations forces deployed at near record levels, or an inauspicious beginning to a new year already on track to reach similar heights, if not exceed them.

During the fiscal year that ended on September 30, 2014, US Special Operations forces (SOF) deployed to 133 countries – roughly 70% of the nations on the planet – according to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bockholt, a public affairs officer with US Special Operations Command (SOCOM). This capped a three-year span in which the country's most elite forces were active in more than 150 different countries around the world, conducting missions ranging from kill/capture night raids to training exercises. And this year could be a record-breaker. Only a day before the failed raid that ended Luke Somers' life – just 66 days into fiscal 2015 – America's most elite troops had already set foot in 105 nations, approximately 80% of 2014's total.

Despite its massive scale and scope, this secret global war across much of the planet is unknown to most Americans. Unlike the December debacle in Yemen, the vast majority of special ops missions remain completely in the shadows, hidden from external oversight or press scrutiny. In fact, aside from modest amounts of information disclosed through highly-selective coverage

by military media, official White House leaks, SEALs with something to sell, and a few cherry-picked journalists reporting on cherry-picked opportunities, much of what America's special operators do is never subjected to meaningful examination, which only increases the chances of unforeseen blowback and catastrophic consequences.

## The Golden Age

“The command is at its absolute zenith. And it is indeed a golden age for special operations.” Those were the words of Army General Joseph Votel III, a West Point graduate and Army Ranger, as he assumed command of SOCOM last August.

His rhetoric may have been high-flown, but it wasn't hyperbole. Since September 11, 2001, US Special Operations forces have grown in every conceivable way, including their numbers, their budget, their clout in Washington, and their place in the country's popular imagination. The command has, for example, more than doubled its personnel from about 33,000 in 2001 to nearly 70,000 today, including a jump of roughly 8,000 during the three-year tenure of recently retired SOCOM chief Admiral William McRaven.

Those numbers, impressive as they are, don't give a full sense of the nature of the expansion and growing global reach of America's most elite forces in these years. For that, a rundown of the acronym-ridden structure of the ever-expanding Special Operations Command [SOCOM] is in order. The list may be mind-numbing, but there is no other way to fully grasp its scope.

The lion's share of SOCOM's troops are Rangers, Green Berets, and other soldiers from the Army, followed by Air Force air commandos, SEALs, Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewmen and support personnel from the Navy, as well as a smaller contingent of Marines. But you only get a sense of the expansiveness of the command when you consider the full range of “sub-unified commands” that these special ops troops are divided among: the self-explanatory SOCAFRICA; SOCEUR, the European contingent; SOCKOR, which is devoted strictly to Korea; SOCPAC, which covers the rest of the Asia-Pacific region; SOCSOUTH, which conducts missions in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean; SOCCENT, the sub-unified command of US Central Command (CENTCOM) in the Middle East; SOCNORTH, which is devoted to “homeland defense”; and the globe-trotting Joint Special Operations





US Special Operations forces.

Command or JSOC – a clandestine sub-command (formerly headed by McRaven and then Votel) made up of personnel from each service branch, including SEALs, Air Force special tactics airmen, and the Army’s Delta Force, that specializes in tracking and killing suspected terrorists.

And don’t think that’s the end of it, either. As a result of McRaven’s push to create “a Global SOF network of like-minded interagency allies and partners,” Special Operations liaison officers, or SOLOs, are now embedded in 14 key US embassies to assist in advising the special forces of various allied nations. Already operating in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, France, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Poland, Peru, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, the SOLO program is poised, according to Votel, to expand to 40 countries by 2019. The command, and especially JSOC, has also forged close ties with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Security Agency, among others.

## Shadow Ops

Special Operations Command’s global reach extends further still, with smaller, more agile elements operating in the shadows from bases in the United States to remote parts of Southeast Asia, from Middle Eastern outposts to austere African camps. Since 2002, SOCOM has also been authorized to create its own Joint Task Forces, a prerogative normally limited to larger combatant commands like CENTCOM. Take, for instance, Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) which, at its peak, had roughly 600 US personnel supporting counterterrorist operations by Filipino allies against insurgent groups like Abu Sayyaf. After more than a decade spent battling that group, its numbers have been diminished, but it continues to be active, while violence in the region remains virtually unaltered.

A phase-out of the task force was actually announced in June 2014. “JSOTF-P will deactivate and the named operation OEF-P [Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines] will conclude in Fiscal Year 2015,” Votel told the Senate Armed Services Committee the next month. “A smaller number of US military personnel operating as part of a PACOM [US Pacific Command] Augmentation Team will continue to improve the abilities of the PSF [Philippine Special Forces] to conduct their CT [counterterrorism] missions ...” Months later, however, Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines remained up and running. “JSOTF-P is still active although the number of personnel assigned has been reduced,” Army spokesperson Kari McEwen told reporter Joseph Trevithick of *War Is Boring*.

Another unit, Special Operations Joint Task Force-Bragg, remained in the shadows for years before its first official mention by the Pentagon in early 2014. Its role, according to SOCOM’s Bockholt, is to “train and equip US service members preparing for deployment to Afghanistan to support Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan.” That latter force, in turn, spent more than a decade conducting covert or “black” ops “to prevent insurgent activities from threatening the authority and sovereignty of” the Afghan government. This meant night raids and kill/capture missions – often in concert with elite Afghan forces – that led to the deaths of unknown numbers of combatants and civilians. In response to popular outrage against the raids, Afghan President Hamid Karzai largely banned them in 2013.

US Special Operations forces were to move into a support role in 2014, letting elite Afghan troops take charge. “We’re trying to let them run the show,” Colonel Patrick Roberson of the Afghanistan task force told *USA Today*. But according to LaDonna Davis, a spokesperson with the task force, America’s special operators were still leading missions last year. The force refuses to say how many missions were led by Americans or even

how many operations its commandos were involved in, though Afghan special operations forces reportedly carried out as many as 150 missions each month in 2014. “I will not be able to discuss the specific number of operations that have taken place,” Major Loren Bymer of Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan told *TomDispatch*. “However, Afghans currently lead 96% of special operations and we continue to train, advise, and assist our partners to ensure their success.”

And lest you think that that’s where the special forces organizational chart ends, Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan has five Special Operations Advisory Groups “focused on mentoring and advising our ASSF [Afghan Special Security Force] partners,” according to Votel. “In order to ensure our ASSF partners continue to take the fight to our enemies, US SOF must be able to continue to do some advising at the tactical level post-2014 with select units in select locations,” he told the Senate Armed Services Committee. Indeed, last November, Karzai’s successor Ashraf Ghani quietly lifted the night raid ban, opening the door once again to missions with US advisors in 2015.

There will, however, be fewer US special ops troops available for tactical missions. According to then Rear-Admiral Sean Pybus, SOCOM’s Deputy Commander, about half the SEAL platoons deployed in Afghanistan were, by the end of last month, to be withdrawn and redeployed to support “the pivot in Asia, or work the Mediterranean, or the Gulf of Guinea, or into the Persian Gulf.” Still, Colonel Christopher Riga, commander of the 7th Special Forces Group, whose troops served with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan near Kandahar last year, vowed to soldier on. “There’s a lot of fighting that is still going on in Afghanistan that is going to continue,” he said at an awards ceremony late last year. “We’re still going to continue to kill the enemy, until we are told to leave.”

Add to those task forces the Special Operations Command Forward (SOC FWD) elements, small teams which, according to the military, “shape and coordinate special operations forces security cooperation and engagement in support of theater special operations command, geographic combatant command, and country team goals and objectives.” SOCOM declined to confirm the existence of SOC FWDs, even though there has been ample official evidence on the subject and so it would not provide a count of how many teams are currently deployed across the world. But those that are known are clustered in favored black ops stomping grounds, including SOC FWD Pakistan, SOC FWD Yemen, and SOC FWD Lebanon, as well as SOC FWD East Africa, SOC FWD Central Africa, and SOC FWD West Africa.

Africa has, in fact, become a prime locale for shadowy covert missions by America’s special operators. “This particular unit has done impressive things. Whether it’s across Europe or Africa taking on a variety of contingencies, you are all contributing in a very significant way,” SOCOM’s commander, General Votel, told members of the 352nd Special Operations Group at their base in England last fall.

The Air Commandos are hardly alone in their exploits on that continent. Over the last years, for example, SEALs carried out a successful hostage rescue mission in Somalia and a kidnap raid there that went awry. In Libya, Delta Force commandos successfully captured an al-Qaeda militant in an early morning raid, while SEALs commandeered an oil tanker with cargo from Libya that the weak US-backed government there considered stolen. Additionally, SEALs conducted a failed evacuation mission in South Sudan in which its members were wounded when the aircraft, in which they were flying, was hit by small arms fire. Meanwhile, an elite quick-response force known as Naval Special Warfare Unit 10 (NSWU-10) has been engaged with “strategic countries” such as Uganda, Somalia, and Nigeria.

A clandestine Special Ops training effort in Libya imploded when militia or “terrorist” forces twice raided its camp, guarded by the Libyan military, and looted large quantities of high-tech American equipment, hundreds of weapons – including Glock pistols, and M4 rifles – as well as night vision devices and specialized lasers that can only be seen with such equipment. As a result, the mission was scuttled and the camp was abandoned. It was then reportedly taken over by a militia.

In February of last year, elite troops traveled to Niger for three weeks of military drills as part of Flintlock 2014, an annual Special Ops counterterrorism exercise that brought together the forces of the host nation, Canada, Chad, France, Mauritania, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Senegal, the United Kingdom, and Burkina Faso. Several months later, an officer from Burkina Faso, who received counterterrorism training in the US under the auspices of SOCOM’s Joint Special Operations University in 2012, seized power in a coup. Special Ops forces, however, remained undaunted. Late last year, for example, under the auspices of SOC FWD West Africa, members of 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, partnered with elite Moroccan troops for training at a base outside of Marrakech.

## A world of opportunities

Deployments to African nations have, however, been just a part of the rapid growth of the Special Operations Command’s overseas reach. In the waning days of the

Bush presidency, under then-SOCOM chief Admiral Eric Olson, Special Operations forces were reportedly deployed in about 60 countries around the world. By 2010, that number had swelled to 75, according to Karen DeYoung and Greg Jaffe of the *Washington Post*. In 2011, SOCOM spokesman Colonel Tim Nye told *TomDispatch* that the total would reach 120 by the end of the year. With Admiral William McRaven in charge in 2013, then-Major Robert Bockholt told *TomDispatch* that the number had jumped to 134. Under the command of McRaven and Votel in 2014, according to Bockholt, the total slipped ever-so-slightly to 133. Outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel noted, however, that under McRaven's command – which lasted from August 2011 to August 2014 – special ops forces deployed to more than 150 different countries. “In fact, SOCOM and the entire US military are more engaged internationally than ever before – in more places and with a wider variety of missions,” he said in an August 2014 speech.

He wasn't kidding. Just over two months into fiscal 2015, the number of countries with Special Ops deployments has already clocked in at 105, according to Bockholt.

SOCOM refused to comment on the nature of its missions or the benefits of operating in so many nations. The command would not even name a single country where US special operations forces deployed in the last three years. A glance at just some of the operations, exercises, and activities that have come to light, however, paints a picture of a globetrotting command in constant churn with alliances in every corner of the planet.

In January and February, for example, members of the 7th Special Forces Group and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment conducted a month-long Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) with forces from Trinidad and Tobago, while troops from the 353rd Special Operations Group joined members of the Royal Thai Air Force for Exercise Teak Torch in Udon Thani, Thailand. In February and March, Green Berets from the 20th Special Forces Group trained with elite troops in the Dominican Republic as part of a JCET.

In March, members of Marine Special Operations Command and Naval Special Warfare Unit 1 took part in maneuvers aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS *Cowpens* as part of Multi-Sail 2014, an annual exercise designed to support “security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.” That same month, elite soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines took part in a training exercise code-named Fused Response with members of the Belizean military. “Exercises like this build rapport and bonds between US forces and Belize,” said Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Heber Toro of Special Operations Command South afterward.

In April, soldiers from the 7th Special Forces Group joined with Honduran airborne troops for jump training – parachuting over that country's Soto Cano Air Base. Soldiers from that same unit, serving with the Afghanistan task force, also carried out shadowy ops in the southern part of that country in the spring of 2014. In June, members of the 19th Special Forces Group carried out a JCET in Albania, while operators from Delta Force took part in the mission that secured the release of Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl in Afghanistan. That same month, Delta Force commandos helped kidnap Ahmed Abu Khattala, a suspected “ringleader” in the 2012 terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya, that killed four Americans, while Green Berets deployed to Iraq as advisors in the fight against the Islamic State.

In June and July, 26 members of the 522nd Special Operations Squadron carried out a 28,000-mile, four-week, five-continent mission which took them to Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Japan, among other nations, to escort three “single-engine [Air Force Special Operations Command] aircraft to a destination in the Pacific Area of Responsibility.” In July, US Special Operations forces traveled to Tolemaida, Colombia, to compete against elite troops from 16 other nations – in events like sniper stalking, shooting, and an obstacle course race – at the annual Fuerzas Comando competition.

In August, soldiers from the 20th Special Forces Group conducted a JCET with elite units from Suriname. “We've made a lot of progress together in a month. If we ever have to operate together in the future, we know we've made partners and friends we can depend upon,” said a senior noncommissioned officer from that unit. In Iraq that month, Green Berets conducted a reconnaissance mission on Mount Sinjar as part an effort to protect ethnic Yazidis from Islamic State militants, while Delta Force commandos raided an oil refinery in northern Syria in a bid to save American journalist James Foley and other hostages held by the same group. That mission was a bust and Foley was brutally executed shortly thereafter.

In September, about 1,200 US special operators and support personnel joined with elite troops from the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Finland, Great Britain, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Slovenia for Jackal Stone, a training exercise that focused on everything from close quarters combat and sniper tactics to small boat operations and hostage rescue missions. In September and October, Rangers from the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment deployed to South Korea to practice small unit tactics like clearing trenches and knocking out bunkers. During October, Air Force air commandos also conducted simulated hostage rescue missions at the Stanford Training Area near Thetford, England. Meanwhile, in international waters south of

Cyprus, Navy SEALs commandeered that tanker full of oil loaded at a rebel-held port in Libya. In November, US commandos conducted a raid in Yemen that freed eight foreign hostages. The next month, SEALs carried out the blood-soaked mission that left two hostages, including Luke Somers, and eight civilians dead. And these, of course, are only some of the missions that managed to make it into the news or in some other way onto the record.

## Everywhere they want to be

To America's black ops chiefs, the globe is as unstable as it is interconnected. "I guarantee you what happens in Latin America affects what happens in West Africa, which affects what happens in Southern Europe, which affects what happens in Southwest Asia," McRaven told last year's Geolnt, an annual gathering of surveillance-industry executives and military personnel. Their solution to interlocked instability? More missions in more nations – in more than three-quarters of the world's countries, in fact – during McRaven's tenure. And the stage appears set for yet more of the same in the years ahead. "We want to be everywhere," said Votel at Geolnt. His forces are already well on their way in 2015.

"Our nation has very high expectations of SOF," he told special operators in England last fall. "They look to us to do the very hard missions in very difficult conditions." The nature and whereabouts of most of those "hard missions," however, remain unknown to Americans. And Votel apparently isn't interested in shedding light on them. "Sorry, but no," was SOCOM's response to *TomDispatch's* request for an interview with the special ops chief about current and future operations. In fact, the command refused to make any personnel available for a discussion of what it's doing in America's name and with taxpayer dollars. It's not hard to guess why.

Votel now sits atop one of the major success stories of a post-9/11 military that has been mired in winless wars, intervention blowback, rampant criminal activity, repeated leaks of embarrassing secrets, and all manner of shocking scandals. Through a deft combination of bravado and secrecy, well-placed leaks, adroit marketing and public relations efforts, the skillful cultivation of a superman mystique (with a dollop of tortured fragility on the side), and one extremely popular, high-profile, targeted killing, Special Operations forces have become the darlings of American popular culture, while the command has been a consistent winner in Washington's bare-knuckled budget battles.

This is particularly striking given what's actually occurred in the field: in Africa, the arming and outfitting of militants and the training of a coup leader; in Iraq,

America's most elite forces were implicated in torture, the destruction of homes, and the killing and wounding of innocents; in Afghanistan, it was a similar story, with repeated reports of civilian deaths; while in Yemen, Pakistan, and Somalia it's been more of the same. And this only scratches the surface of special ops miscues.

In 2001, before US black ops forces began their massive, multi-front clandestine war against terrorism, there were 33,000 members of Special Operations Command and about 1,800 members of the elite of the elite, the Joint Special Operations Command. There were then also 23 terrorist groups – from Hamas to the Real Irish Republican Army – as recognized by the State Department, including al-Qaeda, whose membership was estimated at anywhere from 200 to 1,000. That group was primarily based in Afghanistan and Pakistan, although small cells had operated in numerous countries including Germany and the United States.

After more than a decade of secret wars, massive surveillance, untold numbers of night raids, detentions, and assassinations, not to mention billions upon billions of dollars spent, the results speak for themselves. SOCOM has more than doubled in size and the secretive JSOC may be almost as large as SOCOM was in 2001. Since September of that year, 36 new terror groups have sprung up, including multiple al-Qaeda franchises, offshoots, and allies. Today, these groups still operate in Afghanistan and Pakistan – there are now 11 recognized al-Qaeda affiliates in the latter nation, five in the former – as well as in Mali and Tunisia, Libya and Morocco, Nigeria and Somalia, Lebanon and Yemen, among other countries. One offshoot was born of the American invasion of Iraq, was nurtured in a US prison camp, and, now known as the Islamic State, controls a wide swath of that country and neighboring Syria, a proto-caliphate in the heart of the Middle East that was only the stuff of jihadi dreams back in 2001. That group, alone, has an estimated strength of around 30,000 and managed to take over a huge swath of territory, including Iraq's second largest city, despite being relentlessly targeted in its infancy by JSOC.

"We need to continue to synchronize the deployment of SOF throughout the globe," says Votel. "We all need to be synched up, coordinated, and prepared throughout the command." Left out of sync are the American people who have consistently been kept in the dark about what America's special operators are doing and where they're doing it, not to mention the checkered results of, and blowback from, what they've done. But if history is any guide, the black ops blackout will help ensure that this continues to be a "golden age" for US Special Operations Command.

## **GENOCIDE IN IRAQ Vol.2 "The Obliteration of a Modern State"** By Abdul Haq al-Ani & Tariq al-Ani

### **A review by Dr Vera Butler**

Victors are not prone to objectivity when recounting events which lead to their dominance. This is all the more so when the opponent is in disarray, is divided and unable to put a cogent argument in its defence.

Events in the Middle East, ever since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, have been shaped by external powers – chiefly Britain and France, the USA, and since 1948 by the new state of Israel.

It is, therefore, instructive to listen to the voices of the losers, those who fought for national independence against hegemonist ambitions of Western powers, who relied on the rules of the United Nations and the Security Council to protect their interests. Abdul Haq al-Ani and Tariq al-Ani provide a concise overview of awakening Arab nationalism after World War II, and the counter-forces which lead to the nefarious destruction of the secular state of Iraq.

As the authors point out, an understanding of events in Iraq is relevant to current conflicts in Libya, Syria, Ukraine. They all are evidence of ongoing Western attempts to rule over strategically important countries and their resources – if necessary, by force of arms.

Remarkable is the authors' focus on the influence of Israel on Western strategies in the Middle East and beyond – an argument highlighted by Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu's address to the US Congress prior to the Israeli elections on 17th March 2015, in total disregard of conventions applying to intra-government relations, with the US president simply being ignored.

Author Abdul-Haq Al-Ani, an Iraqi-born, British-trained barrister and a PhD in International Law, deals in some detail with the question of Iraq's right to international remedy for crimes of aggression, crimes of using WMD, crimes against humanity, and crimes that breach basic human rights.

#### **Arab Nationalism**

The events which challenged a political order imposed by colonial rule were not religiously motivated, but were a signal of awakening Arab nationalism.

Thus the Egyptian revolution of 1952, led by army officers, deposed British stooge King Farouk, and in

1956 their leader Gamal Abdul Nassir nationalised the Suez Canal, which continued to function, regardless of outcries of Arab incompetence. Britain, France, and Israel attacked Egypt but withdrew under international pressure.

Nassir's foreign policy was marked by Egypt's neutrality in the Cold War confrontation, and support of the Non-Aligned Nations movement, and established the short-lived United Arab Republic with Syria.

At home, Nassir had distributed land to needy fedayeen, regardless of Muslim Brotherhood hostility, and changed Egypt's constitution to legitimise republican rule.

In Algeria, the 1962 revolution put an end to French colonial rule, and in 1968 the Libyan People's Revolution brought Muammar Al-Ghaddafi to power in a country richly endowed with oil.

#### **Britain in Iraq.**

After the setbacks in Egypt, Britain devised a new strategy for the Middle East. In 1955 the Baghdad Pact – the Central Treaty Organisation or CENTO – was established, comprising a block of pro-British regimes, namely Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan.

In 1958, Iraqi officers ousted the Hashemite monarchy. General Qasim reclaimed 99% of Iraqi oil from the foreign companies operating there; he set up the first unit of the Palestinian Liberation Army, to regain the lands usurped by Israel, and declared Kuwait to be part of Iraq that had been alienated by Britain, as Saddam Hussein was also to claim later. At that time, too, the socialist-oriented Ba'ath party came into being; and Iraq was on the way to becoming a secular, independent Arab polity.

#### **Palestine: the Jewish problem (Zionism)**

The authors see Zionism as an active political movement with a clear ideology, the most powerful political player in the world. They maintain that the Zionist-controlled capitalist system supports the Zionist political agenda: to convert all of Palestine into a purely Jewish

state. That makes a mockery of publicly professed liberal-democratic principles.

Britain, like the United States, affirmed its total and unconditional support for the new state of Israel, a reliable Western power base in the Middle East. The strategy was to ensure Israel's safety among surrounding Arab nations, by exploiting inter-Arab, inter-muslim conflicts. An example is the support for Saddam Hussein's attack on Iran in 1980 – a war that lasted for eight years. There is the unyielding antagonism of the Muslim Brotherhood against the secular state; and the historical conflict between sunni and shia muslims still festers today and is financed by Saudi Arabia, the sunni oil power dedicated to the Wahabi version of Islam.

The instability of alliances among Arab nations invited the interference of Western-sponsored organisations with the professed intent to spread democracy, but there were reasons to suspect ulterior motives, claim the authors. There was the International Crisis Group founded by US strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski and financier George Soros, a Rothschild protégé. The “National Endowment for Democracy”, operating in Iraq, was described by W. Blum as a “Trojan Horse” for US government interference with recalcitrant governments, world-wide. [1]

Already in early 1997 America's neo-conservatives (the neo-cons) founded the “Project for the New American Century” (PNAC), with the declared aim of total Zionist hegemony in the Middle East and the overthrow of the Ba'athist-oriented regimes in Iraq and Syria.

Yet the eventual outcrop of this “divide-and-rule” policy has not been a balance of power between contending interests, but the fearsome advance of Islamic State, an extremist species of murderous terrorism in its claimed pursuit of a new caliphate.

## Preparations for the invasion

The long-term preparation for the assault on Iraq confirms the authors' view that this was not merely some punishment for 9/11, but a plan to remove Saddam Hussein from power as an inconvenient impediment to the Zionist strategy of subjugating the Arab world. Yet the biggest bounty was Iraqi oil, as events were to show.

For some 12 years Iraq was exposed to aerial bombardments, to no-fly zones. Already in November 1998 PNAC and CIA director George Tenet accused Iraq of harbouring or manufacturing chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), although they knew the evidence to be falsified.

Some international legitimacy was achieved by involving the Saudis, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the less ostentatious

support by Jordan – a collection of military minions who, by themselves, would not have been able to challenge Saddam. British and Australian Special Forces teams got into action, and the CIA was bribing Iraqi officers to defect.

The saga of Iraq's “weapons of mass destruction”, presented by US secretary of state General Colin Powell to the United Nations, was decisively disproved by international observer teams, including Sweden's Hans Blix of UNMOVIC.

When on 5th February 2003 Powell presented the UN with “documents” showing Al'Qaida training camps for terrorists in northern Iraq, the intercepted telephone messages proved to be falsified and were equally refuted.

The mendacious search for a *casus belli* drew mass demonstrations of protest to the streets in Italy, Spain, London, Sydney and Melbourne.

## Operation “Iraqi Freedom”

On the 20th March 2003 Shock-and-Awe descended upon Iraq.

The overall number of US personnel deployed was to reach 466,985, plus 40,906 from Britain, 2050 from Australia, 31 from Canada, and 180 from Poland.

According to UN estimates, a total of between 1,100 and 2,200 tons of depleted uranium were dropped over Iraq, plus neutron and phosphorus bombs, causing massive (and never accounted-for) civilian deaths.

On 5th April 2003 US units entered Baghdad.

In 1998 the US Congress had passed the “Iraq Liberation Act” – a bizarre definition, seeing that some three years after the fall of Baghdad the new Iraqi Ministry for Planning reported that by 2006, 6% of inhabitants of the once prosperous country lived in poverty, 54% on an income of less than one dollar a day, and the World Food Program was feeding 8 million people who were wholly dependent on the daily rations distributed by the Public Distribution System. Under Ba'athist rule, for 35 years Iraq was practically free of corruption – yet today it is rife, including the judiciary and trafficking in women.

The unbelievable scale of looting Iraqi museums under the occupation was not stopped, in spite of Iraqi curators' pleas; they were told there were direct instructions from Washington not to interfere. The same applied to universities and their rich collections of historically unique libraries, to Iraqi architecture, to hospitals and to public amenities. such as water-and electricity supply. [2]

The authors argue that the extent of such destruction was not incidental but part of a strategy to push Iraq back to

pre-modernity, not simply a regime change. Leaving Iraq a politically fragmented, social wasteland, was making control over oil so much easier.

## Failure of the Security Council

The UN Charter was written by the victors of World War II. The Security Council's five permanent members – America, Britain, France, Russia and China – each has the right of veto. Because decisions have to be unanimous, a veto annuls the acceptance of resolutions submitted for consideration.

On the 8th November 2002 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1441, authorising new WMD inspections. Iraq accepted.

When the US, UK, and Spain sought a new resolution, France, Russia and China, as well as other, non-permanent members, opposed it.

Although the decision to invade Iraq had been made, it was still deemed desirable to do so formally, with UN approval. When missiles hit Iraq and troops invaded from three sides of its border on 20th March 2003, one of the largest invasions since World War II, the Security Council did not react in any way. What was the reason? The authors suggest that its members well understood that any action on their part would be futile, considering the power of veto held by the US and Britain.

## The destruction continues

Till today Iraq has remained a killing field. Sanctions killed people because of lack of medicines and food. Now Saudi money stirs sunni-shia conflicts.

Dirk Adriaensen of the B Russell Tribunal drew on a survey conducted by “The Lancet”, which concluded that up to 2010, 1.45 million Iraqis have been killed, 7.7 million became refugees, 5 million orphans, 3 million widows, 1 million missing – all in a country of about 30 million. The US, which has refused to publish any figures of civilian casualties, criticised the “Lancet” report as “deeply flawed”. However, Sir Roy Anderson, the UK's Chief Scientific Advisor to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) backed the “Lancet” report, considering that its research methods are close to “best practice”.

## The grab for Iraq's oil

When imperialist Britain occupied Iraq in 1918, they made sure there would be no negotiations regarding their full ownership of Iraq's oil reserves. They enforced a treaty giving them 99 years of exclusive rights.

This state of affairs lasted till 1958, when after General Qasim's coup renegotiations started. However, failure to reach an agreement, Qasim promulgated a revolutionary law, Law 81 of 1961, taking away the companies' rights to all as yet unexploited oil.

Between 1975 and 2003 Iraq exploited, produced, refined and exported its oil without needing the assistance of foreign oil companies.

According to a recent study by the Center for Global Energy Studies, and Petrolog & Assoc., Iraq has a known oil reserve of nearly 3,000 billion barrels/day pumping for the next 300 years, for the cost of as little as \$1 per barrel, inclusive of all production costs, and a 15% return, Iraqi oil is the cheapest in the world to produce. General John Abizaid former commander of CENTCOM, who was responsible for Iraq, said: “Of course its about oil. We can't really deny that.”

## A Modern State has been obliterated

Iraqi genocide has been treated with a “conspiracy of silence” by Western media, in spite of overwhelming evidence of continued torture, murders, and untold misery of the people. There have been assassinations of academics, doctors, scientists. The depletion of Iraq of its intelligentsia leaves the CIA, MOSSAD of Israel, and private security companies operating under US State Department licences, as the most likely suspects, conclude the authors.

Nothing similar has happened since 1258, when the Mongols under Hulagu Khan <sup>[3]</sup> ransacked Baghdad and destroyed its culture, till 2003, when George W. Bush came as a 21st century “hooligan”.

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Vera Butler PhD, Melbourne, Australia.

*GENOCIDE IN IRAQ Vol.2 “The Obliteration of a Modern State”* by Abdul Haq al-Ani and Tariq al-Ani. Published by Clarity Press Inc., Atlanta. Ga. USA 2015

[1] W Blum: *Rogue State: the National Endowment for Democracy*, Common Courage Press 2000.

[2] Ismael, Shereen T., and Ismael, Tareq Y. (Eds), 2010: *Cultural Cleansing in Iraq*, Pluto Press, p.69.

[3] Grandson of Genghis Khan

AMR

# War on progress by other means

## Bob Briton

General Secretary of the Communist Party of Australia

US and other imperialist intelligence organisations faced a mighty challenge at the end of what has been called the Cold War. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the “Evil Empire” whose image they had created in the minds of the “western” public with decades of misinformation, capitalist intelligence agencies would struggle to survive. They faced worsening economic conditions, tightening budgets and the public’s expectations of a “peace dividend”. For a time, leading bureaucrats from these organisations argued that necessary funding cuts should come from the military. They claimed intelligence agencies should be spared because they had achieved or greatly expedited the defeat of socialism in the USSR and Eastern Europe without a shot being fired.

This argument ignores the hugely destructive impact on the economies of the socialist countries of the arms race imposed on them by the US and its allies. In any case, the events in the US of September 11, 2001 settled the funding and influence contest for good. Both strategies would be pursued – “enemies” (countries resisting US economic and political domination) would be toppled by both direct military intervention and/or subversion from within.

The military quickly mounted a “shock and awe” display of its capability in Iraq and the pressure was on intelligence agencies to refine their repertoire for “non-violent” regime change. It should be noted that while “non-violence” and several other wholesome-sounding principles have become trademarks of US regime change projects, the change they effect is usually accompanied by considerable violence and the re-establishment or intensification of exploitation and the violence inherent in the state power of the capitalist class. Their activities don’t usher in an era of popular empowerment or “democracy”. We needn’t be distracted by the self-promoting terms used by these organisations.

The package developed by US intelligence came to be known as “Colour Revolutions”. It is true that similar tactics had been used against socialist countries and other progressive governments for decades. The government headed by Dr Mohammad Mossadegh in Iran succumbed to similar methods in 1953. President Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala was toppled in 1954 and Chilean President Salvador Allende died resisting the brown tide of US-sponsored reaction in his country. In Australia, US meddling was evident in the ousting of reforming Prime

Minister Gough Whitlam in 1975. There was a “Velvet Revolution” against socialism in Czechoslovakia and a “Singing Revolution” launched against Soviet power in Estonia. A veritable catalogue of destabilising techniques going back to the end of WW1 is available in *The Great Conspiracy* (against the USSR) by Michael Sayers and Albert E Kahn first published in 1946.

What is new about Colour Revolutions is the completeness of the package. It focuses on the need for an authentic “grass-roots” appearance, the holding up to ridicule of the government and leading figures, elected or otherwise. Students and other upwardly mobile social groups are targeted for the simplistic, sloganised messages concerning “democracy” and “freedom”. The use of these terms is based on bland, class context-free assumptions that are never questioned in the documentaries sponsored by the Ford Foundation, the essays receiving prizes from the National Endowment for Democracy, the handbooks published by the Albert Einstein Foundation or interviews with the founders of the Otpor organisation in Belgrade.

This contribution assumes people’s familiarity with recent “Colour Revolutions” in Serbia, the Ukraine, Georgia, Egypt, Libya, Venezuela, Hong Kong and elsewhere. It won’t provide the abundant detail available about the finances, training and other assistance provided to the beneficiaries of this generosity from backers based in the US. The penetration of these forces into the student populations, educational institutions, NGOs and even the administration of the target countries is also well documented and well known.

The question less often considered in articles expressing concern at the spread of the use of these camouflaged imperialist methods is why they are effective. Especially in the case of socialist or former socialist countries, why would such a facile approach to the questions of “democracy” and “freedom” be successful? Why does an education grounded in the world outlook of socialism fail to provide effective immunity from the manipulative propaganda of these so-called “revolutions” in so many cases?

A quote from a study by US science journal editor Jeff Schmidt\* stands out in this connection. His book *Disciplined Minds* deals very thoroughly with the conditioning of salaried professionals to support the institutions of corporate dominated societies. In passing, he commented on why their counterparts in the USSR, while it existed, were often trusted to view and hear,



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to fight  
Communism  
-but how?**

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uncensored, capitalist propaganda considered harmful to the broader population. Why were they not affected by the implicit or explicit messages contained in that, mostly English language, media?

"The Soviets never censored the English language broadcasts because those who spoke English were a select group who were trusted to maintain ideological discipline in their work (even if they were not enthusiastic about the assigned ideology). As Robert C. Tucker, a long time student of the Soviet Union, told me, 'They were more likely to be establishment people, and not dangerous.' Many of these people, such as journalists, academics and foreign service professionals, were not only trusted to hear the US government's viewpoint, but were also expected to know it so they could answer it and not get caught off guard by it."

Schmidt leaves open the question of whether or not the foreign broadcast messages had an impact on their "elite" Soviet audiences. It is not clear from the chapter in Schmidt's book introducing this comparison if the same type of ideological conditioning was invested in Soviet intellectuals as was imposed on their "western" counterparts. Though Schmidt doesn't delve into this

question, it could be assumed the loyalty of these Soviet intellectuals could be totally sincere, adopted so as to avoid a type of "cognitive dissonance" or simply, though dishonestly, professed. And while Schmidt doesn't explore the internal world of this third category of Soviet worker in the field of ideas, it isn't strictly relevant to the main thesis of his book, it is definitely worth further consideration.

With the benefit of hindsight and the ability to observe how quickly large numbers from intellectual social strata transitioned quickly from being outwardly loyal Soviet citizens to champions of "free enterprise" and multi-party capitalist "democracy", some conclusions can be drawn. The first conclusion is that decades of socialist education and membership in socialist mass organisations ultimately failed decisive numbers of people. These institutions left them vulnerable to messages cloaking the restoration of class exploitation and all that goes with it.

Another reasonable assumption is that many of the individuals reviewing bourgeois propaganda or otherwise coming into contact with the "democracy" and "freedom" message from the Soviet Union's imperialist

adversaries were, in fact, deeply affected by their content. This is in spite of the comparative realities of the different types of societies. Socialist citizens had much more control of their collective and individual destinies than those in the most advanced capitalist countries, let alone those enduring the hellish social conditions of the capitalist “south”.

This isn't to deny the many frustrating shortcomings of socialist societies. It is not to deny the many grave errors made in the development of current and former socialist countries and the disappointing example of some of its “leaders”. But it is also clear something larger is at play when considering the fragility of the socialist convictions of many citizens of socialist countries. This inevitably raises the question of cultural ideological hegemony at the national and international level.

Lenin observed that the force of habit of millions of people developed over hundreds of years is a mighty one. Socialism set itself the task of the revolutionary uprooting of the awful consensus that had built up around bourgeois class rule. What are the origins of the appeal of the slogans of such an outdated and doomed social order? Why does it continue to appeal even after the establishment of more just social relations and a humanitarian ethos? Some say it is the power of the media and the sophistication of the products of the modern “media industrial complex”.

That is certainly a factor but it is only part of the soft power used to restore the very hard power of capitalist rule. That rule was established by revolutions, the foot soldiers for which came from the toiling masses. Because bourgeois state power is still the rule of a small majority over an exploited majority, an inherently unstable condition, its early “princes” heeded the advice of Machiavelli that the “legitimacy” of their rule must be stamped in the mind of populations decisively and violently before relaxing into conditions based on its acceptance.

Capitalism has had over three centuries to settle into and exploit this long period of “legitimacy”. This can be observed most easily in the oldest and most developed capitalist countries. Antonio Gramsci, founding member of the Italian Communist party and early victim of Mussolini's fascism, made a study of this question of capitalist cultural hegemony. He pointed out that the capitalists' control of the ideological apparatus of the state allowed it to dominate social development without frequent resort to the coercive apparatus that, more or less stable conditions notwithstanding, remains available.

Most of the people of the world don't experience tolerant liberalism as an accompaniment to capitalism. For most of the world's population, life under capitalism is characterised by extreme insecurity and varying degrees of authoritarian rule. However, capitalism's cultural and ideological power over the thinking of these same people



It is a credit to the Communist Party of Cuba that the support has withstood such a long series of arduous tests. Here Fidel Castro (far left) and Che Guevara (centre) lead a memorial march in Havana on May 5, 1960, for the victims of the La Coubre freight ship explosion.

is also considerable. Most progressive observers would give credit to Cuba for its success in carrying out socialist construction in very adverse conditions. The island is nestled right near the underbelly of the imperialist beast and it has not had a minute's rest from attacks originating from the US. Those attacks have been launched from within and without.

Some people suggest that Cuba is "exceptional", that its revolution was not betrayed by venal characters or unchecked self-interested forces that came to the fore in virtually every other socialist society. The legitimacy of the revolution is, in this narrative, not compromised and so the consensus in support of it is all but total. The attacks on the revolution have galvanised the entire population in defence of its gains. There is no doubt that support for the Cuban revolution is overwhelming and it is a credit to the Communist Party of Cuba that the support has withstood such a long series of arduous tests. But even here it is foolish to underestimate the influence of global capitalist cultural and ideological hegemony.

In the final years of the presidency of Fidel Castro, there was a frank recognition of this reality in spite of five successful decades of building Cuban socialism. Cuba's "Battle of Ideas" was a counter-attack against the ideological assault on the island by an enemy using many of the techniques of Colour Revolution. The Cuban Party was correct in its assessment of the cultural and ideological power of capitalism even under conditions of a people's dictatorship against the promotion of exploitation, racism, sexism and other socially destructive ideas.

By contrast, there has long been an overestimation in the international Communist movement of the capacity of socialism to establish its own ideological and cultural hegemony, or counter-hegemony, favouring the interests of the working class and other previously exploited classes. There was a mechanistic approach to the question of which is the dominant ideology in society. It was held that the dominant ideology would automatically be that of the ruling class. If the working class has achieved state power, the dominant ideology belongs to them. But declarations by the Soviet Party about the completion of more and more advanced stages of socialism and all that should follow stood in contrast to the realities observed by many visitors.

Luis Prestes, the exiled General Secretary of the Brazilian Communist Party, confided to future wife Olga Benario his shock at the extent of the sabotage against the Soviet government in the 1930s. Pioneering surgeon, the Canadian Communist Norman Bethune was appalled at the chaos in the countryside in the USSR and the weakness of the hold the Party had on power in the same

period. Both of these historic personalities were utterly sympathetic to the cause of Soviet power and devoted their whole lives to the breaking of capitalist power, including its global cultural and ideological hegemony.

Because it is so old, capitalist hegemony seems "natural". A departure from its embrace is often felt to be temporary by significant numbers of people in countries seeking to break away from the global system of capitalism. Ambitious Soviet professionals of the sort mentioned by Schmidt may well have been banking on the restoration of the previous order and considering their position in it at the very same time as providing lip service and work of doubtful quality to the revolutionary institutions that employed them. They had an expectation that the "grown ups", the financially, militarily and ideologically powerful outsiders and their local lackeys, would return to quell the rebellion of the "children".

So what can be done about the massive cultural and ideological hegemonic power of imperialism and its application through Colour Revolutions? How can socialist societies defend themselves against such destabilisation? The former socialist countries had considerable experience and capacity in this regard but, in the final analysis, not enough. The People's Republic of China and the other existing socialist countries have another 25 years-worth of experience of challenges to socialism to draw from.

It was the ambition of this contribution to raise the question of the extension of considerable capitalist cultural hegemonic influence into socialist societies and whether the former socialist countries ever achieved hegemony for socialist ideas. The attainment of socialist ideological hegemony is strategic for the completion of the construction of socialism and the advance to classless, Communist society. A stateless society is not possible without such a consciousness among the people of the world.

Discussion of the subjective and objective conditions necessary for such an outcome would fill several libraries but a realistic discussion has to start with an honest assessment of the effectiveness of ideological education in socialist countries and people's experience of the integrity of their teachers and leaders. The huge preliminary task for those of us living in imperialist countries is to choke off this corrupting hegemonic influence by transforming their homelands into socialist societies.

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\* Schmidt, Jeff *Disciplined Minds: a critical look at salaried professionals and the soul-battering system that shapes their lives*, 2000, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham, p.17

# The choice facing the people of Portugal

Speech by **Jerónimo de Sousa**,  
General Secretary, Amora, Seixal  
Rally of the 2015 *Avante!* Festival  
September 6, 2015

It is with great joy that we salute all those who, with their presence, make this *Avante!* Festival the great Festival of April, the builders, participants and guests, representatives of international delegations, our friends from the Ecologist Party “The Greens” and from the Democratic Intervention Association and independents who together with us comprise the CDU [United Democratic Coalition – Coligação Democrática Unitária].

A special salute to the youth and to JCP [The Portuguese Communist Youth – Juventude Comunista Portuguesa] who, both in the construction and in participation, are a living proof of a Festival full of future and great confidence!

A confidence all the more founded when we decided to make our Festival bigger and more beautiful, by acquiring the land of Quinta do Cabo, starting a fundraising campaign that is underway and at a good pace. We would like to express our gratitude, of course, to the members and friends of the Party, and also to many other democrats enabling us to affirm today that we are more than halfway from the target we set ourselves and that the goal will be reached by next April as was our purpose and next year, in the fortieth anniversary of the *Avante!* Festival, the new space will be ready to be enjoyed by all our visitors.

Only a Party which has an unwavering confidence in its struggle, in its project and in Portugal with a future could take this bold decision!

Confidence in the struggle of the workers and peoples from all over the world, of which this Festival is also an expression, as the festival of solidarity and internationalism, a meeting point of dozens and dozens of foreign delegations who bring us the strength of their solidarity and confidence emanating from the struggle of their peoples.

Here we are those who in various countries from every continent truly want to change the world. A change all the more necessary since the international situation is increasingly marked by great instability, insecurity and injustice.

The deepening of capitalism’s structural crisis is here marking the present. Capitalism’s economic and financial crisis is far from over, expressing itself in many different ways and in all parts of the globe.

What we see everywhere is a violent sharpening of imperialist aggressiveness. In a world marked by important processes of rearrangement of forces it is increasingly clear that the major imperialist powers do not accept the loss of their hegemonic domination and bet on militarism and war to try to keep it.

Sources of tension multiply and expand in various parts of the globe, carrying out criminal operations of destabilization and foreign interference.

70 years after the victory over Nazi-fascism, which we are celebrating, fascism raises its head in various regions of the globe. This is clearly visible in Ukraine, where a putschist power of the oligarchy and fascist groups, supported by the US and the European Union attacks its own people and persecutes the democrats of that country – which includes the communists, victims of terrorism and illegalization. To the Ukrainian communists who are present here, we would like to express our solidarity and support.

Recent news have shown us shocking images of hundreds of thousands of human beings who come to Europe or die on its doorstep, fleeing war, poverty, unemployment, destruction of their countries. They flee from countries like Syria, Iraq and Libya, among others. All countries subject to processes of interference and imperialist domination, wars of aggression unleashed by the US and the European Union.

In answer to hypocritical speeches, we affirm: it is necessary to respond to the humanitarian drama, respect the rights of these human beings, creating conditions for a real integration. But it is necessary, also and above all, to tackle the causes – and the causes lie in the policy of the US, NATO and the European Union – in the destabilization and plunder of the resources of these countries, imposing an end to aggression and not creating others, whatever the pretext, including the false pretext of concern for the refugees.

That is the great need that emerges from the analysis of the international situation. Strive for the progress of the people, for the sovereign development of States, fight for peace, against militarism and disregard for international law. Fight against the war plans, against NATO which



Avante! Festival 2015.

increasingly asserts as a major threat to international security and which will carry out in Portugal and other European countries, in a few weeks, one of the largest military exercises in its history.

It is in fact the struggle and the construction of a broad unity around the objective of anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist struggle, which emerges from the international situation we live in. That's why we want, today, from this rostrum, to salute all the peoples who struggle!

We salute all those who, under sometimes very difficult conditions, undertake decisive battles, resisting, particularly, the aggressions and imperialist occupations, as in the Middle East and Central Asia. A salute that we address, in a special way, to the Palestinian people and their struggle for the right to an independent, sovereign and viable homeland, and also to the Syrian people in their struggle for their rights, for peace, sovereignty and independence of their Country.

In the year when we mark here at the *Avante!* Festival 40 years of liberation from Portuguese colonialism by various African countries – Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe – we also want to salute those who in Africa, continue to struggle against neo-colonial attempts and also those who like the Sahrawi people continue to struggle for the right to self-determination.

And if we salute all those who resist under difficult conditions, we also salute those who blaze the trail of

social justice, affirmation of national sovereignty and socialism. From here we send a warm greeting to the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and the communist parties and progressive forces of that region, peoples who are subjected to a renewed and dangerous counter-offensive by imperialism, particularly in Bolivarian Venezuela, Ecuador or Brazil. But if that offensive should concern us, from there also blow winds of confidence like the outcome of the liberation of the five Cuban patriots, a great victory! A living example that the slogan “Cuba will prevail” is full of sense and content and that it always pays to stand up and fight.

Resist and struggle also here in Europe.

Our Country is, together with other European countries, one of the main victims of the process of European capitalist integration which is crushing rights and sovereignty on this continent.

If anyone had doubts on the nature of the European Union they can now be dispelled. Capitalism's crisis further enhanced the neoliberal, militarist and federalist pillars of the European Union. The last few years, and the most recent events, have proved that the European Union's solidarity and cohesion was, and is, a huge lie. Reality proves PCP right when it says that the European Union is a project of domination of peoples and countries by large multinationals and a directory of powers.

We affirm today, as we have always affirmed, that in Europe there are sufficient forces to tread different

paths. Paths that reject the trampling of national sovereignties, the exploitation of workers and depletion of the resources and wealth of the countries.

Other paths that are both necessary and possible. That should be treaded boldly, with principles, truth and determination, implementing the necessary ruptures!

No! We do not accept, as we have never accepted, theories of inevitability!

## Timeliness of socialism

The sharpening of the class struggle and capitalism's increasingly exploitative, oppressive, aggressive and predatory nature demonstrates, increasingly, the timeliness and importance of the communist project, of a new society, of socialism and communism. This is the big prospect of struggle that, in different ways and stages, the workers and the people face.

The PCP, a patriotic and internationalist party is here, fighting major battles. To all of you we affirm that you can rely on this Portuguese Communist Party and its contribution to the broader struggle for the emancipation of the workers and peoples.

The serious situation of decline, regression, dependence and impoverishment in which Portugal finds itself cannot be dissociated from years of European capitalist integration and its roster of impositions, and also not dissociated from years and years of ruinous right-wing policy and of national submission, executed by the PSD [The Social Democratic Party – Partido Social Democrata], PS [The Socialist Party – Partido Socialista] and CDS [People's Party – Partido Popular, derived from Centro Democrático e Social] governments.

Successive years of right-wing policy, with consequences on the life of the Country and of the Portuguese during the period of the last two governments, with the application of three Stability and Growth Pacts – SGPs – by the PS government and a Programme of a so-called Financial Assistance, but in fact of interference and aggression and which weakened and ruined the country even more.

Yes, they were the ones who all together – PSD, PS and CDS – placed the country into the hands of foreigners and their programme of plunder and social terrorism.

It was with their active connivance, their arrangements and the fallacious pretext of an imminent bankruptcy that they imposed the policy of exploitation and impoverishment of the workers, of our people and the plunder of the country's assets that we have been witnessing and which they aim to continue.

When Portugal is today a more impoverished, more fragile, more dependent country, we owe it to them and their policy of national disaster, of capitalist recovery and monopolist restoration.

When we have a country marked by economic stagnation for a decade and a half and a sharp fall of the GDP, more than 6% in these years of the policy of the troikas, with the destruction of thousands of companies and jobs, we owe it to them, to the PS, PSD and CDS and their policy of privatization and destruction of national productive sectors and, with the Euro, the alienation of our budgetary, monetary and exchange rate sovereignty.

If today we have a dramatic social situation with high levels of unemployment that affect one million two hundred thousand Portuguese, brutal levels of job precariousness, drastic cuts in labour income and of large sections of the population, we owe it to them, to the PSD, PS and CDS and their policy of continuous aggravation of labour exploitation.

## Impoverishment

If thousands of Portuguese have their salaries, pensions and retirement extorted and degraded and see their most basic labour rights destroyed, a situation that affected all sectors, with particular impact on Public Administration workers, they owe it to them, and their deliberate policy of transferring to the people losses from speculative banking and big business activities.

If in the last five years more than 500 thousand Portuguese were forced to migrate, we owe it to them, to the PSD, PS and CDS and their strategy of impoverishment of the people and their policy of destruction of jobs, and of the national scientific and research system.

If today we have a country plundered of its resources and strategic companies increasingly handed over to foreigners and subject to their domination, we owe it to them and their policy of national abdication.

Portugal today has an unsustainable debt and a suffocating debt service, mostly foreign owned, which paralyzes the country and drags it into an abyss, the Portuguese owe it to them and their policy of economic regression and allegiance to the international centres of capitalism and speculation.

If Portugal witnessed growing corruption and economic and financial fraud, promiscuity between public and private interests with an increasing submission of political power to economic power, we owe it to them, to the PSD, PS and CDS and their policy at the service of big business and instrumentalization of the State in favour of large economic groups.

If we have a country which is long riddled with a profound fiscal injustice, worsened by the greatest increase in taxes on labour income in living memory, we owe it to them, and particularly this PSD/CDS government and their policy of national confiscation.

If the country has, in these years of SGP and Pact of Aggression, a state of serious decline in access to rights to health, education, social protection and culture, with cuts and attacks lashed on the NHS, Public Schools, Social Security and liquidation and weakening of the system of social benefits, we owe it to them, to the PS, PSD and CDS and their policy of reconfiguration of the State in favour of large groups and their businesses, dismantling the achievements of April and in confrontation with the Constitution of the Republic.

If Portugal is a country increasingly unequal, socially and territorially, where poverty came knocking on the door of hundreds of thousands of people – over 800,000 in the last four years of this government, raising to 2 million and 700,000 Portuguese living below the poverty line – we owe it to them, their decisions bound to the policies of the troika and their policy of centralization and concentration of wealth in the hands of the lords of money and power.

These are the ones whose wealth continues to grow. With the rich getting richer, with the 25 largest fortunes in the country once again having their assets growing!

Yes, the crisis that has spread to all sectors of national life, including Justice, Local Government and the democratic regime itself, has authors: – they are the PS, PSD and CDS, and their governments!

Yes, if the country's situation is as it is, is due to them!

It is their policy that we have to defeat, not only the government on duty!

That is why these October 4 elections for the Assembly of the Republic are so important and just as important as the fight that the workers and our people have been waging.

## Intense struggle

This intense struggle that the workers, the Portuguese people have been carrying out to uphold their interests and rights, in resistance to the offensive of big business and the political power at their service, always with a view to making a rupture with the policy of exploitation, impoverishment and national disaster.

From here we salute the workers, the youth, the retired and pensioners, the users of public services, the small and medium-size entrepreneurs, the small and medium-size

farmers, the fishermen, people with disabilities, the unemployed, the military, the professionals of forces of security, all those who took in their hands the resistance and the struggle for rights, against social regression, for a better life, for a developed and sovereign country.

Resistance and struggle without which the offensive of big business would have gone further, that isolated socially and politically the PSD/CDS government and points the way that will lead to their defeat.

A struggle that had the strength and the role of the broad united trade union movement, the CGTP-IN [The General Confederation of the Portuguese Workers – Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses], the great trade union central of the Portuguese workers. A struggle that had the communists at the forefront of its execution, that had the active intervention and solidarity of PCP.

The struggle of the workers of a broad anti-monopoly social front, enabled to isolate a government whose defeat the people are now called to confirm with their vote in the important electoral battle for the Assembly of the Republic that is near. We won the battle against resignation and inevitabilities; we will win the battle for a rupture and a change.

We are a month away from the elections, a battle of undeniable importance for the evolution of the national situation in the foreseeable future. Important for what they represent and the objectives associated with them, which means choosing those who can effectively ensure the defence of the interests and rights of the Portuguese people. Important to affirm, with confidence, the prospect, necessity and possibility of an alternative policy, patriotic and left-wing, to ensure a better life in Portugal with a future.

The necessity and urgency of a rupture with the right-wing policy to stop the course of economic decline and social regression, emerges as a national imperative, a patriotic demand!

There are strong reasons for our confidence in the possibility of a firm and decisive step, with the reinforcement of CDU and the strength of the people and their struggle, to create the conditions for a rupture and a necessary change in our national policy and life.

Confidence which does not underestimate nor the means nor the capacity for dissimulation by the forces that seek, at all cost, to perpetuate the right-wing policy and hinder the affirmation and realization of a patriotic and left-wing alternative.

There we have them, using the most diverse artificial means to shuffle and deal once more the rigged game of

alternation without alternative and pursue the same path of drowning the country.

All of them waving with new virtuous cycles of recovery, and guaranteeing the solution to the problems that they never solved, only worsened.

All of them masking their identify and affiliation to the same political matrix that structures their main options and political orientations, over blowing tenuous secondary differences among them, concealing their real aims and projects for the future.

PSD and CDS, instrumentalizing the State apparatus and public monies to garner electoral support, at the same time as they launch fraudulent propaganda operations, with recourse to fantastic interpretations of statistical indicators, trying to present a trail of destruction left by four years of their government as a success.

They proclaim themselves liberators of the homeland. The homeland they themselves, shamelessly, also turned over to the bankers.

These are the false liberators that we see, with elections coming closer, running around throughout the country promising everything to everyone and announcing solutions for everything. But, in reality, what prevails is a logic of *fait accompli*, a scorched earth policy, quite evident in the accelerated delivery of the SCTP [public transport system in Porto], in the decision three days ago to dismantle the Military Lab, a centennial institution, another emblematic case of a policy that devalues our security, our sovereignty and our productive sector.

They wave the Greek situation around, to make it their lifejacket. But what the events in Greece demonstrate is the imperious need for resistance and struggle against the blackmails, pressures and impositions of the Euro and European Union. What they demonstrate is how PCP was right, that there is no solution without renegotiating the debt, without liberation from the constraints of the Euro that condition the sovereign development of countries. What they demonstrate is that the paths that one need follow and that are possible need to be built with courage, with principles, truth and determination, leading to the necessary ruptures and believing always in the power and strength of the people's struggle.

Therefore, whatever they promise or say, the Portuguese won't forget the nightmare of their governance. As they won't forget that their true program is the one they sent to Brussels – the National Reform Program – based on the intensification of the policy of disasters of the previous four years, and therefore nothing will save them from a profound defeat!

This is our deep conviction, sure that the people will not fail with their vote, their vote in CDU, to defeat them!

But if PSD and CDS are hiding that their true program is tied to the guidelines of big national and transnational capital, the Socialist Party (PS) is following the same path.

Behind much propaganda, what PS, PSD and CDS are preparing for after the elections, if they have the necessary votes, are measures to deepen exploitation, devaluing wages and increasing precariousness, amputating social security, attacking pensions and the retired, the National Health Service, the Public School, Culture, the democratic Local Power, the democratic regime and national sovereignty.

That is their real program.

To give credibility to their false programs and to a policy that failed and ruined the Country, they mud wrestle with scenarios, projections, simulations, calculations and sums that only serve to throw sand into the eyes of the Portuguese!

In the October 4th elections, the workers and people have the opportunity to translate their vote in CDU into a condemnation of the parties of the right-wing and troika.

On October 4th, the Portuguese people have two options:

Support and vote for CDU and therefore break with the policies of disaster that have brought so many privations and condemn those responsible; or, on the contrary, vote for the parties of the arc of right-wing policy and allow them, for a few more years, to pursue exploitation, impoverishment, the submission of the country.

## Support CDU

Support and give strength to the patriotic and left-wing policy that CDU proposes or give a free pass to PS, PSD and CDS to prolong and intensify the policy that has led the country into ruin.

For CDU there is no hesitation. CDU is and will be always beside the workers and people, ready to assume all the responsibilities the Portuguese people want to attribute to it in the country's government, bearer of a patriotic and left-wing policy capable of solving the national problems.

As the great strength of sovereignty and national independence, the great strength of unity and democratic convergence, the great strength of true and political seriousness, that assumes and presents a past of truth, of renowned respect for giving their word, which life gave and gives reason: the great strength of combat to the right-wing policy, that marked the presence in all the moments and locations where it was necessary to affirm rights, fight injustices, defend jobs, schedules and



wages: the great strength of an alternative, patriotic and left-wing policy, tied to the values of April!

On October 4th we can affirm with rigor that a vote for CDU is a vote for truth, work, honesty and competency.

A vote that counts to defeat the government and its policy, but also condemn the parties – PS, PSD and CDS – who signed the pact with the foreign troika.

A vote that decides for a patriotic and left-wing policy, that will never fail solutions to defend the rights and incomes of the workers and people.

A vote in a force in who the workers and people have always counted on, and know they can count on, at the time it is necessary to fight injustices, that did not desert them when it was necessary to fight the present government.

A vote against absolute majorities and against the maneuvers and pressures of the President to guarantee a right-wing policy, either by the hand of PSD/CDS or PS.

Concerned with guaranteeing the continuity of right-wing policy, we see them trying to frighten the people with polls, fabricated with technical draws, with false disputes between putative prime-ministers.

There are no polls that can save PSD and CDS from defeat. On the contrary, what even the polls reveal is that PSD and CDS will suffer one of their most heavy defeats.

What is decided on October 4th is the election of 230 parliament members.

What is decided is the choice of MPs committed with the aspirations of the people and building an alternative policy like those of CDU, or MPs from PS, PSD and CDS who will do nothing other than continue to decide against the workers and people.

Yes, the true options on October 4th are not choosing between Passos and Costa [leaders of PSD/CDS and PS, respectively], but choosing between continuing the same policy or opting for a rupture and change, voting for CDU!

Now PS stands up on tiptoe and warns about the PSD/CDS boogey man. Where was PS during the last 4 years? Watching the destruction of country comfortably, collaborating with the government and the parties that support them, in many of their decisions.

On October 4th, every additional vote for CDU, every additional MP elected by CDU is a one less vote, one less MP from those parties that are responsible for this policy that over the last 39 years has stolen rights and incomes.

No, the workers and people will not exchange the certain for the uncertain, the security and confidence that CDU gives them for support and votes in others that, in name of a PSD/CDS defeat, will then use them to pursue a right-wing policy. Despite the propaganda and maneuvers, one thing is clear: it is not with who has thrown Portugal to the depths that the Country can find a solution!

There are those that hasten to say there is no alternative to a policy of exploitation and impoverishment, that one can't escape the impositions of the European Union, that the country doesn't have resources capable of sustaining any other policy.

We know very well who elaborates this discourse and whose interests it serves.

It is reality itself that places a rupture with the right-wing policy as a national imperative. A rupture that is no mere decorative measure, but assumes a project of development for the Country, placing at the centre of its action the interests and needs of our people and country. A policy we know is necessary, possible and doable.

Doable with the strength and struggle of the workers and Portuguese people, with economic growth as a decisive and strategic factor, with a determined and firm affirmation of the right of the Country to a sovereign development.

Doable given the mobilization of resources that will result from the renegotiation of the debt.

Doable with the results that the fiscal policy we propose will permit.

Doable with the recovery of important amounts of money, today buried in the disastrous businesses of the PPPs and swaps.

From our part:

Instead of the continuation of transferring wealth to big capital via the more than 8 billion euros annually in debt interest, PCP proposes the renegotiation of that debt, in its schedule, rates and amounts, significantly reducing its annual charges.

Instead of the continuation of submission to the demands of the European Union, PCP proposes the decoupling of Portugal from the Budgetary Treaty and the mechanisms of the so-called Economic Governance, to recover and affirm national sovereignty, as well as studying and preparing Portugal liberation from the submission of the Euro.

Instead of cuts in wages, pensions and other incomes, PCP proposes returning what was stolen, valuing work and workers, defending their rights as a condition for

development, inverting the path of precariousness, of miserable wages, including the fixation of a National Minimum Wage of 600€ from the beginning of 2016.

Instead of a continuation of a policy that abdicates national production, PCP defends the unpostponable defense of our Country's agriculture, fisheries and industry. Produce more in order to owe less, create jobs and surpass the chronic deficits of our national economy.

Instead of a policy that reconfigures the State, placing it at the service of big economic interests, PCP proposes the defense of public services and the social functions of the State – the National Health System, the Public School, Social Security and Culture.

Instead of the continuation of a policy of privatizations, PCP proposes recovering the public control over strategic sectors of our economy, starting with the banking sector. Immediately stopping and reverting the ongoing processes, such as the privatizations of TAP, CP Carga, Carris, the Lisbon Subway, SCTP and Porto Subway, the New Bank and others.

Instead of deepening an unjust fiscal policy, PCP proposes fiscal relief for workers and people, as well as micro- and small business. Fighting tax evasion, ending the scandalous fiscal benefits, taxing big capital.

Instead of the continuation of a policy of capturing public resources by economic groups, PCP proposes an end to so-called public-private partnerships, to numerous concessions and ruinous contracts for the state, fighting the unbearable promiscuity between political and economic power, and corruption.

These and other proposals, more that resulting from our conditions and the project we have for the Country, are mostly a necessity and an aspiration of the Portuguese people.

Solutions that are part of a patriotic and left-wing policy, tied to national interests and that are also a basis for dialogue and convergence with other forces and democratic sectors that do not give up on a Portugal with a future.

We are in a decisive moment in the life of our Country. The situation is serious!

PCP has alerted, predicted, resisted, furthered the struggles, presented the alternative. Life has shown us in the right.

Today, the same as usual, big capital and the parties in their service, prepare the continuation and deepening of

this policy of exploitation, impoverishment, liquidation of rights, that jeopardizes the democratic regime and the existence of Portugal as a nation and a sovereign and independent country.

PCP has fulfilled and fulfills its role, it embodies difference, in an incomparable action based on its party collective, a militant intervention which is ability, strength and example.

The Party reinforces itself and faces, with confidence, the need and possibility of its further reinforcement.

Here we can testify the framework of the action “More organization, more intervention, more influence – a stronger PCP”, the success of the recruitment campaign “The values of April in the future of Portugal” with 2 thousand new militants, a largely surpassed objective, with a high number of youth and women.

From here we salute the new militants, the Party organizations and militants, the communist youth, JCP – the Portuguese Communist Youth.

The workers, youth, the Portuguese people, the Country needs a stronger PCP. It is a necessity, an objective we assume with confidence, more recruitments, furthering the contact campaign, broadening militancy, more organization, namely in companies and work places, intensifying propaganda and disseminating the party press, namely the Avante!, and new steps in guaranteeing the financial independence of the Party.

A stronger Party to fight for a rupture with the right wing policy and a patriotic and left-wing alternative, for realizing a Program of “An advanced democracy – the values of April in the future of Portugal”.

A stronger Party, reaffirming its communist identity. Yes, all the Party reinforcement we have achieved and want to achieve is towards making the Party stronger and more influential, with the essential characteristics that define it, with its nature of a Party of the working class and all workers, its objective of building a new society, socialism and communism, its theoretical basis Marxism-Leninism, its working principles derived from the creative development of democratic centralism, a profound internal democracy, a single central leadership and a single general orientation, and its characteristic as a patriotic and internationalist Party.

An identity, an ideal and project based on the strength of our convictions and the justice of our fight and that today the world's reality make even more relevant.

AMR



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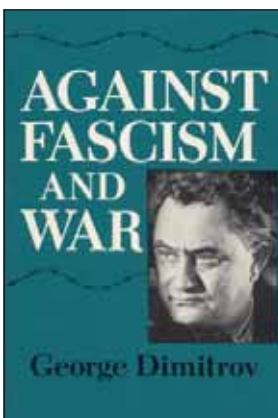
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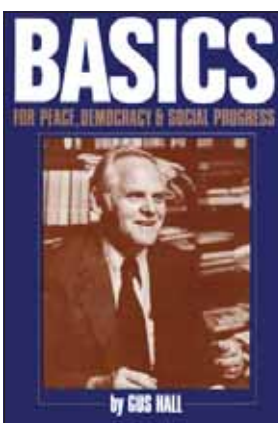
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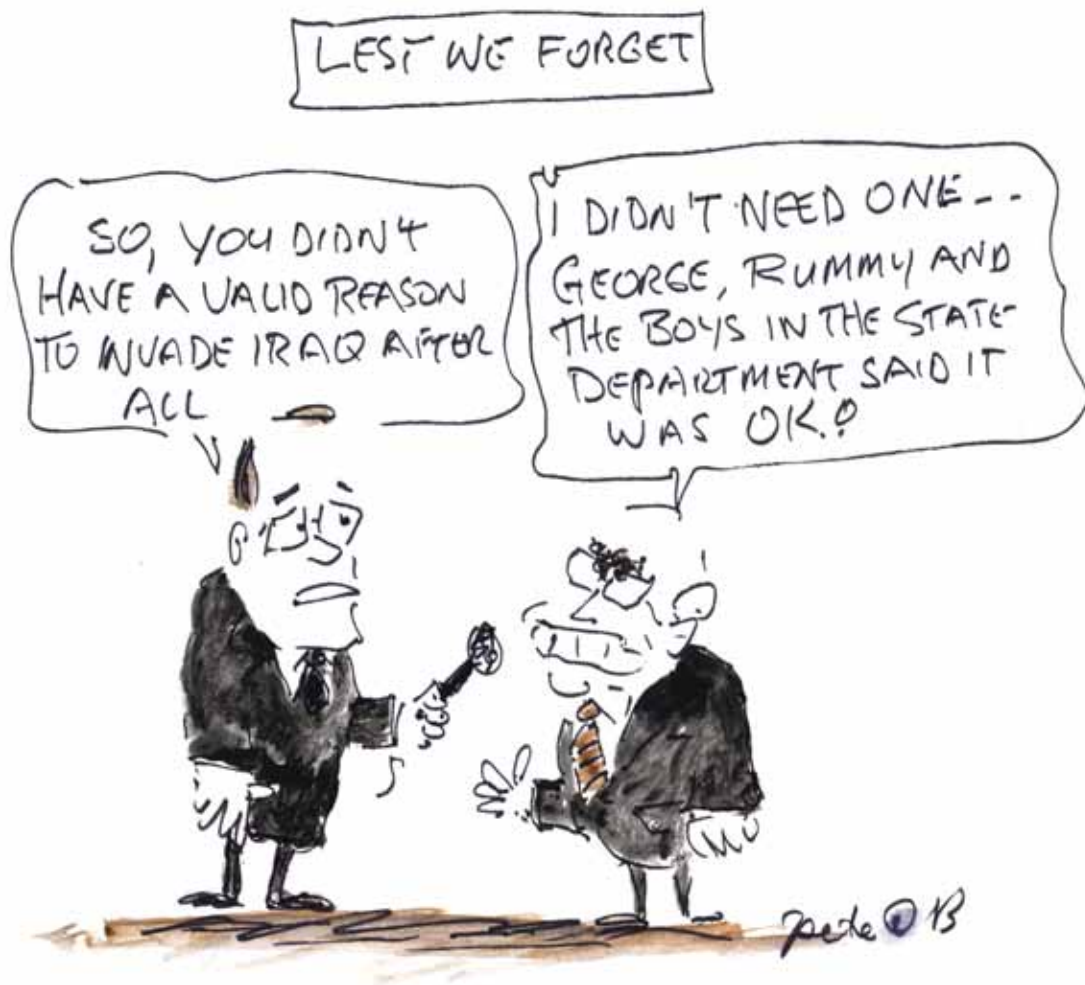
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# Unite to Oppose Imperialist War



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