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Understanding US Intervention

***The Presidential Candidates' Agricultural
Policies & the National Question***

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Theoretical Organ of the New Democratic Marxist Leninist Party

Background: Vietnam War Image

SONG FOR A PALESTINIAN CHILD

Dr. Mustafa Kamal Sherwani

I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child.
People think, I am meek and mild.
I was born in the midst of fire,
Coffin on the body is my attire;
I can face everything, dark and dire,
The time fails to sink me in its mire.

I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child.
People think, I am meek and mild.
Always ready for bullets is my chest,
The bombs can never dampen my zest;
My blood is meant for my country's best,
Only in the grave, I shall take my rest.

I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child
People think, I am meek and mild.
I aspire for peace, have love for all,
I want to demolish the religion's wall;
When the world is weeping on my fall,
I must also try to rise high and tall.

I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child
People think, I am meek and mild.
Playing with death, is my ordinary game,
For me, earth and sky are all the same;
I am a violent storm, no power can tame,
My enemy will suffer a lasting shame.

I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child.
People think, I am meek and mild.
Desire for freedom makes me wild,
I am a Palestinian child. I am a Palestinian child.

Editorial

The collapse of the 'Good Governance' regime was to be expected. It was a marriage of convenience between parties with little but greed for power and wealth in common, that was doomed from the start. The alliance won the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015 owing to public anger at the Rajapaksa regime's corruption, greed for power and abuse of power. The victory was, however, not overwhelming, as the support base that Mahinda Rajapaksa built by claiming personal credit for ending the war was mostly intact, while people had doubts about the rival alliance.

Things may have been different for the Good Governance regime had it acted on its pledges. It took little or no action on its long list of crimes of the Rajapaksa regime. Instead, the new regime itself was accused crimes not much different from its predecessor's. Steps to bring the offenders to book came late and close to the end of its term so that the claim by the Rajapaksa's that they were politically motivated gained credibility.

Disunity was not just between partners. The drubbing that the 'official' SLFP led by President Sirisena suffered in the local government elections of February 2018 accelerated splits in the moribund SLFP. Meanwhile, UNP's weak performance opened old wounds. Wickremasinghe, by making seemingly big concessions, slyly outmanoeuvred his challenger Sajith Premadasa's bid to replace him as leader. But Premadasa instead of consolidating his gains and targeting the presidential elections, spent more energy to combat Wickremasinghe than to fight his opponent, only to weaken his campaign, deepen divisions in the UNP and eventually split the UNP. Rival factions played for time until close to nominations in February and are to battle it out in the parliamentary elections, originally scheduled for April. The factions have no substantial political differences and see pandering to Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism as the way forward.

Weak performance of the JVP in the presidential polls hurt its electoral credibility, although its unity is intact since its major split in 2012. But it has not changed in its chauvinistic approach.

The Tamil, Muslim and Hill Country Tamil political parties and alliances have undergone further splits and switches of loyalty, which have more to do with inter-personal rivalry than policy.

Thus the country is in a situation where there is little for the electorate to choose by way of policy or programme among rivals who will compete for votes from their respective communities by pandering to parochial attitudes within each nationality and even region.

If the Easter bombings of 2019 only helped to bring communal feelings that lay dormant to the fore, the COVID-19 outbreak of February 2020 has added confusion to all electoral arithmetic. The government which was responsible for the avoidable spread of the virus by its initial lackadaisical attitude and desire not to delay elections, has since resorted to firm measures like curfews and clampdowns without steps to ensure that essential needs of the people, especially the poorer sections, are met through a credible distribution network. The opposition parties seem to be quietly counting on the mishandling of the crisis by the government.

What is certain regardless of the outcome of the health crisis is that the economy is due for a battering from the global impact of COVID-19, from which recovery will be hard and painful for the toiling masses on whom the burdens will be imposed. Meanwhile, the signs are that electoral politics will resume where it left off before the health crisis with communal politics taking centre stage.

The genuine Left should learn from the lessons of the old left during the great depression and the malaria epidemic that followed, by combining community work with political work to organize the masses. Mass political work is all the more important today since the country faces the risk of the anti COVID-19 security regime becoming the order of the day for any government that comes to power to keep protest under wraps.

People should protect themselves from infection through collective community work while not falling prey to exaggerations emanating from those seeking profit. The Left has a big role to play in this respect.

Understanding US Intervention

Historical Background

The rise of US imperialism was unlike that of any European imperialist power. Isolation from Europe and the power vacuum after the fall of the Spanish empire helped capitalist growth in what became the United States of America (US) in 1776 and expansion beyond the borders of the thirteen British Colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America.

The US was an outgrowth a British settler colony, and its capitalism and dominant society were British transplants. While British capitalism made profit of African slave labour in North America and the Caribbean, US capitalism directly benefitted from slave labour and later from European immigrant labour fleeing poverty in Europe. Its territorial expansion, occurred at the expense of a failing Spanish empire, and had minimal external constraints. Expansion started with forcing Spain to give up its claim to Florida through the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1819, to be followed by genocidal acquisition of vast territories of the indigenous people to the west. Annexation of Texas led to a war with Mexico which enabled the US to purchase a vast territory from Mexico under duress.

Discovery of minerals, coal and later oil fuelled industrial growth, while agriculture and farming, assisted by mechanization, were key aspects of the economy until well into the 20th Century.

The idea of an “American Empire” became reality in the latter half of the 19th Century, when a surge in industrial output forced US capitalism to seek new global markets for its goods. A major extraterritorial expansion was the purchase of Alaska of extent 1,518,800 km² from the Russian Empire for \$7.2 million in 1867. The aim was to enhance trade with Asia.

Territorial expansion was, overall, driven by prevailing ideologies of social Darwinism. The US arrogated to itself a duty to establish industry, democracy and Christianity to “savage” societies, of which it saw plenty in the American continents. It was also driven by the idea that its mission to spread liberty and democracy set it apart from industrialised Europe. The claim relied on the fact that the bourgeoisie dominated European powers were restrained by feudal roots, as seen from the inability of many European states to be rid of their monarchies. The Christianity that dominated the US was ideologically too diverse to sustain a central religious authority. As a reactionary ideology, its hold on the minds of the people has been far stronger than that of European Christianity.

Territorial Expansion

Initial expansion was aided by colonial rivalry in North America. It helped the US to gain the territory of Louisiana from the French. It gained most from the fall of Spanish colonial rule, first in North America, then Central and Southern America and later the Caribbean. It encouraged Anglo-American settlers in Texas during 1835–36 to revolt against Mexico for independence. Texas which became independent in 1836 was annexed by the US in 1845. Annexation led to the Mexican–American War (1846–48), as Mexico retained its claim to Texas despite its declaration of independence. Defeat forced Mexico to yield on Texas and accept the Rio Grande as its national border as well as transfer Alta California and New Mexico to the US in exchange for \$18 million.

The Samoan crisis of 1887–1889 concerned rival claims for the throne of the Samoan Islands, with the US, Germany and Britain backing rival claimants to the throne. The resolution of the crisis led to partitioning Samoa into American and German Samoa. During WWI, New Zealand took German Samoa in 1914, which it ruled until independence in 1962. American Samoa remains an unincorporated territory of the US.

The Spanish–American War lasting nearly four months from April to August 1898 was the outcome of US intervention in Cuba’s war for

independence. US intervention did not lead to independence but made Cuba its client state in 1902. The war initiated US predominance in the Caribbean region and led to US acquisition of Spain's Pacific possessions. The 1898 Treaty of Paris ending the Spanish–American War was loaded in favour of the US, and gave the US temporary control over Cuba and indefinite right over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, which it purchased from Spain. Spain was left with Spanish West Africa, Spanish Guinea, Spanish Sahara, Spanish Morocco and the Canary Islands, of which only the last remains a Spanish territory.

The War also brought closer the countries of the Americas which had a common enemy in colonial Spain. This helped the spread of US influence across most of Central and South America.

Annexation of Hawaii in 1898 was another crucial conquest of the time. The US took hold of all public facilities of the Government of Queen Liliuokalani, the last monarch of Hawaii, overthrown in 1893 in a coup, led by US citizens. Hawaii became America's 50th State in 1959.

US foreign policy was isolationist before the Spanish–American War. US interests were thought to be best served by keeping out of the affairs of others. Also, wars of expansion, including annexation of the Philippine, faced internal opposition. The Spanish-American War was denounced as an imperialist war by the American Anti-Imperialist League (founded in June 1898). The US electorate, however, in consideration of economic interests, sided with the imperialist policy. The Spanish-American War was thus a watershed in US foreign policy. The US has since meddled in various conflicts around the world, often motivated by business interests, against a background of economic prosperity backed by technological innovation and industrial growth. US population grew fast from 1880 to early 1920s owing to European migration induced by poverty and religious persecution. The period from 1890s to the 1920s, called the Progressive Era, was a period of social activism and political reform. The progressives addressed issues rising from industrialization, urbanization and immigration, and fought widespread political corruption. Like the

reformists of Europe, they ignored imperialist expansion. Nor did they intervene to win civil rights for Black Americans while the Supreme Court let many racist laws of the southern states to stay.

Forerunners to US Imperialism

Victory in the Spanish–American War helped the US to assert itself as a military power on par with European powers. The US had, however, justified its incursions since 1831–32, when US forces landed in the Malvinas (Falkland Islands), now under British control but disputed by Argentina, on pretext of protecting US citizens. Among other incursions are those into Argentina in Buenos Aires in 1833 and from 1852 to 1853, into Mexico in 1836 during the Texas War of Independence, in 1844 to ‘protect’ Texas, from 1846 to 1848 during war with Mexico, and again in 1859, and into Nicaragua for prolonged periods in 1853, 1854 and 1857. US assertion of military might gradually stretched beyond the Americas.

The hegemonic ambitions of the US as declared by President James Monroe in 1823 became known as the Monroe Doctrine in 1950. The declaration of 1823 threatened European nations that further efforts to colonize land in the Americas or to interfere with states therein would be acts of aggression in the view of the US and invite US intervention. At the time, nearly all American colonies of Spain and Portugal had either gained, or about to gain independence. It was conceded, however, that the US would not interfere with existing European colonies or meddle in the internal matters of European countries.

The Monroe Doctrine asserted the concepts of American Exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny, which refer to the right of the US to exert its influence over the rest of the world, and justified US intervention abroad. It sought to keep the New World and the Old World as distinct spheres of influence by insulating newly freed colonies from European meddling and pre-empting the spilling over of European conflicts the Americas in order that the US could freely expand its influence in the Americas.

The Doctrine was, however, not applied consistently. In the 1830s the US ignored British seizure of the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) claimed by Argentina, and the naval blockade of Venezuela (1902–03) by Britain, Germany and Italy for Venezuela's refusal to pay foreign debts and damages to Europeans in its civil wars. Venezuelan President Cipriano Castro expected the US to uphold the Monroe Doctrine against the intervention, but the US limited the Doctrine to seizure of territory, not intervention. Castro was defiant and the blockading powers made a deal, but the blockade lasted through the negotiations. The incident influenced the addition of the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904 to the Doctrine. President Theodore Roosevelt, concerned with the prospect of German penetration, asserted in the Corollary the right of the US to intervene to stabilize the economic affairs of states in the Caribbean and Central America in case of inability to meet international debt obligations. The Big Stick policy and Dollar Diplomacy of the US in Latin America were important outcomes.

The Monroe Doctrine, with minor changes, was de facto foreign policy dogma of the US for much of the 20th Century, so that Presidents and statesmen used it to defend US aggression in Latin America and the Caribbean even in late 20th Century. The thinking is still implicit in US foreign policy. Armed intervention was mostly by the US Marine Corps (the Marines) and at times by the US Navy or Army. The seemingly passive Dollar Diplomacy declared in December 1912 by President William Taft soon proved to be a failure, and 'Dollar Diplomacy' came to be seen as rash manipulation of foreign affairs to serve monetary ends.

During the Spanish-American War, the US meddled in Central America and the Caribbean for economic reasons. The interventions, called the American-Caribbean Wars, were also dubbed the Banana Wars in view of the aim to preserve American commercial interests, mainly the United Fruit Company and the Standard Fruit Company that controlled the economies of the countries and dictated government policy. After the Spanish-American War, the US intervened militarily in Cuba, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. By the

turn of the century the US had built a sizeable sphere of influence besides the overseas empire gained at the expense of Spain.

The US, seeking military and economic domination in the region, sought sole possession of the proposed Panama Canal (started in 1881 by a French company and aborted by 1889). The US–Columbia treaty of 1903 allowed US use of the territory in exchange for financial return. But the Colombian Senate rejected it. The US responded by urging and aiding Panamanians to win independence from Colombia in November 1903. It gained control over the Panama Canal Zone in February 1904 to build the Canal completed in 1914 and placed under US control until end of 1999, when sovereignty was transferred to Panama.

The US, while urging political isolation of the Americas from European powers, took the opposite stand on China. Following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, China faced the threat of partitioning and colonizing by Britain, France, Russia, Japan, and Germany. The US, following victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898 and acquisition of the Philippines, desired greater presence in Asia and a stronger commercial and political interest in China. It initiated the Open Door Policy towards China in 1899–1900 allowing equal privileges among countries trading with China while Chinese territorial and administrative integrity remained intact.

The Rise of US Imperialism until WWI

The evolution of capitalism into imperialism in the US was in pace with that in Europe. However, the US, unlike European powers, was free from armed conflicts with rivals, but for its war against a weakening Spanish empire on the decline. By the end of the 19th Century the US aggressively asserted its imperialist ambitions. Proclaiming the Monroe Doctrine and later the Open Door Policy towards China are relevant in this context.

After the fall of the Spanish Empire the US had a free hand to assert its authority in the American continents. It intervened militarily in several countries to safeguard its economic and hegemonic interests. Thus, even before WWI the US was on its way to empire.

Territorial expansion was on military footing until WWI, besides strong military presence in countries with vital economic and strategic interests. Major acts of expansion until the start of WWI are listed below.

Hawaii (1893): Anti-monarchists, mostly Americans, in Hawaii, staged a coup that overthrew Queen Lili'uokalani of the Kingdom of Hawaii in January 1893. Hawaii, initially reconstituted as an independent republic, was annexed to the US in 1898 and became its 50th state in 1959.

Cuba (1898): The US invaded Spanish-ruled Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1898. It occupied Cuba until 1902, then from 1906 to 1909, in 1912 and from 1917 to 1922.

Puerto Rico (1898): The US seized the island by a sea and land military operation. An armistice signed in August between the US President and the French Ambassador acting for Spain led to Spain yielding sovereignty over Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines and Guam.

The Philippines (1899): The Philippine–American War was a struggle by revolutionaries against US occupation. Fighting began in February 1899, and in June the First Philippine Republic declared war against the US, which took control of the Philippines at the end of the war in July 1902.

China (1898–1901): An eight-nation alliance of Japan, Russia, US, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Austria–Hungary defeated the Imperial Chinese Army. They imposed on the Imperial Government further humiliating conditions atop those imposed since the Opium War.

Panama (1903): The Panama Canal Zone, carved out of Panama after the US aided Panama to secede from the Republic of Colombia in 1903, was placed under US sovereignty. Relations with Colombia were strained for two decades as a result, but economic ties withstood diplomatic strain as the US was Colombia's main market for its key export, namely coffee.

Honduras (1903–1925): During the Banana Wars (1898 to 1934) the US staged invasions and military incursions in Honduras, in 1903 to successfully stage a coup, and in 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1920, 1924 and 1925 to defend pro-US regimes in order to protect US interests.

Nicaragua (1912–1933): Resentful of the Nicaragua Canal proposal by President José Santos Zelaya to link the Atlantic and the Pacific, the US which controlled the Panama Canal forced Zelaya to resign in 1909, and set up military bases in Nicaragua from 1912 to 1925. Guerrilla resistance, led by Augusto Cesar Sandino, forced the US to leave in 1933, only to return in 1937 when General Anastasio Somoza Garcia seized power. The corrupt Somozas ruled until the Sandinista revolution of 1979.

Mexico (1914): The Mexican Revolution that began in 1910 alarmed US businesses that invested in Mexican mines and railways. US intervened in the revolution violating Mexican sovereignty by backing a coup in 1913 and stationing US troops along the border to fight against Mexican rebels. US troops invaded Veracruz in Mexico in 1914 following a minor incident involving US sailors and Mexican land forces in the port Tampico, and occupied Veracruz for seven months.

Haiti (1915–1934): The US encouraged investment in Haiti in 1910–11 to counter German influence. US-based banks sought US intervention to recover their loans. US forces that occupied Haiti in 1915 imposed a new government and a new constitution. Mass unrest and civil war forced US troop withdrawal in 1934. But the US maintained fiscal control until 1947.

Dominican Republic (1916–1924): Military interventions in 1903, 1904, and 1914 preceded invasion and occupation of the Dominican Republic by US marines in 1916. The US, unable to impose or sustain a civilian government to do its bidding, imposed its own military regime on the Dominican Republic which was resented all along, and the US left in 1924 in the face of much anger at home as well.

The US in WWI and until WWII

Busy with consolidating gains in the Americas and keeping European powers out of what it saw as its backyard, the US pursued neutrality in WWI that began in late July 1914, and intervened in April 1917 to preempt Germany's challenge to its hold on Latin America, after Germany urged Mexico in January 1917 to be its ally and recover Texas, New

Mexico, and Arizona from the US. Attacks on commercial vessels in the Atlantic by German submarines prompted the US to declare war. The US also fought in the Russian Civil War (1917-22) against the Bolsheviks.

The US economy was in recession when WWI began. The war helped an economic boom as Europeans sought US goods for their war needs. US entry into WWI in 1917 led to an economic surge based on war. The years of neutrality had enabled a smooth transition to a wartime economy through production of plant and equipment to meet the demand from warring countries. Enrolment in military and government and new manufacturing jobs for military production reduced unemployment. The war also was a turning point in the growth of US military strength and in its alliance with Britain and France owing to role in defeating Germany.

The Bolshevik government of Russia which came to power by the Great October Revolution withdrew from WWI. The US, its European allies, several British colonies, China and the Empire of Japan invaded Russia in 1918, amid the Russian civil war to side with the White Army against the Red Army of the Soviet government. The US and its European allies, having failed in their aim, pulled out by 1920. But Japan held to parts of Siberia until 1922 and the northern half of the Sakhalin Island until 1925.

Not counting the US endorsement of General Jose Orellana's United Fruit Company sponsored military coup that overthrew President Herrera in Guatemala in December 1921, the only serious US military intervention in Latin America between WWI and WWII was in Panama October 1941, where it got loyal elements in the Panama National Guard to stage a coup against President Arnulfo Arias, whose government turned down a US request for building over 130 new military installations inside and outside the Canal Zone. The coup leader Ricardo Adolfo de la Guardia Arango, a friend of the US who became president, obliged.

After WWI, the US, earlier a net debtor in international capital markets, invested large sums internationally, especially in Latin America. For instance, the US outdid Britain in investment and trade with Peru in the third decade of the 20th Century. By the early 1920s, Chile had most of its

economic activity in the hands of the US and let the US mining giants Anaconda and Kennecott take control of its major copper mines. The US became the leading exporter of capital, overtaking Britain and other European economic powers weakened by the war so that New York emerged as a leading financial centre on par with London.

The US seemed the predominant power of the Western Hemisphere, a perception that few doubted until the Soviet Union asserted itself in the Cold War era. The US had already marked its interests in Asia, but had to wait until after WWII to assert itself. The rise of the American empire brought with it several new approaches to American foreign policy, from military intervention to economic coercion to a mere threat of force.

The US had a 'Good Neighbour Policy' in Latin America in the 1930s, whereby friendly trade relations survived political conditions including dictatorships. The US renounced at the Montevideo Conference in 1933 its right to unilaterally intervene in the internal affairs of other nations. In 1934 it abrogated the Platt Amendment of 1901 imposed on Cuba, which placed severe restrictions on Cuba and granted the US unlimited right to intervene in any Cuban affair on pretext of preserving the independence of Cuba, restricted transferring of any of Cuba's land to the US alone, denied Cuba the right to negotiate treaties with other countries, and gave the US rights to a naval base in the Guantanamo Bay (which still exists as a US naval base). Also, the US Marines withdrew from Haiti in 1934. The policy was due partly to enduring Latin American diplomatic pressure against US interventionism and partly to rising resistance in Central America and the Caribbean to the US, and the cost of occupation.

The net effect of World Wars I and II was the reduction of European presence in Latin America and consolidation of US influence. The Good Neighbour Policy benefitted the US during WWII, and helped the US to have major Latin American countries as allies against Germany and Japan, although Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela declared war on Axis powers only in 1945. The Good Neighbour Policy died in the course of the Cold War that soon followed

the end of WWII, as the US was gripped with an obsession to protect the western hemisphere from Soviet influence and the threat of communism.

Post WWII Multi-national Military Treaties

Having become the strongest imperialist power after the end of WWII, the US expanded its influence at the expense of both friend and foe in WWII. The Cold War against the Soviet Union starting around 1946–47 aimed to curtail Soviet influence and contain the spread of communism, after a sizeable section of Europe came under socialist governments that were friendly towards the Soviet Union and surging anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa found a natural ally in the Soviet Union.

The US built military–political partnerships based on a foreign policy driven by hegemonic ambitions. Altruistic motives have, however, been attributed to nearly every US intervention in other countries, including the horrific wars in Korea and Vietnam. Among major military–political alliances formed with an anti-communist and anti-Soviet agenda were:

- **The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance**, also known as the Rio Treaty, comprising many countries of the Americas upheld the principle that an attack against one shall be seen an attack against all. But some member states repeatedly breached the Treaty which took effect in 1948. Canada did not join, and only Trinidad and Tobago (1967) and the Bahamas (1982) have joined it since.

The Treaty was invoked in 1962 to serve US interests during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and recently to impose sanctions on Venezuela. Its inconsistency, as in the war over the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) in 1982, led to resentment among members. Mexico, anticipating the Iraq War, withdrew in September 2002, citing the Malvinas example.

Led by leftist governments, the ALBA countries of Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela, withdrew from the Treaty in 2012 after the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) created a new regional security council to address defence issues. However, Venezuela was

'readmitted' when the rogue government of Juan Guaidó, formed in 2019 and recognized by the US and allies, opened talks to rejoin. But Uruguay withdrew from the Treaty in protest against its voting to impose sanctions against Venezuela's leader Nicolas Maduro.

- **The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** began in April 1949 as a military alliance of twelve countries (the US, Canada, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal). In 1966, France threatened to quit in protest of US domination. Although the NATO headquarters are in Brussels since 1967, the US remains dominant and decisive. NATO grew to include Greece and Turkey (1952), Germany (1955) and Spain (1982). Further expansion followed the end of the Warsaw Pact in 1991 to include former Warsaw Pact partners and later several European member countries of the former Soviet Union. Membership reached 28 in 2009 and is 29 since 2017. NATO also has 20 partner countries (including Russia) which have no say in policy matters.

With over three million troops under its command and a total population close to 940 million in its member states, NATO is by far the world's mightiest multi-national war machine. Although NATO existed throughout the Cold War, supposedly as a counter to the Warsaw Pact founded in 1955, no military operations other than joint military exercises occurred until it intervened in Bosnia–Herzegovina in 1992. Since then it has been party to several wars waged by the US.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the US has named the following as its major non-NATO allies: Australia, Egypt, Israel, Japan & South Korea (1989); Jordan (1996); New Zealand (1997); Argentina (1998); Bahrain (2002); Philippines, Thailand & Taiwan (informally) (2003); Kuwait, Morocco & Pakistan (2004); Afghanistan (2012); Tunisia (2015); and Brazil (2019). There are besides other partners of the US for its purpose of encircling China and Russia.

- **The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)**, also called the Manila Pact was founded in Manila, Philippines in September 1954

and had its headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand. Its purpose was collective defence against communist expansion in Southeast Asia. It comprised US, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand and Philippines. Notably, only the last two were Southeast Asian states. Pakistan withdrew in 1968, France suspended financial support in 1975 and SEATO formally ended in June 1977.

- **The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)**, founded in 1955 as the Middle East Treaty Organization or the Baghdad Pact by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and Britain, with headquarters in Ankara, Turkey was modelled after NATO. The US, which was instrumental in its formation, only joined the military committee in 1958. CENTO failed to arrest Soviet influence in the Middle East— especially Egypt, Syria, Iraq, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Somalia, and Libya. CENTO proved futile in 1974 when Turkey invaded and occupied Northern Cyprus. It was doomed by the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. US and British defence agreements in the region, thereafter, have been bilateral.
- **The Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS)** made in 1951 was a non-binding agreement designed in the early years of the Cold War to confront the “communist threat”. Intended for military matters of the Pacific region, it later covered worldwide conflicts. New Zealand was suspended in 1986 for seeking a nuclear-free zone in its territorial waters. The ban was partly lifted by the US in 2012 to keep intact the Australia–New Zealand deal. Australia and New Zealand fought in the Korean and Vietnam Wars without invoking the now mostly defunct ANZUS, now superseded by the more powerful AUSCANNZUKUS and intelligence outfits like the Five Eyes that coordinate intelligence services of the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Mention of the **Warsaw Pact** (the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance), signed in 1955 by Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union is

relevant here. The Warsaw Pact was a response to West Germany being made a member of NATO. It was dissolved in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union is often listed among reasons to justify the US-led military alliances listed above. It was at best a modest response to NATO, and was used militarily only in the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The US, besides the said alliances, has defence treaties to make countries partners in its wars. The Korean War was fought under UN Command by cynical manipulation of the UN Security Council (UNSC) when the Soviet Union kept out of the UN protesting the so called “Republic of China” usurping the UN seat and permanent membership of the UNSC. The UN Command founded in 1950 with 17 countries had mostly South Korean and American forces, with a US puppet ruling South Korea. The US again manipulated the UN since 1991 to dismember Yugoslavia, with the NATO playing a strategic role for the US allies.

The Sino-American Mutual Defence Treaty (1955–79) between the US and the Taiwan regime, to prevent takeover by mainland China, served to make Taiwan a US military base. Features of the treaty survive in other forms since nullification after the US recognized the People’s Republic as the sole legitimate government. The Mutual Defence Treaty with the Philippines (signed in 1951) stands, even after the US naval base in Subic Bay ceased to be in 1992. The US–Israel Strategic Cooperation Agreement of 1981 affirms the role of Israel as defender of US interests in the Middle East and parts of northern Africa. The most vicious of such alliances is the 35-nation Gulf War Coalition of 1990-91.

Post WWII Armed Aggression

US foreign policy is based purely on US imperialist interests. Thus foreign policy is about making the world safe for American corporations by forestalling the rise of any society that offers a humane alternative to capitalism. Being the dominant capitalist power, the US seeks to wield political and economic hegemony over as much of the world as possible. Hegemony demands military supremacy to face potential threats as well

as ensure loyalty of allies. Thus its defence sector has a disproportionate say in national policy and favours the defence establishment as well as the armament industry, defence contractors and intelligence services.

The Cold War was not declared to protect democracy from a perceived communist threat, but to keep alive a war mind set. The cold warriors brainwashed themselves and the public that an evil International Communist Conspiracy existed and there was need for a moral crusade against it. When the myth of the communist conspiracy was no longer sustainable after the fall of the Soviet Union, the US needed a new enemy to pursue its moral crusade, and before long it found one in Islamic fundamentalism to whose rise the US contributed in no small measure.

The following is a list of major US military interventions since WWII (by continent and in sequence of last intervention). The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) founded in 1947 played a key role in US interventions.

ASIA

- **The Philippines (1945-54):** The US military fought the Hukbalahap rebels (Huks) even when they fought the Japanese invaders in WWII. The US continued its fight after the war to defeat the Huks. The Philippines has since been ruled by US puppets including Ramon Magsaysay (1953–7), propelled to presidency by the CIA in 1953.
- **Korea (1950–53):** After WWII, the US acted to suppress the popular forces that liberated Korea from fascist Japan in favour of corrupt, conservative Japanese collaborators. In the resulting war, UN forces, mostly US troops, fought on the side of the brutal US puppet regime in South Korea. Soviet Union backed North Korea and provocation by US drew China into the war. The US aim to subdue North Korea failed. Fighting ended on 27th July 1953, with more than 3 million people, mostly civilians, killed. Armistice agreement was between North Korea and the US but without a treaty, so that the war is still on in theory, and US troops have a pretext to stay on in South Korea.

- **Vietnam (1961–75):** US interest began with siding France against the Viet Minh (League for Independence of Vietnam) which the US saw as communist, despite the Viet Minh being the only force that fought the Japanese in WWII and friendly towards the US. Following French defeat in South Vietnam in 1954, the US sided with the reactionary regime there to keep Vietnam divided. The war that began with 400 US Army Special Forces personnel arriving in South Vietnam in May 1961 escalated. In December 1972, a desperate US bombed North Vietnam, but was forced to retreat in 1973. But the US continued with military and strategic support for its client in South Vietnam until it fell in 1975. This remains the biggest military humiliation for the US. But the US, by destroying Vietnam to its core, killing 1.3 million, poisoning the soil and harming the gene pool for generations, has fulfilled its key aim of wrecking a good development model for Asia.
- **Laos (1964–73):** The CIA was in Laos since 1950 and conducted covert activities including the coup of 1960. The ‘Secret War’ of the US from 1964 to 1973, using CIA paramilitaries in Laos was inseparable from the Vietnam War. The US dropped more than two million tonnes of ordnance on Laos in 580,000 bombing missions, the heaviest known bombing per capita. The bombings, designed to support the Royal Lao Government against the communist Pathet Lao and arrest traffic along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, destroyed many villages and displaced hundreds of thousands. The war was ‘secret’ to the extent that the media kept the US public in the dark.
- **Cambodia (1969-73):** Prince Sihanouk’s independent policy did not let the US use Cambodia to fight its war in Vietnam. The US, which attacked selected targets in Cambodia since 1965, launched extensive “secret” carpet bombings in March 1969. Sihanouk was evicted by a coup in March 1970. Bombing activity expanded and a third of the country’s population was internally displaced before it ended in August 1973. The hated coup government of Lon Nol was defeated by the Khmer Rouge amid the economic mess caused by US bombing

which destroyed Cambodia's agrarian economy. The US later sided with the Khmer Rouge purely to spite Vietnam.

- **Lebanon (1958, 1982–84):** The US landed 14,000 troops in Lebanon in July 1958—its first post WWII military adventure in the Middle East. Meantime British forces arrived in Jordan to prop up its client state in the wake of anti-imperialist developments in the region and the rise in prestige of Gamal Abdel Nasser. Diplomacy minimised bloodshed, but the US troops stayed on for three months.

In August 1982, 800 US Marines were sent to Lebanon as part of a multinational force to assist the evacuation of members of the PLO from Beirut after the Israeli supervised massacre of over 1000 Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, and the siege of Beirut in which Israeli bombing killed 300 people. The US Marines who stayed on to protect the fragile pro-US regime were forced to withdraw in 1984 after the bombing of their barracks in 1983 killed 241 US personnel.

- **Kuwait and Iraq (Gulf War 1991):** Iraq warmed up to the US after waging war on Iran (September 1980 to August 1988). The US saw in Iraq a surrogate to fight Iran. But when Iraq, driven by the dire state of its post-war economy, invaded Kuwait in August 1990, US and Western allies intervened on Saudi and Egyptian request. Gulf War 1991 began when Saddam Hussein defied UNSC demand to leave Kuwait by mid-January 1991. During Operation Desert Storm, comprising the most concentrated aerial bombardment in history, the US dropped 88 kt (88 million kg) of bombs including napalm and cancer-causing depleted uranium weapons. That was followed by relentless air and ground attacks by the allied coalition for 42 days until end of war. Subsequent UNSC sanctions, by denying proper medicines, killed over a million children and even more adults.
- **Afghanistan (2001–):** The US sought to topple the social reformist Democratic Republic of Afghanistan since its founding in 1978. Soviet influence in Afghanistan bothered the US. The Soviet Union erred in

sending troops in 1979 to defend its ally. The US avoided encounter, but armed the mujahideen, whom it armed with Stinger missiles from 1986 to shoot down Soviet helicopter gunships.

The CIA had a pivotal role in arming and advising the mujahideen and other fundamentalists against their secular rivals who resisted the Soviet troops in 1989. CIA's plans to build a US-friendly regime went astray. The Taliban, which took power in 1994, turned hostile by 1996 and harboured the al-Qaeda. Based on the unproven charge that al-Qaeda was behind the 11th September 2001 (or 9/11) attacks, the US and allies waged war on the Taliban. The war, dubbed "War against Terrorism" lasted 18 years with the US and allies unable to overcome the Taliban.

- **Iraq War (2003–10):** US desire to punish Iraq arose from Saddam Hussein's defiance of the US in several matters. In May 1991, using Iraqi repression of the Kurds as pretext, the US, UK and Gulf War allies declared and enforced "no-fly zones" over most of the airspace in southern and northern Iraq. Regime change in Iraq was US policy by 1998, and the US used crafted the false pretext of Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction to attack Iraq in March 2003, with 125,000 US and UK troops invading from Kuwait amid massive anti-war protests worldwide including the US and UK. The war achieved its purpose by end of April 2003, but US-led military presence rose to 170,000 in 2007. Resistance to the invading forces went beyond 2008. What is most odious about the war that killed up to 500,000 Iraqis, caused serious injury and disease to millions, destroyed the unity of Iraq and wrecked its economy is that it was based on a shameless lie.
- **War against the Islamic State (2014–):** The US war against ISIS is an undeclared war on Syria and a project to politically weaken Iran and thus isolate the Hamas in Palestine and Hisbollah in Lebanon. The Islamic State (IS, also known as ISIS, ISIL, or Daesh) was an offshoot of al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and thus a creation of the US. The AQI faded out with the escalation of US attacks in Iraq in 2007, but re-

emerged in 2011 amid instability in Iraq and Syria and called itself the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in 2013.

The war against IS is complex. The US uses IS (i) to attack enemies in the Middle East; (ii) as pretext for military intervention; and (iii) to project a perceived Islamic threat to intimidate the American public and justify invasive domestic surveillance. In the proxy war in Syria against Syria and its allies, the IS is indispensable to the US. Thus the US wages war on IS not to destroy IS but preserve it for a rainy day. The rise of IS in Africa since its fall in Syria and Iraq, while it imperils stability in northern African countries, offers the US a window to interfere in the name of fighting terrorism.

EUROPE

- **Bosnia–Herzegovina (1994–95):** During the Bosnian civil war, which began after the country declared independence in 1992, the US was part of NATO's peacekeeping force in the region. It launched air strikes on Serb targets to prevent “ethnic cleansing” by Serbs while turning a blind eye to offences against Serbs, especially by Croats.
- **Kosovo (1999):** Separatist violence erupted in residual Yugoslavia's province of Kosovo in March 1999. Kosovo separatists, encouraged by Germany since 1996 and later the US, received military advice and training from CIA officers stationed as ceasefire monitors in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999, on fighting the Yugoslav army and Serbian police.

AFRICA

- **Somalia (1992–93):** Civil war followed the fall of Somali dictator Siad Barre, a US ally, in 1991. A US-led multinational force intervened in 1992 on pretext of restoring order and food security. Outgoing US President Bush persuaded the UN to agree to sending US combat troops to protect aid workers. The failure of the military mission led to troop reduction by the new President Clinton.

The US troops also suffered humiliation at the hands of Somali militants in October 1993, and were forced to withdraw fully in 1994.

Since then the US resorted to proxy war, using Ethiopian troops with strategic support from the US to fight the rebels. Intensive bombing of rebel forces since 2015 failed to subdue the rebels who warmed up to al-Qaida from 2009 and IS since 2015.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- **Cuba (1961):** Having failed to overthrow the Cuban government by invasion in the Bay of Pigs using Cuban exiles in April 1961, the US imposed quarantine on Soviet shipment of missiles to Cuba in October 1962. The Missile Crisis took the US and the Soviet Union to the verge of a nuclear war. US hostility mellowed slightly by the end of the 20th Century, but US embargo on Cuba still continues.
- **Dominican Republic (1963–66):** The US resented Juan Bosch, elected in February 1963 as head of state as he stood by his pledges of land reform, social welfare, limited nationalisation and restricted foreign investment. A US-backed military coup ousted him in September 1963. When young military officers with mass support rebelled in April 1965 to return Bosch to power, the US sent 23,000 troops to crush them and impose a government of its choice.
- **Grenada (1983):** The US invaded Grenada in October 1983 to oust its government which was friendly with Cuba. Since then, Grenada's US-trained police and counter-insurgency force are reputed for brutality, arbitrary arrest, abuse of power and erosion of civil rights.
- **Panama (1989–90):** In December 1989, US forces bombed and invaded Panama in breach of International Law on pretext of protecting American lives. At least 500 people were killed merely to overthrow Panama's dictator and drug-smuggler Manuel Noriega, once a trusted CIA agent, who offended the US in the late 1980s.

GLOBAL

The US is the only imperialist power launch a global war to serve its imperialist aims on pretext of addressing a global menace.

- **Global War on Terrorism (2001–):** Soon after the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001, President Bush launched the Global War on Terrorism. Several NATO countries and other allies have participated in it to eliminate al-Qaeda and other militants groups.

The War on Terrorism, declared in October 2001, helps to maintain the oversized military machine that helps the US military-industrial complex to reap profits from war and arms trade. The War is estimated to have cost the US around six trillion dollars, and killed more than 500,000 people including 7000 US troops in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, while defence contractors and arms manufacturers made billions of dollars of profit. US counterterror operations now affect nearly 80 countries, mostly in the Middle East and Africa.

- **War on Drugs (1971–):** Addiction of US servicemen to heroin was handled internally in the US in the early 1970s. With neoliberal globalization, the US made its War on Drugs a pretext to involve US military in anti-drug operations in Latin America. In September 1989, President Bush announced the Andean Initiative in the War on Drugs to provide Colombia, Bolivia and Peru with military and law enforcement assistance to fight illicit drug production and trafficking.

Later developments showed that the "War on Drugs" was a cloak to conceal the extension of earlier military or paramilitary operations, especially in Colombia where the government backed by its army and militias fought a civil war (1964-2016) against leftist rebels. Large parts of drug war funding, training and equipment from the US went to fighting leftist insurgents, with much of the funds reaching active large-scale drug-traffickers, including members of the Colombian military. By heavily arming and training the military between 1984 and 1990, the US ruined prospects for stable democracy in Colombia, which has since been notorious for political killings and crime, committed mostly by the state and pro-government militias.

Following the killing of nine US-Mexico dual nationals by members of a drug cartel, President Trump declared in November 2019, that

the US will declare Mexican drug cartels as terrorists and wage war on them in an affront to Mexican sovereignty. Ironically, the drug cartels use arms smuggled from the US for their criminal activities.

Undeclared Wars

Conventional wars are economically and politically costly. The US was fairly cautious after defeat in Vietnam. Heartened by the fall of the Soviet Union followed by the break-up of Yugoslavia, it took on the Taliban in Afghanistan, misjudging Taliban's potential. Its Iraqi adventure, despite military success, achieved little more than ousting Saddam Hussein and weakening Iraq, now closer to Iran, the nemesis of US in West Asia.

The US knows the hazards of direct rule over countries, and its wars since WWI were rarely over capturing territory. It seeks control over the state in nominally sovereign neocolonies so that each client state attends to its political and economic problems in ways that serve neocolonial interests. War and civil disturbances in the Third World help neocolonialism, by hindering unity among oppressed nations and letting imperialist arms manufacturers and suppliers profit from arms sales and military advice. Conflicts also enable political leverage by intervening on behalf of a warring party or both parties, if possible. Regime change is tried when a neocolony is reluctant or fails to deliver.

War is the last resort when other means of regime change fail. Although the US has not been attacked by any country since WWII, the US has attacked countries based on imagined threats and self-interest portrayed as collective interest. Of more than seventy countries that faced US hostility since WWII, fewer than twenty were invaded by the US.

The US has on occasion not identified itself as the main player in conflicts to serve its interests, and used proxies to fight its battles and used means other than war to achieve regime change. They include inciting civil unrest and regional conflicts, coups d'état (mostly by the military) and political assassinations. Constitutional coups have become more common since the dawn of this century. Since the end of the Cold War, defending

human rights, democracy and even the right to self determination have increasingly made the case for US intervention through the agency of the UNSC, NATO or other alliances as necessary.

Regime Change and Destabilisation

What follows is a list of moves by US alliances to destabilise or depose 'unfriendly' regimes since WWII, without waging war. The CIA, a component of the US intelligence community, has played a key role in regime change and destabilization. One may add to this list limited military exercises that stopped short of armed conflict, and proxy wars.

ASIA

- **Syria (1949):** A junta led by Syrian Army chief of staff Husni al-Za'im with extensive CIA links ousted the government of Shukri al-Quwatli in April 1949. But al-Quwatli returned to be re-elected in 1955. CIA's plan to overthrow him in 1956 for his friendship with Nasser stalled amid invasion of Egypt by Israel. A CIA plot in 1957 to use Iraq and Jordan to invade Syria fell through when military officers who were bribed millions of dollars confessed to Syrian intelligence.

(2011–): Since as early as 2006 the US, amid mending relations with Syria, financially assisted anti-government exile groups. Soon after inducing a civil war in 2011, the US demanded the resignation of Syrian President Bashar Al Assad, and imposed an oil embargo on Syria. The "moderate" rebels whom it armed and assisted since 2013 to overthrow President Assad were overcome by fundamentalists backed by US clients Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The ISIS soon sidelined its rivals and posed a grave challenge to Syria, until Syria, supported by Russia, Iran and the Hezbollah of Lebanon since 2015 turned the tide. Having failed at regime change and later fighting the ISIS, the US sought to retain a foothold in Syria by backing the Kurdish rebel force YPG in northern Syria, much to the fury of Turkey. The US, has since distanced itself from the YPG to placate Turkey, but uses the pretext of fighting the defeated ISIS to prolong military presence.

- **Iran (1953):** The progressive and popular Prime Minister Mossadegh nationalised the British company that controlled Iran's oil. The CIA and Britain's MI6 organized a coup that deposed Mossadegh and re-installed the brutal Shah of Iran, who privatised Iran's oil, allowing British and American oil companies dominant shares. The Shah's brutal police state lasted until the 1979 Islamic revolution. The CIA admitted to its role only in 2013.
- **Iraq (1959, '63 and '68):** Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim got Iraq out of the anti-Soviet Bagdad Pact in March 1959. The CIA used the Ba'ath Party against him and had a hand in the failed coup of October 1959. But the CIA helped the Ba'athists to seize power in a coup in early 1963. The Ba'athists were expelled from government soon, but a CIA-backed coup in 1968 returned them to power. By the 1970s the Ba'athist regime and the US began to drift apart owing to its social reforms aimed to appease left-wing elements. Meanwhile Saddam Hussein, who was on the payroll of the CIA from 1959, wormed his way up to become Vice President of Iraq, and President in 1979. However, the CIA and MI6 plotted an unsuccessful coup to oust him in 1996, which strengthened his hand. Events that followed paved the way for the US and Britain to wage war on Iraq.
- **Indonesia (1957–58 and 1965):** The US disliked President Sukarno for his non-alignment. The CIA planned his overthrow in 1957, and in 1958 elements of the Indonesian military abortively rebelled against Sukarno. The CIA persisted, and in 1965 General Suharto ousted Sukarno in a US-backed coup, and by conservative estimates killed up to a million people (two million according to recent estimates) including thousands of popular leaders, whose names were given to the military by the US Embassy. The key target was the Communist Party of Indonesia, the largest communist party outside socialist countries. Severe repression ensued until Suharto's fall in 1998.
- **East Timor (1975):** East Timor declared independence in November 1975. But Indonesia invaded it in December, following a visit by US

President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger. Indonesia used US arms in the invasion which, by 1989, killed a third of the population of 700,000. The US, which supported the territorial claim of Indonesia over East Timor, also politically backed Indonesia and armed it all along its occupation until 1999 when 78% of the East Timorese voted for independence. Indonesian backed militias, however, continued to terrorise East Timor until close to independence in May 2002.

EUROPE

- **Italy (1947–48):** The US meddled in Italian elections to prevent the election of communists. Besides covert funding of rightist Christian Democrats (DC) to the tune of tens of millions of dollars, the US explicitly linked continuing US aid to war-devastated Italy with electoral victory for the DC. For two decades and more, the CIA and American big business intervention ensured victory for the DC.
- **Albania (1949–53):** Taking advantage of the geographic and strategic isolation of Albania from its European allies by Yugoslavia, the CIA and the British secret service MI6 plotted to replace the communist government with a friendlier regime using expatriate Albanian monarchists and WWII collaborators with Italian fascists and Nazis. This failed project was kept secret from the public until 2006.
- **East Germany (1950s):** During Cold War, the CIA indulged in wide-ranging campaigns of espionage, sabotage and psychological warfare against East Germany. This was among factors that led to the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. CIA's intelligence operations in Germany continued even after reunification in 1990.
- **France (1965):** On 21st April 1961 a group of French generals tried to depose President Charles de Gaulle for proposing the granting of independence to Algeria, which they feared will lead to communist dominance and a Soviet base in Algeria. The conspirators took Algiers, the capital of French Algeria, but the unpopular coup fell within days. There is evidence to link Allen Dulles, Director of CIA, and his friends in the French government for orchestrating the plot.

- **Greece (1967):** Georgios Papandreou's centre-left government elected with an outright majority in February 1964 was dismissed by the monarch in 1965. Fresh elections were slated for 28th May 1967, and it was likely that Papandreou would form government. A military coup occurred on 21st April 1967, just weeks prior to the scheduled polls. The fiercely anti-communist and pro-US coup was a joint venture of the Greek monarchy and military, the US military posted in Greece, and the CIA to avert a "communist take-over". It was followed by martial law, censorship, arrests, beatings, torture and killing of thousands. The military junta that wielded power from 1967 to 74 was a legacy of the Greek Civil War, in the final phase of which the US intervened in 1946 to prevent communists from capturing power.
- **Yugoslavia (1999):** Yugoslavia, reduced to a federation of Serbia and Montenegro by 1992, suffered further secession. Semi-autonomous Kosovo seceded in June 1999 following a NATO-backed secessionist campaign from February 1998 to June 1999. Yugoslavia was bombed by NATO from March to June 1999. The British MI6, US Special Forces and personnel from Military Professional Resources Inc. militarily trained KLA separatists. Meantime the opposition parties received around 100 million dollars from the US through its agencies, to achieve regime change in Yugoslavia. The campaign served to generate and organise dissent and contributed to the Bulldozer Revolution that overthrew Slobodan Milošević in October 2000. Disintegration of Yugoslavia continued. In 2003 Yugoslavia became the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, and in 2006 Montenegro declared independence. Kosovo, which in 1999 was made a UN protectorate, but de jure part of Serbia, declared independence in 2008, which is to date recognized by all US allies and Islamic states.

AFRICA

- **Egypt (1952):** King Farouk I rejected reforms prescribed by the CIA in the wake of the Cairo riots of January 1952, in order to weaken the protesting radicals and stabilize his regime. The CIA allegedly had a

hand in the coup of July 1952 led by anti-communist military officers that ousted him. The US had strong clandestine contact with the post monarchy regime and when Nasser took power in 1954 the US tried to curb his Arab nationalist agenda. Relations soured after Egypt recognized the People's Republic of China in 1956. But the pro-Israeli stand of the US during the Six Day War of 1967 wrecked relations, which were restored only after Anwar Sadat succeeded Nasser in 1970.

- **Congo (1960–65):** On 24th June 1960, Patrice Lumumba became the first prime minister of independent Congo. Belgium retained its vast mineral wealth in Katanga province, where the US too had much at stake. Following Lumumba's public call for the nation's economic as well as political liberation, Katanga province declared independence on 11th July. President Joseph Kasavubu, at the instigation of the US, dismissed Lumumba in September, and Lumumba was assassinated in January 1961. For the next 30 years, the corrupt, brutal and US-friendly Mobutu Sese Seko ruled the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, renamed Zaïre by Mobutu). CIA's role in planning the assassination became public only in the 21st Century.
- **Libya (1981–89; 2011–):** In 1973 Libya nationalised US and British oil interests in defiance of imperialism. In August 1981 US fighter jets shot down Libyan planes within Libyan airspace; in 1982 the US imposed a unilateral embargo against Libya; and in 1984 attempted to assassinate Libya's leader Muammar Gaddafi. Holding Gaddafi responsible for the bomb attack at a German disco that killed two US soldiers, the US bombed Tripoli and Benghazi in January 1986 killing at least forty. Western diplomatic pressure followed the alleged Libyan bombing of a civilian aircraft over Lockerbie in Scotland in December 1988, and in January 1989 US Navy aircraft shot down two Libyan jet fighters over the Mediterranean Sea 110 km north of Libya. In March 2011 a NATO-led coalition militarily intervened in Libya enabling Gaddafi's opponents to overthrow his government through

a 'civil war' waged amid the Arab Spring uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East. The defeat of the Libyan government in October 2011 and the brutal killing of Gaddafi in was achieved by NATO intervention, in which the US and France played a key role. The resultant political instability and internal strife continue to date.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- **British Guiana (1953–64):** When Cheddi Jagan, leader of the leftist People's Progressive Party (PPP), was elected Prime Minister in 1953, Britain suspended the constitution, sent in troops, and set up an interim regime. The constitution was restored in 1957 after inducing a split along ethnic lines in the PPP. Although Jagan's faction won the election, he could only be a minister, as the post of Prime Minister had been suppressed. In 1961, Britain granted autonomy to British Guiana (now Guyana) but keeping control over internal and defence matters. Jagan, elected Prime Minister in 1961, faced endless trouble with CIA-funded strikes and communal riots that crippled Guyana in 1962–63. Combined with CIA's disinformation campaign, they led to the defeat of the PPP in 1964. Guyana, one of the region's better-off countries under Jagan, was among the poorest by the 1980s.
- **Guatemala (1954–1990s):** Ten years of social democratic reforms since 1944 came to an end in 1954 following a CIA orchestrated coup in response to the nationalization of plantations of the United Fruit Company. Mass unrest led to civil war in 1960 pitting a repressive regime against indigenous Mayans and the Ladino peasantry. The civil war ended in 1996, but not the human rights abuses by the CIA-backed state. Military and paramilitary forces of the state killed and disappeared up to 2000,000 civilians.
- **Paraguay (1954, 2012):** The far-right Colorado Party ruled Paraguay from 1945 to 1962. The brutal dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner who took power in a bloody coup in 1954 was fully backed by the CIA until overthrow in a bloody coup in 1989. Paraguay as a close ally of the US coordinated Operation Condor (1968–1989) with dictatorial

regimes of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil as key actors and US as mentor. Operation Condor executed cross-border state terror and assassinations between 1975 and 1985 killing between 60,000 and 80,000 left sympathisers and imprisoning more than 400,000. The Colorado Party lost power in 2008 to Fernando Lugo, a former Roman Catholic Bishop was elected President. Lugo was ousted four years later in a CIA-backed constitutional coup.

- **Cuba (1959–):** Besides the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961, the US had from 1959 backed terrorist attacks within Cuba including an elaborate plan code-named Operation Mongoose to overthrow the government by October 1962. The placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba comprising the “Missile Crisis” led to a deal with the Soviet Union including winding up of the operation. But CIA-driven terror operations continued and peaked in the mid-1970s under President Nixon. Meanwhile the US intensified economic sanctions. Trade and travel embargos against Cuba persist despite UN General Assembly resolutions calling for their lifting.
- **Brazil (1964):** President Joao Goulart earned the ire of the US by restoring relations with socialist countries and opposing sanctions against Cuba. He was overthrown on 31st March 1964 in a covertly US-backed military coup. The US was promptly recognized the coup regime on 2nd April. Recently released documents reveal that the US readied to intervene in Brazil by sea and air to protect the coup.

In the next 15 years, the military dictatorship which became a close ally of the US shut down the Congress, crushed political opposition, trampled on individual and trade union rights, made it a crime to criticise the president, used the police and military to quell public protest, and armed gangs to torture, kill, and disappear likely rebels.

- **Chile (1973):** The CIA and US multinationals such as ITT spent millions of dollars to manipulate the Chilean presidential elections in 1964. But, Salvador Allende who lost in 1964 was elected in 1970 and acted on his pledge to nationalise Chile’s copper mines to the fury of

US mining companies. The CIA-backed right-wing stirred a political crisis and staged a bloody coup on 11th September 1973 to oust the government and assassinate Allende. Seventeen years of military rule under Augusto Pinochet witnessed mass executions and torture with more than 3000 murdered and thousands more “disappeared”. Chile is still struggling to heal the wounds of its 9/11, made in USA.

- **Uruguay (1969):** In the 1960s, the failing economy of Uruguay led to mass protests and militancy against the right wing government. The revolutionary group Tupamaros gathered momentum. In 1969, the CIA persuaded the government to use death squads. CIA agent Mitrione trained the army in cruel forms of torture. His kidnapping and killing by the Tupemaros in 1970 led to Uruguay’s ‘dirty war’ of 1972–83. Tupemaro activists were captured, questioned and killed as advised by the US. A US-backed coup in 1973 led to a civic-military dictatorship that annulled the Constitution and choked trade unions and political opponents. Electoral democracy returned in 1985 after a general strike in 1984 forced the hand of the military.
- **Bolivia (1971, 2019):** A US-backed coup deposed President Juan José Torres and brought Hugo Banzer to power in 1971 costing 100 lives and many injuries. Coup leaders were handsomely rewarded by the US through the CIA. Banzer’s seven year dictatorship arrested and tortured thousands and executed or disappeared over 200.

Since the election of Evo Morales in 2005, the US aided the Bolivian right in its efforts to topple the government. The military coup of 10th November 2019 masterminded in Washington DC was preceded by street violence stirred by the opposition. The coup has hurt relations with Mexico, now led by a less obliging President Lopez Obrador, who boldly offered refuge to Morales, thus encouraging resistance to the US-backed coup regime in Bolivia.

- **Nicaragua (1978–89):** The US feared the birth of a second Cuba when its client, the fascist dictator Somoza, was defeated by the Sandinistas in 1978. After political pressure and economic sabotage failed under

President Carter, President Reagan waged a proxy war from 1981 to 1988 using the Contras (mainly Samozá's soldiers) armed and funded by the US. The Contras, who bombed villages, destroyed public utilities and violated human rights, were disbanded in 1990.

The Sandinistas who lost the elections of 1990 to a US-funded rightist alliance returned to power in 2006 and remain in power with mass support. The US in another bid at regime change, incited a student protest in April 2018 against social security reforms to become a violent anti-government campaign, which collapsed by September.

Soon after the Bolivian coup the US resumed attack. On 25th November 2019 it issued a statement claiming that Nicaragua is an "unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States". This prolonged the executive order by President Trump declaring a state of "national emergency" on Nicaragua in 2018, by which right is reserved to impose sanctions.

- **El Salvador (1980–92):** Despite El Salvador's left opposition working within the system, the US-backed military regime repeatedly resorted to electoral fraud and criminal repression of all protest. As a result the broad left alliance Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) took up arms. The ensuing civil war lasted 13 years (October 1979 – January 1992) and cost 75,000 civilian lives. The US military, said to serve in an advisory capacity, and the CIA actively backed the regime, costing six billion dollars to the US.
- **Haiti (1991, 2004):** The US backed the dictatorship of the Duvaliers in Haiti from 1957 until the military overthrew it 1986 amid massive public unrest. The CIA worked closely with terror squads of the state, especially the notorious *tontons macute*. Constant wilful meddling by the US undercut post-dictatorship efforts to democratise. President Aristide who took oaths in February 1991 was forced into exile by a US-backed military coup in September 1991. The coup fell in the face of massive public resistance, and the US sent in 20,000 occupation troops and "peace-keepers" to protect the military Junta and its

neoliberal allies from the masses. The US let Aristide return in 1994 to continue as President from 1994 to 1996 and serve again from 2001 to 2004, when another coup led to his exile until 2011. The US, despite nominal handing over of military authority to the UN in 1995, has been in de facto control of the occupation and actively interfered with elections. It used the catastrophic earthquake of 2010 to tighten its grip while acting cynically to wreck public goodwill towards Cuba, arising from Cuba's outstanding disaster relief work.

- **Venezuela (2002, 2019):** The US backed the failed coup of April 2002 that briefly ousted President Hugo Chávez. It then tried to destabilize Venezuela, even encouraging a separatist call by the oil-rich state of Zulia in 2009. Disruption escalated since Nicolás Maduro succeeded Chávez who died in 2013 of cancer, caused probably by carcinogens introduced by hostile elements. Venezuela faced an economic crisis caused by the fall in the price of oil, its main export. Since 2006, US economic sanctions and criminal acts by US-backed right opposition have aggravated crime, inflation and shortages. US and allies froze Venezuela's foreign assets on false pretexts from 2008.

In 2015 President Obama lied that Venezuela posed an 'unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the US' to declare a "national emergency" to thwart the 'threat'. Street violence led by the opposition deepened and coup attempts followed, including the CIA-orchestrated terrorist attack on Fort Paramacay in Carabobo State in August 2017 and the attack on Maduro in August 2018 by drones carrying C-4 explosives. Climax came when, by prior agreement, opposition leader Juan Guaidó declared himself Interim President in January 2019 and was promptly recognized by the US and its European and South American allies, amid rejection by most the world's countries. A military coup attempt by Guaidó at the end of April failed, but attempts to destabilize go on, with US backing.

- **Honduras (2009):** Honduras, after more than a century of US-backed military rule, had a fragile transition to a limited democracy under

military watch in the early 1980s. Nominally civilian governments elected since 1982 had to defer to the military and the US Embassy on key issues, and CIA-backed Contras used Honduras as the main base to attack Nicaragua. Manuel Zelaya, elected President in 2006, was a liberal with left tendencies, and took Honduras into the Bolivarian Alliance, ALBA in July 2008. A military coup deposed Zelaya in June 2009 to return Honduras to the heavily militarized regime of the 1980s. US censure of the coup was sham amid much anger in Latin America. Subsequent evidence is that the coup had the blessings of the US, which also acted to block Zelaya's return to Honduras.

Proxy Wars

During Cold War, arresting spread of communism and containing Soviet influence were priority and pretext for US intervention in the Third World. Subversion of unfriendly governments and political forces was mostly via the CIA. Proxy wars were launched to protect right wing governments and to subvert the Left, whether in power or in opposition. Proxy warfare paid dividends in Laos where CIA-trained Hmong tribes fought communists, in Afghanistan where the mujahideen overthrew a pro-Soviet regime, and in Nicaragua where contras wrecked the country.

In later years, the US used militias and other non-state actors backed by US advisors and trainers. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Israel — with conflicting aims — aided US-recruited proxies in the region. Proxies like the Syrian Democratic Forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) were unsuccessful. The civil war in Libya spun out of control with US proxies battling each other for power.

Conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya mark a new era in proxy wars. These and the war in Afghanistan could mutate into prolonged proxy wars between competing interests, certainly including the US.

To the list of proxy wars should be added the wars waged by Israel and Saudi Arabia and other Arab client states, where US imperialist interests coincide with the hegemonic interests of the client.

Russia. The US fought proxy wars against the Soviet Union in Angola (using the South African apartheid regime), in Ethiopia (using internal dissenters to overthrow a pro-Soviet government), and in Afghanistan (where the main proxy, the Taliban, soon became a formidable foe).

Since early this century, the US saw the resurgent Russia as a challenge to unbridled US hegemony and sought to curtail Russian influence. It backed Chechen secessionists against Russia in vain between 1999 and 2009; and its reckless move to make Georgia a member of NATO led to the Russo-Georgian War in August 2008 as Abkhazia and South Ossetia declared independence from Georgia and received prompt recognition from Russia. Logistic and political support by the US for Georgia proved inadequate.

Ridding Ukraine of a Soviet-friendly government by a US-backed coup in 2014 led to the secession of Crimea and its repatriation to Russia (where it belonged until transfer to Ukraine in 1954 under Khrushchev) by a referendum. The bitterly anti-Russian stand of the coup regime made the provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk declare independence. An armed conflict followed with the US and Russia siding feuding parties.

China: After the People's Republic of China's entered the UN as the legitimate government of China, the US, which until then recognized the Taiwan regime as legitimate, crafted a "Two Chinas" policy and induced native (not indigenous) Taiwanese to seek secession. While prospect for armed conflict is weak, Taiwanese independence will remain a bone of contention between China and the US. The US has also encouraged Tibetan separatists (whom the CIA unsuccessfully armed in the late 1950s) and Uygur separatists (based in the US and Turkey) to create regional unrest. Although the conspiracy is failing, the anti-China propaganda war goes on with Xinjiang high on the agenda.

US moves to create conflicts between China and its neighbours using South China Sea boundary disputes have failed to bear fruit so far, partly because of China's effective diplomacy. There are, however, other ways to stir trouble in South China Sea which will be touched on later.

The motives of the Hong Kong ‘democracy protests’ of 2019 became clear as protests spiralled into violence and vandalism. China’s charge that the US backed the protests has been vindicated by recent US Federal legislation requiring US sanctions against Chinese and Hong Kong officials responsible for human rights abuses in Hong Kong.

Iran: Iran has been prime US target since Shah Reza Pahlavi fell in 1978. After the plan to use Iraq against Iran failed in the 1980s, Saudi Arabia and Israel are used to incite Iran. The US sought to stop Iran’s uranium enrichment for nuclear power, calling it a nuclear weapons programme. The US has persisted with threats to attack Iran and has imposed sanctions even after signing the Iran nuclear deal in 2015, from which it unilaterally withdrew in May 2018 to heap further pressure on Iran. The prospect of using Saudi Arabia and Israel to attack selected targets in Iran is strong with rising Iranian influence in the region, especially Iraq and Syria, and its impact on events in Lebanon, Palestine and Yemen.

Somalia: The US is now actively pursuing a fully blown proxy war in Somalia using a multi-nation African force to fight al-Shabab militants. In the process, USAFRICOM forces are breeding future surrogate forces comprising US-trained native forces to fight on its behalf.

Political Assassinations

Political assassination is resorted to when political means fair or foul fail to deliver regime change. It is cheaper than war, if there is no risk of a backlash, and has been a major regime change tool during Cold War. Targets included critics of US policy on their countries or regions.

To facilitate assassinations, imperialism mobilises social and political forces that will be loyal external masters. It contrives political movements of local agents such as political parties, disgruntled members of the government, and externally driven non-governmental organisations.

CIA-led attempts on the lives of ‘enemies’ of the US, included around thirty heads of government, of whom quite a few survived, notably Fidel

Castro, who died of natural causes in 2016 after dodging 638 attempts, an unbeatable record. Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the UN was less lucky. Information relating to his killing in an air crash in September 1961 was deliberately withheld to keep the air crash a mystery for decades. Emerging evidence, however, asserts that the killing was a CIA-MI6 project. But secrecy still shrouds important aspects, with the US, Britain and South Africa withholding important information.

CIA victims included once loyal clients of the US who either outlived their usefulness or deviated from the line laid down for them, like Jose Antonio Remon, President of Panama killed in 1955 and General Zia Ul-Haq, President of Pakistan who died in a plane crash in 1988.

CIA's abuse of authority became public concern in the 1970s. In 1975 a Senate Select Committee headed by Senator Frank Church investigated the conduct of intelligence activities by the state. Only part of its report was made public. Despite the report playing down the use of media establishments and intellectuals by the CIA in its evil missions, many crimes of the CIA were exposed including assassination plots, abuse of power, tampering with mail, tapping telephones and illegal spying on US citizens. The report revealed CIA's engaging mafia dons to kill Fidel Castro and attempts to poison Patrice Lumumba before his brutal killing. Also exposed were surveillance, infiltration, discrediting and disruption of several domestic political organizations between 1956 and 1971 by the infamous COINTELPRO (acronym of Counter Intelligence Program).

The exposure made the CIA curtail but not stop its killings. Not long ago, the CIA played a role in assassinating Osama bin Laden, Moammar Gadhafi and members of his family. The State Department and the CIA have polished their style of doing underhand business. Remotely located killer agencies with covert support are now hard to link to their masters.

Technology has refined the art of killing, making assassinations neater and simpler. The drone attack of August 2018 on Venezuelan President Maduro in is an example, although unsuccessful and strongly denied. No one still knows the cancer causing substance that poisoned Chavez.

Elimination by other means

Assassination of an important leader can confuse allies of the victim and facilitate regime change. Elimination of Lumumba led to a US-client regime in the DRC. But assassinations risk the advent of the cult of a martyr in whose name a political movement could emerge that nurtures sentiments hostile to US interests in the target country or even globally.

The coup in Ghana in 1965 occurred while Kwame Nkrumah was out of Ghana and that in Cambodia in 1971 when Narodom Sihanouk was out of Cambodia. As Sukarno was too popular to kill the Indonesian coup regime kept him under house arrest from 1965 until he died aged 60 in 1970, for lack of medical care. Others like Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia were witch hunted after their overthrow in 1999.

Newer methods in vogue include either 'forced exile' — most recently Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti — or ousting by a 'democratic upsurge', the latter being a very well-funded subversive campaign.

Rescue Missions

The US has under pretexts such as rescuing US citizens and at times others to safety amid social unrest sent its armed forces into countries on 'non-combatant' missions. In several instances, the US was the cause of the crisis, as in Cambodia and Vietnam in 1975, in Iran during the hostage crisis of November 1979 to January 1981 and the rescue fiasco of April 1980. Rescue operations which increased in frequency since the end of Cold War have been carried out, at times jointly with the NATO or UN, mostly in situations arising from US intervention in West Asia, former Yugoslavia and the Horn of Africa. Frequent rescue missions would strengthen the case for permanent US military bases in Africa.

Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Intervention

UN peacekeeping flourished after the Cold War. Major missions were in Kuwait, Namibia, Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and the

DRC. Genocide and ethnic cleansing drew UN attention in the 1990s, and led to the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), a global political commitment endorsed by the 2005 UN World Summit to address concerns of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. But, the US and allies perverted R2P to serve their regime change agendas, as in Libya, where UNSC cited the R2P to authorize military intervention.

During Cold War, US–Soviet rivalry denied UNSC endorsement to most imperialist interventions. Since end of Cold War, peacekeeping under UN auspices in a US-dominated world order, notably in Iraq, Somalia, Cambodia and Bosnia–Herzegovina, has been a strategy that served US interests at minimal risk to US military personnel.

If peacekeeping ever succeeded, it was because the adversaries desired peace. In fact, UN peacekeeping was hardly neutral in the DRC (1960), Namibia (then SW Africa, 1980s), Angola (1989 to 91 to 95 to 97 to 99), Bosnia–Herzegovina (1992–95) and Kosovo (1999–). US military presence continued under NATO in Bosnia–Herzegovina until 2004 and in Kosovo for the past 20 years. UN peace keeping openly sided with imperialism in Haiti (1993–96; 2004–19), Kosovo (1999), Syria (2012–) and Mali (2013–). The Support Mission for Libya (2011) aided imperialist intervention.

UN forces failed the civilians in Bosnia–Herzegovina (1994), Rwanda (1994), the Central African Republic (CAR) (2016) and DRC (1999–). In Sierra Leone, UN peacekeepers stood aside or fled as rebels advanced on Freetown in 2000, and British troops moved in fight the rebels. In South Sudan, when government forces fought former rebels in July 2016, UN troops failed to protect civilians. In CAR, the UN mission was guilty of inaction in September 2016 when over 75 people were killed amid an outbreak of violence. In November 2019, people in eastern DRC, tired of the failure of UN forces and the government to protect them from armed groups, attacked the UN mission’s camp in Beni.

Serious misconduct of UN troops was reported in the CAR, DRC, Haiti and Sudan, including smuggling and abuse of vulnerable women and children. As bad is the failure of countries to punish offending soldiers.

Also, the 2004–19 UN mission in Haiti caused the cholera outbreak of 2010 that killed up to 30,000 people before the Mission was engulfed in a sex abuse scandal that further offended local communities.

Owing to the reluctance of the West to dispatch peacekeeping troops to Africa, the UN has made regional organizations like the African Union its partners. Imposed solutions, especially military solutions, miss out on underlying issues and pay minimal attention to recovery from conflict, unless it benefits imperialism.

UN forces are under pressure to fight America's war, especially in countries whose governments resent US domination. Peacekeeping could thus end up as a proxy war between the US and rival powers seeking influence in the country or region, with the UNSC enlisting soldiers from poor countries to die for US imperialist interests.

Sanctions and Trade Wars

UNSC Sanctions

Of thirty sanctions regimes imposed by the UNSC, only two were during Cold War. Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) faced sanctions in 1966 when its white minority regime declared unilateral independence; racist South Africa faced an arms embargo in 1977 after "voluntary" measures since 1963 failed. South Africa agreed to universal franchise amid international pressure and shady deals between African National Congress leaders and imperialist powers that betrayed the Black people of South Africa.

The UNSC has since applied sanctions on former Yugoslavia (1992–95, 1998–99), Haiti (1993–94), Iraq (1990–2003), Libya (1992–99), UNITA opposition of Angola (1993–2002), Rwanda (1994–2012), Sierra Leone (1997–2010), Somalia (1992–), Eritrea (2009–18), Liberia (2003–16), DRC (2003–), Côte d'Ivoire (2004–16), Sudan (2004–), Lebanon (2006–), DPRK (2006–), Iran (2006–), Guinea-Bissau (2012–), CAR (2013–), Yemen (2014–), South Sudan (2015–) and Mali (2017–). UN applied sanctions on ISIS, al Qaida and Taliban, which were once proxies of the US, but not on US clients like Israel or Saudi Arabia, both major violators of human rights.

US Sanctions

Since WWII the US has unilaterally imposed political and trade sanctions to extract economic advantage and punish enemies. Sanctions were justified by claiming that the victim violates human rights, democratic rule or fair trade. The real reasons were economically driven, like the desire to dominate access to markets and natural resources.

Sanctions work by inflicting pain, and the US knowingly risks — if not destroys — thousands of lives to force a target government to yield to its demands or risk regime change. Such cruelty rarely arouses indignation among US citizens who are deliberately misled by the US media. The unilateral sanctions of the US lack global consensus and are in breach of the rules of the World Trade Organization.

Among countries facing severe economic sanctions and embargos by the US are North Korea (from 1950, enlarged since nuclear tests in 2006, and further extended after launching long range missiles in 2013), Iran (from 1979), Syria (from 2012), Sudan (from 1997, partly lifted in 2017), Zimbabwe (from 2002), Cuba (from 1960, full embargo since 1962) and Venezuela (from 2014). The US forces compliance of countries and businesses by selectively punishing breach of sanctions.

Unlike other sector-wise punitive or retaliatory US sanctions on various countries, the above listed aim at regime change. But regime change is, rarely realized by punitive sanctions as even an unpopular government can turn tables on the US by blaming sanctions for its troubles. Although sanctions since 2002 helped to bringing down President Mugabe in 2017, they failed to produce a regime amenable to the US in Zimbabwe.

Tariff Wars

Post-WWII economic wars waged by the US include the Chicken Tariff (1980s), Banana Wars with the EU (1993 to 2012) and the Lumber Wars with Canada (since 1982). Resistance in the World Trade Organization (WTO) led to the revoking of tariffs on steel imports imposed in 2002.

Protectionist tariffs violate the codes of Free Trade and Open Economy imposed on the Third World not long ago. In July 2018, the US applied tariffs to all imported washing machines and solar panels. Additional tariffs on a variety of Chinese imports followed, alleging unfair trade practices by China. China responded with tariffs on US imports forcing a partial retreat by the US in late 2019. The US also slapped tariffs on its European partners, Mexico and India, causing adverse responses.

The real concern of the US is the prospect of China overtaking it in key fields including ICT, which it has led for decades, and the “Belt and Road Initiative” propelling China to prime position in international trade amid China’s growing economic footprint in Africa and Latin America.

Military Encirclement

Military encirclement in times of peace indicates intention to isolate and attack. Extensive global presence of US armed forces ensures that most countries targeted by the US are mostly encircled.

Well before economic sanctions, Iran was surrounded by at least 45 US military bases. While militarily threatening Venezuela, the US also has proxy forces like Colombia ready to do its bidding. Notably, US military returned to neighbouring Guyana in August 2019 after a decade to ‘shore up relationships amid growing tensions in neighbouring Venezuela.

After East Europe, the Baltic States and most of former Yugoslavia joined NATO, Russia was fully encircled in Europe but for a few buffer states. The Ukrainian coup of 2014, planned to move NATO bases to the border of Russia, is the most aggressive anti-Russian move by the US so far. The US also has military bases in the former Soviet republics of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to the south of Russia. Pressure from regional countries has ensured that they will not be permanent. To the east, the US has strong military presence in Japan and South Korea has since WWII.

Encircling China was on hold after the thaw in US–China relations in the 1970s, and was revived as capitalist China posed an economic challenge

to the US. China, aware of US resentment of its rise and fearful of possible US embargo in the Indian Ocean, assisted countries in the region to develop harbours. US media accused China of creating a 'String of Pearls' to militarily encircle India. The 'String of Pearls' story fell apart when China announced its Belt-and-Road (B&R) initiative in 2013.

President Obama's hostile Pivot-to-Asia initiative of 2011 failed. In 2017 US, Japan and Australia, to rival the B&R, announced the Blue Dot Network, which is still on the drawing board. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) of the US, Japan, India and Australia of 2007 aiming to contain China was revived in 2017. Encouraged by the US, India, risking its own isolation, has kept out of B&R and avoided signing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partner Partnership (RCEP).

Global Military Presence

Global military presence is vital to the security of the US, the most militarized state known. As the self-appointed policeman of the unipolar world it viciously violates the UN Charter, international law, and sovereignty of nations. While the giant military bases of Cold War years declined a global infrastructure of overseas bases expanded in scale and scope with US treating host countries like colonies.

Besides the Army, Navy, Marine Corps (nominally under US Navy), Air Force, Coast Guard and National Guard) and other organs of its military network, the US has ten Unified Combatant Commands (eleven with the Space Command), six of them Regional Commands which together map the whole globe and tasked to protect US interests in their assigned regions. All bases come under their relevant Command. Headquarters of Commands for Europe and Africa are in Germany and the rest in the US.

Major military bases exist in over 35 countries and at least 80 countries host Special Operations Forces, with over 200 000 US military personnel in some 800 military bases. With the smaller Forward Operating Sites, the bases would exceed 1000. US military personnel also train local armed

forces of many countries. Mutual cooperation arrangements offer US forces a wide reach within countries for military training and assistance programmes, and joint exercises, so that up to 164 countries and regions have some form of US military presence.

The Cooperative Security Location (CSL) also called “lily pad” gained currency since 2004 especially in Latin America and Africa. It is a host-nation facility without many US personnel but with pre-positioned equipment and/or logistical facilities for joint activities and ready access. There are also other very basic sites like the Contingency Locations (CL). The secrecy shrouding many CLs, CSLs and at times Forward Operating Sites is worrying. Their undocumented existence makes them immune to public and parliamentary oversight. As military bases are a manifestation of US foreign policy, undocumented bases suggest that the state develops policies without public debate to spend vast sums of public money to drag the US into conflicts of which most of the country is uninformed.

Europe: Overseas military presence of the US is strongest in Germany, Italy and Japan (all WWII adversaries) and South Korea. NATO had in 1999 effectively encircled Russia in Europe. European countries notable for absence of US bases are Sweden, Switzerland, Austria (since 1955) and France (since 1966).

Latin America and the Caribbean: Military expansion in Latin American was slow as most states were compliant, but defiance was duly punished. Many CSL type US military bases came up after US forces left Panama in 1999 as per Torrijos–Carter Treaties of 1977. Under the State Partnership Program of the US, the National Guard has 24 State Partnerships in Latin America and the Caribbean, which host the following major US bases:

- **Cuba:** The Guantanamo Bay military base established in 1903 and housing the infamous Guantanamo military prison since 2002.
- **Bahamas:** Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center of the US Navy, operating since 1966 at several locations in the Andros Island to develop new naval military technology.

- *Aruba and Curacao* (Dutch controlled): Military bases to intercept narco-ships and aircraft, accused of use for spying on Venezuela.
- *Costa Rica*: A US military installation exists despite denial by US.
- *Puerto Rico*: Puerto Rico, an unincorporated US territory, was used for training and military exercises. The island of Vieques which had live training exercises since the 1940s was bombed by hazardous materials including depleted uranium until training stopped in 2003.
- *Honduras*: The Soto Cano Air Base built as part of the CIA-military support network in in 1983, now nominally a base for US civic action and humanitarian and drug interdiction projects, where the US has invested heavily in men and material since the coup of 2009.
- *El Salvador*: The Comalapa Naval Base, a lily pad base opened in 2000 to contain drug trafficking.
- *Colombia*: As the Colombian Constitutional Court rejected stationing of foreign military personnel in Colombia, the government allowed US forces to continue to use seven existing bases as 'lily pads' of the US to combat drug cartels and insurgency.
- *Peru*: The US Naval Medical Research Center #6 located the Peruvian Naval Hospital in Lima for research on and surveillance of infectious diseases threatening military operations in the region.
- *Ecuador*: The US Southern Command was allowed use of the Manta airport from 1999 to 2009. President Rafael Correa refused to extend the deal. But his successor Lenin Moreno has since 2019 engaged in military cooperation including letting US anti-drug overflights to land in the environmentally sensitive Galapagos Islands.

Middle East and North Africa: US military presence was driven by need to protect oil interests. Also, having antagonized the Iranian Revolution, the US fears Iranian influence in the region. The US has deployed troops to Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain.

Islamic fundamentalism, once backed by the US and Saudi Arabia, led to the rise of reactionary political Islam that now confronts US hegemony in North Africa. US presence in Africa has little to do with any military threat. USAFRICOM has a major military base, Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti (leased since 2001) but is unlikely to set up another of its kind.

Africa: While focus is on the warring regions of Africa (West Africa with Islamic extremists, Libya torn by power rivalry and Somalia in a state of civil war), the US expands its presence in Africa, with military bases, compounds, port facilities and fuel bunkers in 34 countries. The US uses the pretexts of countering terrorism and assistance programmes to infiltrate continental security organisations and establish liaison offices.

State Partnership relationships allow joint security operations with the US National Guard in fourteen African countries. Lily pad bases exist in Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Botswana, Kenya, Cameroon and Uganda and are anticipated in CAR, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, South Sudan and Uganda. Algeria, Gabon, Mali and Nigeria are likely targets. US troop presence is strong in Niger and stated in 2013. But its scale became known only after four US soldiers were killed in an ambush in 2017. Thus, Americans learn of US military activity in Africa only when things go wrong.

French forces in the former French colonies of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger supplement the US War on Terrorism in Africa.

Asia: Asia has ten large standing armies (China, Russia, India, Pakistan, North Korea, South Korea and Vietnam, the first five nuclear armed). US military presence declined in Asia since the Vietnam War, but surged in the Middle East and in Afghanistan, where the US is mired in futile wars.

Regional security groups in Asia exist, but are far less purposeful than the SEATO which lost impact a decade before it was wrapped up in 1977. The US retains its strong military presence in Japan and South Korea amid growing public resentment of foreign military presence, using the North Korea bogeyman and Sinophobia.

From before the 20th Century to the end of the Cold War the Philippines housed the largest US military bases in the Pacific. Despite closure of the bases in 1992 and slashing of US military assistance, US–Philippine military relations endured on pretext of countering Islamic terrorism in the south. The US rotated 500 to 600 special operations forces regularly in counterterrorism operations. Rodrigo Duterte, elected in 2016, despite questioning priorities of the US–Philippine alliance, let the two militaries work together under revised terms, and also endorsed the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement of 2014 which he threatened to nullify.

Agreement to station US troops in Singapore was renewed in 2019 to until 2035. Singapore has no US military base but its naval base served to launch US forces into the South China Sea, where US regularly conducts “freedom of navigation” exercises to contest Chinese territorial claims.

The US got on lease an airbase each in the former Soviet Republics of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia to station soldiers and refuel aircraft in the run-up to US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Russian initiatives in Turkmenistan thwarted US efforts to draw it into the war.

US military presence in the Middle East is strong but not stable in the long run. Troops are located in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Iraq by mutual agreement. Israel with the strongest war machine in the Middle East is the closest US ally in the region and like Saudi Arabia acts as a US proxy against Iran.

US efforts to entice Vietnam since around 2010 appear to have paid off. However, despite warming relations and joint military exercises, a US military base in Vietnam is yet to arrive.

The US and allies use several islands and archipelagos in the Pacific for various military purposes. The most important is Guam (ceded by Spain in 1898). The US illegally acquired from Britain in 1966 Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean for its use. Both bases served to conduct wars in Asia.

Control of the Oceans

The US almost totally dominates world's blue waters. Naval might is best assessed by fire power and ability to strike at will; and US Navy has unmatched ability to strike targets at sea, air and land. The oceans are assigned to US fleets directed from the US, Italy, Bahrain and Japan; and to fifteen forward deployment facilities covering the globe.

The US Navy deploys to various regions of strategic interest and is well placed to impose blockades, intervene to protect ships and launch rescue operations. It flexes military muscle as a deterrent with aircraft carriers and ballistic missile submarines as key means of intimidation. Threat of ballistic missile and amphibious assaults has been used in the past, and will probably be used for decades. Maritime security and humanitarian aid are further pretexts for US meddling. Port calls, transit through international and territorial waters, visible regional presence, and naval exercises to display military prowess assert control and authority.

China, Russia and India are naval powers in their own right but their global naval presence compares poorly with the US. Yet the US, after its long domination of the Pacific, faces a strong and defiant China. The US resents China's influence in East and Southeast Asia and its assertion of territorial rights and sovereignty over atolls in the South China Sea, where other regional states too claim maritime rights and require foreign ships to notify them of intention to sail through.

To military presence on land, sea and air should be added the desire to use space too as territory to wage war from. With rivals advancing rapidly in space technology, the US is unlikely to dominate space the way it seemed possible at the end of the Cold War.

Redefined Aims

The Congressional Research Service Report "U.S. Role in the World: Background and Issues for Congress" (updated 19.12. 2019) has summed up the role of the US in the post-WWII under the following four aims:

- global leadership;
- defence and promotion of the liberal international order;
- defence and promotion of freedom, democracy, and human rights;
- prevention of the emergence of regional hegemons in Eurasia.

These aims align with US foreign policy guided by the Monroe Doctrine asserting American Exceptionalism and America's Manifest Destiny.

Bid for Absolute Global Leadership

Having arrogated to itself global leadership, the US finds hegemony an essential precondition for the pursuit of the remaining aims. The liberal international order and freedom, democracy, and human rights are thus redefined to serve US imperialist interests. The final aim of preventing the emergence of regional hegemons reflects a colonial mindset.

The US dominated the post-WWII world by economic and military might. Its methods involved unequal trade treaties, aid as a means of economic exploitation and political domination, misinformation using the capitalist and state controlled media, and military threats, armed aggression and subversion of less cooperative governments. If anything has changed it is the style of work and not the substance.

During Cold War, US concerns were about keeping the status quo in Latin America and preventing left governments from gaining power in Africa or Asia. It intervened in Latin America to assure US hegemony. In Africa it faced a dilemma as White racists and colonial rulers were its natural allies confronted by anti-colonial struggles. Wars in Asia (the Philippines, Indochina and Korea) were residues of WWII.

After failing in Korea and Vietnam, the US avoided any intervention that risked Soviet military intervention, but it engaged in proxy wars and other misdeeds including military coups and political assassinations.

The fall of the Soviet Union offered new impetus to penetrate former allies and members of the Soviet Union. The US lured some former Soviet states through a series of unethical "Colour Revolutions": Rose

Revolution (Georgia, 2003&2004), Orange Revolution (Ukraine, 2004) and the Tulip Revolution (Kyrgyzstan, 2005).

Despite understanding with Russia that countries of the former Soviet Union, except the Baltic States, will not be drawn into NATO, the US tried to induce Georgia into the NATO, leading to Soviet intervention in Georgia. A similar mistake was committed in Ukraine some years later.

Loosening Grip

Even after thrusting neoliberal free enterprise, globalization, free market economy and free trade upon the Third World, the US is far from global economic domination. Three decades into its global crusade for free trade starting in the 1980s the US finds itself protectionist while China with a planned economy is the standard-bearer of free trade.

The US and its agencies, mainly the IMF, used debt as a means to coerce governments implement neoliberal structural reforms in the 1980s and 90s. The resultant economic disaster in several Latin American countries led to the election of leftist governments, called the 'Pink Tide'.

The US, to reverse the 'Pink Tide', resorted to regime change by bloody coups in Honduras and Bolivia, and constitutional coups in Paraguay and Brazil. Ecuador had a conspiratorial policy reversal. Rightist gains seem short lived. In Argentina, the neoliberal President elected in 2015 was defeated in 2019 by a centre-left candidate. Rightist regimes of Brazil and Ecuador face growing opposition, and Bolivians have reacted strongly to the coup. Mass protests are raging against state repression in Colombia and Chile. Coup attempts failed in Nicaragua (2018–19) and Venezuela (2019) and Mexico has a President who dares to defy the US.

Islamist terror as a weapon against Russia (and later China) has failed. The terrorists trained by the CIA soon turned against the US. There, however, seem to be shady deals between the US and Islamic terrorists whereby the latter serve to destabilize unfriendly regimes and provide pretext for US meddling in the name of fighting Islamist terror.

The rise of China as a global economic power created new concerns for the US in the Third World, especially Africa, which to the West was little more than a source of minerals whose supply was assured by friendly regimes. China built on its modest African presence in the south of the continent during the anti-colonial struggles to invest in infrastructure and in economic sectors long neglected by the West.

The US stirred trouble in Hong Kong in 2019 after failure in Tibet and Xinjiang, but appears to be failing again. The Indo-Pacific idea concept is a new ploy to draw India into an anti-China alliance.

Hostility towards Russia revived as it re-emerged as a military power. Efforts to encircle Russia by further enlarging NATO pushed Russia to assert itself in Georgia and later Ukraine. Russia, which erred in letting the US have its way in the UNSC to attack Iraq and Libya, took a defiant stand against US inspired subversion in Syria. The imprudence of using Islamic terrorism and later the Kurdish nationalists to topple the Syrian government led to a strong, but not necessarily enduring, geopolitical alliance of Russia and Iran, and later, Turkey.

Iran has been in the crosshairs from 1979. US sanctions expanded in 1995, intensified since 2006, continued despite the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action of October 2015, and deepened with US quitting the JCPA in May 2018. Sanctions have badly hurt Iran's economy but not its resolve. Frustration in Syria seems a motivation for the assassination of Iran's Major General Qasem Soleimani on Iraqi soil in January 2020. Global repercussions apart, Iran by striking back with precise missile attacks on two US air bases in Iraq demonstrated its military potential.

Inability of the US to coerce Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua has a clear message for the Third World: A firm stand based on mass support is a bulwark against imperialist bullying.

Sustaining global presence costs the US heavily, and the US has recently demanded that host nations should contribute more towards the cost of keeping US troops on their soil.

Moves to Recapture

The US lacks the economic might to dominate global economy, and its political influence is waning. Trapped by consumerism, the US is a major debtor nation with a huge trade gap. It thus relies on military might and strong military presence to protect its global dominance.

From the foregoing sections it is clear that any country failing to defer to US imperialism becomes a target for attack or subversion. Targets in order of importance are China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela and North Korea. But other targets in the Third World cannot be ignored

China is a prime target for its fast growing economy and influence across the Third World, and capability to resist aggression. Among important post Cold War projects to contain and encircle China is the failed Pivot to Asia bid by President Obama in 2011. The Blue Dot Network initiative of Japan and US, and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) of the US, Japan, India and Australia target China's Belt and Road (B&R) project. Regional destabilization and creating obstacles to infrastructural development would play a supporting role.

Stirring trouble within China goes on despite failure in Tibet, declining success in Xinjiang and impending failure in Hong Kong. China has increasingly prepared itself against military threats. But the economic war will persist and dominate the anti-China strategies. Rhetoric about China's intellectual property theft and unfair trade practices are aimed to justify to the American public the trade war waged by the US.

Russia can no longer be bullied by the US, and Russia's growing military power and rising global influence worry the US. Meddling in elections and stirring dissent are still pursued, mostly through NGOs. However, US foreign policy pushed Turkey closer to Russia, and the new Ukraine government seeks friendship with Russia, amid outstanding issues. Russia is acting to reengage in Africa by reviving bonds of the Soviet era, posing a further challenge to US expansion in Africa.

Diplomatic blunders by the US wrecked relations with **Iran**, and chances to normalize relations were killed by excessive demands on Iranian foreign policy and denial of its right to develop nuclear energy. Rivalry between Saudi Arabian and Iran was encouraged and Israel was used to target Iran in the name of supporting Palestinian terrorists. The US, besides having used Iraq to fight a proxy war with Iran, has meddled in Iranian elections and induced anti-government activities through well-funded human rights NGOs operating in Iran.

Venezuela, after Cuba, is the most enduring and inspiring of left-of-centre governments in Latin America and the Caribbean, and is thus the immediate target in the region.

North Korea is still a major target, but the failure of intimidation and economic sanctions and political changes in South Korea forced the US to adopt a seemingly softer approach, especially after North Korea followed its nuclear weapons with advanced missile technology.

Changes in Approach

Armed invasion which failed during Cold War, except in Grenada and Panama, soon returned with force. NATO wrecked Yugoslavia when Russia was still weak. Since 'liberating' Afghanistan in 2001, the US has created endless war fronts. Its major military missions failed badly, and the US is desperate to save face in Afghanistan while its troops linger in Iraq and Syria as unwelcome guests. Proxy wars persist in Somalia, Yemen, Libya and elsewhere. Thus the short term prospect of the US waging further conventional wars is weak, but proxy wars will thrive.

The US has escalated threats against Venezuela and Iran. Elsewhere its "War against Terrorism" serves to enhance military presence and attack targets in the Middle East and northern Africa, using partners and proxies, mainly Israel and Saudi Arabia. African clients are being cultivated on pretext of military training and joint exercises. Colombia, groomed for long to fight the enemies of the US in Latin America, serves to intimidate Venezuela, while the US trains anti-Venezuela combat

groups. Surrounding Russia and China with military bases goes hand in hand with stirring up regional conflicts to provoke Russia and China.

The January 2020 assassination of Iranian General Soleimani in Iraq by drone attack is a desperate act of frustration. Iran's measured response to the provocation has damped US belligerence. War with Iran may now be remote, but anti-war pressure needs to be sustained.

The US has, however, adapted to global reality. Pressure continues on weaker countries to open their markets to US businesses while the US economy gets even more protective. Economic arm-twisting of rivals and weaker countries will continue, but less effectively than before. Economic sanctions backed by military pressure will persist against less friendly countries on pretext of defending human rights and democracy, fighting unfair trade practices and protecting intellectual property rights.

Acts and threats of armed intervention are part of imperialist hegemony. But loss of American life in wars is politically expensive, especially when people are not convinced by arguments for war. US military intervention has hence changed in style. Interventions in South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America now are much unlike intervention during Cold War and soon. Logistics, intelligence and combat have seen changes enabled by advances in Information Technology and Cyber Technology.

US warfare today relies on Special Operations Forces, private contractors, military and CIA guided local proxies, air power with a rising drone component, and cyber warfare. The danger of such operations, referred to as light footprint warfare, is that their minimal visibility in the US enables their conduct with utmost secrecy and little accountability.

Training and employment of peace-keeping proxies increases reliance on foreign forces, reduce US troop casualties, and conceal US involvement. The US increasingly relies on drones and special operations forces to fight scattered global enemies, and fighting duties are outsourced to proxies in the Third World. Thus US military expansion in Africa is not

about building large military bases, but making African countries readily accessible to conduct training operations and launch attacks.

The US is still the strongest global economy with interests to protect around the globe. With new players challenging its geopolitical influence and economic competitiveness, it will rely heavily on military might. As waging war on strong 'enemies' is self-destructive, proxy wars and surrogates will be used in efforts to weaken rivals for global power.

US Imperialism Today

US, the prime imperialist power, leads an imperialist alliance. Its global dominance outlived Soviet rivalry and the prospect of contest by the EU. West Europe and Japan assert their interests in dealings with Russia and China, but remain loyal to the US in Third World issues.

The US, while losing grip of its economy, defends and expands its global military presence. Prospects of a US-dominated unipolar world following the fall of socialist regimes in Europe fast evaporated. US hegemony has faced resistance in most of Latin America since the 1990s. China made inroads into all but a few African countries amid their economic neglect by the US, which frantically pursues military expansion in Africa to offset losses on the diplomatic and economic fronts to China.

The US is also desperate for regime change in Iran and Venezuela. Given its poor credibility among the people of either country, even if it succeeds at regime change, the net outcome will be political instability that would hurt US interests in the region.

Attempts to assert itself in Asia have mostly failed. How far India will afford to antagonise China in order to please the US is uncertain amid growing economic ties with China which will be a major restraining force in the context of a weakening US economy. Its rush to leave Afghanistan by compromising with the Taliban will be a loss of face for US allies. Not many countries in East or Southeast Asia besides Japan are ready to bite its anti-China bait. Even Vietnam will be cautious about such a risk.

The Syrian adventure eventually led to the loss of the strong US ally in Turkey, and political gains for Russia and Iran. The Ukraine coup failed to deliver and Ukraine now seeks to mend fences with Russia.

Unable to come to terms with a multi-polar world, the US desperately seeks to assert its primacy. The re-emergence of Russia as a military power and the surge in China's economic and military strength inhibit US from confronting Russia or China militarily. Thus it aims to operate in what some call the "grey zone" between peace and war, below the threshold of armed conflict but not excluding limited conflict. There is, however, pressure from within the ruling circles for strong-arm tactics short of war against Russia and China. The US is ill prepared to compete militarily, diplomatically and economically. Even European and Asian regimes with reservations about Russia and China that may welcome US assistance to offset the impact of Russia and China are unlikely to side unconditionally with the US as they would have during Cold War.

Methods Old and New

Military Aggression. As political authority wanes in the Third World and among allies, military penetration replaces failing economic penetration. The US counts on military might to retain global power. Three years after humiliation in Vietnam the US returned to military aggression and proxy wars. Military aggression followed Cold War, in former Yugoslavia and the Arab World, besides the invasion of Haiti and Panama.

The "Global War on Terrorism" set the stage for prolonged wars in this Century. After sponsoring Islamist terror, the US was forced to declare war on its pet monster. But the war on terrorism has been selective about its targets in Muslim countries stretching from Afghanistan to Libya. Patrons of terrorism like Saudi Arabia and its allies passed unnoticed and Islamic terrorists attacked legitimate governments in Libya and Syria.

The US relies heavily on partners in its wars in West Asia and North Africa, and is likely to use proxies in its wars elsewhere.

Silencing and Spying on the Public. Since Vietnam War, Americans are sensitive to war casualties. That concern is being addressed on several fronts. New war strategies favour strategic bombing from afar and the use of unmanned bombers to minimize use of field troops. Use of proxies and surrogates limits the role of the US to arming and militarily training allies. Public anger about waging wars in their name is appeased with lofty aims like protecting the US and the 'American way of life' against foreign threats; and mainstream media rush to the rescue by encouraging xenophobia and keeping the people in the dark.

US imperialism sees a potential 'traitor' in every citizen, and intelligence services spy on citizens on an ever increasing scale as has been exposed by Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden and other whistle blowers. The scope and depth of spying by the state is unprecedentedly extensive, thanks to advances in electronics and ICT and loyal telecommunication companies and Internet service providers who allow intelligence services indiscriminate access to private communications.

Thus, high in its list of 'potential enemies' of the state is the American public. Witch hunt of the likes of Julian Assange of Wikileaks is mainly to deter others from daring to educate the public about the state spying on its own citizens in the name of national security.

Methods of Warfare. Cold War era methods are still much in use. Old terminology yields to new to label targets as threats to the US or as anti-democratic oppressors who violate the human rights of their own people. The way the US military footprint is structured is also new. '**Lily pads**' are on the rise as they cost less in money and American lives. They will serve to encircle potential enemies, protect economic interests, and arrest the lure of rivals, mainly in Africa, where is hard to outdo China on the economic front. Lily pads in South America aim to militarily defend the political and economic interests of the US and to encircle Russia and China in Central Asia. On the whole, lily pads allow flexibility and make the US less vulnerable to changing political moods even in an allied country like Turkey which distanced itself from the US war in Iraq.

As weapons of mass destruction will risk destruction for the US, they may not be used except as a last resort. The US, however, has a huge arsenal of chemical and biological weapons despite declaring an end to its biological warfare program in 1969 and chemical weapons program in 1990. Recent US biodefense programs have raised concerns that the US may be pursuing research outlawed by the UN. The US is most likely to use them surreptitiously, although it has openly used biological weapons in North Korea and chemical weapons in Vietnam. Despite US denial Cuba has evidence of its use of biological weapons over a long period.

Military Strategy. US military strategy comprises special operations forces, proxy armies, use of drones for intelligence and attack, militarized espionage and intelligence gathering, cyber warfare, and joint operations with client government agencies, atop massive air and naval power and domination of global arms sales. Cyber warfare has been used against countries including Iran and, besides military applications, could be used to cripple economies.

Diplomatic, humanitarian and disaster relief missions meanwhile assist military intelligence, patrol, and propaganda. Rotational deployment of US forces globally, port visits and the growth in joint military exercises and training missions enable a de facto global military presence and transform foreign forces into proxies.

Strategic Partnerships. Defence Cooperation Agreements formalise joint military exercises, routine defence collaboration, education and training, research and development, arms procurement, and exchange of classified information. Implementation details are addressed through putting into effect technical agreements and legal obligations. Other power projection devices include the Status of Forces Agreement (SoFA) also known as the Visiting Forces Agreement (which the US itches to impose on Sri Lanka but terminated by the Philippines recently). An Acquisition and Cross-Services Agreement (ACSA) was signed between the US and Sri Lanka on 5th March 2007, talking advantage of the civil war that ended only in

2009. Pressure to impose Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) agreements faces stiff political resistance in Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Power projection in any form is about securing political and economic goals by privileged access for the US whose military might will entrench its influence to keep as many countries as possible within its orbit. In this context it will be useful to remember Operation Condor of the 1970s, the notorious regional campaign run by the intelligence services of South American military dictatorships with active support and guidance from the US in order to capture and kill unlawfully and secretly, political dissidents who escaped political repression at home to other countries.

Thus defence cooperation agreements with the US should be scrutinized with utmost care against hidden threats to the sovereignty of the country and the freedom of its people. Mass opposition to shady deals like MCC and ACSA needs to be kept alive and on constant alert.

Agents of Subversion. Regime change, political assassination and destabilization are still on, and the CIA uses a fresh array of agents. The National Endowment for Democracy, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Center for International Private Enterprise, International Center for Journalists, Freedom House, USAID and Millennium Challenge Corporation and countless regional NGOS conduct political subversion, each in the name of noble causes like saving democracy and good governance, defending human rights and fostering economic growth. NGOs proliferated since the 1980s, and are mostly political despite denial and receive funds traceable to shady US agencies.

Private charitable organizations like Ford Foundation have deep political interests. Human rights organizations like the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are selective and biased in pointing at violations. On Honduras and Venezuela, they simply echoed US policy. NGOs and charities also actively create public opinion at home, the imperialist world and, as necessary, in countries in the region of the target country in anticipation of support for US action against the country.

Subversive agencies take advantage of social dissent to stir trouble, and US imperialism mainly through NGOs has used issues of identity politics to sharpen what are friendly social contradictions at the expense of the main class contradiction to prevent militant unity among the oppressed.

Key Targets. The US targets China, Russia, Iran, Cuba, North Korea and Venezuela. The US stops short of war as the war is unwinnable and will burden an already troubled economy. But vested interests seek to keep alive the arms race and global arms sales.

If US behaviour persists, a Third World War comprising a blend of proxy wars and surrogate wars besides economic wars like those that wrecked the economies of Venezuela, Iran and Zimbabwe. Any country that is friendly towards a US target is a potential US target.

Economic Warfare. The US wages economic wars against potential adversaries for purposes ranging from regime change in Venezuela and Iran to wrenching economic concessions from China. The US bullies states and businesses to prevent them from having dealings with its targets, even when the sanctions are not endorsed by the UN Security Council which it dominates.

Military Encirclement. Encirclement of China and Russia is also to provoke and draw them into an arms race that will be a drain on their economies. This aim has failed in the face of a measured response of the rivals, unlike that of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Encirclement of weaker countries are intimidatory as well as intended to strike at an opportune moment to achieve regime change.

Information Warfare. During Cold War, the US built a mighty military machine and an extensive web of information warfare based on selective information, disinformation and outright lies. Its information warfare has gained from advances in modern communication and been aided by the control that a few mass media giants have over international news. While popular print and electronic media repeat shamelessly versions of events as projected by the imperialist establishment, newspapers and

broadcasting organizations that claim to be unbiased and fair in their reporting play dirty in crucial issues that affect imperialist interests, amid a show of neutrality in less important issues.

Tampering with information is something in which the establishment media, including the 'liberal' media, collude with the imperialist state. Manipulative deconstruction and reconstruction occur alongside withholding, delaying and suppressing of information in part or whole. Manufacturing information has been honed to a fine art by the imperialist media. Highly sinister forms of manufactured information includes host of false flag operations that have been used against the governments of Syria and Venezuelan the past few years. The media hangs on to their lies even after they are exposed, and seldom retract their stories or apologize to the public for misleading them, as we have seen in connection with the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria.

False Flags. US imperialist double standards on human rights and war crimes is well known, and imperialist false flag operations have a long record. The US effectively uses the media establishment to accuse enemies of war crimes, human rights violations and chemical and biological warfare. Charges are often based on false flags.

The Soviet Union was a victim of such mischief in the name of fighting communism. During Vietnam War the US staged the Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1962 to justify bombing North Vietnam. The downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014 and the staging of the poisoning of former Russian double agent in 2018 using Novichok nerve agent were meant to defame Russia.

Uprisings have been staged in Iran, Nicaragua and Venezuela to create an impression of political instability.

Chemical warfare was used in 2013 to present the Syrian government in a bad light by accusing it of using Sarin nerve gas against the rebels, and use it as pretext to launch air attacks against Syria. It became known later that the UK supplied Sarin to the rebels. But false flags continue. In 2019,

whistle blowers exposed that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons suppressed important information in this regard.

Questions now arise about the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic that has been used cynically to smear China and stir anti-Chinese racism.

Mainstream media, as expected, confer credibility upon false flags, even after truth comes to light, by either ignoring or casting doubt on the revelation of false flags to repeat the official lie. Thus, the mainstream media seem as deadly as chemical and biological warfare.

Some Lessons for the Left

Old style revisionism has drowned its identity in social democracy. But, sadly, several parties calling themselves leftist are blind to the imperialist threat. Dogmatists lightly dismiss the national question, tribal rights, caste oppression, gender and environmental issues. Confusion about modern day imperialism has led calling all and sundry as “imperialist”. Some place China and Russia on par with US imperialism and interpret world events as rivalry of “imperialisms”.

Dogmatism has helped reactionaries by fostering attacks on governments like Venezuela and Syria when they confront US imperialism. Some see Russian intervention in Syria as imperialist rivalry with US, regardless of context and outcome. Others defend the ‘tactical alliance’ of the Kurdish YPG with the US in northern Syria, even after the bitter lesson learned.

Dogmatism obstructs unity of revolutionary forces within countries. It is sad to see Marxist Leninists adopting sectarian stands rather than uphold the Marxist Leninist united front strategy. Lack of dialogue between rival Marxist Leninist parties, particularly in India, is depressing.

We heard hasty declarations of Socialism of the 21st Century based on gains in Nepal and Venezuela, followed by frustration and dejection. While one is cautious of blind overenthusiasm, one should respect what has been achieved, without which imperialism would have won with ease. Learning has meaning when it is from both victories and setbacks.

The importance of criticism and self-criticism seems lost on leaders of several parties, to whom criticism is something doled out to others while self-criticism is something to demand from others.

Marxist Leninists cannot ignore the reality that US imperialism is the main enemy of the working class and all oppressed people of the world. They should take stands on international issues based on context but consistent with fundamental principles. Capitalism in the neocolonial era is more unevenly developed and that many countries of the Third World have strong feudal remnants. There is need to appreciate the contexts of fraternal parties with mutual respect and recognize that revolutionary tactics will vary widely with context even within countries.

The revolutionary task ahead is tough in nearly all countries. But the goal of socialism is winnable. Marxist Leninists should objectively study the world and subjectively condition themselves to change it. The concepts of unity and struggle within a united front, mass struggle, broad based unity, and criticism and self-criticism should be seriously revisited by each party that calls itself Marxist Leninist.

Acknowledgments

Sources of information used in this study include Common Dreams, Democracy Now!, Jacobin, The Grayzone, Global Policy Forum, Global Research and Monthly Review. The study group benefitted much from William Blum's *"Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II"* (parts accessible at http://members.aol.com/bblum6/American_holocaust.htm). Studies by Samir Amin, Noam Chomsky and James Petras were helpful in interpreting events. Several of the ideas contained in this essay have been presented in various articles on imperialism in Marxist Leninist New Democracy. Support provided by NDMLP comrades and other friends of MLND is much appreciated.

The Presidential Candidates' Agricultural Policies and the National Question

Shiran Illanperuma

This article breaks down the agricultural policy of the two main candidates for the upcoming presidential election, Gotabaya Rajapaksa from Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) and Sajith Premadasa from the United National Front (UNF), based on the English versions of their election manifestos. The article will explore the effects these policies might have on the existing structure of the agrarian economy, as well as the link between agriculture and the national question.

It should be noted that election manifestos are rarely adhered to or fulfilled in politics. Therefore, the manifestos only serve as a tool to map out the candidates' policy direction. To come to a fuller understanding, each party's previous policy track record and allegiances to particular classes must also be analysed.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa

The 88-page manifesto for SLPP candidate Gotabaya Rajapaksa promises a 'people-centric economy'. Highlights include achieving an ambitious average growth rate of 6.5%, lowering taxes and reforming the tax system, promoting export agriculture, developing agricultural technology, and further developing tourism, garment manufacturing and construction.

In the field of agriculture, policy proposals bear many similarities to the 'Mahinda Chinthanaya'. Subsidies are offered for export crops such as tea, rubber, coconut, cinnamon and pepper, alongside protective tariffs. The manifesto also proposes transitioning from bulk export of agricultural goods to exporting packaged and 'value added' products, though this would require significant state intervention to control the quality of exports and to ensure that the foreign currency that is earned is invested in further industrialisation. Furthermore, the state would have to proactively find emerging markets for agricultural exports because tariff in core capitalist countries encourage exports of raw materials while make it hard for developing countries to sell finished products.

Other promises are include a farmers' pension and crop insurance, as well as the reintroduction of the fertiliser subsidy as a key campaign promise for rural constituencies. Of these promises, the fertiliser subsidy is most likely to be effected, and will, undeniably, be a short-term relief for farmers who were among the first to protest against the Yahapalanaya government, after it abolished the subsidy in 2015. Ultimately, however, the subsidy can do little to transform the social relations that characterise the underdevelopment of the agricultural sector. Fertiliser as a 'variable capital', and a product of the so-called 'Green Revolution', helps improve yields per unit of land, but not necessarily per unit of labour. In a fertiliser dependent agricultural system, increasing inputs of fertiliser and larger tracts of land are required. A capital intensive system however can increase production on small plots of land and lead to further industrial activity that is able to absorb more labour. It is in the context of the dependence on fertiliser that post-1948 Sri Lanka has sought to increase agricultural output by increasing arable land through large scale irrigation projects such as the Mahaweli Scheme, thereby disrupting peasant farmers and the environment and sharpening communal contradictions.

In terms of modernising agriculture, the manifesto promises a gradual transition to organic fertiliser, as well as development of agriculture

through 'advanced technology'. The manifesto calls for using smaller plots of land, with more capital inputs to increase yields and efficiency. In essence this is a call for industrialisation of agriculture, and the manifesto suggests providing low-interest loans for smallholders and entrepreneurs to pursue what is described as technologically intensive agribusiness.

Unfortunately, the role of the state in industrialising agriculture is understated, and emphasis is placed on 'entrepreneurs'. Given the experience under post-liberalisation SLFP/SLPP governments, it is hard to imagine that any large scale effort to move towards organic and mechanised agriculture will take place, as it would severely disrupt the system of political patronage that characterises the peasant sector in underdeveloped capitalism. That is to say that the fertiliser subsidy binds constituents to their political representatives, and leaves peasants in fragmented plots of land. The introduction of modern machinery into agriculture reorganises labour along industrial lines, creating the conditions for an organised proletariat.

Aside from crops, the manifesto aims to achieve self-sufficiency in milk while promoting the export of meat and eggs. While achieving self-sufficiency in meat and dairy is one thing, producing for export is worrisome due to the high degree of land and water that is required for meat production. The crisis in Brazil's Amazon's forest is largely fuelled by the ever increasing demand from the meat industry. Sri Lanka should ideally be promoting the preservation and optimal usage of arable land, as the production of meat not only sucks up scarce water but also requires a great deal of grain that could otherwise be grown for human consumption. Cattle grazing is also known to be the biggest contributor of greenhouse gases, more so than the transport industry.

Sajith Premadasa

The 80-page manifesto for the UNF's Sajith Premadasa promises a 'competitive economy' with a focus on the private sector as an 'engine of

growth'. Highlights include a Rs 10 billion fund for research and development, reforming and reducing taxes, developing small and medium enterprises, setting up of new special economic zones and reforming labour law to allow for greater 'flexibility'.

In the field of agriculture, the manifesto focuses on modernising the sector through more capital inputs. Specifically, promises are made to slash taxes on agricultural machinery and parts. While this appears to be a positive move towards mechanising the highly labour and land intensive agricultural sector, a side-effect may be the outflow of foreign currency reserves to pay for capital goods that are designed, patented and manufactured in countries other than Sri Lanka. In short, reducing taxes on capital goods imports alone could lead to technological dependency on the developed capitalist countries. A true industrialisation project must focus on developing homemade technologies that are suitable to the Sri Lanka's climate, terrain and staple crop base - such was the experience of centrally-planned economies of the USSR and New China as well as the state-regulated capitalist economies of Japan and South Korea. Imports of capital goods are useful, insofar as they can be stripped apart and reverse engineered by local technicians. However, it appears highly unlikely that the UNF plans to do this to ensure technological self-sufficiency.

A large chunk of the policy focuses on gimmicky 'app-based' solutions for farmers to handle logistics, as well as construction of transport and storage facilities. Transport and storage are of course vital for agriculture. However, they do little to transform the relations of production in the farm and will not innately put the sector on an industrial path. The manifesto also promises to return the fertiliser subsidy though it is strange that the current UNF government has not already done so, even as a last minute vote-winning strategy.

The manifesto also promises the transition of unproductive plantation lands into dairy farms. In theory this could work well if appropriate breeds of cattle are used. Traditionally, it was in the highlands that

Sinhala peasants reared cattle. Many of these cattle are said to have been slaughtered by the British, as retribution for the rebellions in 1817 and 1848, thereby crippling the native dairy industry and forcing dependency on imports. However, in the modern context the plantation areas are occupied by the plantation workers. With tea being more labour intensive than dairy, workers may find themselves dispossessed if plantation lands are grabbed for dairy production. One way to make this policy work is to wait until the current batch of plantation workers approach retirement, and their children achieve education sufficient for jobs outside the plantation sector, before transitioning from tea to dairy.

Agriculture and the National Question

It is a well-known fact that the SLPP has a largely rural constituency, whereas the UNF has a largely urban one. This reflects in each party's election manifesto as well as their campaign promises. The SLPP is naturally forced to make a minimum amount of concessions to the agricultural sector, even if it is a mere fertiliser subsidy. The SLPP manifesto also places agriculture at a higher level of prominence than the UNF one, with many more pages on the topic than the latter. In reality however, the rise of Gotabaya Rajapaksa as the presidential candidate marks a shift in the SLPP's policies and a convergence with the urban interests of the UNF. Much of the promises made by the UNF and SLPP are not too different, especially those related to lower taxes, moratoriums on loans, fixed prices for certain agricultural goods and import tariffs to protect local products. In many ways the current economic climate pushes both parties towards the same direction, as was the case for Sri Lankan governments between 1956 and 1977. However, these policies do not disrupt the larger structure of the economy in any substantial way.

The transformation of the agricultural sector on an industrial path is part of the material basis of solving the national question. Such a transformation requires a radical break from the current mode of production that only strong state intervention can accomplish. The ultimate gift of the so-called 'Green Revolution' has been the erosion of

soil, pollution of groundwater and inland water bodies, spread of chronic kidney disease and communal conflicts. The colonial imposition of export-oriented plantations and imported indentured South Indian labour dispossessed the native Sinhala peasantry of the Central highlands. In the post-independence era, the settlement of these landless Sinhala peasants in the East and North Central areas in turn fuelled competition with the Tamil peasantry residing in those areas. The never-ending search for new tracts of land to farm for export, and the accompanying disruption of communities, is a cycle of underdevelopment and violence. Therefore, industrialisation of agriculture is a core part of solving the national question and moving towards a more equitable mode of production.

While a certain degree of exports are necessary to pay off old loans and facilitate the import of new technologies, agricultural production must be turned towards the home market. The production and processing of local staples such as rice must be modernised with emphasis on derivative products (like noodles, biscuits, breads, alcohols etc.) to deal with surpluses that may otherwise lead to falling prices. Most importantly, locally grown staples like rice and manioc must be promoted to break the stranglehold of imported wheat-based products that have become staples thanks to international aid and massive subsidies in grain growing western countries.

Agricultural products are a material basis through which solidarity can be nurtured amongst the working class and peasantry. In the so called 'dual structure' of the plantation economy, the plantation worker grew tea for export and was fed imported rice or wheat, meanwhile the peasant farmers had no market for their rice and could not afford to drink tea. Therefore, the production of agriculture for the home market is part and parcel of rejecting food imperialism, affirming food sovereignty, and creating the material basis for a revolutionary alliance between the plantation workers and the peasantry who have historically been pitted against each other.

The following is a summary of statements issued by the New Democratic Marxist Leninist Party on recent events.

25th March 2020

State Relief for the Public

Comrade V Mahendran, National Organizer of the NDMLP, while commending the sense of alertness of the government now compared to the early stages of the pandemic also called upon the government to ensure proper distribution of relief to all the people. He also drew attention to the implications of the restrictions for the poorer sections of the population who are facing severe inconveniences, in particular for wage labourers, casual labourers, plantation workers and small traders.

The statement was critical of the failure of various state relief measures to reach the needy, mainly in the plantations, inadequate health initiatives and advice, and pressure on plantation workers to work even during curfew hours. The statement also drew attention to difficulties faced by the people as a result of inadequacies in implementing relief measures and low level of activity in disease prevention in the Hill Country.

It urged remedial action to overcome shortcomings in matters of relief measures, concessionary prices and sanitation, and called upon the government to ensure that its relief measures are duly communicated to the public by the officials concerned.

22nd March 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Crisis

Comrade SK Senthivel General Secretary of the NDMLP in his statement on behalf of the Politburo of the NDMLP called upon the public to act with a spirit of fraternity to face the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

The statement drew attention to the global crisis and the daily rise in number of infected in Sri Lanka reaching 81. It noted with regret that the

country should have been on the alert when the virus spread rapidly in China, in the context of the close relations with China and the large number of Chinese serving in here. It pointed out that the government was lackadaisical after being boastful about healing a Chinese COVID-19 patient tested positive on 27th January and failed to act with far sight and make contingency plans even after a tour guide was tested positive on 11th March. It criticized the doggedly casual attitude of the President dismissing the spread as one affecting only a few arrivals from abroad and showing keenness to hold the elections as scheduled, and drew attention to indifference of the Minister of Health as late as 18th March.

The statement pointed out that the airport should have been closed at the same time as schools were ordered to close and expressed concern about the limited resources allocated by the state to the health sector. It urged the government to be open about financial allocation for controlling the virus, ensure the safety of medical personnel working actively to control the pandemic, and to provide relief for the working people affected by the economic disruption due to the pandemic and preventive measures.

The government should be alert to the dangers of imposing and lifting curfews and make alternative arrangements and supply of food and other essentials free to low income families.

The statement also urged the people to be self-reliant, and drew attention to the failure of European capitalist countries to control the virus in the context of rise in privatisation of public health, and remembered with pride the struggle of the people against privatization of health and educational services. It urged the people to strongly resist policies of privatization, liberalization and open economy.

12th December 2019

India's Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019

Comrade SK Senthivel issued a statement on behalf of the Politburo of the NDMLP condemning the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in the Lok Sabha (House of Representatives) recently, in which he

accused the Act of trampling underfoot human rights and secularism as the Act which will allow residents of certain countries to become Indian citizens excludes Muslims and Sri Lankan Tamils, besides requiring Indian Muslims to provide evidence in support of citizenship rights.

The statement noted that country wide popular protests against the Act have met with brutality by thugs and the police and that their sole demand is the withdrawal of the fascist legislation. It denounced the savage attacks by Hindutva thugs against the Delhi university students and the state terror unleashed by the police against mass protests.

The statement drew attention to the Act being passed in the wake of the withdrawal of the special status of Kashmir and the securing for Hindus the land that housed the Babri Masjid through court order and reiterated the support of the Party for the struggle of the masses against Hindutva nationalism frog marching India towards fascism.

22nd November 2019

Sri Lankan Presidential Election Results

Comrade SK Senthivel issued a statement on behalf of the Politburo of the NDMLP on the outcome of the Presidential Elections held in November 2019, which he said emphasises the need for the people to mobilize along the path of mass struggle.

The statement pointed out that the outcome of the elections confirms the continuation of the national question which affects the Tamils, Muslims and Hill Country Tamils as the main contradiction of the country and that a situation has arisen in which the Sinhala Buddhist capitalist ruling classes will uphold chauvinism to increase oppression of the minority nationalities and that post-election violence confirms it.

The statement strongly condemned such unacceptable developments and drew attention to Gotabaya Rajapaksa's swearing in as President taking place at the memorial of Duttu Gemunu in Anuradhapura and his stating in his acceptance speech that he won on the strength of the Sinhala majority vote and its ominous implications for minority nationalities and

for the recommencement of the rule of the family of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

The statement pointed out that the only way before the ordinary working people and the socially oppressed among the minority nationalities was to unite based on a far sighted long term programme to overcome their problems and crises. It is also pressed the need for unity with the ordinary working people and socially oppressed among the Sinhalese.

The statement drew attention to the spectrum of economic problems and pointed out that Sinhala chauvinism can only aggravate the problems. It questioned the will of the new President to address these problems that are closely linked with the neocolonial neoliberal economic set-up in the country by defending the sovereignty, independence and self-reliance of the country.

The statement summed up that the results of the elections urge the need for mass mobilization by the toiling masses and oppressed nationalities to solve their problems and secure their rights.

15th October 2019

Presidential Elections

Comrade SK Senthivel issued a statement on the Presidential Elections scheduled for November 2019, on behalf of the Politburo of the NDMLP.

It was pointed out that the Presidential Election was a contest for power among rival ruling class parties to seize executive presidential power, and that, whoever came to power, the dire existence of the majority of the working people will remain the same and the rights of the minority nationalities not be secured. Thus the winner will be the ruling classes and the losers the working people and oppressed nationalities as seen in the past 41 years of executive presidential rule.

The statement drew attention to the ruining of the national economy by 41 years of open economy, privatization, import of foreign goods and the

arrival of multinational companies, which have severely aggravated the debt burden of the country.

The statement also drew attention to the country's poverty level of 45%, the heavy per capita debt burden, the rising cost of living and declining standard of living, rising unemployment, oppressive legislation to keep down protest and anti trade union legislation.

The stand of the Party is that there is no purpose in the oppressed and exploited people's taking an interest in a hugely expensive election that shows no prospect of a solution to problems faced by the people or the country. It urges the people to transcend the presidential electoral politics to integrate themselves with mass politics and mass struggle.

My Only Wish (Interlude)

Sami Yusuf

All your armies, all your fighters
All your tanks, and all your soldiers
Against a boy holding a stone
Standing there all alone
In his eyes I see the sun
In his smile I see the moon
And I wonder, I only wonder
Who is weak, and who is strong?
Who is right, and who is wrong?
And I wish, I only wish
That the truth has a tongue

The Good Ones

(for Hugo Chavez)

Alice Walker

(March 5, 2013)

The good ones
who listen
to women
to children and the poor
die too soon,
their lives bedevilled
by opposition:
our hearts grieve for them.

This was the world my father knew.
A poor man
he saw good men come and mostly go;
leaving behind
the stranded and bereft.
People of hopes, dreams, and so much
hard work!
Yearning for a future
suddenly
foreclosed.

But today
you write me all is well
even though the admirable

Hugo Chavez
has died this afternoon.
Never again will we hear that voice
of reasoned anger
and disgust
of passionate vision

and of triumph.

This is true.

But what a lot he did in his 58 years!

You say.

What a mighty ruckus

Hugo Chavez made!

This is also true.

Thank you for reminding me.

That though life –
this never-ending loop –
has passed us by today
but carried off
in death
a hero
of the masses
it is his spirit
of fiercely outspoken
cariño
that is not lost.

That inheritance
has gone instantly
into the people
to whom he listened
and it is there
that we will expect it
to rise
as early as
tomorrow;
and there
that
we will encounter it
always
soon again.

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William Blum (1933 to 2018) authored, among others, Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II, America's Deadliest Export: Democracy – The Truth About U.S. Foreign Policy and Everything Else (2013), Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower (updated 2005), West-Bloc Dissident: A Cold War Memoir (2002), and Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire (2004).

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