

Update

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The Emperor Has No Clothes

It seems that the less the Democratic and Republican politicians have to say about solving the real problems facing our country, the more they condemn the people for lacking “American values.”

Such propaganda is used by the government politicians to slander and blame the people for the oppression imposed on them by the capitalist system and the anti-social offensive of the big monopolies. While the government slashes income-support programs, our “moral” politicians declare that the unemployed and low-wage workers “lack the work ethic.” While the government herds the youth into overcrowded classrooms and militarizes the schools, the youth are slandered as “violent.” While police violence and national oppression are intensified in the minority commu-

nities, the oppressed peoples are labelled as “criminals” and “drug addicts.”

Indeed, today’s Democratic and Republican politicians sound like the grand inquisitors of Medievalism. “Poverty and suffering are the wages of sin,” they pontificate. “Dissatisfaction with the status quo is the work of the devil,” they warn.

In the Medieval period, official state religion and morality were part of the ideological apparatus used to enforce the absolute and arbitrary power of the Kings, who were said to rule by hereditary and divine “right.” Today, the increasingly virulent and increasingly official propaganda about “American values,” reflects the fact that the monopoly capitalist class is turning backwards towards Medievalism. The real driving forces behind this propaganda are the anti-social agenda

of monopoly capital and the arbitrary, violent power of the capitalist state.

But the criticism and repudiation of Medieval ideology began several hundred years ago. From the days of the Enlightenment, people fought not only to assert that all human beings have the right to think and to act on the basis of their human values but also against the usurpation of political power by a few. The demand for the separation of Church and State was part of the movement of people to claim their sovereign right to rule themselves and to demand that government be subordinate to the people and responsible to them. Today, in carrying this struggle through to the end we must focus on developing a genuinely pro-social agenda which again opens the path for the progress of our country, in opposition to the “divine” rule of monopoly capital.

For Your Reference

The U.S. War Against Korea

The following article is the second in a series providing background material on the U.S. occupation of Korea and the history of U.S. aggression against the Korean people.

At the end of World War II, the U.S. government signed several documents pledging to withdraw all its armed forces from the Korean peninsula and to support the establishment of a “free and independent Korea” based on the sovereign will of the Korean people.

But the U.S. government did

not honor these commitments even for a second. From the first day that U.S. troops landed in Korea, they began to create the infrastructure for permanent military occupation. The patriotic Korean political forces which had fought the Japanese aggressors were systematically suppressed or killed. By 1948, the U.S. had installed a puppet government (based, in large part, on former collaborators with the Japanese) in South Korea and declared the partition of the country. (see “The Worker,” March 30, 2013).

Not content with occupying the southern half of the peninsula, U.S. imperialism prepared and launched the Korean war with the goal of occupying the entire country. The Korean war was part of U.S. imperialism’s strategy of extending its colonial empire to the four ends of the earth by suppressing the national liberation movements and “containing communism.” Amongst other things, the U.S. sought to create a ring of military bases around China

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and the Soviet Union. In fact, the Truman administration planned the Korean war as a preparation for “rolling back communism” through an all-out attack on the People’s Republic of China.

Below we provide further material on how the U.S. launched the Korean war and the barbaric methods it used against the Korean people.

Immediately after occupying Korea in September 1945, the U.S. moved quickly to accomplish its goal of turning the Korean peninsula into a U.S. military base.

Near the 38th parallel, the U.S. started fortifying artillery positions and bomb shelters. Money was poured into the construction of military air bases, roads, and naval ports. Cheju island was placed under direct control of the U.S. army and its airport was expanded to accommodate B-29 bombers. Naval bases at Ryosu, Inchon, and Pusan ports were all rebuilt and expanded.

During this time the U.S. army command in Korea also began organizing a puppet Korean army in the southern half of the peninsula. A “Korean National Guard” was organized by U.S. military authorities, and an

“English Military Institute” was created to train South Korean officers. In the Spring of 1948, President Truman agreed to the decision of his Security Council to increase military aid in order to “build and strengthen a South Korean army.” Soon afterwards, a “conscription law” was issued forcing Korean youth in all southern provinces into the military. By 1950, the U.S. had amassed a 100,000-strong south Korean army.

In addition to pouring in huge amounts of money in order to turn the peninsula into a U.S. military base, the U.S. announced in early 1950 an official “Treaty of Mutual Defense” which called for the “defense and modernization” of the Korean army in the south. According to General MacArthur, the new South Korean military force was “the best in Asia” and the head of the U.S. military advisory group called it “the faithful watchdog guarding U.S. capital.”

Confident in its military position and strength, and not content with merely occupying the southern half of the peninsula, the U.S. then began a determined campaign of military threats and provocations against North Korea.

Throughout 1949-50, the South Korean president, Syngman Rhee, began issuing calls for a “northward expedition” and “unity through force of arms.” On October 31, 1949, for example, on the deck of the U.S. cruiser Setpol, Rhee stated that the “North-South division must be removed through war. We can occupy north Korea and achieve unification.” In a letter to a U.S. official on September 30th of that same year he wrote: “I think this is a golden opportunity for us to open an attack and wipe out the remnants in Pyongyang. Our people hanker for north-bound expedition.” And in a press interview in December he declared “In the coming year we will strive as one to regain our lost territory...we must remember that next year we should unify north and south Korea by our own strength.” Such statements were accompanied by the huge buildup of U.S. and South Korean troops in the summer of 1949.

In 1949, the U.S. military began launching combat operations, small border incursions, against the North all along the 38th parallel. Over 2,617 armed invasions of the northern territory took place that year, and U.S. reporters themselves began describing the situation as a “small war.” The head of the U.S. Military Advisory Group, Roberts, stated in October 1949 that “Attacks on the region north of the 38th parallel have been and will be made by my orders. In many cases, however, units launched attacks at discretion only to spend a tremendous amount of ammunition with no result whatsoever except to suffer heavy losses.”

Due to the failure of these “small wars” against the North in 1949, the U.S. was forced to temporarily halt the border aggression and revise its

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war plans. The new plans called for greater mobilization and concentration of Korean and U.S. troops along the 38th parallel, while at the same time calling for the immediate suppression of South Korean opposition to U.S. occupation and aggression. A “mopping up” campaign was launched in the south to suppress any opposition. This campaign resulted in the murders of more than 40,000 South Korean people in the months of December 1949 and January 1950 alone. Over 109,000 Koreans were killed in all of 1949. It was at this time also that the U.S. resurrected the notorious “National Security Law” to implement a fascist and terrorist environment throughout the southern half of the peninsula. According to his memoirs, President Truman at this time ordered Syngman Rhee to “stabilize” the rear of South Korea above all else.

In order to cover-up its war plans, the U.S. State Department started diplomatic efforts at the U.N.. Turning truth on its head, U.S. authorities began accusing the North of “having aggressive intentions,” and began drafting a U.N. resolution and a “lawsuit” against North Korea’s “planned armed invasion.” U.S. officials worked feverishly to manufacture hysteria about an “Asian crisis” while attempting to portray North Korea as the aggressor. U.S. intelligence agents, posing as “independent U.N. monitors,” were deployed along the north-south Korean border to act as “third-person” reporters of any invasion by the North. In the first half of 1950, therefore, the threat of “invasion by the north” was used by U.S. imperialism to justify its increasing mobilization of troops and preparations for war.

In June, 1950 U.S. State Department Advisor, John Foster Dulles

flew to Tokyo to meet with General MacArthur and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Immediately afterwards, Dulles flew to South Korea where he met with President Rhee, inspected U.S. troops along the border, and told the south Korean national assembly that “you are not alone in the fight against communists” and promised them that they would receive strong “moral and material support” from the U.S. President Rhee reportedly begged Dulles for an order to attack the North, and Dulles told Rhee “I attach great importance to the decisive role which your country can play in the great drama that is unfolding.” After Dulles flew back to Tokyo, South Korean troops were refused all furloughs and ordered to combat status.

The Korean war was part of U.S. imperialism’s strategy of extending its colonial empire to the four ends of the earth by suppressing the national liberation movements and “containing communism.”

On June 25, 1950, the South Korean army launched an attack at dawn against the north along the 38th parallel. After an emergency meeting of North Korea’s Cabinet and Central Committee, the order to counter-attack was given to the Korean People’s Army. The next day, Kim Il Sung, delivered a radio address in which he stated “The entire Korean people, if they do not want to become slaves of foreign imperialists again, must rise as one in the national-salvation struggle to overthrow and smash the traitorous Syngman Rhee regime and its army. We must win ultimate victory at all costs.” Nearly one million civilian North Korean youth immediately volunteered to fight at the front.

Within a few days after the attack by the southern army, the inva-

sion was reversed and the city of Seoul was in the hands of the northern Korean Peoples’ Army. Syngman Rhee flew secretly out of the city to Pusan and many other members of his ruling clique followed.

The fall of Seoul brought about panic amongst the U.S. military and State Department officials. President Truman ordered U.S. military forces into combat action on the peninsula, including directives to the navy and air forces to begin bombardment north of the 38th parallel. General MacArthur was given “full powers to use the naval and air forces under his command.”

As the U.S. military began its all-out war against the North, an emergency meeting of the U.N. was hastily called and a resolution declaring the war “an armed attack on the Republic of Korea” was passed. This U.N. “resolution” was passed without the presence of representatives from either the Soviet Union or the People’s Republic of China. No representative of Korea was present either.

The war that followed, from 1950-1953, can only be described as one of the most brutal and ferocious wars ever waged by the U.S. It was a war in which official U.S. military doctrine was to carry out a “scorched-earth” policy to annihilate the North Korean people. It was a war filled with innumerable atrocities carried out by U.S. military forces.

During the first year of the war, over one million Korean civilians were killed in the North as a result of U.S. air and ground attacks. Civilian massacres in the south, such as the recently brought to light incident at No Gun-Ri in which hundreds of Korean civilians were slaughtered by U.S. troops, occurred frequently in both

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the north and south and are well-documented.

In November 1950, MacArthur ordered the U.S. airforce to turn North Korea into a wasteland by destroying “every installation, factory, city, and village.” He congratulated the air force on November 8th when seventy B-29s dropped 550 tons of incendiary bombs on Sinuiju, “removing it from the map.” In the following week, napalm was used to completely burn the city of Hoeryong, and by November 25 MacArthur joyfully declared that “a large part of the northwest area between Yalu river and southwards to enemy lines was more or less burning” and would become “a wilderness of scorched earth.”

The war carried out against North Korea by U.S. imperialism was bestial and genocidal, and the U.S. came very close to using atomic weapons, especially after November 1950 when Chinese troops entered the war and completely routed U.S. forces in the north. On November 30th, Truman stated publicly in a press conference that the use of the atom bomb was “under active consideration,” and added further that the decision to use the bomb “would not wait for U.N. authorization.” On December 9th, MacArthur formally made the request to use atomic weapons, and outlined a list of targets. MacArthur later reflected “I would have dropped between thirty and fifty atomic bombs...strung across the neck of Manchuria.” He said he wanted to “spread behind us – from the Sea of Japan to the Yellow Sea – a belt of radioactive cobalt...which has an active life of between sixty and 120 years.” MacArthur was not alone in his lunatic desires to use atomic weapons. At the time, many other U.S. military and civilian officials called for dropping the bomb on northern Ko-

rea and China.

While atomic weapons were not used during the Korean war, the use of chemical and germ warfare by U.S. forces was widespread, and napalm was dropped on thousands of civilian targets. U.S. saturation aerial bombing with conventional weapons, however, proved to be the most deadly method of war carried out by the U.S. By 1952, almost everything in northern and central Korea was completely flattened by this relentless bombing. The bombing was intentionally used by the U.S. military authorities to not only kill but to terrorize the entire population. As one U.S. official put it: “If we keep on tearing the place apart, we can make it a most unpopular affair for the North Koreans. We ought to go right ahead.” During U.S. Congressional hearings in 1951, the commander of the U.S. air force in the Far East, O’Donnell, stated that his mission “was to reduce towns of north Korea to heaps of ashes and destroy them totally...so as to make the Korean people get a terrible shock from it and desist from the war...Almost the whole of Korean Peninsula is in an awfully tragic state. Everything is being destroyed. Nothing worth mentioning remains.”

It is estimated that during the

three years and one month of war, the U.S. dropped on North Korea as much tonnage of bombs as they dropped on all the Pacific countries during the three years and eight month Pacific campaign during World War II. It also far exceeded the amount of bombs dropped on Germany.

Despite these barbarous methods of warfare used by the U.S., however, they failed to destroy the morale of the Korean people who continued to fight. After three years, North Korean resistance and repeated counterattacks against U.S. forces eventually resulted in defeat for U.S. imperialism. On July 27, 1953, the U.S. and North Korea signed an armistice agreement.

With the signing of the 1953 armistice, the Korean people proved that no force, no matter how powerful or strong, can conquer a people who have risen in defense of their freedom and independence. The arrogant desire of U.S. imperialism to occupy the entire Korean peninsula was crushed, and like the Japanese imperialists before them, the new U.S. occupiers of Korea were learning that the proud and heroic Korean people would never willingly submit to foreign aggression.

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