



**COLONIALISM**  
Past and present from  
around the globe



**SUDAN**  
Antagonistic forces pull the  
country in two different  
directions



**#IWD2021**  
Commemorate, celebrate  
and campaign for equality  
and justice for women

# Liberation

Journal of Liberation formerly the Movement for Colonial Freedom

£1 or solidarity price Spring 2021

**UK/US foreign policy:**  
prospects and  
progressive priorities



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# editorial/liberation

What Biden and his Secretary of State, Robert Blenkin, are promising is at best a reset to consistency of the pre-Trump era – and at worst a less erratic, though just as dangerous, level of overseas interference and aggression.

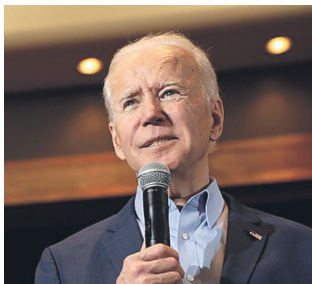
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Credit: Creative Commons/Anthony O'Neil

## For a new course for Britain's foreign policy

THE ERRATIC and often unpredictable nature of US foreign policy during the Donald Trump administration is likely to soon become a minor footnote in the history of world politics. During this period, Britain's foreign policy was largely confined to holding hands with Trump or suffering partial paralysis on the sidelines.

For decades before the Trump era, Britain essentially clung to the coat tails of the US – acting as cheerleader or direct partner in the West's military and economic expansionism around the world.

An independent or progressive foreign policy was not an option for the British establishment. Intensifying Cold War aggression and diplomacy; and supporting or leading overt and covert actions against progressive forces seeking national liberation and independence, were the central characteristics of the so-called 'special relationship' between Britain and the USA.

This kind of foreign policy, and the character of diplomacy it generated, are not just modern history. This legacy and its consequences are still felt today in national and international politics. Throughout, NATO has exacerbated these dangers and still does.

Britain spends billions on useless and dangerous nuclear weapons which ultimately remain under US military control. Overseas wars – such as in Afghanistan, where after 20 years of war and tragedy, the US is effectively resigned to the re-installation of a reactionary theocratic Taliban regime – illustrate the utter futility, waste, and threat to life posed by NATO's policy and operations.

Furthermore, millions of Afghan people are left to face crushing poverty and oppression. But it is not only in Afghanistan that people are suffering the consequences of

the Britain's imperialist foreign policy, which has brought devastation and terror to reign supreme. Whether in Palestine, Yemen, Iran, Chile, Egypt, Syria or Lebanon, millions of people have been paying the price of a foreign policy solely geared towards securing overseas markets, free mineral resources, and economic and political hegemony.

Now President Joe Biden claims that "the US is back". However, the legacy of tragedy and failure around the world cannot be left at the door of the Trump administration alone. In truth – whether it is Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, the Middle East, or Europe – the US has never been away! What Biden and his Secretary of State, Robert Blenkin, are promising is at best a reset to consistency of the pre-Trump era – and at worst a less erratic, though just as dangerous, level of overseas interference and aggression.

However, this current junction also affords an opportunity to change course – to break with the failure and tragedy of the past and develop a progressive and independent foreign policy for Britain. A policy that brings an end to the war in Yemen; that provides a sustainable peace and reconstruction process in Syria; that supports the sovereignty of the Afghan people and saves them from a bleak future under a theocratic state ruled by the Taliban; and that ensures the revival of a UN-supported nuclear deal with Iran that was aborted by the Trump administration.

Such a policy based on economic cooperation, friendship and mutual respect between peoples and states, not exploitation and military force, would not only help the cause of peace but could also help meet the challenge of climate change and environmental degradation.

Hanging onto Biden's coattails – as Britain has traditionally done with previous US presidents – and remaining in NATO, does not offer security or progress. On the contrary, it is a dangerous cul-de-sac.

It is time to change course! **Jamshid Ahmadi**

PICTURE: Roosevelt and Churchill at the start of the "special relationship" in the 1940s. Morphing quickly from World War to Cold War, this has seen the UK acting as cheerleader or direct partner in the US-led Western military and economic expansionism around the world



## news/analysis

Liberation stands in solidarity with the Indian Workers' Association GB in its support of the courageous and determined struggle of the farmers of India, against the government's new farm laws.

# Indian farmers challenge right-wing nationalism

The unprecedented protests at the borders of New Delhi, highlight the bravery, courage and peaceful challenge to the brutal repression of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

by **Harsev Bains**



OVER 200 farmers have lost their lives victims to the unsympathetic attitude of a Government that is becoming increasingly disconnected from its people. The three laws are related to agricultural marketing, contract farming and stocking of food commodities.



Throughout the process, neither the farmers nor the state governments were consulted, but instead only those agribusiness corporations like Adani and Ambani since it is only their interests the government is promoting.

The farm laws and the manner in which the BJP has pushed them through, have wide implications which impact on issues such as democratic rights, encroachment on rights of states, the issue of food security, the surrender of responsibility of governments to control prices and, of course, setting up the legal architecture to advance corporate control of agriculture.

The struggle of the farmers has highlighted the efforts by the Indian ruling classes to acquire

corporate control over agriculture for its own profit maximisation. A new class conflict has arisen between the big corporates with their international finance and the entire peasantry.

The BJP is striving to establish its complete political hegemony by destroying the federal structure of India's Constitution and in its place, erecting a unitary state structure, creating conflicts between the central government and elected state governments.

With the global economy in a state of recession, the neo-liberal reform has exposed itself as being totally bankrupt in offering any solution to overcome this crisis and the scrambling for profit maximisation under capitalism intensifies. The BJP government is aggressively pursuing the neo-liberal reform to provide greater opportunities for profit by the corporates. This requires the takeover of newer areas of economic activity.

The rise of right-wing nationalism has tested the fragility of Indian democracy. The full force and authoritarian tactics of the Indian government have been showcased in their response to the largest protest in its history.

India's ranking in the Press Freedom Index is now down to 142 out of 180 countries. Barricades and border walls erected with barbed wire and pointed spikes fixed to the national highways. The use of water cannons, tear gas and deployment of security forces have all been utilised to intimidate peaceful protesters. Since November 26, the day of the National General Strike, farm protestors from the north Indian state of Punjab have been joined by workers, women and youth from all parts of India.

Two months later on 26th January, India's Republic Day, normally free from protests, saw

an unprecedented show of anger against the farm laws, with one of the largest global demonstrations ever assembled.

A splinter group organised a counter-march earlier in the day to the Red Fort in Delhi which resulted in the loss of life. Their disruptive action was condemned by all the 500 farmers' organisations. Despite this instant condemnation, the Government machinery and RSS went on a violent rampage against the non-violent protestors. When these images created a storm on the web, the internet was shut down. PM Modi has used the action by this splinter group to defame the farmers calling them "parasites", questioning their patriotism and integrity.

Solidarity marches and rallies were held around the world including in London where Members of Parliament have taken to tweeting their support for the farmers, with Claudia Webbe, MP for Leicester East being most prominent from Britain. Rihanna's and Greta Thunberg's tweets have drawn particular ire from the BJP government and pro-BJP Bollywood and sports stars. Disha Ravi a 21-year-old activist from Bengaluru has been charged by Delhi Police for criminal conspiracy, on the absurd grounds that she forwarded a "tool kit" in support of the farmer's struggle.

The All-India Farmers Union has called for all the farmers of India to organise further protests and prepare for more determined and fierce struggles across the country to ensure the repeal of the unjust farm laws.

Harsev Bains is a Liberation Central Council member and National Vice President Indian Workers' Association (GB)

## Last chance to join us!

### LIBERATION AGM

LIBERATION WILL be holding its annual general meeting on March 13 to review its work over what turned out to be a momentous 12 months globally – and to set the agenda for activity in what is likely to be a no less dramatic year.

Motions proposed by Liberation affiliated organisations will be debated on issues that include ending Britain's continuing colonial hold over the Chagos Islands, and the political situation in Iraq and Iran.

Members of the Liberation Executive will be updating attendees on work to strengthen links with trade unions and MPs and our campaigning and influencing priorities. There will also be a briefing on our plans to develop an education programme.

Liberation looks forward to an engaging interactive event that will allow members – and their guests – to learn more about our organisation and our activities.

Liberation members – or guests where invited by members – can book a ticket to the AGM via our website [www.liberationorg.co.uk](http://www.liberationorg.co.uk) by March 5. If you are not a member, you can join via our website, or email [info@liberationorg.co.uk](mailto:info@liberationorg.co.uk) and we'll

## Liberation call for end to Yemen war



### ARMS SALES

LIBERATION JOINED The global push to end the war Yemen and stop arms sales to the Saudi-led coalition that has caused a humanitarian disaster in the country.

At an online public meeting days before the Global Day of Action on January 25, 2021, former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn MP and Germany's Die Linke MP Sevim Dagdelen (writing on page 6) joined campaigners to call for end to the West's fuelling of horrendous destruction of life, homes and critical infrastructure in one of the Arab world's poorest countries, and the wider region *see left*.

Andrew Murray, Corbyn's former advisor and a senior figure in Stop the War, and representatives of Stop the Arm Trade and the World Peace Council also spoke at the meeting for peace and diplomacy and an end to UK-US neo-colonialist designs.

As *Liberation* journal reports elsewhere limited progress has been made in the campaign, following the change of the political guard in Washington. However, the fundamental challenges of ejecting imperial powers from the region remain.

Catch up on the meeting at our website <https://liberationorg.co.uk/video/>



# Sudan/inside view

The radical forces have agreed to join together to defend the limited gains achieved so far and to proceed to establish the broadest possible front to respond to the demands of the mass movement, including a new economic policy aimed at alleviating the suffering of the majority of the population.

## Sudan at the crossroads...

Sudan's complicated present political situation is a reflection of the deep contradiction between antagonistic forces pulling the country in two different directions.

by **Fathi El-Fadl**



The radical forces are grouped around the Minimum Programme signed in January 2019 which demanded the overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood regime, its complete dismantling and liquidation.

On the other side stand the forces grouped around the military generals; former members of Al-Bashir's Security Committee, which include two of the armed groups; the Umma Party; the Sudan Congress Party; and some Islamic forces which jumped Al-Bashir's ship at the eleventh hour. Their main purpose is to hinder and, if possible, abort the transitional process, by implementing certain reforms to improve the image of the country while keeping in place the main policies of the old regime. These forces enjoy the support of the regional powers, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Egypt.

It was not surprising that under the growing influence of the alliance between army generals and the Janjaweed militia (now known as the Rapid Support Forces), Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok announced his new cabinet and government programme, as well as his decision to adopt an economic policy proposed by the IMF and the World Bank which violates all agreements previously reached with the popular mass movement in Sudan.

### Forces for change

The radical forces - which include representatives of the Professional Alliance, the Resistance Committees, the Civil Society forces, the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP), and two of the armed groups - have agreed to join forces to defend the limited gains achieved so far and to proceed to establish the broadest possible front. It is hoped that this will include a majority of the 80 organisations and parties that originally signed the Minimum Programme.



The main reason behind this attempt to form a broader front is to bring together the forces that played the major role in the hard days of the confrontation that ultimately led to the removal of Al-Bashir. These forces include the young women and men that peacefully fought off the brutal thugs of the security forces and the Janjaweed militia in the streets of Khartoum during the occupation of the square in front of the Sudan Armed Forces Headquarters. They also continue to play a critical role in many other cities and towns around the country. They have formed the Resistance Committees and workplace steering committees and have re-established independent trade unions as well as unions for peasants, students and women. Attempts are also being made to bring in representatives of the hundreds of thousands living in refugee camps in Darfur who have rejected the claims of some of the armed groups that sought to represent them.

These steps by the radical forces come as a result of the failure of both the Hamdok government and the Forces for Freedom and Change Alliance to respond to the demands of the mass movement. These demands included a new economic policy aimed at alleviating the suffering of the majority of the population. It is suffice to state that since August 2019, when Hamdok established his first government, the Sudanese pound has fallen in international value from 80 Sudanese pounds to the US dollar back then to 390 Sudanese pounds to the US dollar currently. As a result, the prices of basic commodities have increased by 400 percent. The plan originally advanced by economic experts was ignored in favour of IMF prescriptions.

There has also been a delay to the agreed demand for the transfer to state ownership of companies controlled by the army, the security forces, and the Janjaweed, which have monopoly over the export of Arabic

gum, cattle, gold, and various agricultural products.

Other demands which were denied included those for the public trial of criminal figures of the previous regime, as well as the handing over of Al-Bashir and other war criminals to the International Criminal Court. The proposal for a new labour law, drafted by progressive trade unionists, has been gathering dust in the drawers of the Minister of Justice for the past six months. There has also been a complete retreat from the demands for democratic liberties, including the right to peaceful protest. Meanwhile, changes and amendments have been made to the constitutional document - in effect, the agreed-to constitution of the transitional period.

This has happened despite all the forces originally signatory to the document in August 2019 agreeing that only the Legislative Council has the power to amend the agreement and would need a two-thirds majority to do so. The Legislative Council itself has still not been established.

### Foreign policy

In the field of foreign policy, the present authorities continue to follow the old regime's policies. The government refuses to withdraw Sudanese troops from Yemen. Sudan currently hosts the largest CIA spy station in Africa. The generals have agreed to work with the US AFRICOM forces. The government has succumbed to the Trump administration's pressure on Israel and is controversially engaged in the process of normalising relations with that country. Such a step in foreign policy can only be decided upon by an elected government.

The military has intervened to hijack the peace process in Sudan by creating its own supposed peace council, thus violating one of the principal agreements that the peace process would be the sole responsibility of the civilian government and the Forces of

Freedom and Change (FFC).

The peace talks - which were concluded in Juba, capital of the Republic of Southern Sudan, financed and sponsored by the UAE - resulted in a so-called agreement that dealt only with the quota distribution of ministerial posts. It gave the three armed groups three seats on the country's Sovereignty Council, five ministerial posts, and a 20-percent allocation of civil service posts. It failed to address the root of the problem and just mimicked previous agreements reached between Al-Bashir and the same groups following talks in Abuja and Al Doha. The agreement was rejected by the majority of the people of Darfur - especially the hundreds of thousands displaced in the camps, who demanded a new round of talks with their bona fide representatives in attendance. The agreement was also rejected by all political parties and the civilian administration.

Despite the fanfare and festivities in Khartoum, the people of the three conflict-hit areas in Sudan (Darfur, Southern Kordofan, and the Blue Nile) continue to live in fear and under the constant threat of military attacks from the militias and the Janjaweed. The Juba Accord is doomed to failure since neither the generals represent the people of Sudan nor do the three armed groups represent the people of the three respective areas. Two of the main armed groups were not involved in the Juba fiasco at all.

For its part, the Sudanese Communist Party, while it supports fully the position of the people of Darfur, states clearly that peace in Darfur or in Southern Kordofan or the Blue Nile cannot be achieved without tackling the whole issue of the fair and democratic distribution of wealth and power. Such a goal can only be achieved within a national forum with the participation on an equal footing of all political and armed groups.

It is owing to all of these reasons that the SCP has withdrawn from the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) and is engaged in efforts to establish a broad gathering of all forces that stand to correct the path of the revolution and to establish full civilian power in Sudan. This is the only way to successfully complete the tasks of the transitional period and proceed to hold a national democratic election. These steps should lead to the convocation of a national constitutional conference which will draft the new constitution and pave the way for a better, democratic Sudan.

Fathi El-Fadl is a progressive Sudanese politician and Vice President of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights (ICTUR), a London-based non-profit organisation that promotes international trade union rights through research and advocacy services.



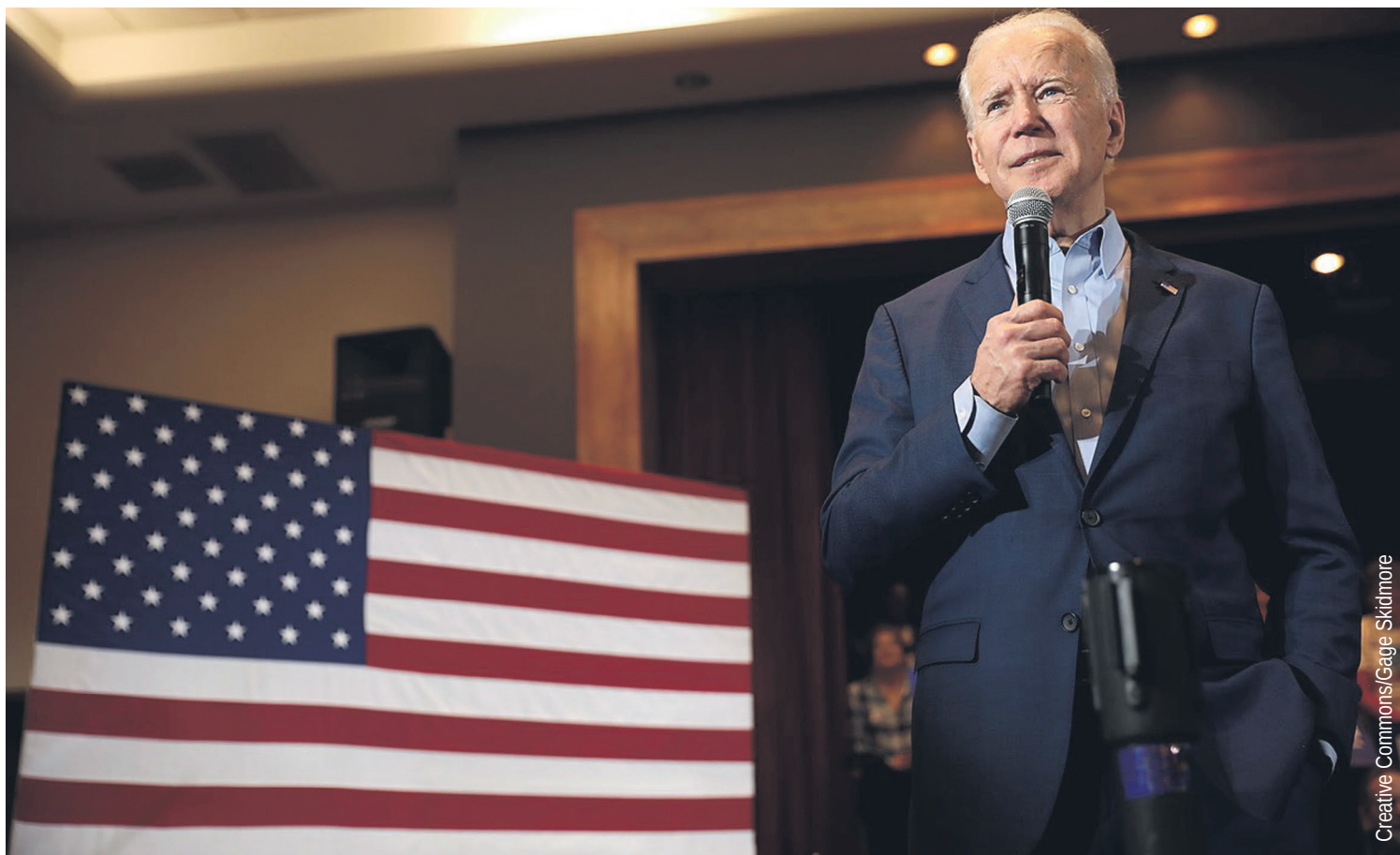
# USA/foreign policy

Famously regarded by the US as its 'backyard' the relationship of the superpower to its neighbours to the south in Latin America has historically been characterised by subterfuge and illegal intervention.

## Business as usual, threat or promise?

With a newly elected President in office expectations are high that the United States will adopt a different approach to foreign policy over the next four years. What are the prospects?

by **Steve Bishop**



**I**N HIS FIRST major foreign policy speech on 4 February newly elected US President, Joe Biden, proclaimed “America is back, diplomacy is back”. Biden was clearly looking to draw a line under the approach to foreign policy of his predecessor, Donald Trump, and signal a return to business as usual in relation to US foreign policy.

Biden’s words are unlikely to adorn baseball caps worn by his supporters at mass rallies. However, Biden’s phrase is still a variation on the theme of making America great again. Making America great has, in one way or another, been the theme of US foreign policy for over a century.

Biden has indicated an initial desire to do things differently to Trump. The temporary ban on weapons sales to the Saudi Arabia-led coalition which has been bombing schools, hospitals and communities in Yemen since 2015 is positive, though Biden did not cut the Saudis loose entirely, promising to continue to help Saudi Arabia “defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Biden indicated that Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin will conduct a review of US global forces to ensure that the US “military footprint is appropriately aligned with our foreign policy and national security priorities”, a warning signal to Russia and the growing militarily and economic power of China.

In the Middle East Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, has restated Biden’s commitment to reconsider US withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran nuclear deal, agreed with Iran

in 2015 before the US violated the deal in 2018 by withdrawing.

US return to compliance with the JCPOA is by no means unconditional, with Biden wanting to make Iran compliant in a number of “deeply problematic” foreign policy areas outside of the deal, a requirement before the easing of US sanctions.

In a recent interview Biden made it clear that sanctions would not be lifted until Iran abandoned its nuclear enrichment programme. For its part Iran has made it clear that it will not reduce its nuclear programme until there is a commitment to remove sanctions.

The fact that America is back is also unlikely to inspire confidence in the peoples of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, all recent recipients of the particular form taken by US diplomacy, boots on the ground and missiles from the air.

### Pro-Israeli bias

Biden and vice-president, Kamala Harris, have made no secret of their pro-Israeli position regarding the politics of the Middle East. While the love-in Benjamin Netanyahu enjoyed with the Trump administration is unlikely to be sustained, Israel’s role as the eyes, ears and, where necessary, military proxy of the US in the region is unlikely to be threatened.

On the question of Palestine, Israeli withdrawal from the illegally-occupied territories and insistence on compliance with international law, flouted by Israel for over half a century, may be a step too far for Biden to consider.

The United States has form of its own in this area, undermining any claim it may have to the

moral high ground on the issue of compliance with international law. As well as the illegal detentions which continue at the Guantanamo Bay prison camp, the United States persists in its 60 year long illegal economic blockade of Cuba.

In a final vindictive act, Trump added Cuba to the US list of ‘state sponsors of terrorism’ in the weeks before leaving office. Since 1959 over 3,000 Cubans have lost their lives to terrorist acts, most of which emanated from the United States. It is vital that Biden takes Cuba off the list, ends the blockade and begins the normalising of relations with Cuba.

Famously regarded by the US as its ‘backyard’ the relationship of the superpower to its neighbours to the south in Latin America has historically been characterised by subterfuge and illegal intervention. From the coup d’état in Chile, undermining the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, gun running in El Salvador, invading Grenada, the list goes on.

More recent examples include covert support for the coup in Bolivia and ongoing attempts to undermine the government of Venezuela. Such interventions must stop and Latin America must be free from US interference.

The rhetorical flourish and embellishment of the daily tweets from Donald Trump may be gone. That will be welcomed in some quarters, given the rollercoaster ride of the past four years. However, the message that US foreign policy is back to business as usual will, for many, not be as reassuring as Biden may like to think.

Steve Bishop is a member of the Executive Council of CODIR, a long-standing affiliate to Liberation.

## Inter-imperialist contradictions

Here is what Jonathan Tepperman, editor of *Foreign Policy* – best thought of as the house journal of US imperial ambition – says about Biden’s posture and the developing contradictions with European powers.

*President Joe Biden’s declaration to the Munich Security Conference last Friday that “America is back”—lest anyone miss it, he repeated the line three times—hasn’t gone down very well in the days since. While I suspect many in the Zoom audience were quietly relieved to hear it, public responses have ranged from skeptical to hostile.*

*At the same conference, for example, French President Emmanuel Macron insisted that France stake out greater “strategic autonomy” from the United States.*

*His German counterpart, Angela Merkel, reminded the audience that U.S. and German interests “will not always converge.”*

*And back in the United States, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said: “I don’t think the American people can afford to go back to eight more years of Barack Obama’s foreign policy.”*



# USA/foreign policy

Economic sanctions are not an alternative to arms exports and military support and especially during a pandemic, they are a weapon of mass destruction. Embargoes and blockades are warfare by other means.

## Against the politics of escalation and economic wars

On 4 February, in his first foreign policy speech since taking office, US president Joe Biden – besides making an escalatory statement towards Russia and China – announced an end to military support for Saudi Arabia in the Yemen conflict.

by **Sevim Dagdelen**



**T**HERE IS much to suggest, however, that Biden's announcement was not entirely in earnest. The break with the politics of violence espoused by his predecessors Barack Obama and

Donald Trump towards Yemen would certainly be welcome, were the President's words to be followed by action. And for the people of Yemen, it would be a light at the end of the tunnel after what will soon be a six-year bombing campaign. But let's not be fooled: an end to the US's massive arms exports to members of the coalition fighting in Yemen is certainly not in sight. The Biden administration left no room for doubt about that.

The military support from the US – and the United Kingdom – for the Saudi Arabia-led coalition of aggression has been a key driver of the war against the civilian population in Yemen, now in its sixth year, and has led to the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Once the military support provided by the US to the beheader dictatorship in Riyadh and the autocrats in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates has ended, there will still be immense challenges ahead. Those responsible for war crimes must be brought to justice – with Saudi Arabia's crown prince Mohammed bin Salman first in line. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition must be made to pay for the restoration of Yemen's devastated infrastructure. This should be the starting point for efforts by the Left – in the UK, in Germany and internationally.

Saudi Arabia's Wahhabi regime has caused and is responsible for the problems in the

region by providing support for Islamist terror groups and facing off against Iran. What is needed is a permanent arms embargo against the aggressors in Riyadh.

### Arms exports

Arms exports are an international problem, and as a peace movement, we will only be successful if we engage in international networking and dialogue. The intervention by the coalition – which includes not only Saudi Arabia but also the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, Sudan and Senegal, with the United States and the United Kingdom providing support for the bombing campaign – would not be possible without the plentiful supply of arms from Western countries, first and foremost the US, France and the UK but also Germany.

The German Government's action is hypocritical: the coalition agreement signed by the governing CDU/CSU and SPD in March 2018 states that there will be an embargo on arms exports to all countries that are "directly" involved in the war in Yemen. In fact, the embargo was only enforced in November 2018, after the brutal killing of the Saudi journalist and dissident Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Turkey, not because of the deaths caused by the bombing campaign in Yemen.

It is a phoney embargo, for two reasons. First, arms exports to other countries involved in the war in Yemen are continuing. Last year alone, permission was granted for arms exports valued at more than one billion euros that were destined for countries actively involved in the war in Yemen, with Egypt

leading the field with 752 million euros. Since the war began in 2015, the German Government has approved total arms exports worth more than 5.5 billion euros to members of the Saudi-led coalition. What's more, the ban on arms sales to Saudi Arabia itself has loopholes: although the German Government has halted direct arms shipments to Riyadh, it has not stopped the lucrative exports by German defence company subsidiaries in other countries, nor shipments of components via joint European projects.

In the foreign policy of the Left, "more responsibility" does not mean more weapons, more troops and more military operations. It means respecting international law and strengthening diplomacy in international relations. As much as Joe Biden's rejection of the war in Yemen is to be welcomed, the Left must condemn the adherence to the highly dangerous politics of confrontation towards Russia and China. Together with the other NATO members, the US now spends more than one trillion dollars on defence and the military – 15 times more than Russia and four times more than the People's Republic of China. To support its global power projection, the US has a network of 1,000 military bases in other countries; China has one, in Djibouti. As members of the Left, we must never lose sight of these realities. A global Cold War, like the one being waged by the US and its allies against Russia and China and now being propagated by Biden as well, must be resisted by the Left around the globe, for this politics of confrontation



Alisdare Hickson/Creative Commons

poses a threat to world peace and security and jeopardises the global cooperation against climate change and the pandemic that is so urgently needed.

### START

The extension of the new START Treaty on strategic nuclear arms reduction is an important confidence-building measure between the US and Russia following the US withdrawal from numerous international disarmament treaties under the previous US president Donald Trump. The five-year extension of the Treaty is critical to security in Germany and Europe.

The new US government needs to return to the major international disarmament treaties as well, above all the nuclear deal with Iran, the INF Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty, after the Trump administration unilaterally withdrew from these agreements in 2018, 2019 and 2020, respectively. Germany must also make a contribution to nuclear disarmament. More than 90 per cent of the population in Germany would like the German Government to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Left Party fully supports this demand, along with calls for the withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Germany and Europe. Nuclear weapons of mass destruction do not make Germany and Europe more secure; in a worst-case scenario, our country and continent would become a nuclear battleground and then a barren wasteland.

Economic sanctions are not an alternative to arms exports and military support. In a foreign policy environment which, ethically speaking, is highly charged, they may ease our consciences, but in reality, they worsen the problems on the ground. Economic sanctions, especially during a pandemic, are a weapon of mass destruction. Embargoes and blockades are warfare by other means. In March 2020, the Left Party therefore expressed its full support for the UN's demand for a complete and immediate lifting of economic sanctions. The punitive measures imposed unilaterally by the US and the EU against Iran, Syria, North Korea, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba and Russia violate international law, undermine the global effort to curb the spread of coronavirus and thus jeopardise global human security. The blockades make it more difficult for the countries concerned to procure essential drugs and medical equipment. A lifting of all the sanctions is essential.

We say: no to war, no to the military build-up, no to economic sanctions. This is, and will remain, the core doctrine of Left foreign policy.

Sevim Dagdelen is the Left Party parliamentary group spokesperson on the German Bundestag's Committee on Foreign Affairs



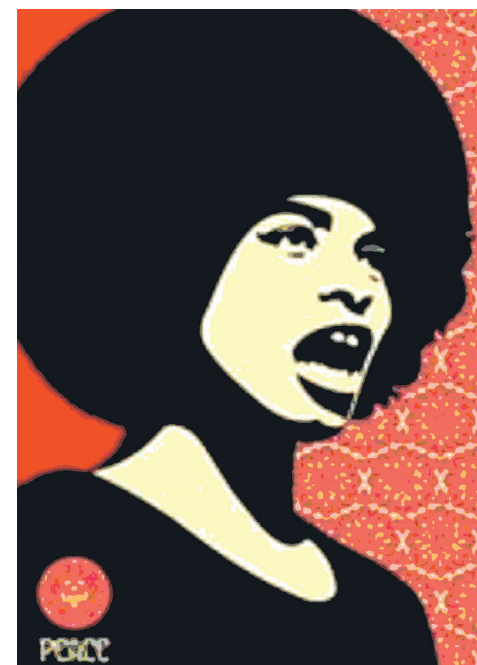
# comment/International Women's Day

In many countries, including former colonies of Britain and other powers, women campaigners and advocates for even very basic rights face arrest, incarceration, harsh sentences, gender-based tortures and, in some cases, the death penalty.

## Let's celebrate, commemorate, and campaign for equality and justice for women

International Women's Day (IWD) is an occasion on which to celebrate each year the struggle of generations of women across the world for equality and justice - the strides we have made, the crucial things for which we have fought and won and the gains we have successfully defended against the ever-present threat of their reversal.

by Anita Wright



deteriorating as desperate governments resort to force in the face of any challenge to their authority.

The National Assembly of Women (NAW), recently affiliated to Liberation, is committed to the international struggle for justice and equality for women and children everywhere. The NAW is affiliated to and works closely with the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), founded in 1945, which itself grew out of the International Women's Day Committee established in 1942. The NAW would like to mark IWD 2021 by promoting WIDF's statement below and inviting Liberation and all progressive organisations to stand in solidarity with the women of the world:

*"The progressive women's organisations in the world struggle daily in their countries. In some countries our members struggle to abolish the medieval laws that forbid women to be educated, to work and to have public lives. In others, they are struggling to stop the hideous "customs" of female bodies being mutilated and the stoning for "crimes of honour". In other countries, member organisations of WIDF struggle against the policies of privatisation, the raising of retirement age and the flexible employment reforms that place a double burden on women and mothers. Moreover, women are fighting for freedom and democracy in their country, against imperialism and its organs. The specific struggles of each organisation may take different shapes and have different immediate goals. However, we are united on the ideals of social justice, equality, solidarity and the decision to continue the struggle until the day dawns on which women have the place they deserve."*

Anita Wright is an executive member and former president of the National Assembly of Women.



ON 8 MARCH, we commemorate as well as celebrate. We remember with gratitude the courage and sacrifice of countless thousands of sisters who have given everything they held dear, including their lives, in the battle to end the oppression, denial of rights, lack of access to economic and political resources, violence and abuse, marginalisation and the searing exploitation to which women subjected.

But IWD is about much more than remembering the past. As the title of the day highlights, this is an event of truly international significance, when we can listen to the voices of women everywhere as they tell of their current struggles and hopes for the future. It strengthens us in our conviction that we must remain linked in solidarity and united in our dedication to treading the path that will lead us from a

world dominated by big business and private profit, where a woman's place will always be subordinate, to one shaped by women and men together, in which the natural resources of the planet and everything our labour produces are directed to eliminating poverty and inequality and providing for our needs.

Being able to take this path depends on peace and the fight for it is at the heart of women's struggle. Women must continue to stand together to end current conflicts, oppose cold war, de-escalate tension, and halt the arms trade and future production of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Since we marked IWD in 2020, women have suffered in every dimension of their lives. Already disproportionately disadvantaged after years of disastrous neo-liberal attacks on working people everywhere, they now face the double impact of the spiralling economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Both have

destroyed women's jobs and livelihoods, and hence their independence; exposed them to the virus in their millions as they perform frontline essential services in their traditional female caring and other roles; double-burdened and overburdened them with family care and imprisoned many in violent domestic situations from which they are unable to escape. Now, unless we are united in our opposition, the burden of paying for the twin crises will fall most heavily on women, potentially reversing much that the women's struggle has achieved and turning the clock back by decades.

In many countries, including former colonies of Britain and other powers, women's movements continue to face the vicious attacks of dictatorial regimes in which campaigners and advocates for even very basic rights face arrest, incarceration, harsh sentences, gender-based tortures and, in some cases, the death penalty. Every indication is that the situation is



# interview/Socorro Gomes

Colonial oppression in Latin America, executed through brutal violence against the indigenous peoples, is the genesis of today's oppressive states – coupled with neo-colonial relations, coups, and foreign interventions

## Latin America and the struggle against neo-colonialist and imperialist policies

**Liberation:** Latin America's history of colonial oppression began in the fifteenth century. Can you say something about its continuing legacy and the way it affects power relationships in the continent today?

**Socorro Gomes:** Colonial oppression in Latin America was executed through brutal violence against the indigenous peoples, who were victims of genocide, coupled with the enslavement of African peoples. This system ensured subjugation and the destruction of any attempt at rebellion against the colonizer. This bequeathed a legacy of state apparatus in the power of the nations' exploiters – one that is essentially racist, favourable to cast social relations, an anachronic framework set against the interests of the regions' peoples. It created the political and legal weaponry for plundering the peoples' resources. This is the genesis of today's oppressive states, coupled with neo-colonial relations, coups, and foreign interventions, in which we see the symbiosis between national elites and imperialism.

**Liberation:** Latin America is rich in natural resources. How can these be used for the benefit of the peoples of the continent rather than as plunder for profit by global corporations?

**Socorro Gomes:** The history of colonial oppression and exploitation, as well as of imperialist domination, is reflected in today's aggression and wars unleashed to secure the plunder of natural resources — such as Venezuela's oil, the biggest reserve in the world; Bolivia's natural gas and lithium; the Southern Cone's aquifers; the Amazon's huge biodiversity, etc. These are the real reasons for aggression and the coups promoted and supported by US imperialism. The region's natural resources can only be used for the benefit of the peoples if the economic model is completely changed.



What is needed is a project for economic and social development that is totally independent, not subordinated to monopolist and international finance capital. National development must be combined with social justice and political independence, sovereignty, and cooperation between friendly nations regionally and globally.

**Liberation:** Ten years ago, the world could look at Latin America as the cradle of challenge to the old order and movement towards progressive change by and for the people. How do you assess the resurgence of the Right since then and the potential for the reassertion of the Left?

**Socorro Gomes:** The victories achieved since the end of the 20th century by the democratic, progressive, and leftist forces, committed to breaking away from imperialist domination, are the result of struggles and the accumulation of forces, the fight against military dictatorships, in the 1960s and 1970s, and against neoliberal civilian governments in the 1980s and 1990s. These were all instruments of US imperialism, in criminal partnership with local dominant classes. What happened in Latin America and the Caribbean since 1998, with the electoral victory of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and, in 2002, with the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in Brazil, was part of the peoples' quest for a path to overcome and defeat imperialist domination. In the last 20 years, with the left's electoral victories, the plunder logic was challenged and alignment with imperialism rejected. Progressive governments achieved significant improvements to the living conditions of the poorest. Illiteracy was eradicated in some areas. These governments made huge investments in public policy. Progressive forces that came to power in different countries strengthened bonds of cooperation through regional fora such as CELAC, ALBA and others, while working to build world peace. The imperialists reacted

violently, with threats, sieges, sanctions, blockades, and coups, introducing a strategy of hybrid wars and 'regime change', in a political and economic offensive designed to destroy national sovereignty and social rights, and liquidate achievements. This presents us with the challenge of broadening the forces of progress, strengthening the peoples' unity, cementing solidarity and efforts for peace. The right-wing forces are at the core of the oppressors' political system and do everything to secure the privileges of the dominant classes. But gradually, the left is rearticulating, reorganizing, and accumulating new forces to move forward on the path of progressive transformation.

**Liberation:** We have certainly witnessed a year of turbulence across Central and South America and the emergence of protest movements and generally progressive trends in several countries. How do you assess the situation? Is there cause for hope?

**Socorro Gomes:** Yes, there is reason for hope. The rise in misery, elimination of social and workers' rights, rupture of the democratic state, intensification of violence against workers, breakage and alienation of strategic sectors for the countries' sovereign development, as well as a culture of hate, the rise of obscurantism and prejudice, utilisation of lawfare for judicial persecution of progressive leaders – these have all been carried out by putschist governments leading to ominous retrogression. Now, with the great health crisis during this COVID-19 pandemic, which afflicts and impoverishes millions of people and brings death to hundreds of thousands, while the billionaires' fortunes are multiplying, public discontent is mounting. This will turn into resistance and struggle which, yes, brings us hope that joint solidarity actions, unity, and victory are all possible.

**Liberation:** What are the key priorities for the peace movements of Latin America in securing freedom from imperialist aggression and war – both in the short term and in building a stable, democratic, and peaceful future?

**Socorro Gomes:** The peace movements in Latin America and the Caribbean have the immediate goal of silencing the US war drums, blocking its mounting aggression against the countries of the continent. The planet's greatest power, with the support of regional accomplices, is implementing warmongering policies aimed at destroying democratic institutions, overthrowing elected governments, and effecting regime changes in order to dominate and plunder. For the group of member organizations of the World Peace Council, our priority is overcoming and defeating the growing militarization of the region, in terms of policy and practice. The US military is installed in approximately 80 bases, not to mention the ever-present menace of the US Fourth Fleet. This is the focus of our struggle. It presents a great challenge to the anti-imperialist peace forces and it is vital that we strengthen and broaden our actions.

**Liberation:** Finally, can you tell us something about the deliberations and outcomes of the World Social Forum (WSF) in January 2021? What is the basis for hope for the people of Latin America?

**Socorro Gomes:** The peoples' cause for hope is the very reality of the struggle against oppression. The current order, based on imperialist hegemony and domination, is the main cause of wars, environmental devastation, and the degradation of natural resources. This constantly jeopardises the existence of life on Earth. Humanity cannot survive if it continues. The WSF provides space for debating and sharing projects among various movements and organizations that have a common concern with overcoming the current order – based on the appropriation of wealth by a tiny minority and the consequent impoverishment of billions of the world's people. More than 700 activities were organized by associations from across the globe during the week-long event. We participated in many of them, including the Central Panel on Peace Day, which focused on Universal Disarmament for Social and Ecological Transformation, and sessions on struggles against enduring colonialism. The Forum sought to promote concrete proposals for action and approved a platform of struggle against war and in defence of life, democracy, justice, and social progress. The final activity was a conversation about the future, leaving the process open for further initiatives and actions.

Socorro Gomes is President of the World Peace Council and based in her native Brazil



# history/South Africa

The parliamentary victory of Afrikaner nationalism in 1948 merged the old colonial autocracy with industrial capitalism into a programme of racial totalitarianism and consolidated the whites into one power bloc. Starting with the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 the government used the coercive techniques of colonial rule to silence its radical opponents

## The legacy of British colonialism

**At the end of the Second World War South Africa was held in high esteem as a senior member of the British Commonwealth, a bastion of western capitalism, and the most advanced economic region in Africa. Her people, black and white, could claim with some justification that their material conditions were the best in Africa.**

by **Chris Matlhako**



**T**HE SOUTH had the highest national income per head of population, the largest volume of trade, and the widest scope of opportunity for acquiring education or obtaining employment.

It was at the time a blurred and superficial picture, a land seen from a distance. Within a decade South Africa had been transformed into an institutionally racist Apartheid state ruled by fear and force. Its origins can, however, be traced to the one and a half centuries of earlier British colonialism embedded in the soil of the previous Dutch settlement.

By the beginning of the twentieth century almost three centuries phased by colonial wars, expropriations of tribal lands, slavery, forced labour and industrialization produced a variety of human types. In the Cape there was indeed something like the beginnings of an integrated multi-racial society. While colour prejudice was endemic and deeply ingrained among whites their policy of racial discrimination differed in degree rather than in kind from discrimination practiced elsewhere. There was also a countervailing radicalism that stretched across the colour line in pursuit of a non-racial social order. Nowhere else in Africa did so many whites, Asians and coloured people participate with Africans in a common struggle against both



class and colour oppression. Indeed, a peaceful transition to parliamentary democracy without colour bars seemed plausible to some.

But this was not be. Both British and Afrikaner interests pushed aside the demands of the black majority for equality and democratic dispensation by brute force. Its roots go back three centuries.

### Force of arms

Britain took the Cape by force of arms in 1806 after 150 years of Dutch rule. The colony resembled a feudal society. It was divided into estates rather than classes and strongly resisted radical reforms. The Dutch colonialists had been quick to resent the authoritarian rule and mercantilism of the Netherlands East India Company. The first serious demand for political reform was made as early as 1779 when liberalism from Europe and America combined with the company's bankruptcy to produce some agitation in the western Cape.

In 1806 the British occupied large parts of the Cape – dividing the indigenous people and getting them to fight amongst each other. The previous Dutch agrarian economy was sustained by slavery. The British for good economic reasons abolished slavery across their empire in 1807 and their seizure of the Cape led to the emancipation of slaves. Instead, the British used market methods to exploit. Taxation of homesteads and land forced the African population into a rigged labour market.

Among the whites the cultural and economic dualism developed into rival nationalisms. It was the British army and not the Boer commandos that defeated the African kingdoms and forced him to accept white authority. British immigrants then joined Afrikaner farmers on the eastern frontier. The Afrikaners trekked north to found their own republics where slavery could be maintained.

The temporary liberalism of the Cape was not a general characteristic of the white population elsewhere. British immigrants rapidly absorbed racial prejudices of older white inhabitants, or acquired their own, as in Natal, where English-

speaking settlers were dominant after 1850. They disenfranchised Africans in 1865 and developed under British rule a white supremacy state no more tolerant of Africans and Asians claims to equality than were the Afrikaner republics.

Imperial expansion and industrialization followed hard on the diamonds discoveries of 1867-71. South Africa's industrial era was baptized in blood and the subjugation of indigenous people leading to the receding of the Cape liberalism. Kimberley's mine owners produced diamonds under a regime of colour bars, pass laws and closed compounds for indentured, migratory peasants workers.

### Diamonds and gold

The alchemy of diamonds and gold transmuted an agrarian society into an industrial state that attracted thousands of artisans, clerks, farm workers, men without special skills, fortune seekers and aggressive capitalists from Europe. South Africa's white population rose significantly in this period. Some were staunch trade unionists and ardent socialists. They grafted their beliefs and patterns of organization on the colonial stock. White working men, set in authority over African peasants, despised them and also feared them as potential competitors. Employers, concerned mainly to maximize profits, exploited the weak bargaining position of the peasants and substituted them, when this was expedient, for the better paid whites.

Trade unions sprung up everywhere – from Cape Town, Kimberley, Durban and the Witwatersrand between 1881 and 1899. Small employers hobnobbed with artisans in the friendly atmosphere of a colonial community, where dark men did the dirty work and all whites belonged to a racial elite. Passions ran higher in the crude mining camps of Kimberley and the Witwatersrand. Here white working men fought against great capitalist combines for rights but their struggle rarely crossed the colour line to unite workers of all races. White workers usually chose to fight on their own, often under the

banner of white supremacy. Racial discrimination, sponsored by governments, employers and white workers, divided the working class.

The emergence of De Beers Consolidated Mines was also the beginning of the monopolization of enterprise and creation of the South African international capital. De Beers' monopolistic structure and political influence enabled it to rationalize mining techniques and enforce strict control of workers, output, markets and prices. Rhodes, Beit, Barnato and Philipson-Stow, the four life governors, took 40 percent of the profits.

The discovery of diamonds at Kimberley in 1867 and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 transformed the imperialist attitude towards the South African interior. From being something of a liability and a burden, it now also held the bounty of plentiful black labour. Britain strengthened her military and political position on the flanks of the Boer republics culminating in the Jameson raid of 1895 and the Boer War.

The founding of the Union of South Africa in 1910 created four all-whites republics, divided equally between the English and Afrikaner whites and formed the basis for a future codification of racial segregation along colour and class lines.

Antagonisms between Afrikaners and British dominated the politics that followed. The British had many initial advantages. Backed by the imperial state representing a world-wide culture, they behaved with arrogant assurances of conquerors. They dominated mining, industry and commerce, controlled banks and finance houses, and supplied most technical skills. But resisting adsorption, Afrikaners acquired a national consciousness in their fight for political independence, language rights, religious cohesion and white supremacy.

The parliamentary victory of Afrikaner nationalism in 1948 merged the old colonial autocracy with industrial capitalism into a programme of racial totalitarianism and consolidated the whites into one power bloc. Starting with the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 the government used the coercive techniques of colonial rule to silence its radical opponents.

But total oppression evoked total resistance. The champions of an open, non-racial society took up the challenge by resorting to mass struggle. Radical nationalists and radical socialists on both sides of the colour line joined forces in an alliance of the African National Congress, the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress and the Communist Party. Defiance campaigns and national strikes led to the Sharpsville massacre of 1960. Within little more than thirty years the resulting struggles – drawing on both the residual traditions of social radicalism and centuries long black resistance – had overthrown Apartheid and created a new South Africa.

Chris Matlhako is the National Coordinator of South African Peace Initiative (SAPI)



# colonialism/Indian Ocean

Britain must return the colony to the Republic of Mauritius, fully resource the repatriation of all Chagossians who wish to return to their homeland and provide compensation to all those forcibly displaced



## Why Britain must quit the Chagos Islands

**The Chagos Islands is the only remaining overseas colony on African soil and Britain's presence there serves to endorse other unlawful occupations, including those of Western Sahara, Northern Cyprus and Palestine. Britain must pull out.**

by **Liz Payne**



**W**E HEAR little about the 'British' Chagos Islands, an archipelago in the middle of the Indian Ocean. This is deliberate on the part of the mass media, given the shocking British

colonial backstory, continuing occupation of what rightfully belongs to the Republic of Mauritius and the hosting there of a notorious US military base.

The UK detached the Chagos from Mauritius when it 'granted' the latter independence in 1965, in contravention of international law expressly forbidding the break-up of any state during the decolonisation process (UN Resolution 1514). London made a cash offer for the territory; the Mauritians had no option but accept or lose their chance of freedom.

Britain's attention at the time was focussed on one Chagos island in particular, Diego Garcia, gained from the French in the 1814 Treaty of Paris following the Napoleonic Wars. Its enslaved plantation workers may have been officially 'freed,' but conditions under their new overlords remained appalling. A hundred and fifty years later, the British government was planning to eject the island's entire population to make way for a strategic military facility of its number-one ally, the United States.

A small British base on the island had proven its worth for launching missions across the Indian Ocean in World War II. By the 1960s, the US was desperate to fill the void left by Britain's shift away from maintenance of permanent military garrisons east of Suez. For the two imperialist powers, the deal was perfect. The UK would permit an enduring American presence on the island. The US would sell Britain its Polaris missile system at a

knock-down price. Everything hung on Diego Garcia being 'empty', and the British government wasted no time in getting to work on its side of the bargain, effectively trading the island's people for a cut-price nuclear arsenal.

### Forced removal

At first, London denied the existence of any inhabitants with residency rights, asserting that the plantation workers were all on temporary contracts. One racist official said there were just "a few Man-Fridays coming down from the trees." Ruthless expulsion tactics evolved from this mindset. People who left the island temporarily were debarred, without notice, from returning. When frantic relatives went searching for 'the disappeared', they too were denied re-entry visas. Essential imports - food and medicines - were restricted. Terror followed, with threats of bombing and the seizure and gruesome killing of hundreds of family pets. Finally, those still left were forced onto boats and dumped without money or possessions on the docksides of Mauritius and the Seychelles, condemned to a life of marginalisation and poverty.

Following these crimes, Diego Garcia was transformed. The US mega base soon became a menacing and aggressive presence, threatening the peace, stability and development of East Africa, the Middle East and Asia. It has since served as a base for bombing missions over Iraq and Afghanistan; a hub for surveillance and sorties over the Indian sub-continent, south-east Asia, and South China Sea; a detention and torture centre with alleged links to the US rendition programme and a position from which to control and potentially disrupt vital oil routes from the Middle East to China, Japan and other Asian states. It even has a

NASA station. The US makes no attempt to conceal how crucial the place has become for maintaining hegemony and pursuing foreign policy objectives, something only made possible Britain.

### Cold War

Today, the UK continues its colonial occupation, in defiance of the ruling of the UN International Court of Justice in February 2019, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 22 May that year (by 116 votes to 6) which declares this to be unlawful.

At the same time, it has rejected the right of those exiled, and their descendants, to return home, despite their unwavering campaign directed at the British government for more than five decades. It has gone to enormous lengths to destroy the conditions which make that return possible, even by weaponizing concern for the global environment and establishing the Chagos Marine Protected Area around the Islands.

In these days of renewed Cold War, escalating regional conflicts, and growing tension, it is time for urgent change. The British government must now close all civil and military installations throughout the Islands, ensure that post 1965 contamination is removed from Diego Garcia and that the natural and built environment is restored to support a flourishing, healthy and prosperous future community. It must return the colony to the Republic of Mauritius, fully resource the repatriation of all Chagossians who wish to return to their homeland and provide compensation to all those forcibly displaced - for their unlawful expulsion, enforced exile and all other resultant detriment. Only by doing these things can a disgraceful chapter of colonial history be closed.



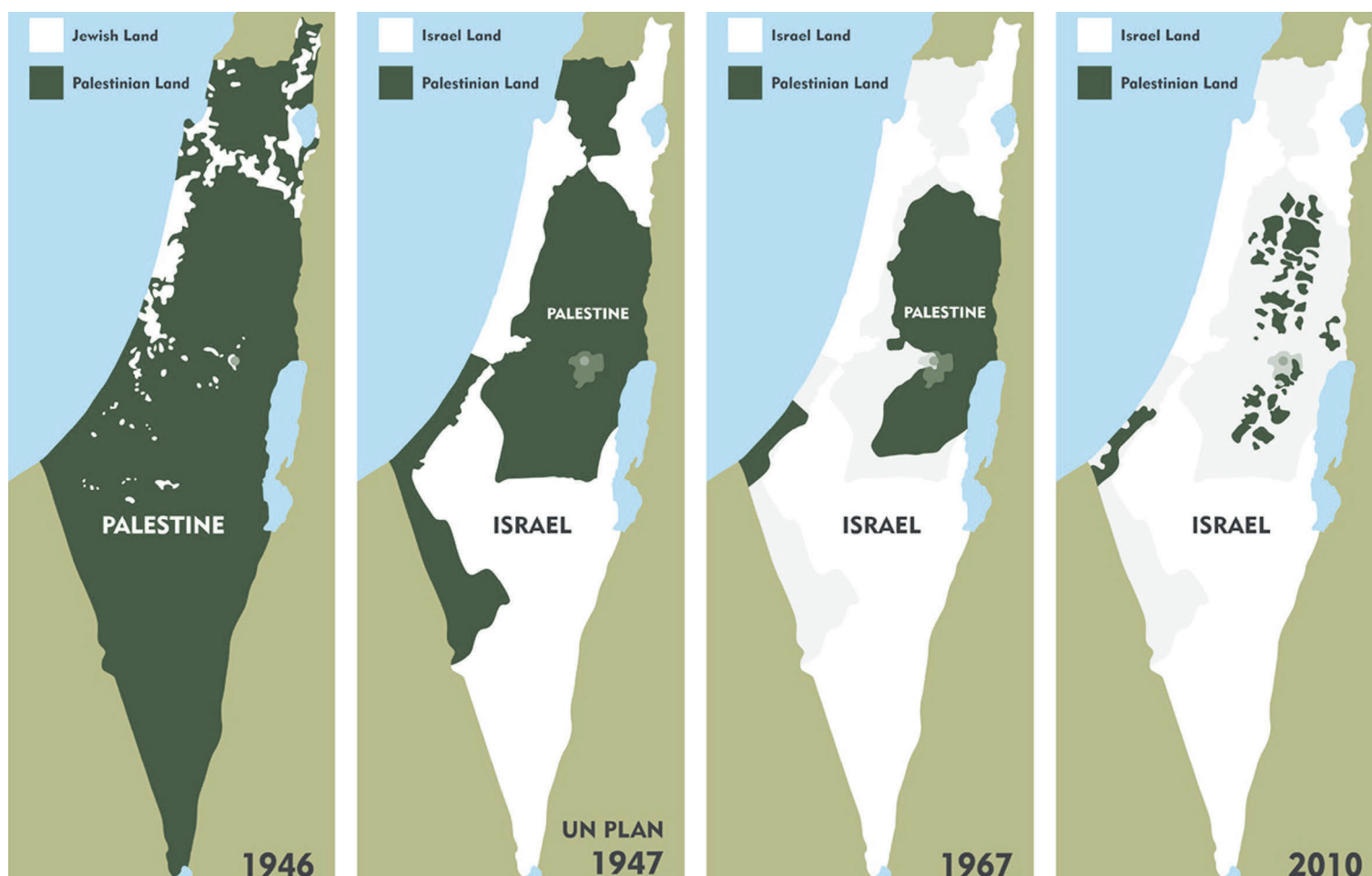
# colonialism/ Palestine

Unfortunately, the indications are now that the Biden administration will be reticent to confront and deter Israeli colonialism and return to the practice of primary deference to its age-old ally regarding all matters pertaining to Palestine and the wider region.

## Palestine's 100-year old wound

Among the painful legacies that remain from the disbandment of the British Empire, perhaps the most keenly felt in terms of injustice and suffering, and the most dangerous in terms of wider conflict across the Middle East, is that of Palestine.

by **Payam Solhtalab**  
a campaigner for  
peace and détente in  
the Middle East



**T**HE YEAR 2017 saw the dark centenary of the Balfour Declaration, which committed to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and formalised the support of the British Empire. This was at a time when the British authorities counted upon the Palestinians, as well as other Arabs of the Levant and Arabian Peninsula, in the campaign to wrest control of the area from the Ottoman Empire during World War I. One tragic colonial subjugation was to be merely replaced by another which carries on to this day!

Over the years that followed, the Zionist settler movement continued to grow apace - eventually even turning on the very colonial power, the British Mandate for Palestine, that had nurtured its growth. In 1948, the state of Israel came into being and the hitherto predominately Palestinian indigenous population were violently expelled from their homes and land in campaigns of massacres and ethnic cleansing. Approximately 800,000 Palestinians were made refugees. They remain refugees to the present day as a result of Israel's continued refusal to adhere to UN Resolution 194 which calls for their return.

In 1967 Israel occupied the rest of Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza) - an occupation that has grown more brutal and entrenched over the last half-century in flagrant violation of several UN resolutions and despite condemnation by the majority of world opinion.

However, such condemnation means very little in the absence of any accompanying sanction to deter Israel from the course it has unashamedly continued to pursue. Likewise,

calls for the implementation of the two-state solution - the only legitimately mandated - appear only tokenistic without any attempt made by the international community to bring pressure to bear upon Israel to desist from its illegal actions. Instead it permits Israel to intensify its occupation and create facts on the ground that leave any hope for the reaching of such a solution increasingly forlorn.

It soon became apparent after the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 and 1995, and in the wake of the assassination of Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin by ultra-right-wing Zionists, that Israel desired to continue its effective occupation and control over Palestine while dispensing with its direct and overt military occupation, with the costs and collateral this entailed.

Thus, the number of Zionist settlers has increased several-fold from its level in the mid-1990s. The complete subjugation of the Palestinian people and the gross violations of their human rights continue on a daily basis, as does the horrendous siege of Gaza.

Covid-19 supplies a current example of such injustices openly perpetrated against the Palestinian people. While Israel is currently lauded around the world for having the world's highest vaccination rate per capita (with nearly half of its population having already received one jab, and one third having received a complete dose) the government makes little or no effort to extend that response in any meaningful way to the beleaguered Palestinian territories under its occupation.

It should not be forgotten that for Israel to achieve a fait accompli, it is still wholly reliant upon the unequivocal backing of the US - as well the connivance of several of its reactionary ally-client states in the region.

The Trump administration spelt disaster for Palestine. At the outset of the Biden presidency there was legitimate ground for hope that the more extreme aspects of his predecessor's approach (as articulated in the "Deal of the Century") would be relegated to the footnotes of history. Unfortunately, the indications are now that the Biden administration will be reticent to confront and deter Israeli colonialism and return to the practice of primary deference to its age-old ally regarding all matters pertaining to Palestine and the wider region.

This critical juncture affords Britain the opportunity to move away from its position hitherto of towing whichever line is put by Washington and Tel Aviv and to instead adopt a conscionable role in assisting with resolution of a conflict with which it has been intimately involved.

The Palestinian people, despite the difficulties and injustices they have endured, remain unbowed. They are committed to the struggle for their national liberation: a two-state solution that would see the establishment of an independent Palestine with borders as in 1967, East Jerusalem as its capital, the right of return of all Palestinian refugees, and the release of all Palestinian political prisoners from Israeli gaols in line with UN resolutions..



## Liberation

Journal of Liberation  
Volume 62 No 2 Spring 2021

Liberation was founded in 1954 as the Movement for Colonial Freedom. Today Liberation campaigns for peace, economic justice, equality and human rights

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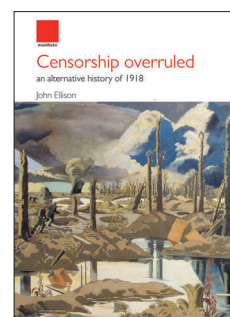
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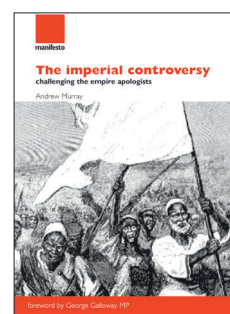
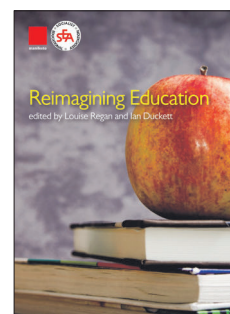
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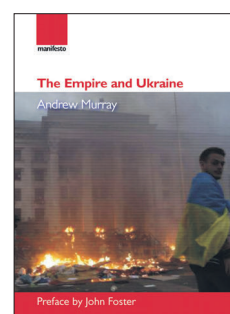


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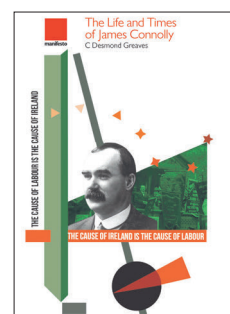
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