



April 14, 2018 - No. 14

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No Airstrikes Against Syria in the Name of High Ideals!

Hands Off Syria!

On April 13 at approximately 8:30 pm the U.S. imperialists, in coordination with Britain and France, launched a criminal attack by firing missiles on Syria. News agencies reported loud explosions and smoke in the Syrian capital Damascus in the aftermath. The Syrian government reported April 14 that its air defences shot down 73 of 103 missiles.

The U.S. claims this attack is in response to the alleged use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government against its own people on April 7, something the Syrian government adamantly denies. This U.S.-led attack was launched the day before chemical weapons inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were set to begin their work, as requested and facilitated by the Syrian government, to determine if chemical weapons were in fact used.

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) denounces this attack and reiterates its stand with the people of Syria, who for seven



long years, have been subjected to foreign-backed aggression and terrorism disguised as a civil war. The aim is to impose regime change on a country that seeks to exercise its right to a peaceful and independent existence, a right that belongs to all countries big or small and forms the foundation of international law.

The attack on Syria is also an explicit threat to Iran and Russia, two countries that the U.S. sees as undermining its aims in Syria and the region.[1]

The so-called evidence cited by the U.S. to isolate the Syrian government and justify war and aggression follows the shopworn methods of disinformation that are meant to cause people to doubt their anti-war convictions, forget the long history of U.S. aggression against the peoples of the world and discard the principles of international law that oppose the dictate of "Might Makes Right."



It should be remembered that just over a year ago, in April 2017, U.S. airstrikes in Syria released toxic chemicals that by all indications were stored in facilities used by terrorists. The U.S. and its monopoly media mouthpieces tried to spin this as a chemical attack carried out by the Syrian government and used it to justify a missile strike on a Syrian air base.[2]

For its part, the Canadian government has expressed its support for the criminal act against Syria. "Canada supports the decision by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to take action to degrade the Assad regime's ability to launch chemical weapons attacks

against its own people," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in a statement on April 13, adding, "Those responsible must be brought to justice." [3]

CPC(M-L) urges everyone to oppose this disinformation by organizing actions to oppose war and aggression and discussing with their co-workers, families and friends the urgent need to oppose U.S.-led aggression, Canada's support for this aggression and any possibility that Canada could become further embroiled in these crimes. Already around the world, emergency anti-war actions have been called, with one at the White House on April 14 followed by a teach-in at George Washington University and another in Britain at Parliament Square in London on April 16. Canada must be a Zone for Peace, and this can only happen if the people organize to make it so.

Notes

1. In remarks on the alleged April 7 chemical weapons attack, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert sought to isolate Russia:

"The Assad regime and its backers must be held accountable and any further attacks prevented immediately. Russia, with its unwavering support for the regime, ultimately bears responsibility for these brutal attacks, targeting of countless civilians, and the suffocation of Syria's most vulnerable communities with chemical weapons. By shielding its ally Syria, Russia has breached its commitments to the United Nations as a framework guarantor. It has betrayed the Chemical Weapons Convention and UN Security Council Resolution 2118. Russia's protection of the Assad regime and failure to stop the use of chemical weapons in Syria calls into question its commitment to resolving the overall crisis and to larger non-proliferation priorities.

"The United States calls on Russia to end this unmitigated support immediately and work with the international community to prevent further, barbaric chemical weapons attacks."

2. On March 13 at the UN Security Council, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley threatened that "any nation that is determined to impose its will through chemical attacks and inhuman suffering, most especially the outlaw Syrian regime, the United States remains prepared to act if we must." She then reminded the Security Council of the deadly U.S. missile strikes against a Syrian airbase in April 2017.

The U.S. Ambassador's threats were made in the context of a so-called ceasefire proposal by the U.S. This proposal sought to halt Syrian and Russian military operations in eastern Ghouta, which the Syrian government was liberating from armed groups, setting the stage for a negotiated settlement whereby armed fighters were permitted to leave the city in transportation provided by the Syrian government so that civilians could return to the city.

3. On April 7, Canada's Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland issued a statement in which she fell in line behind the U.S. imperialists asserting, without evidence, that the Syrian government was to blame for the use of chemical weapons. Taken in the context of the April 13 airstrike, this can be considered spreading propaganda for war, itself a war crime:

"The repeated and morally reprehensible use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime in the past has been confirmed by independent international investigators. It is part of a deliberate strategy to terrorize local populations and force them into submission. Canada condemns the Assad regime -- and its backers, Russia and Iran -- for its repeated, gross violations of human rights and continued, deliberate targeting of civilians.

"Canada expresses its admiration for the medical workers and other organizations, including the White Helmets, who have been working tirelessly to save the lives of those affected. Our most sincere condolences go to the families of the deceased.

"Chemical weapons attacks are a war crime. Canada, alongside its international partners, will pursue accountability for these atrocities by all available means. Those responsible must be brought to justice, and the massacre of innocent civilians must end."



Western Threats to Attack Syria Will Not Dissuade It from Confronting Any Aggression Regardless of Its Source

Permanent Representative to the UN of the Syrian Arab Republic, Dr Bashar Al-Jaafari, during a Security Council session April 10 on the situation in Syria, stressed that threats of aggression on Syria by Western states and their manoeuvres, misdirection, lies, and terrorism will not dissuade Syria from preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity and from confronting any aggression regardless of its source. He added that Syria will not allow any of the permanent or non-permanent member states to do in Syria what they have done in Iraq or Libya.

Al-Jaafari said, "The U.S. representative said that there is a single monster today which stands in the face of the whole world, and it is a monster which has armed and financed terrorists for more than seven years in Syria, and I say that this monster is the U.S., Britain, and France who

sponsored terrorism in Syria and before it in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya."

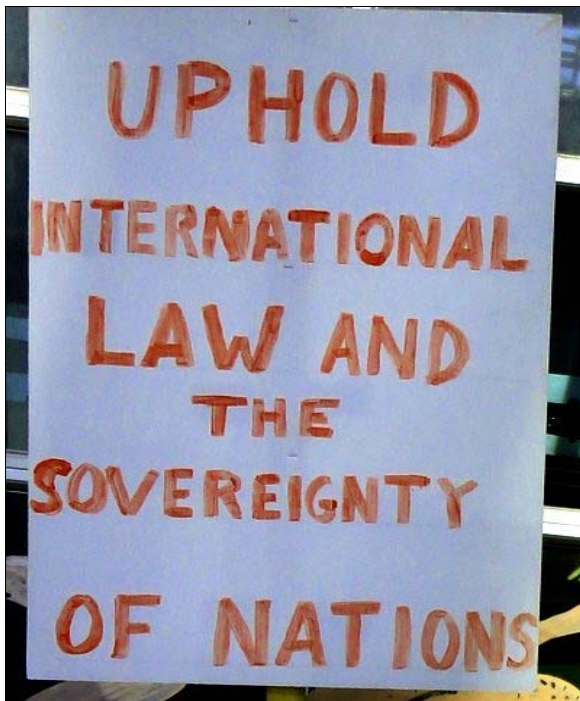
He clarified that Syria's Foreign and Expatriates Ministry -- in response to the campaign launched by some Western states against Syria regarding the alleged chemical attack in Douma city -- sent a formal invitation to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on April 10 for a team from the fact-finding mission to visit Douma to investigate.

Al-Jaafari added that Syria welcomes the visit. He asserted Syria's commitment to cooperate fully and its readiness to provide all the required help to allow this mission to do its work and to guarantee the safety of its members. He stressed that Syria hopes the mission will perform its work with transparency and professionalism based on credible evidence.



The mandate of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism expired in November 2017. At the April 10 Security Council meeting, two draft resolutions were presented ostensibly to establish a mechanism to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Both resolutions were defeated, neither receiving a unanimous vote from the council's five permanent members.

Al-Jaafari reiterated that those who backed the U.S. draft resolution at the Security Council on April 10 are not seeking to uncover the truth, because the truth will prove their guilt and that of their terrorist pawns on the ground.



"I affirm the reality that the U.S., Britain, and France are the ones who caused the failure of what was called the Joint Investigative Mechanism due to their insistence on politicizing its work and exerting pressure on its leaders," Al-Jaafari said. He pointed out that what is happening in the Council during this session is similar to what happened a year ago when the U.S. used false and fabricated excuses about the use of chemical weapons in Khan Sheikhoun to attack al-Shairat Airbase.

He called on the Security Council's member states to shoulder their responsibilities in supporting international legitimacy and in protecting international peace and security from the terrorism which is being used by the aforementioned three permanent member states who seek to undermine the stability of other states and to decide the fate of their peoples.

Al-Jaafari reiterated that the Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances, and that it is fully committed to co-operating with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to uncover the reality of the allegations.

In a phone call with Syrian TV, Al-Jaafari described the Security Council session as "being similar to a play." He indicated that the West has suffered successive failures at the Security Council and it can neither achieve progress there nor in exploiting terrorism.

The prejudicial nature of the proceedings to isolate Syria were underscored by UN Secretary-General António Guterres' remarks prior to the meeting. Without evidence of a chemical weapons attack having occurred, Guterres called for the "norms against chemical weapons [to] be upheld." He appealed to the Security Council to "fulfil its responsibility and find unity on this issue." In this way, all the serious breaches of international law known to have been committed against Syria by the U.S, Britain, France and other countries are covered up and the U.S. imperialists set the agenda based on their own geo-politics, trampling international law in the mud. The Security Council becomes an instrument through which to use the United Nations not to defend the international rule of law and peace, but coalitions of countries who violate the peace, which was identified following World War II as the supreme crime against humanity.

(With files from UN News Centre and news agencies)



Oppose Murderous Israeli Attack Against Syria

- Yi Nicholls -

On April 9, fourteen people in Syria were killed by an Israeli missile strike that targeted the T-4 airbase in the central province of Homs. Syria's Foreign and Expatriates Ministry asserted that Israeli F-15 jets launched their missiles from Lebanese airspace. The Syrian Air Force is reported to have shot down some of these missiles. Those killed included four Iranian citizens, the Iranian news agency FARS reported.

Israel has neither confirmed nor denied it carried out this attack. However U.S. officials told NBC news that the U.S. was informed by Israel of its plans to attack Syria. A statement from the Lebanese army corroborated that four Israeli planes violated Lebanon's airspace, flying from the Mediterranean Sea over the coastal town of Jounieh and then heading east, toward the city of Baalbek near the Syrian border.

At an April 9 emergency meeting of the UN Security Council on the situation in Syria, Syria's representative condemned in the strongest terms the ruthless Israeli aggression on the T-4 airbase, which left several civilians dead and others

injured. He said that attack would not have occurred without United States' support for Israel, and the latter has never been held accountable for its state-organized terrorism and its threat to regional and global peace and security. By failing to refer to Israeli aggression in their statements, Western countries are complicit in such action, he said. He added that the April 9 Israeli aggression was alluded to by the Prime Minister of Israel as an indirect response to the Syrian military's success against armed terrorist groups. However, this would not divert Syria's attention from a decisive military victory over terrorism, said Syria's representative.



Click to enlarge

None of the other Security Council members raised the attack on Syria as a matter of serious concern which the Security Council was duty bound to deal with. Emphasis instead was placed on how to investigate whether or not chemical weapons had been used in Syria and the mandate for any investigation.

The situation underscores that far from the Security Council upholding the rule of law and defending international peace, its functioning has become totally politicized and an arena for contention between the big powers and their proxies like Israel, while smaller countries are permitted to be singled out for military aggression -- i.e., the breaching of international peace, considered the greatest war crime under international law.

(With files from news agencies.)



Cold War Provocations to Justify Aggression

- Workers' Weekly -

Many commentators have torn to shreds the assertions of the British government that Sergei Skripal^[1] and his daughter Yulia were poisoned by a nerve agent called Novichok, and that the Russian government was directly involved.

Added to this are the recent allegations that the Syrian government has launched chemical warfare attacks on its citizens in the city of Douma, an area about six miles to the north-east of Damascus, which the Syrian army has just liberated from "rebel" factions. Although the imperialists are targeting Syrian President Bashar Al Assad, as they have done for several years under their program of "regime change" and destruction of nations, here again Russian backing of Assad is what is being portrayed as the main culprit.

This is of course not the first time that the pretext of chemical weapons has been used to justify missile strikes and military intervention. In April last year, Trump used the alleged targeting of Syrian civilians with chemical weapons, which he blamed on Assad, to launch Tomahawk missiles from U.S. destroyers in the Mediterranean against Syria, following the deployment of thousands of U.S. ground troops. In December 2015, RAF Tornado jets also carried out their first air strikes.^[2]



When the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries fell in 1989-1991, after the period of the 1980s when the world entered a profound turning point, there was much talk of the end of the Cold War and the "peace dividend" this was going to bring. Of course, this "peace dividend" failed to materialize, and from the 1990s onward, the forces of reaction have held the initiative.

Nevertheless, the people's forces themselves have stepped up their resistance to neo-liberalism and the anti-social offensive. In particular, the people have constantly mobilized against the warmongering and militarization of the imperialist system of states.^[3] This has pointed the way forward to the necessity to establish an anti-war government, and in Britain for the working class

and people to settle scores with their pro-war governments.

This is what faces them now, as Theresa May and her Cabinet declare that they are ready, in tandem with France, to take their lead from the U.S. regime in committing aggression against Syria.

How is it imagined that bombing Syria as revenge or alleged punishment will sort out any problem whatsoever? How is it that Syria is selectively chosen for air strikes? The U.S. and its allies have been bombarding what they call Daesh positions inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate. The strikes have on many occasions resulted in civilian casualties and failed to fulfil their declared aim of countering terrorism. In fact undeclared warfare is taking place, particularly throughout the Middle East, and the U.S., Britain and other big powers are colluding and contending for influence and domination. This risks an escalation into a very dangerous conflict between the big powers and Russia in particular. The European Union is also being urged to establish a "military Schengen Area," at the behest of NATO, to counter "Russian aggression." Is this the ultimate aim of this warmongering? How is this of benefit to humanity?

This is what is meant by a Cold War mentality: pose those that threaten your domination as the enemy, declare that only those that share your values are worthy human beings, stage provocations that others are aggressive, allege that extremist ideology is the threat to humanity.

This poses the necessity for the people to constitute themselves as a power in their own right. The apocalypse of war is not a necessity if the people constitute themselves as the power for peace. The issue is not one of taking sides for or against Russia, for example.



In the present situation, the resistance of the people, fighting against war, is characterized by doing everything possible now to stop a further attack on Syria by the U.S.-led big powers. Of crucial importance is to build the anti-war movement, to activate the human factor. There is an important campaign spearheaded by the Stop the War Coalition for everyone to lobby their local MPs to demand that a vote be taken on any proposal to use military arms to force a regime change in Syria. Demonstrations are taking place outside Downing Street, which we call on anyone who can to participate in. On April 13, a letter is being handed in at Downing Street signed by MPs, trade unionists, celebrities and academics to urge Theresa May to refrain from joining Donald Trump in escalating the war in Syria. Protests taking place over the weekend include those in Norwich, Nottingham,

Sheffield, Edinburgh and Cardiff, as well as street stalls in many other places.

These are important actions, since although the U.S., Britain and other powers have been intervening in Syria for many years without authorization from the Syrian government and with no legal authorization from the United Nations, the recent hysteria has reached a high pitch in a short period of time. This contrasts with the events of 2003, when war criminal Tony Blair attempted to prepare the ground with fraudulent dossiers and other means to win public opinion behind armed intervention in Iraq. This has been farcically echoed by the Theresa May

government with the anti-Russian accusations in the far-fetched Skripal poisoning case. Russia and chemical weapons are supposed to connect this and Syria in the public mind.

Tony Blair joined the "coalition of the willing" in invading and creating chaos and bloodshed in Iraq for which the people have been paying ever since. And this was despite the millions that took to the streets to stop the war. The lesson for the people is that these rotten scenarios of warmongering by such as Blair and May who claim to be representatives of the people in a representative democracy, but actually represent private interests in the name of the state, must be consigned to the past. As was so prominent 15 years ago, it is fundamental that in their warmongering they do not act in our name! In fighting for peace, the people must get organized with a view to the necessity of political power to bring about an anti-war government that acts for peace, eschews the use of force in international relations, and transforms society in establishing relations that favour the people.

The Stop the War Coalition has been organizing a tour based on the necessity for an anti-war government. This is an important initiative. Local Stop the War committees based on the need for an anti-war government must be built. Demands must also be raised to end the militarization of the economy.

***No to Air Strikes Against Syria!
Oppose All British Military Intervention!
Not In Our Name!
All Out for an Anti-War Government!***

Notes

1. Sergei Viktorovich Skripal is a former Russian military intelligence officer who acted as a double agent for the UK's intelligence services during the 1990s and early 2000s. In December 2004, he was arrested by Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) and later tried, convicted of high treason, and sentenced to 13 years in prison. He settled in Britain in 2010 following the Illegals Programme spy swap. On March 4, 2018, he and his daughter Yulia, who was visiting him from Moscow, were found "slipping in and out of consciousness on a public bench" near a shopping centre in Salisbury by a doctor and nurse, who were passing by.

2. Special forces from Britain have been operating in Syria since June 2016, according to a BBC report from the time. They were equipped with long range patrol vehicles, sniper rifles, heavy machine guns and anti-tank missiles.

3. Summary findings given on airwars.org of Coalition air and artillery strikes: August 8, 2014 to February 28, 2018, an overall total of between 17,348 and 25,800 civilian non-combatant fatalities had been locally alleged from 2,475 separate reported Coalition incidents, in both Iraq and Syria. Of these, Airwars presently estimates that a minimum of 6,238 to 9,582 civilians are likely to have died in Coalition actions. However, some caution is needed given the significant challenges of casualty verification at present.

Workers' Weekly is a publication of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

(April 10, 2018. Edited slightly for style by TML.)



Call for Emergency Anti-War Actions Across U.S.

- ANSWER Coalition -



Picket outside White House, April 7, 2017.

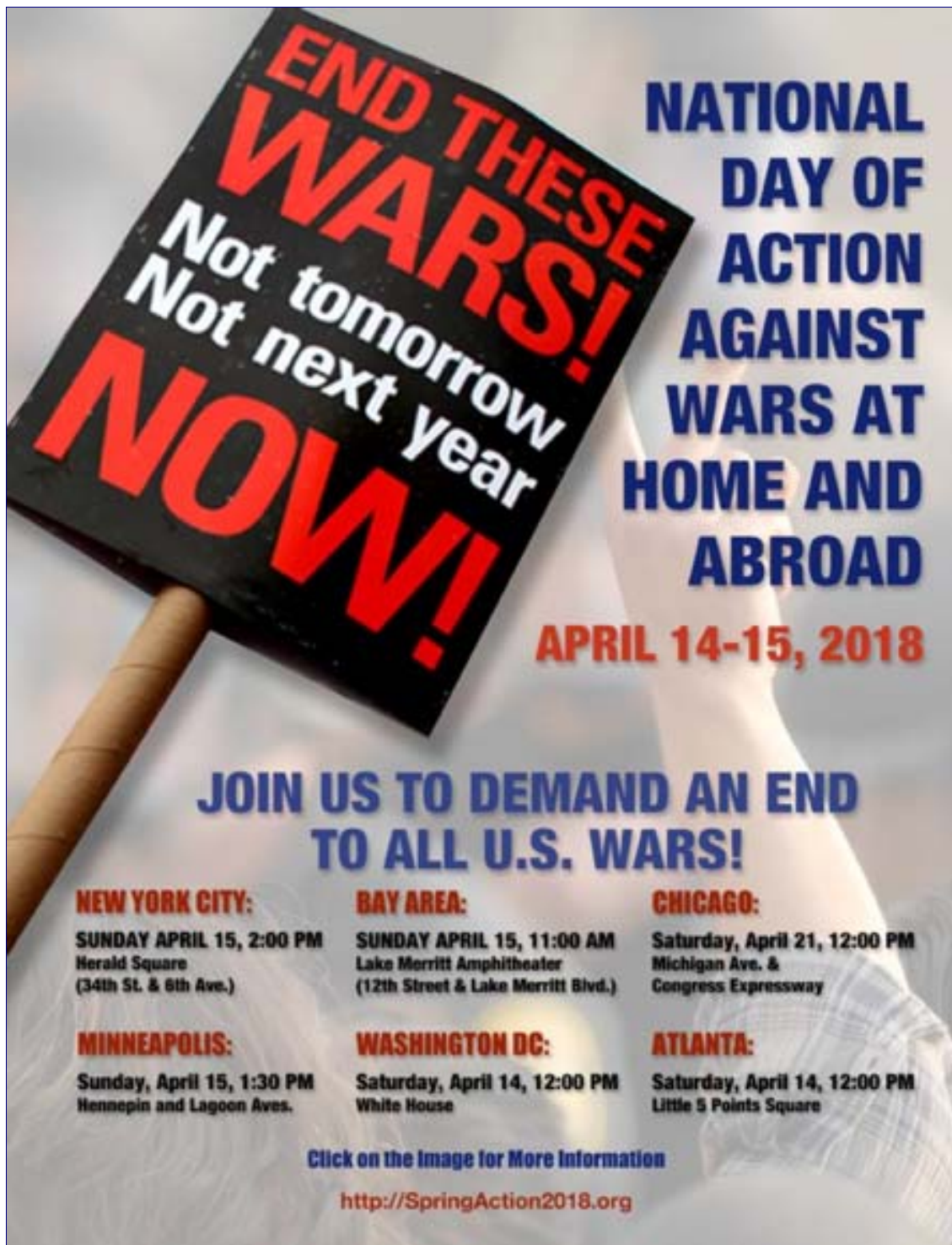
For the third time in 15 years, the United States government has started a criminal war of aggression against a country and the peoples of the Middle East. Each imperial war is conducted under the pretext of a noble cause. The destruction of Iraq and Libya were conducted on the basis of false, lying propaganda. The illegal aggression against Syria likewise borrows from the George W. Bush playbook by insisting that this is all about chemical weapons.

Just as George W. Bush raced to go to war in Iraq in March 2003 to prevent weapons inspectors from verifying that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction, Trump and the Pentagon raced to bomb Damascus before independent investigators could assess the facts about the alleged chemical attack. Just yesterday, Secretary of Defense Mattis said the United States has "no evidence" regarding the alleged chemical weapons attack.

As cruise missiles and bombs crashed into the Syrian capital of Damascus under the order of U.S. Commander in Chief Donald Trump, his critics in Congress and the corporate-owned media became his supporters. The great brotherhood of imperialism overcame domestic squabbles. Trump appears "presidential" once again.

We, the people of the United States, reject the notion of endless war, imperialism and militarism. We condemn Donald Trump and his rubber-stamp congress (including both parties) for conducting a criminal assault against the people of Syria.

Join us in the streets as we demonstrate in cities throughout the United States on Saturday, April 14 and Sunday, April 15.



**NATIONAL
DAY OF
ACTION
AGAINST
WARS AT
HOME AND
ABROAD**

APRIL 14-15, 2018

**JOIN US TO DEMAND AN END
TO ALL U.S. WARS!**

NEW YORK CITY: SUNDAY APRIL 15, 2:00 PM Herald Square (34th St. & 6th Ave.)	BAY AREA: SUNDAY APRIL 15, 11:00 AM Lake Merritt Amphitheater (12th Street & Lake Merritt Blvd.)	CHICAGO: Saturday, April 21, 12:00 PM Michigan Ave. & Congress Expressway
MINNEAPOLIS: Sunday, April 15, 1:30 PM Hennepin and Lagoon Aves.	WASHINGTON DC: Saturday, April 14, 12:00 PM White House	ATLANTA: Saturday, April 14, 12:00 PM Little 5 Points Square

Click on the Image for More Information
<http://SpringAction2018.org>

(April 13, 2018)



Coming Events



Ottawa

Canada, U.S., UK, France: Hands Off Syria!

Saturday, April 14 -- 4:00 pm

U.S. Embassy, Sussex Drive at the corner of York St.

*Organized by: Nowar-Paix, Solidarity Ottawa, Syrian Arab Association of Ottawa,
and the Ottawa Peace Council*

Windsor

Oppose the U.S.-led Military Attack on Syria!

No to U.S.-led Wars of Terror!

Anti-War picket every Saturday -- 11:00 am - noon

Corner of Tecumseh and Ouellette

Organized by Windsor Peace Coalition: windsorpeace@hotmail.com

Montreal

No to US, France and Great-Britain Aggression Against Syria!

Sunday, April 15 -- 3:00 pm

Norman Bethune Square, Guy-Concordia Metro Station

Organized by Syrian House in Canada, Coalition of Syrian-Montrealers

Facebook

Vancouver

Hands Off Syria!

Sunday, April 15 -- 12:00 noon

Vancouver Art Gallery

Organized by Stop the War --Vancouver Coalition for Peace and Justice

Facebook



**Arrest of High Level Member of People's Alternative
Revolutionary Force in Colombia**

Darkest U.S. Reaction Acts with Impunity

- Margaret Villamizar -



Celebrations in Bogota marking the founding congress of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force, September 1, 2017.

U.S. imperialism increasingly acts to destroy what it cannot control. With the prospects for a stable peace in Colombia at a critical point and concerns mounting over the failure of the Colombian government to implement commitments it agreed to in the Peace Agreement it signed to end the war with the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP),^[1] the dirty hand of U.S. imperialism is seen intervening to try to derail it entirely.

In a direct blow to the peace process, a member of the National Political Council of the new political party formed as an outcome of the peace accords, the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force (FARC) was arrested in Bogota on April 9 on the order of Colombia's Prosecutor General. The arrest and detention came in response to an Interpol warrant and request by the U.S. government that the FARC leader in question, Jesús Santrich, be extradited to stand trial in a U.S. court based on a New York Grand Jury indictment for allegedly conspiring to export cocaine to the United States.

In the Prosecutor General's haste to accede to the U.S. request for a high level FARC member's extradition, he reportedly did not even bother to consult with the Colombian president, much less the president of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the alternative justice system tied to the Peace Agreement, which is the first jurisdiction that is supposed to review any allegations against former FARC-EP guerrilla fighters.

Santrich was a member of FARC-EP's peace negotiating team and one of the signatories to the Final Peace Agreement signed in November 2016. He is also one of ten members of the new political party who as of July 20 will occupy a seat in the National Congress as provided for in the section of the agreement dealing with political participation.

Reporting of the arrest by the monopoly-owned media has been done in a sensational manner, using bits and pieces of what is called "evidence" that was leaked to them to carry out a media lynching -- not just of the person arrested but of the entire leadership of the new political party and the peace process itself.

The Peace Agreement has long been the target of the most reactionary, warmongering sections of

the Colombian oligarchy that were behind the dirty "No" campaign of lies and disinformation used to manipulate voters into rejecting it in the October 2016 national plebiscite.

Candidates of these reactionary forces in next month's presidential election are campaigning on a platform of further mutilating the Peace Agreement. They have already forced changes to it using Congress and other organs of State power, notably the Office of the Prosecutor General who has made it his mission to weaken and limit the scope of the Special Jurisdiction of Peace.



The arrest, extradition request and leaking of "evidence" allegedly obtained by agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration came just days before the opening of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru and Donald Trump's first official visit to Colombia. A last minute change in plans resulted in Trump deciding to remain in the U.S. so he could give priority to destroying the possibility of peace in Syria instead.

The arrest also came as pressure was mounting on the Colombian government and President Juan Manuel Santos in particular, who has barely three months left in office, to put in place the long overdue resources and guarantees required for FARC members' security and reincorporation into civilian life.

Santrich's arrest came when Norway, as one of the two guarantor countries of the Peace Agreement along with Cuba, had sent its Prime Minister Erna Solberg to Colombia. She was visiting the Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation around the country, where FARC members currently reside under difficult conditions, to evaluate the progress in implementation of the terms of the Peace Agreement. The day before, an important conference had concluded, where the Norwegian Prime Minister as well as representatives of Cuba, the UN and the Colombian government heard reports from FARC members about the problems they are experiencing as a result of the government's non-fulfilment of many of its commitments to them.

It is important to condemn this latest act of perfidy by U.S. imperialism against the Colombian people's efforts to find a political solution to end over 50 years of armed conflict in their country -- a conflict instigated and maintained by the U.S.

It is also important to call on the Colombian government to live up to the commitments it made to the FARC, the war's victims and the Colombian people in the Peace Agreement it signed that was ratified in its Congress and by the country's Constitutional Court. It must fully implement everything it committed to without further delay or concessions to pro-war sectors inside and outside the country attempting to obstruct the agreement's implementation and smash the prospects for peace that it will open up.

Canadians stand with the people of Colombia in their ongoing fight for peace with social justice. Even under difficult conditions, when U.S.-orchestrated media lynchings and judicial frame-ups have become the order of the day to attack the people's forces and their projects, the organized Colombian people will foil the attempts by pro-war forces to smash their growing unity and divide the public opinion that has been created for the building of a lasting peace with social justice and a new Colombia.

Note

1. Since the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the FARC in November 2016, over 50 members of FARC or their relatives and some 200 other social and political activists have been assassinated. Six hundred FARC members and several hundred other political prisoners who were supposed to be released more than a year ago under the Amnesty Law remain imprisoned. FARC members report that land and other resources promised to former guerrilla fighters and communities affected by the war to set up agricultural and other productive projects so they can become economically self-sufficient have not been provided; few serious training programs are being delivered as promised; there is a lack of adequate housing, basic sanitation and health services as well as food supplies in areas leased on a temporary basis for FARC members to stay with their families to receive training and develop projects that will allow for them to sustain themselves financially; security guarantees are lacking even as FARC members, who have long since turned over all their weapons, are killed with impunity by known or suspected paramilitary groups while state officials deny the existence of a systematic campaign against their lives and those of other social leaders and take no action to stop it.

Communiqué on Arrest of Jesús Santrich

- National Political Council, People's Alternative Revolutionary Force -

1. With the arrest of our comrade Jesús Santrich, the peace process is at its most critical point and threatens to become a true failure. We must now add to the clear breaches by the State a new situation, one that we had considered as a possibility ever since Congress, because of the perverse actions of the Prosecutor General, started to dismantle the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP).

2. Santrich's detention is part of a plan orchestrated by the Government of the United States and supported by the Colombian Prosecutor's Office, whose latest declarations were arranged during the recent visit to the USA of the director of this accusing body. This plan threatens to extend to all the former command structure of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP), with the aim of decapitating the political leadership of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force and burying the Colombian people's desire for peace. While this is a humiliating subordination of the Colombian justice system, it is also clear that we are facing another hoax of the corrupt U.S. justice system, just like the trials against Simón Trinidad. They intend to extradite and try Santrich for an alleged attempt to commit a drug-related crime.



3. Faced with the evidence that the transnational corporate cocaine business, because of its very nature, could not disappear with the Peace Agreement, since the FARC-EP was not the cause of it, and that it has not only continued but acquired renewed impetus, it was necessary to find a pretext that justified the new version of the failed "war on drugs." This was none other than our alleged continuation of criminal activities, so as to further impede our right to political participation, including representation in Congress.

4. This sends a terrible message of non-compliance to the ex-guerrilla fighters who are now in the Territorial Areas for Training and Reincorporation, with whom we had a successful meeting this past weekend, during which the unwavering will to build peace was reaffirmed in spite of so much adversity. We invite all of them to remain calm, not to respond to the provocation and not allow the honour and dignity of the FARC to be further sullied. It is indisputable that the governments of the U.S. and Colombia are trying to force the collapse of the peace process to justify the continuation of violence.

5. In this difficult moment in which a summary media conviction is being carried out by the majority of the political leadership and the Presidency of the Republic itself, we call for the solidarity of all sectors of Colombian society that have supported the agreements not to cease in the effort to prevent the peace process from being taken to the abyss. We urge the Presidency of the JEP to exercise its autonomy to carry out the procedures indicated in transitory Article 19 of *Legislative Act 01 of 2017*, and the President of the Republic to comply with the agreement and his pledge, which he recently reaffirmed; we request an emergency meeting.

6. To the guarantor countries, Cuba and Norway, to the Second Mission of the United Nations, to the European Union and in general to the entire international community, we ask for their accompaniment and contributions to ensure that the procedures of the JEP are being applied with rigour; we also request an urgent meeting.

7. To Jesús Santrich, we send all our solidarity. We know he has a will of steel. We express our support for the hunger strike he initiated and his call to be accompanied by the prisoners of war who are still in the prisons of the regime. Santrich cannot be the trophy to be delivered to Trump during his visit to Colombia.

***We Have Fulfilled Our Commitments and We Will Continue to Do So!
Freedom for Jesús Santrich Now! We Are All Santrich!***

(April 9, 2018. Edited for style and clarity by TML.)

Fighting for Democracy in Brazil

The Democratic Route Closes

- Atilio A. Borón -

The decision of the Federal Supreme Court rejecting the writ of *habeas corpus* presented by the lawyers for former President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva shuts him out of the presidential race and ends with him being thrown into jail, as Judge Sergio Mora ordered yesterday [April 5].

What in the past required intervention by armed forces is today being carried out by new actors, suitably indoctrinated and trained by various agencies of the United States government with their "best practices" programs.

They select judges, prosecutors, legislators and journalists and offer them specialized courses on the subject of their interests. One such judge is Sergio Moro, who without any trial condemned Lula to nine years and six months in prison, having learned well the lessons he received in the country up north.



One of many actions across Brazil condemning criminalization of former President Luiz Inácio de Silva, April 6, 2018.

This Brazilian is perhaps the most famous of the many Latin American judges and prosecutors who have participated in these "best practices" courses. In his case, he attended the program of instruction for lawyers offered by the Harvard Law School and a workshop on money laundering organized by the U.S. State Department, although there are four U.S. states -- Delaware, Nevada, Wyoming and South Dakota -- where money is laundered openly and shamelessly. Moro has learned that it is "best practice" to condemn a defendant, even if there is no evidence of the crime.

The same thing happened when the gang of villains and crooks who seized the Brazilian Congress and, without any evidence, condemned Dilma Rousseff for corruption and then impeached her in a scandalous process that plunged the legislators of that country into the most foul-smelling sewer in international politics.

But judges and prosecutors are not enough to concretize the plans of the empire. Journalists are also needed to learn and apply the evil arts of systematic lying, misinformation, the rigged fabrication of consensus, to arrange and manipulate public opinion with colourful "post-truths" and to protect the rulers and their political friends and lynch the undesirables through the media.

It is no coincidence that the opinions expressed by the media oligarchies are commonly taken as "evidence" by those judges or prosecutors whose brains were neatly washed in the United States. There is a reason why the ex-president of Ecuador Rafael Correa indicated that the main obstacle that interfered with all his government plans was the mass media, controlled at will by the financial oligarchy and its allies.

In the case of Argentina, the defence of rulers and their political friends is impressive. For example, the issue of the Panama Papers has completely disappeared, as has the Iron Mountain arson, where ten firefighters lost their lives and documents and testimonies of great importance went up in smoke.



In Brazil, the main actor in the condemnation of Lula and the dismissal of Dilma was O Globo Network which, like almost all its cohorts throughout Latin America, has violated the rules of a most noble profession. Instead of journalism, what we have, with some honourable exceptions, are propaganda machines, interested only in promoting certain economic and political interests and covering up the crimes of their allies.

But corrupt judges and journalists are not enough: it is also necessary to have unscrupulous legislators ready to do whatever "if the price is right." These social strata have been trained for decades by the government of the United States in what is the functional substitute for the ominous School of the Americas.

Imperialism has incorporated into its mechanisms of domination the so-called soft coup, which in fact is a strategy for the removal of progressive governments -- including those that are only somewhat resistant to the White House's orders -- which soon provokes a real blood bath.

For those who doubt this, look at what happened in Honduras or what has been happening in Paraguay or in Brazil, where Rio de Janeiro is completely militarized, with victims like Marielle Franco -- a scandalous crime that could not be covered up, as was tried a week later with the murder of Paulo Henrique Dourado, councillor of the overcrowded Rio neighbourhood of Baixada Fluminense.



Picket in Montreal, April 14, 2018, demands justice for Rio de Janeiro councillor Marielle Franco on the one month anniversary of her assassination.

By trampling constitutional precepts, the Superior Federal Court delegitimizes democracy and throws Brazil into the arms of violence. It shows that from now on our peoples will have to devise other strategies for the conquest of power, because the route of democracy seems to end fatally in reactionary revenge with the blessing of the empire. There are not many willing to tolerate this result.

(April 6, 2018. Translated from original Spanish by TML.)

Stern Opposition to U.S. Provocations at Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru

Bombs in Syria and Provocations in Peru: The United States Abandons Diplomacy

- Sergio Alejandro Gómez, Granma -

The bombing ordered by the United States against Syria and the provocations of the OAS in Lima targeting the VIII Summit of the Americas, remotely controlled by Washington, confirm that the

current Republican administration does not have the slightest interest in diplomacy.

As the bombs began to fall on the other side of the world, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) delivered a cynical speech in Lima about the "disease of corruption," without naming specific countries, but notably intended for progressive governments of the region.

The Cuban delegation in attendance at the opening ceremony left the room before the start of Almagro's speech.^[1]

"We were paying attention and listening very seriously to the speech of the president of Peru, Martín Vizcarra," Cuba's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rogelio Sierra, told reporters. "But when it was announced that the Secretary General of the OAS, Luis Almagro, was about to take the floor, we decided to leave the room."

The Deputy Minister explained that on Thursday [April 12] Almagro spoke "very offensively about Cuba and its authorities," which "the Cuban delegation is under no obligation to put up with."

Almagro met Thursday with mercenary groups present in Lima, including the misnamed Latin American Youth Network for Democracy (Redlac), and used that space to ask the countries in the area to increase the "pressure" against Cuba and Venezuela.

"Almagro and the discredited OAS have no moral or any other authority to pass judgment on countries in the region or Cuba," said Sierra.

The Cuban diplomat specified that the walkout only applies to the opening ceremony and does not relate to the rest of the proceedings of the Summit.

At noon on Friday, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla arrived in Lima to head the Cuban delegation to the event. The delegation is composed of Rodrigo Malmierca, Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment, and deputy ministers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ana Teresita González and Rogelio Sierra, as well as the Ambassador of Cuba in Peru, Sergio González.

The VIII Summit of the Americas is the least attended since the meetings began in Miami in 1994. Only about twenty Heads of State and Government are at the event.

One of the most notable absences is that of President Donald Trump, whose country founded the hemispheric mechanism as a way to promote free trade in the Americas. Vice President Mike Pence took his place, but was forced to change his schedule in Lima.

Peruvian media reported that Pence retired to his hotel and did not attend the inauguration of the Summit in view of Trump's announcement on Twitter that he was about to attack Syria.

The plenary of the VIII Summit of the Americas, where all the representatives are to intervene, is planned for [Saturday, April 14]. Given recent events, sticking to the script of a meeting supposedly dedicated to the fight against corruption has little credibility.

TML Note

1. The Summit of the Americas brings together the heads of state of the member nations of the Organization of American States (OAS). While Cuba is not an OAS member, having been expelled due to U.S. pressure, it sent representatives to the Seventh Summit in Panama in 2015,

and now this year's Summit in Lima. Cuba has nonetheless made it clear it will never seek membership in the OAS again.

(April 14, 2018)



Resistance Movement in the United States

No Troops on the Border! Fight for the Fraternal Unity of the Peoples

- Voice of Revolution -



President Trump has ordered the Pentagon and Department of Homeland Security to draw up plans to send National Guards and "any military personnel" required to "secure the southern border." The plan is to be submitted within thirty days (May 4) and as Trump put it, his administration "has no choice but to act."

The plan for troops is taking place at the same time as numerous other police measures are being put in place. These include government demands for five years of social media records for people, including students, applying for visas; increased raids and detentions against workers and activists; adding a citizenship question to the census; numerous illegal searches and arrests by Border Patrol, such as on Greyhound buses; forcing immigration judges to meet quotas to qualify for a "satisfactory" performance rating; and a federal lawsuit against California opposing her sanctuary laws. All are indications that the rulers have in place a government of police powers, where rule of law has been eliminated and violence and impunity to use force and impose arbitrary actions are imposed.

The plans for troops and further militarization of the border are also taking place at a time when Trump has made changes to his cabinet and advisors. John Bolton, a notorious warmonger, has been given the position as National Security Advisor, which requires no Senate approval. Mike Pompeo, of the CIA, has been nominated for Secretary of State, which does require Senate approval. He too has promoted war against Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Why then the move toward Mexico? One of the problems the presidency contends with and needs

to solve, as part of preserving the Union, is uniting the massive military bureaucracy. So far Trump has not succeeded on this front, a problem that contributes to heightened conflicts among the rulers. This is evident in the open conflicts expressed among the various military forces as to how to proceed internationally. And it is evident in the need for the police measures against the people outlined above. Bolton, a civilian, is evidently considered someone to unite the bureaucracy. But it appears instead he will be one more block to such unity.

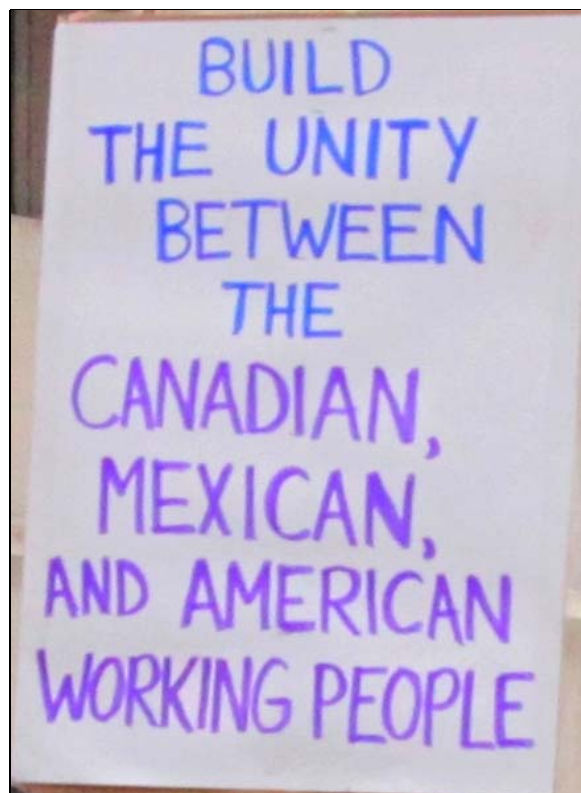


Generally the military now considers China and Russia the greatest threats, as stated in the Pentagon's Defense Strategy and by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph Dunford. But it is also the case that the military is not at all agreed on launching more wars now if they involve China or Russia. Attacking the DPRK or Iran would do just that. So while previously Paul Wolfowitz, a senior Bush advisor, made clear that the war against Iraq was done not to eliminate weapons of mass destruction but to unite the military bureaucracy, today plans for more wars are dividing the bureaucracy.

Trump then, has now turned to targeting Mexico and threatening war there. The U.S. has long considered Mexico and all of the Americas as belonging to the U.S. Considerable efforts have been made to fully integrate Mexico and Canada under U.S. command, including their military forces. Current negotiations over the North American Free Trade Agreement are part of furthering this integration. Clearly, any battle against Mexico is also one the U.S. thinks it can win.

It should be remembered though that for the U.S., there is a relationship between war with Mexico and civil war in the U.S. The imperialist war against Mexico, 1846-48, occurred at a time that civil war was brewing in the U.S. The seizing of Mexican territory, including what are now Texas and California, were also related to preserving the institution of slavery. Texas became a slave state, California did not. It is also the case that war with Mexico did not prevent civil war in the U.S. in 1860.

The issue is that there is an interrelationship between civil war and imperialist war. The U.S. perhaps thinks that targeting Mexico is a means to unite the military bureaucracy and prevent civil war at home. But if history is any indicator, that is not the case. Present conditions are showing that the intensifying conflicts among the rulers are getting closer to the outbreak of open violence. And they show that the people of Mexico, like those in the U.S. are also rejecting the old and demanding change. The presidential elections now underway in Mexico are no doubt another source of fear for the rulers as their candidate is



failing. Troops at the border are a means to secure U.S. interests and repress resistance both sides of the border if manipulation of the Mexican elections in July fails.

The way out of the situation is not more war. It is by forging a new direction of political empowerment of the people. What is needed is an Anti-War Government that brings *All U.S. Troops Home Now* and establishes fraternal relations with the peoples, including uniting the workers of Mexico, Canada and the U.S. What is needed is a political process that ensures such a government can be achieved.

The rulers clearly have no solutions and indeed daily show themselves to be unfit to rule. Supporting the growing resistance by defending the rights of all abroad and at home is needed. Now is the time to organize for political empowerment of the people, for Anti-War governments that outlaw aggressive wars and fight for the fraternal unity of the peoples.

Voice of Revolution is a publication of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization.

(April 2018)



Federal Government to Demand Social Media Information for Visas

On March 30 the State Department announced plans to include extra questions about social-media use on visa applications. It wants applicants for both immigrant and non-immigrant visas to submit their social-media handles from the previous five years, according to notices filed by the agency in the Federal Register. Along with the handles, the State Department is also asking for a five-year history of email addresses, telephone numbers, and international trips. The changes still have to be approved by the Office of Management and Budget after a 60-day public comment period, but there is little doubt they will be enforced.

The U.S. has already been requesting social-media information from people the government suspected to represent a "national security threat." That policy targeted about 65,000 people. The new measures would cover nearly 15 million people. There is no information as to what criteria will be used to deny a visa based on social media content. As with similar measures, such as the travel ban blocking people from countries like Syria and Yemen, where the U.S. is at war, and other countries with large numbers of Muslims, the decisions will be arbitrary.

President Trump and his cabinet have been using executive orders and changes to regulations as a means to criminalize immigrants and non-immigrants, like students and workers seeking visas. The actions do not require legislation by Congress and can simply be imposed. The purpose is both to criminalize those applying for visas while also reducing the number of visas issued. It also serves to make it normal for the government to utilize social media as a weapon against any it considers a "threat." The measures are reflective of the current government of police powers, where arbitrary actions and the impunity to enforce them serve to eliminate rule of law.



70th Anniversary of Jeju Massacre Commemorated in Korea

Remembering the April 3 Jeju Uprising

- Zoom in Korea -



Photo: The Hankyoreh | Heo Ho-joon, Jeju correspondent

On April 7, organizations seeking justice for the April 3 Jeju Uprising and Massacre in 1948 held a press conference in front of the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. The Association for the Bereaved Families of the April 3 Victims, the Memorial Committee for the 70th Anniversary of the Jeju April 3 Uprising and Massacre, and the Pan-National Committee for the 70th Anniversary of Jeju April 3 organized the joint press conference to call on the U.S. to issue an official apology for the role of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) in the state repression and genocide that occurred over a seven-year period from 1947 to 1954. Two hundred people including the families of victims, Jeju residents, and peace activists also demanded a full investigation of the U.S. military to uncover the truth on U.S. involvement in the massacre.

They attempted to deliver a letter containing their demands to the U.S. Embassy but were turned away by the police guarding the building. They subsequently staged a sit-down protest in front of the building to demand the U.S. accept their letter.



Tuesday, April 3, 2018 marked the 70th anniversary of the April 3 Jeju Uprising and Massacre. In April 1948, guerrilla fighters in the southern island of Jeju waged an armed struggle against the U.S.-backed Korean police and right-wing paramilitary groups. More than 30,000 Jeju residents -- 10 per cent of the island's population at the time -- died at the hands of government forces and right-wing paramilitary groups. At the time, the U.S. military occupied the southern half of the Korean Peninsula and controlled all police, military and government forces in the south.



Banner reads: "Petition to demand U.S. and UN take responsibility for April 3."

Seventy years later, the families of the fallen victims, the people of Jeju, and activists for peace are still seeking justice and demanding the U.S. acknowledge, apologize and take responsibility.

Historical Background

The root of the April 3 Jeju Uprising can be traced back to Korea's liberation from Japanese colonialism. After decades of struggle and resistance, the Korean people liberated themselves from Japanese colonial rule in August of 1945 -- only to be occupied again by foreign forces. The United States took control of the southern half. Set on permanently dividing the Korean Peninsula, it decided to hold a separate election in the southern half to install its own puppet, Syngman Rhee, as president.

In the name of "democracy," the U.S. decided to install a puppet dictator through whom it could grow its influence in the region. Not all people, however, approved of the U.S. intervention. Those who opposed protested, carrying on the spirit of the liberation movement against colonial Japan. They challenged the U.S. plan to force the separate election in May of 1948.

March 1, 1947

On the anniversary of the March 1 Movement to resist Japanese colonialism, residents of Jeju Island mobilized a rally to denounce the U.S.-planned election. In an attempt to control the dissidence, the police force fired indiscriminately into the crowd and killed six civilians, including a young child, a mother and her baby.

In response to the violence enacted by the U.S. military-controlled government, the Jeju Chapter of the South Korea Labor Party (SKLP) staged armed protests, burning down polling centers and attacking police stations. Jeju residents also staged general strikes targeting both private and state-owned companies. Over the next year, the U.S. military ordered the arrests of over 2,500 Jeju residents suspected of being communists.



U.S. Anti-Communism and Right-Wing Extremism

The U.S. justified the suppression of dissidents in Jeju by framing it as a part of the "battle between democracy and communism." It also enlisted the help of a violent, right-wing Korean paramilitary group called the Northwest Youth League. U.S. military advisers provided training and logistical support for the suppression of rebellions.

In late 1947, at the advice of American Counter-Intelligence corps, anyone identified as leftist or sympathizing with communism was targeted as "terrorist" by the governor of Jeju Island and the Northwest Youth League. One unnamed former U.S. military adviser was quoted as saying, "My duty was to suppress the rebellion and wipe out the communists. We conducted several mop-up operations across Jeju Island."

April 3, 1948 and Beyond



The struggle of Jeju residents culminated in a mass rebellion on April 3, 1948. Guerrilla fighters of SKLP led the uprising against the police and right-wing paramilitary forces. They attacked police stations and burned down polling centres to prevent the election and denounce the

U.S.-controlled government of Syngman Rhee. The SKLP Women's League led residents into the mountains to keep them from being physically threatened by government forces to vote in the election.

In the early hours of April 3, three hundred and fifty guerrilla fighters attacked 12 out of the 24 police stations on Jeju Island. In the weeks leading up to the May 10 election, the guerrillas dismantled election offices and disrupted all communication about the election by cutting telephone lines and blocking access to roads and bridges. Due to their resilient efforts, the election result in Jeju was rendered null and void. Months later in July of 1948, however, Syngman Rhee was installed as the president of south Korea.

In response to the guerrilla opposition, the U.S. officially declared Jeju as a "red island" and ordered all residents identified as associated with communists to be hunted down. This order was referred to as "the red hunt." The struggle against the so-called red hunt was not a one-day ordeal. It lasted seven years, during which the police and right-wing paramilitary forces claimed tens of thousands of lives.

On November 17, just four months after taking office, Rhee declared martial law on Jeju Island. He then ordered the south Korean military to enact its "scorched earth" strategy against the guerrilla fighters still resisting the authority of the newly-formed south Korean government. The Rhee government deployed the martial law army and made a proclamation to the Jeju residents that anyone caught within the Chungsangan area would be identified as a "rioter" and killed immediately. In a five-month period, 95 per cent of the Chungsangan village was burned down, and the villagers who were able to survive and escape were forced to take refuge in the mountains.

The U.S. used anti-communist propaganda to justify its mass repression and genocide on Jeju Island. Its media conjured up baseless stories about Soviet influence behind the Korean uprising against U.S. military presence. In January 1949, the *New York Times* published an article claiming that Soviet submarines were near Jeju Island to give aid to the so-called leftist rebellion. On April 9, 1949, U.S. Ambassador to south Korea John Muccio claimed Soviets infiltrated Jeju to wage "terrorist attacks." There was no conclusive evidence, however, to back up such claims.

Breaking Fifty Years of Silence

For decades, the historical record of the Jeju Uprising and Massacre was buried deep along with stories of the thousands of people killed at the hands of the U.S.-backed right-wing south Korean police. It was more than 50 years later when south Korea passed a special law to mandate the government to investigate the truth behind April 3. In 2003, former President Roh Moo-hyun issued an official apology to the people of Jeju: "Due to wrongful decisions of the government, many innocent people of Jeju suffered many casualties and destruction of their homes."

The apology, however, has yet to be followed up with any substantive action that meets the demands of the families and supporters of the fallen victims. Organizations like the Association for the Bereaved Families of the April 3 Victims, the Pan-National Committee for the 70th Anniversary of Jeju April 3 Uprising and Massacre, and the Jeju Council have been at the forefront demanding justice and proper reparations from the parties responsible for the massacre. In October 2017, they launched a petition campaign to gather 100,000 signatures to call on the U.S. to take responsibility for its role in the violent military repression against the people of Jeju.



According to *Hankyoreh*, the Pan-Korean Committee on the 70th Anniversary of the Jeju April 3 Uprising and Massacre presented ten demands:

1. A government investigation to uncover the truth behind the uprising and subsequent U.S.-backed crackdown;
2. Institutionalization of reparations for victims, surviving families and communities;
3. Passage of a law to uncover the truth behind people imprisoned through illegal trials and restore their honour;
4. Preservation and maintenance of historical sites;
5. Creation of a permanent system for collecting reports on victims and surviving families;
6. Excavation of the remains of the missing;
7. Creation of an institution to help survivors and their families to heal from trauma related to the massacre;
8. Passage of a law to prevent defamation and misrepresentation of the uprising;
9. Investigation of U.S. responsibility; and
10. Officially designating an appropriate name for the uprising.

(Edited slightly for style by TML. Photos: Hankyoreh, Zoom in Korea)



75th Anniversary of Heroic Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

Defiance and Organized Resistance Against Nazism During the Darkest Hour



Painting of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, by unknown artist.

During World War II, resistance against the Nazis was organized in many ghettos across eastern Europe as the people armed themselves with smuggled and homemade weapons and fought to the death for freedom. Reports indicate that between 1941 and 1943, underground resistance movements were formed by about 100 Jewish groups, with the most famous attempt by Jews to resist the Nazis in armed fighting being the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. This uprising took place from April 19 to May 16, 1943, when residents of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw in Nazi-occupied Poland staged an armed revolt against deportations to extermination camps.

The Nazis established ghettos in cities throughout Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. The Warsaw ghetto was the largest in Poland, established shortly after the Germans invaded in September 1939. More than 400,000 Jews in Warsaw, the capital of Poland, were confined to an area of the city that was little more than 2.5 square kilometres. In November 1940, this ghetto was enclosed by a wall that was more than three metres high, topped with barbed wire, and closely guarded to prevent movement between the ghetto and the rest of Warsaw. The Nazis controlled the amount of food that was brought into the ghetto, and disease and starvation killed thousands each month.

During the Nazi occupation of Poland, more than 250,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto alone were deported or killed.

In July 1942, Heinrich Himmler, head of the Nazi paramilitary corps known as the Schutzstaffel (SS), ordered that Jews be "resettled" to extermination camps. The Jews were told they were being transported to work camps; however, word soon reached the ghetto that deportation to the camps meant death. Two months later, some 265,000 Jews had been deported from the Warsaw ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp, while more than 20,000 others were sent to a forced-

labour camp or killed during the deportation process.

An estimated 55,000 to 60,000 Jews remained in the Warsaw ghetto. When reports of mass murder in the Treblinka killing centre leaked back to them, a surviving group of mostly young people formed an organization known in Polish as the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (ZOB), which means Jewish Fighting Organization. The ZOB issued a proclamation calling for the Jewish people to resist going to the railroad cars. On January 18, 1943, when the Nazis entered the ghetto to prepare a group for transfer to a camp, with a small number of weapons smuggled in by the anti-Nazi Polish Resistance, a ZOB unit ambushed them. After a few days, the troops retreated and the Nazis suspended deportations from the Warsaw ghetto for the next few months. This small victory inspired the ghetto fighters to prepare for future resistance. The ZOB expanded to incorporate members of underground political organizations. The Polish resistance forces provided training, armaments and explosives.

Mordecai Anielewicz, 23 years old, was appointed commander. The fighting organization was unified, strategies were planned, underground bunkers and tunnels were built, and roof-top passages were constructed. The Jews of the Warsaw ghetto prepared to fight to the death.



A commemorative memorial dedicated after the war which stands upon the remains of the bunker at 18 Miła Street in the Warsaw Ghetto.

On April 19, 1943, Himmler sent in SS forces under the command of SS General Juergen Stroop to continue the deportations. The ghetto population, however, did not report for deportations. Instead, the ghetto fighting organizations had barricaded themselves inside buildings and bunkers, ready to resist the Germans while the rest of the population, targeted deportees, refused to present themselves for deportation. Seven hundred and fifty fighters, far outnumbered in terms of manpower and weapons, fought the heavily armed and well-trained Nazis. After three days, German forces began burning the ghetto, building by building, to force Jews out of hiding. Resistance continued as the Germans, with their collaborators, tanks and heavy artillery, reduced the ghetto to rubble, block by block, destroying the bunkers where many residents had hidden. Not until May 16 was the revolt crushed and the ghetto brought firmly under Nazi control. On that day, as an ultimate act of revenge, the Germans blew up Warsaw's Great Synagogue.

General Stroop reported after the destruction of the ghetto that 56,065 Jews had been captured; of those, 7,000 were deported to the Treblinka killing centre, and the remainder sent to forced-labour camps and the Majdanek camp. It is believed that the Germans lost several hundred men in the uprising. Some of the resistance fighters succeed in escaping from the ghetto and joined partisan groups in the forests around Warsaw.



The Great Synagogue on Tlomackie Street in Warsaw, built between 1872 and 1878, was destroyed by the Nazis on May 16, 1943.

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising inspired revolts in extermination camps and ghettos throughout Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. On August 2, 1943, some 1,000 Jewish prisoners at Treblinka seized weapons from the camp's armoury and staged a revolt. Even though many were recaptured and executed, several hundred inmates escaped.



Group portrait of members of the Kalinin Detachment (part of Tuvia Bielski's 1,200-person Jewish partisan group) on guard duty at an airstrip in the Naliboki forest in Poland.

Yitzhak Zuckerman, one of the leaders of the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto, later said of its significance, "I don't think there's any real need to analyze the Uprising in military terms. This was a war of less than a thousand people against a mighty army and no one doubted how it was likely to turn out. This isn't a subject for study in a military school. Not the weapons, not the operations, not the tactics. If there's a school to study the human spirit, there it should be a major subject. The really important things were inherent in the force shown by Jewish youth, after years of degradation, to rise up against their destroyers, and determine what death they would choose: Treblinka or Uprising. I don't know if there's a standard to measure that."^[1]

Note

1. Barbara Harshav, ed., trans., *A Surplus of Memory: Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), p. xiii.

(Photos: Yad Vashem Archive, Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation)

Zog Nit Keynmol, Yiddish Song of the Jewish Partisan Movement



Jewish Partisan unit near Krasnik, Poland, circa 1943.

Hirsh Glick, a young poet and partisan, inmate of the Vilnius Ghetto, composed this song in 1943, inspired by news of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. It was written to the music of "Those Aren't Clouds but Thunderclouds" by Soviet composers Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass. It became an iconic song of the resistance movement.

To view a video of the song sung by Paul Robeson at the 1949 Moscow Concert (live) in Yiddish and historical pictures of the burning of the Ghetto by the Germans, [click here](#).

Zog Nit Keynmol

Never say that you are walking the final road,
Though leaden skies obscure blue days;
The hour we have been longing for will still come,
Our steps will drum -- we are here!

From green palm-land to distant land of snow,
We arrive with our pain, with our sorrow,
And where a spurt of our blood has fallen,
There will sprout our strength, our courage.

The morning sun will tinge our today with gold,
And yesterday will vanish with the enemy,
But if the sun and the dawn are delayed --
Like a watchword this song will go from generation to generation.

This song is written with blood and not with lead,
It's not a song about a bird that is free,
A people, between falling walls,
Sang this song with pistols in their hands.

So never say that you are walking the final road
Though leaden skies obscure blue days.
The hour we have been longing for will still come --
Our steps will drum -- we are here!



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