

Stand Against Genocide and Imperialism, from Palestine to Ukraine

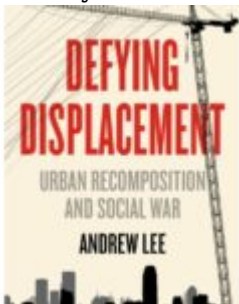
February 20, 2024



Ukraine and Palestine are both cases of imperialism

Gentrification and Social War

February 20, 2024



Andrew talks through the organizing reality of confronting housing as both a commodity and a human necessity.

Cornel West for President? - Part 7 - Ron Daniels for President- 1992

February 20, 2024



Ron Daniels decided to run for president in 1992 after his experience as national director of the Rainbow Coalition during Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign.

“Tensions are building in Ukrainian society as a result of neoliberal policies imposed by the government”

February 20, 2024



An editor of the leftwing Ukrainian journal Commons discusses the dual enemies of Russian aggression and Ukrainian neoliberalism

The New U.S. Labor Movement

February 20, 2024



The labor movement in the United States is passing through a transition from the stagnation of the

period from 1980-2010 to a new period of dynamic change in industrial decentralization, new technologies, work, organization, union activism, and the enormous and enveloping issue of climate chan

We Need Creative Measures Against the Genocidaires

February 20, 2024



Use all kinds of peaceful creative measures to embarrass, shame, inconvenience and bother the mass killers.

Gaza: A Ghastly Window into the Crisis of Global Capitalism

February 20, 2024



Gaza is a real-time alarm bell that genocide may become a political tool in the decades to come for resolving capital's intractable contradiction between surplus capital and surplus humanity.

Historic Ruling by the International Court of Justice

February 20, 2024



The ruling against Israel at the International Court of Justice today is historic, notwithstanding that it fudged South Africa's request for a provisional order for a ceasefire.

Ecuador's reactionary war

February 20, 2024



Ecuador has begun to experience a pattern of violence similar to that of Colombia and Mexico.

Can Xi Jinping's "Chinese Model" Supplant Capitalist Democracies and Why Should Western Socialists Care? - Part 4

February 20, 2024



Given China's drivers, it's difficult to imagine how this trend could be halted or reversed short of the collapse or overthrow of the CCP. That's coming but of course it's impossible to predict when.

Yes, it's a Genocide

February 20, 2024



The ongoing suffering, displacement, and destruction in Gaza invoke a sense of urgency in labeling the situation for what it is, and for prompt investigation and adjudication, rather than waiting for a tragic culmination.

Sudan: revolution and counter-revolution

February 20, 2024

Genocide strikes Darfur, again

9,000 people have died and over 5.6 million have been displaced since the latest escalation in Sudan started on April 15th 2023. The fighting between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) continues for seven months now. Today's war has mainly been fought in the capital Khartoum, as well as in the West of Sudan and some major cities in the South.

Since the beginning of November dramatic and very brutal attacks by the RSF and its allies have been taking place against the civilian population, especially the Masalit, in Ardamata in Western Darfur State. It is not the first time that the people of West Sudan are subjected to massacres, to pillage, and to rape.

The violence against the Masalit evokes images of the Darfur genocide that commenced in 2003, especially given that the present victims once again belong to the non-Arabic population and that the perpetrators, back then the Janjaweed and today the RSF, share historical and organisational ties.

From Rebel group to Paramilitary

The RSF, officially established in 2013, evolved from West Sudan's so-called Janjaweed militias and became a paramilitary force, which as of today is engaged in fierce fighting for control over the Sudan.

Hemiti, its current commander, expanded its influence and capabilities. The RSF became a key player in Sudan's internal politics, aligning itself with the government of Omar al-Bashir. Its role expanded beyond Sudan's borders, with RSF fighters reportedly involved in conflicts such as the war in Yemen, supported by Saudi Arabia.

The RSF's evolution and integration into the Sudanese military and security apparatus solidified its position as a powerful force, distinct from its origins as the Janjaweed militia. While maintaining its paramilitary nature, the RSF became instrumental in suppressing protests against the Sudanese government, particularly during the 2019 demonstrations that led to the ousting of al-Bashir.

Since the ousting of Omar Al-Bashir, the army and pro-democracy groups have demanded the RSF's integration into the regular armed forces. Adel Abdel Ghafar, a fellow at the Middle East Council, said the RSF "has resisted integration into the army, understanding it would lose its power."

This led to today's brutal civil war, with conflict once again focusing on the West of Sudan, where the RSF is establishing a powerbase, ruthlessly killing men, women, and children.

Unpacking Misconceptions

Despite popular narratives, neither the genocide of 2003 nor today's violence, death, and displacement in the West of Sudan are based on visible racial or religious differences. "All parties involved in the Darfur conflict-whether they are referred to as "Arab" or "African"-are equally indigenous, equally black, and equally Muslim", says Ahmad Sikainga, Professor of History at The Ohio State University.

Darfur is home to diverse ethnic groups, including Arabic-speaking communities like the Rizaiqat and non-Arabic speaking groups such as the Masalit and the Fur. Despite linguistic differences, these groups share common racial and cultural backgrounds. A long history of migration and intermarriage has created ethnic fluidity, with labels like "Arab" often used for occupation rather than ethnicity, as Arabic-speaking groups are mainly pastoralists, while non-Arab groups are mostly sedentary farmers, though these distinctions are often crossed.

The struggle over diminishing resources led to repeated conflicts, which historically were resolved through local customs and practices, including tribal conferences and mediation. The post-independence abolition of native administration policies and political manipulation by Sudanese rulers further escalated tensions. Regional and ethnic rebel movements emerged, and in the 1960s, the Darfur Development Front advocated for economic development and autonomy. These events, including two civil wars that eventually led to the independence of the South, influenced the Darfur crisis. After Omar Al-Bashir's 1993 ascent to power, the dictator was confronted with a wildfire of political conflicts.

In order to secure his power in the West of Sudan and to prevent further autonomy aspirations, Sudan's long-ruling President used the Janjaweed militias to help the army put down a rebellion and

to bolster Arab hegemony in the region.

Exploiting Inequalities

Since gaining independence in 1956, Sudan has grappled with a series of civil wars and political instability, including the North-South conflict resolved in 2005 after two rounds of fighting. Today's civil war is part of this larger pattern of Sudanese crisis, marked by conflicts in various regions, such as the Nuba Mountains, Upper Blue Nile, and the Beja region.

These challenges trace back to deep-seated regional, political, and economic inequalities rooted in Sudan's colonial and post-colonial history, characterized by the hegemony of a small group of Arabic-speaking elites marginalizing non-Arab and non-Muslim groups in the peripheries.

These political elites actively sowed conflicts along linguistic lines in Darfur, where the majority of the population is Muslim but not exclusively Arabic-speaking. Similarly, in the marginalized South, Nuba Mountains, and Red Sea region, where the majority consists of non-Arab and non-Muslim groups, political powers instigated conflicts along these distinctions.

Thus, the genocide in Darfur beginning in 2003 as well as today's violence needs to be understood as a proxy war for power in a country struggling with its colonial legacy. Furthermore, the recruitment campaigns of the RSF, often overlooked, respond to the disenfranchisement of people in the wider region.

The RSF capitalized on social inequalities and thus it is not surprising that as of today we can see that the RSF is not only composed of people native to the West of Sudan, but also young, and disenfranchised people of the wider region.

Can Xi Jinping's "Chinese Model" Supplant Capitalist Democracies and Why Should Western Socialists Care? - Part 3

February 20, 2024



If Xi's Chinese-style modernization has shattered the myth that modern-is-Western, then why is his economy still so dependent on Western science and technology?

Could the U.S. Become Involved in a War Between Venezuela and Guyana?

February 20, 2024



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro shows new map of Venezuela's incorporation Eusebio Province of Guyana.

The United States has taken the first steps in becoming involved in a potential war between Venezuela and Guyana. President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela is claiming the territory of the oil-rich Essequibo region of neighboring Guyana, a claim recently backed by a referendum. Maduro then produced a new Venezuelan map that includes Essequibo as a new state. A 1996 agreement between the two countries gives the United Nations International Court of Justice the power to resolve disputes, but Maduro has rejected its involvement. All of this is seen as a prelude to military action to take over the province and its petroleum wealth.

President Irfaan Ali of Guyana declared, "Essequibo is ours, every square inch of it," and sent troops to reinforce the country's border with Venezuela. Brazil, which is a neighbor of both countries has also sent armed forces to the area. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva expressed his concern about the situation, saying, "We are going to treat it very carefully because what we don't want here in South America is war." St. Vincent and Grenadines president Ralph Gonsalves and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres have persuaded Maduro and Ali to meet to discuss the issue, but Ali says he will not discuss the country's borders and Maduro reiterates his claim to Esequibo.

Why is Maduro claiming Esequibo at this time?

Maduro, a virtual dictator, faces an election in 2024, and it is not clear that he could win a free and

fair election. The country is racked by economic crisis, hampered by U.S. sanctions, and is experiencing mass emigration. Out of a population of 30 million in 2015, 7.7 million Venezuelans have migrated, principally to other South American countries, though almost a quarter of a million to the United States.

In the last election in 2018, Maduro won only after most opposition parties and candidates were declared ineligible, in a process riddled with irregularities, and with relatively few voters going to the polls. In 2019, conservative challenger Juan Guidó claimed to be interim president and was recognized by over 60 countries, including the United States, throwing the country into a years-long crisis, though Guidó failed to take power.

In the coming election, Maduro will face Maria Corina Machado, an economic conservative and member of the opposition party in the Venezuelan National Assembly. She won in the opposition's unofficial primary election, in which, remarkably, 2.4 million people participated. Machado has already been disqualified from holding public office because of her support for U.S. sanctions. The U.S. government says sanctions won't be lifted unless the opposition parties can participate in the elections.

Claiming Esequibo allows Maduro to offer the promise of economic improvement. A war would provide him with a chance to wrap himself in the flag, declare a national emergency, and postpone the elections. But he may find himself in a war not only with Guyana but perhaps also with the United States.

The U.S. Southern Command which oversees Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, is already conducting joint flight operations with the Guyana Defense Forces. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told President Ali that he could count on Washington's support "for Guyana's sovereignty and our robust security and economic cooperation." Maduro has criticized Guyana for involving the United States.

Since the election of the leftist government of President Hugo Chávez in 1999, the United States has opposed Venezuela. In 2006, President George W. Bush imposed sanctions on Venezuela for its failure to cooperate in counter-terrorism and anti-drug efforts. President Barack Obama imposed further sanctions in 2014 because of Venezuelan human rights violations. The Donald Trump administration expanded the sanctions, though President Joseph Biden has subsequently moderated them, permitting the sale of oil. The U.S. recognition of Guidó as interim president was an attempt to overthrow Chavez's successor Maduro.

Already involved in supporting Ukraine and Israel, the Biden administration would no doubt like to avoid another war. Since the discovery of enormous off-shore oil fields in Guyana, American and other foreign petroleum companies, such as Esso Exploration & Production Guyana, a descendant of ExxonMobil and Standard Oil, already have operations in Esequibo, and the oil companies have always played a large role in U.S. foreign policy.

War? Not yet. But the left must be watching, prepared to oppose U.S. involvement.

This article was originally published in Foreign Policy in Focus.

Cornel West for President? - Part 6 - Jesse Jackson for President - 1984 and 1988

February 20, 2024



While many Black voters and others admired and took pride in his achievement, some on the left felt he had ultimately served the Democratic Party establishment.

On Martyrdom

February 20, 2024



The meaning of martyrdom to Palestinians

Obstacles to Palestinian-Israeli Peace

February 20, 2024



Background on the Israel-Palestine crisis

From Chile to Palestine

February 20, 2024



One of the most brutal characteristics of dehumanization is the reduction of the other to something that is not a person, that is less than human, and that does not have the same rights or capacity to experience emotion other than pain.

A Letter from Afghanistan about Palestine & Israel

February 20, 2024





The people of Palestine have suffered from multiple oppressions for many years. Their homeland was occupied. They lost many of their youth. Their intellectuals were exiled or killed. Their children experienced war and explosions. Women experienced the loss of their homeland and their children.

Israel has continued to occupy more and more areas on a daily basis and has turned Gaza into a prison for its inhabitants. The people of Palestine cannot even breathe and live under deplorable conditions. At the same time, Israel and the states that support it have pushed aside progressive movements and organizations among Palestinians. The government of Israel has been able to use propaganda to cover the crimes that it has committed against the Palestinian people with the help of imperialist states.

Wherever there is oppression, there is also struggle. The Palestinian people are tired of the oppression of the state of Israel and the silence of the countries that support it. Hamas has witnessed the desire of the Palestinians to fight back and has exploited the lack of progressive alternatives in order to start its own attacks on Israel.

I condemn war crimes against innocent Palestinians and Israelis. The people of both sides should not be deceived by the propaganda of militarist states in the West and the East. Under these difficult circumstances, they should be by each other's side and not against each other.

The people of Afghanistan have suffered from the hell of religious fundamentalist regimes and occupying powers. We can understand the pain of the Palestinian people and are with them. However, many of us make a distinction between Hamas and the resistance and struggle of the Palestinian people.

The people of Afghanistan have experienced resistance against Russian and U.S. imperialism. They have also experienced many bloody and treacherous years of religious fascism. If a freedom-seeking resistance movement which opposes occupation, does not work toward democracy and secularism, the religious fundamentalist forces will easily hijack the results of the popular struggle. They will make life a living hell of terrorism for all people and especially women. Regional imperialist and reactionary countries will also try to sow the seeds of terrorism and religious fundamentalism in a newly emerging country and will support religious fundamentalist forces by providing them with opportunities for profit making.

At the same time, U.S. imperialism and the murderous government of Israel are trying to reduce the resistance of the Palestinian people to Hamas. Since Hamas is a terrorist organization, Israel and the U.S. argue that they have the right to fight against terrorism. In truth however, Hamas is only part of the resistance of the Palestinian people and not its majority. By equating the Palestinian struggle with Hamas, Israel continues to deceive people around the world and justifies its murders in the name of self-defense.

We need to emphasize that a reactionary opposition cannot be liberating. The oppressed people of Palestine need to form a democratic opposition in the midst of this war. If the Palestinian people themselves do not take up the leadership of the resistance against the occupation, and if the reactionary forces of Hamas are the leaders of the resistance, they will poison a future Palestine with religious fascism.

The conscious, educated and progressive people of Palestine can take up the leadership of a liberatory resistance. And if a people-centered and secular government comes to power in Israel, perhaps both sides could live peacefully alongside each other while respecting each country's territorial integrity.

Afghanistan

November 30, 2023

Can Xi Jinping's "Chinese Model" Supplant Capitalist Democracies and Why Should Western Socialists Care? - Part 2

February 20, 2024



In fact, China's "miracle" was neither an "unprecedented feat" nor as rapid as the modernizations of its own East Asian neighbors, let alone characterized by "long-term social stability."

The Meaning of "Moderate Bolshevism": A Book Review Essay

February 20, 2024



By itself, revolutionary consciousness cannot create wealth and material well-being for most of the population except in the mind of hyper voluntarists such as Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong and Ernesto (Che) Guevara.