

Editorial

Winnipeggers Oppose Honourary Degree for War Criminal Madeleine Albright

On October 16, Lloyd Axworthy, the Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg, bestowed an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. This act, which Axworthy managed to keep secret until just days before the ceremony, was protested by many students and faculty members from both the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba, who objected to bestowing an honorary degree on a known war criminal.

During the past few years, Axworthy has made a name for himself as a vocal opponent of the policies of U.S. President George W. Bush. However, by honouring Madeleine Albright he is demonstrating that his opposition to Bush is not opposition to the crimes of U.S. imperialism, but merely a matter of the spin that is put on those crimes. Axworthy is one of those supporters of the U.S. Democratic Party who attempts to portray the Democrats in general,

and the administration of Bill Clinton in particular, as being enlightened and humanitarian in their foreign policy.

Even during her acceptance speech Albright unintentionally refuted Axworthy's claims. She stated that, despite her objections to the Bush invasion of Iraq, she believes that Canada should actively participate in the efforts of the Bush regime to bring "democracy" and "reconstruction" to Iraq. She also agreed with Axworthy that the Bush administration's ignoring of the NAFTA dispute mechanism was deplorable, despite the fact that the current trade war was actually initiated by the Clinton administration, which similarly ignored every decision of the NAFTA dispute resolution panel which went against the U.S. government. Honouring such a person does a disservice to the students and alumni of the University of Winnipeg and to the Canadian people as a whole.

Israel Continues Land Grab in West Bank

Israel has now seized more land in the West Bank than it gave up with the removal of all Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip.

Reports in the Israeli press indicate that extensions to the security wall that Israel is building in the West Bank were quickly erected this past August, when the world's media attention was focused on the withdrawal from Gaza. Three separate extensions to the wall were built on the northern edge of Jerusalem, and construction on them is rapidly approaching completion. Right now, it is still possible for Palestinians who live in the villages adjacent to the north and east of Jerusalem to enter Jerusalem. However, once these sections of

the wall are complete, thousands of Palestinians will have been completely cut off from their families, jobs and businesses in East Jerusalem.

Israeli commentators have pointed out that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's government is attempting to negate any Palestinian claim to Jerusalem through a combined approach of 'Judeaization' – moving Jewish settlers into East Jerusalem to reduce the Palestinian percentage of the population – and simply making it impossible for a future Palestinian government to have any way of physically accessing East Jerusalem, which the Palestinians have always said will be the capital of an independent Palestinian

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For Your Information

A Brief History of Madeleine Albright's Crimes

During Bill Clinton's first term of office as President of the United States, Madeleine Albright was the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and the U.S. representative on the UN Security Council. An independent report commissioned by the Organization of African Unity states that in 1994 the U.S., France, Belgium and the Catholic and Anglican churches used their influence within the UN to actively block any use of peacekeeping forces to prevent the genocide in Rwanda. Furthermore, the report specifically accuses Albright of using her position on the Security Council to block any form of military rescue mission. The Clinton administration then hypocritically proceeded to blame the United Nations for the Rwandan disaster.

As U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Albright was also responsible for defending and aggressively pursuing sanctions against Iraq. According to figures released by the UN and various aid organizations, by the mid-1990s those sanctions were directly responsible for the deaths of at least 500,000 Iraqis, most of them children. When asked by reporter Leslie Stahl in a 1996 interview if this was a price worth paying, Albright replied that "the price is worth it." As a result of the outcry over her remarks, the Clinton administration changed its tactics and began blaming Saddam Hussein for those deaths because he was supposedly diverting humanitarian aid into building up his military. Whatever crimes Saddam Hussein may have committed against the Iraqi people, the fact remains that almost all shipments of medical supplies to Iraq were blocked by the U.S. under the hoax that they could be used to produce weapons of mass destruction. Meanwhile, under the pretext of defending the illegal "no-fly zone" imposed by the U.S. and Britain without the consent of the UN, U.S. and British bombers destroyed Iraqi pharmaceutical factories, hospitals and water treatment plants.

During the early years of the first Clinton administration, Madeleine Albright also played a key role in shaping U.S. policy towards the Balkans. U.S. imperialism had just emerged as the world's sole military superpower and was anxious to use that

position to stop its economic downslide and block the emergence of any challengers to its imperial rule. German imperialism was eager to use its influence over Croatia to consolidate its control over the Danube transportation route and access to Middle Eastern oil. For its part, the U.S. was desperate to block the German expansion southward, but it had no traditional allies in the Balkans. Following Albright's advice, the Clinton administration championed the Bosnian cause and interfered in the negotiations between the Bosnians, Croatians and Serbs in such a way as to block any peaceful settlement to the dispute over Bosnia's secession from Yugoslavia. At the same time, U.S. emissaries were assuring Yugoslavia's Slobodan Milosevic that the U.S. considered Bosnia to be an internal affair of Yugoslavia, encouraging the Serbs to pursue an expansionist policy towards Bosnia. Of course, when civil war inevitably broke out, the U.S. promptly declared its "humanitarian duty" to protect the Bosnians from the Serbs.

Albright was U.S. Secretary of State during Clinton's second term and oversaw the bombing of a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan which was producing crucial vaccines for the Sudanese people. Once again the excuse given by the Clinton administration was that the facility was being used to produce weapons of mass destruction, although subsequent investigations proved these claims to be totally false. In fact, the U.S. pharmaceutical giants have had a long-standing dispute with African pharmaceutical manufacturers because they have been providing cheap vaccines and medicines to the African people, cutting into the profits of the U.S. drug cartels. It has become clear that this act by Clinton and Albright had nothing to do with combating terrorism or the production of "weapons of mass destruction" and everything to do with eliminating competition to the U.S. pharmaceutical monopolies.

During Albright's final years as Clinton's Secretary of State she once again interfered in the Balkans. The

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Israel Moves to Set Up Apartheid Justice System in Gaza

The Israeli parliament is currently considering a bill which, if enacted, will enable Israeli police and security forces to treat Palestinians living in Gaza differently before the law than Israelis. The bill, entitled the *Criminal Law Procedures Bill (Powers of Implementation – Special Directives for Investigating Security Violations Perpetrated by Non-Citizens)*, was approved by the Ministerial Committee for Legal Affairs on October 9 and will soon be before members of the Israeli Knesset for debate. The bill proposes the creation of two separate procedures for investigation, interrogation and detention – one for Israelis and one for “non-Israelis” – that is Palestinians.

The bill was recommended by Israel’s General Security Services (GSS) following the disengagement from the Gaza Strip. Once the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) pulled out of Gaza, military rule, under which IDF soldiers were able to disregard all requirements of Israeli and international law, was automatically cancelled. The GSS moved quickly to fill this gap by recommending the new bill, under which “non-Israeli” nationals suspected of “security offences” could be held and investigated for 96 hours without being brought before a judge. Israeli criminal law currently requires any suspect being investigated to be brought before a judge within 48 hours. The legislation would not apply to Palestinians living in the West Bank because they are still under military rule.

The bill also proposes extending detention times for Palestinians to 20 days, up from the 15 days for which any Israeli can be held. Under the new bill a non-Israeli being detained by GSS could also have his or her detention extended by the country’s Attorney General without appearing before a court, something that could not happen to an Israeli.

The bill would also empower a single Justice of the Supreme Court to prevent a detained Palestinian from meeting with an attorney for 50 days, while Israelis can only be denied access to legal counsel for a maximum of 21 days and even then, any Israeli can appeal such a denial, a right denied to Palestinians under this bill.

Adalah, the Legal Centre for Israeli Arab Minority

Rights, has written to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and other senior cabinet ministers, demanding the cancellation of the bill. In the letter, Adalah attorney Abeer Baker points out that the bill aims to re-legislate *de facto* military rule in the form of Israeli laws applicable only to Palestinians, something which gravely violates the rights of detained Palestinians to equality in legal procedures and to receive a fair trial. He also notes that the bill as a whole is unconstitutional and violates international human rights law, which stipulates that detainees be treated in accordance with the principle of equality and civilian laws regardless of their national belonging or nationality.

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state.

Israel has also used the past few months to rapidly expand the wall into other parts of the West Bank. In total, the West Bank wall is now over 600 km long and, when completed, will result in absorption of over one third of the West Bank into Israel. The Israeli government is widely expected to proclaim the wall is Israel’s new border, once its construction is complete.

In addition, at a meeting of the Likud Party and its allies in September, Sharon is reported to have said it was important to expand the settlements without drawing the world’s attention. The Israeli newspaper Ha’aretz quoted him as saying: “There’s no need to talk. We need to build, and we’re building without talking.”

According to media reports, new building of Jewish settlements during the first quarter of 2005 was up by 83 percent compared to the same period in 2004. About 4,000 homes are currently under construction in the West Bank settlements, with thousands more homes approved for construction in the areas seized by Israel since August. The population in the West Bank settlements has also increased by roughly 14,000 so far in 2005 – compared with the 8,500 settlers who were withdrawn from the Gaza Strip.

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Kosovar Albanians have been struggling for independence from Yugoslavia and reunification with Albania ever since Britain divided the country at the end of the Balkan Wars and gave half of Albania to the newly-established Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This struggle re-emerged after the death of Yugoslav leader Tito when his successors decided to consolidate their power in Serbia by extinguishing Kosovo's autonomous status. The Serb campaign against the Albanians reached a peak in the early 1980s with Yugoslav tanks rolling into Prishtina and the closing of all Albanian-language schools and universities. In the late 1980s Slobodan Milosevic once again played the Kosovo card in order to consolidate his position as leader of the Yugoslavian state. He addressed a Prishtina rally of over one million Serbs (over 90 percent of whom were brought in from Serbia) and pledged to them that Kosovo would never again be granted autonomy, but would remain a Serbian province. Milosevic was swept to power on the resulting wave of Serbian chauvinism and the Kosovar Albanians began an armed struggle for self-determination. Milosevic's speech in Prishtina so alarmed the Croatian and Slovenian sections of the League of Yugoslav Communists that they withdrew from the party, setting in motion the events that led to the eventual secession of Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia from the Yugoslav Federation. It should be noted that during this period the U.S. government refused to condemn the Yugoslav attacks against the national rights of the Kosovar Albanians.

With the fall of socialism in Albania, the U.S. State Department took over *de facto* control of the Albanian government. However, the 1997 armed uprising in Albania forced the U.S. administrators to flee Tirana for a period of time and weakened American control over the Balkans. However, Albright and the Clinton administration saw an opportunity to regain their control by taking over Kosovo. During the late 1990s the armed struggle of the Kosovar Albanians was escalating under the leadership of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Initially the U.S. opposed the KLA as a terrorist organization and the KLA leadership rejected any alliance with U.S. imperialism. However, following their ouster from Albania in 1997 the Americans

changed their position. They began to woo some of the military leaders of the KLA with promises of weapons and training and by 1999 the Americans had, for all intents and purposes, taken over that organization. At the Rambouillet talks in early 1999, the Americans, led by Albright, drafted an agreement that they knew Yugoslavia could not sign since it would mean the end of Yugoslavian sovereignty. Milosevic responded to the collapse of the Rambouillet talks by escalating the Yugoslav military offensive against the KLA. This was the excuse needed by the Americans to intervene. Claiming that the Serbs were committing genocide, the U.S. imperialists, led by Clinton and Albright, declared that it was their "humanitarian duty" to intervene militarily to "protect" the Kosovar Albanians. As a result, NATO forces bombed Yugoslavia for 78 days, eventually forcing the Milosevic regime to concede defeat and agree to the *de facto* secession of Kosovo. The war against Yugoslavia was also used by the Americans to re-establish their military control over Albania. Despite their claims of "humanitarian duty", since establishing their control over Kosovo the U.S. imperialists have shown little regard for the wellbeing of the Kosovar Albanians, abandoning them to the mercies of various criminal gangs and drug lords.

This is the legacy of Madeleine Albright and the Clinton Democrats, whom Lloyd Axworthy would have us believe were a humanitarian and peace-loving lot, to be much preferred to the warmongering Bush regime.

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Editor: Ken Kaltornyk

To contact the Manitoba Branch of CPC(M-L):

Fax: 477-6741

Email: mrc-cpcml@mts.net

Internet: www.modern-communism.ca

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