

Editorial

All Foreign Troops Out of Somalia

In mid-December 15,000 Ethiopian troops, armed, trained and supplied with intelligence by the United States, invaded Somalia. Within two weeks the Ethiopian army had entered Mogadishu and overthrown the *de facto* government – the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). The Transitional Government of Somalia - a non-elected warlord government cobbled together by the U.S. in 2004 and rubber stamped by the UN - has now been installed in Mogadishu. Despite the claims of the Ethiopian government that its intervention has finally brought peace to Somalia, the events of the past week indicate that the country may soon be plunged back into a state of full-scale civil war.

The roots of the current problems in Somalia date back to the Cold War and the attempts by both the

U.S. and the Soviet Union to control the strategic Horn of Africa and, thereby, all shipments through the Red Sea and Suez Canal. Each superpower groomed agents within Ethiopia and Somalia and the allegiances of both governments switched from one superpower to another and back again a number of times. In 1991 the Somali government of Said Barre was overthrown by the United Somali Congress (USC), but the USC soon split into two rival factions led by Mohammed Aidid and Ali Mahdi and civil war erupted. Despite support from the U.S. and various European countries, Mahdi was driven out of most of Somalia and Aidid became the most powerful warlord in the country. Under the guise of “humanitarian concern” the U.S. and its European allies pushed for and got a UN-sanctioned military

See page 3: Somalia

Oppose the UN Security Council Sanctions Against Iran

On December 23, 2006 the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions on Iran. These block the import or export of specific nuclear material and equipment and also freeze the financial assets of specific individuals, institutions and enterprises. The Security Council resolution prohibits any country from supplying, selling or transferring any items to Iran that could contribute to enrichment-related, reprocessing or heavy-water related activities or nuclear weapon delivery systems. It also directs the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to submit a report within 60 days on whether Iran has established full and sustained suspension of all activities mentioned in the resolution.

The resolution goes on to state that the Security Council will review Iran’s actions in light of this IAEA report. It will suspend implementation of these sanctions, if and for so long as Iran has suspended all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, or it will adopt additional punitive measures if Iran has not complied. In addition, the Security Council established a new committee, comprised of all its members, to monitor implementation of the resolution and designate further individuals, institutions or enterprises to which the sanctions should apply. All member states of the United Nations must report to this committee within 60 days on the steps they have taken towards implementing the resolution.

See page 2: Sanctions Against Iran

Sanctions Against Iran...from page 1

This resolution is the culmination of many years of intrigue against Iran led by the United States. The aim of these sanctions, as well as other economic, political and military pressure against Iran, is the complete domination of the Middle East by the Americans. U.S. imperialism vehemently opposes any government or people in the Middle East that resist its domination - whether it is the Palestinian people fighting for self-determination, or the Iranian government pursuing a national and international policy of its own choosing, or the people of Iraq fighting to rid their country of U.S.-British occupation.

The imperialists have created the nuclear issue in Iran as a pretext and diversion. They really do not care what issue is used to justify their attacks on Iran. This is the *modus operandi* of the imperialists in all situations. The entire world is witness to the bare-faced lies that Bush and Blair used to justify their aggression against Iraq. If, in fact, Iran is developing nuclear weapons - and there is actually no evidence that this is the case - why is it that the United States, Britain, France and other nuclear-supplier countries have had many of these economic sanctions in place against Iran since 1979?

Before the 1979 Iranian revolution these countries and their nuclear industries had made massive investments towards developing a nuclear industry in Iran, including uranium-enrichment facilities. After the Iranian revolution they stopped their investments, construction and co-operation with Iran. These actions had nothing to do with preventing the development of nuclear weapons. Rather, they were part of a concerted effort by the imperialists to destabilize Iran and topple the new revolutionary government. In fact, the U.S. sanctions imposed at that time, and renewed by every single American president since, are not limited to nuclear or missile technology; they prohibit any kind of trade between U.S. companies and Iran.

This most recent resolution against Iran is yet another illustration of the domination and control of the UN Security Council by the five permanent members, in particular the U.S. The very powers that are supposed to defend world peace against aggression are the ones that are committing aggression and mobilizing others to do the same. One day the Security Council passes a resolution against a country like Iran which has no nuclear weapons, no

military troops outside of its borders, supports a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East and supports the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The next day it is silent about the U.S.-backed Ethiopian aggression against Somalia and about the U.S. helicopter gunship attack there. The new United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon shamelessly endorsed this U.S. aggression instead of condemning it when he declared on January 11 that he fully understood "the necessity behind this attack".

Fifteen years ago the U.S., with Security Council backing, brought the might of its entire armed forces and those of its allies, like Canada, crashing down on Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait. It did not wait a second to seek a peaceful resolution to the Iraq-Kuwait confrontation. By contrast, today the UN Security Council remains silent about Ethiopia's U.S.-backed invasion of Somalia. Similarly, only a few days before the resolution against Iran the Prime Minister of Israel admitted that Israel has nuclear weapons. While this was not a well-kept secret, the Israelis had never before admitted this. Surely, this should have triggered some kind of censure or response from the UN Security Council, but absolutely nothing was said.

In the meantime, the big powers and their regional allies continue to modernize and augment their nuclear arsenals and all of it goes without comment by the UN Security Council. Tony Blair's British government is currently renewing its Trident nuclear weapon submarine systems contrary to its disarmament obligations under the NPT. On January 8, the *New York Times* reported that the U.S. is planning to spend 100 billion dollars on its nuclear weapons program. It stated that the U.S. is ready to build its first nuclear warhead in 20 years. A new design - the "Reliable Replacement Warhead" - which will replace the existing nuclear warhead design, is to be unveiled to Congress soon by the Nuclear Weapons Council.

Modern Communism denounces the UN Security Council, particularly the five permanent members - the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China - for imposing sanctions on Iran. It also denounces the Canadian government for supporting this resolution. The Canadian working class and people should see through the lies of the American and Canadian governments and oppose the unjust attacks on Iran.

Israel and U.S. Support Civil War In Palestine

Over the past month, sectarian violence in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank has intensified, with over 35 people killed in gun battles between Hamas and Fatah factions. The fighting has been the worst in Gaza. Indeed, the situation has become so volatile that many are predicting that there will be all-out civil war. This would be devastating for the Palestinian people.

In this situation, according to sources in both Fatah and Hamas, talks have now started to create a national unity government which would go some way to dealing with the crisis. However, according to Rafiq Husseini, chief of staff to Fatah president Mahmoud Abbas, the talks will begin this week and will fold unless agreement is reached within two weeks. "After those two weeks we will either come to agreement or not," he said, suggesting that if talks fail the crisis will worsen.

Hamas first proposed the idea of a national unity government shortly after it won the Palestinian elections last year. This suggestion was rejected by Fatah. Over the course of the year, international aid, the main source of revenue for the Palestinian government, has slowed to a trickle. Led by the U.S. and Canada, donors have refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Hamas government, even though it came to power through democratic elections. This has caused intense financial pressure and created a serious humanitarian crisis for the Palestinian people. Within this situation, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas last month called for early elections, a suggestion which infuriated Hamas and led to open battles between the armed wings of each group. Despite this, the Hamas government has not fallen, much to frustration of the Bush administration.

In this situation, the CIA has openly admitted that it is offering money to Palestinians to oppose Hamas and, in December, the U.S. announced that it was providing an additional \$80 million in aid to Abbas to arm and train his personal militia, which numbers in the thousands. Within days of receiving this aid commitment, Abbas declared the Executive Force, an armed wing of Hamas operating in Gaza, an "illegal organization". On January 8, Abbas issued a decree ordering Executive Force be disbanded, something Hamas has so far refused to do.

However, the looming prospect of civil war has made Hamas vulnerable. On January 9, Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh appealed for calm. "We stress the necessity of sparing the Palestinian people any internal confrontations and avoiding using weapons as a medium for dialogue and to focus on dialogue only to solve our differences. The differences exist, they are there, but this does not mean that they should be solved by gunfire," he said. The fighting "will please enemies of the Palestinians, who want to see civil war."

Haniyeh's appeal came around the same time that Mohammed Dahlan, the head of Fatah's armed wing in Gaza gave an interview to an Israeli newspaper and called Hamas supporters "thugs". He told *Ha'aretz* that Hamas has become "a bunch of murderers and thieves who execute Palestinians only because they are Fatah members."

Throughout all of this, the Israeli government has expressed quiet satisfaction. Short of ethnically cleansing all Palestinians from the occupied territories, nothing would please Israel's rulers more than to see the Palestinians embroiled in a bloody civil war that would divert their attention from the occupation.

Somalia...from page 1

intervention in Somalia in 1992. Although billed as a "peacekeeping" mission, the main thrust of the UN intervention was to defeat Aidid's forces and install Mahdi as president. However, the U.S. incurred heavy losses in battles against Aidid's forces and withdrew from Somalia in 1993, with the UN following suit shortly after.

Following the departure of the American, UN and African Union troops, Somalia was divided up among several warlords and a state of general anarchy ensued. Whatever law and order existed was provided by a loose collection of Islamic Courts, which gradually established their own police and armed forces to enforce their decisions. In 2004, in response to the growing power of the Islamic Courts, the U.S. put together an interim government comprised of the very warlords who had brought

See page 4: Somalia

Somalia...from page 3

disaster to Somalia throughout the 1990s and pressured the UN and African Union to recognize it as the official government of Somalia. However, the Transitional Government of Somalia did not dare set foot inside the country and had to operate out of Kenya.

At the beginning of 2006 the Islamic Courts organized themselves into the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and challenged the warlords for control of the entire country. In an article dated May 17, 2006 the *Washington Post* reported that the U.S. was secretly supporting the warlords fighting against the ICU and was violating the UN arms embargo on Somalia by providing the warlords with weapons. However, despite their American support the warlords were defeated by June 2006 and over the next six months the ICU established law and order, disarmed the warlords, opened the ports for trade and began to rebuild a number of major government institutions. Although the ICU is portrayed by the American media as being a Taliban-like regime, the evidence suggests that it was in fact relatively moderate and enjoyed the support of the vast majority of the Somali people, who were fed up with the lawlessness and indiscriminate killings carried out by the warlords.

Shortly after the ICU came to power, the Ethiopian army – trained, armed and financed by the U.S. – sent troops across the border and occupied parts of Somalia. It was clear that the Ethiopian move had the blessing and backing of the Bush administration, which was portraying the ICU as Islamic fundamentalists linked to al Qaeda. Peace talks between the ICU and the warlords began in the fall of 2006; the main demand of the ICU was the complete withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somali soil. However, in mid-December the Ethiopians, with the approval of the Americans and with U.S. intelligence support, launched a full-scale invasion of Somalia with 15,000 troops and a massive bombing campaign. In the face of such an overwhelming force the ICU government abandoned its control of major Somali cities, including

Mogadishu, pledging to continue to fight a guerilla war against the occupation forces.

In the early days of 2007 the U.S. openly entered the battle, carrying out mass bombings of villages still under the control of the ICU. The U.S. has also announced that it has sent Special Forces into Somalia to hunt down the leaders of the ICU government. Despite this, the Ethiopian government continues to claim that it is not acting at the behest of or in collaboration with the U.S. It has now been reported that the Ethiopians and the U.S. have reinstated four warlords to govern over areas from which they were ousted by the ICU in 2006, despite extensive documentation of the crimes and human rights violations committed by these warlords over the past decade and more.

There is little doubt that the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia was planned and authorized by the Bush administration and that it is closely linked to Bush's "surge" strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Bush administration seems to think that by a massive escalation of violence throughout the Middle East it can deal a death-blow to all of its enemies in the region and stabilize its control of the entire Middle East and its vast oil resources. However, just as with George Bush's declaration of victory in Iraq in May 2003, it is beginning to look as if similar claims of victory by the Americans' Ethiopian proxy forces in Somalia will also prove to be premature.

Modern Communism

**Bulletin of the Manitoba Regional Committee
of the Communist Party of Canada
(Marxist-Leninist)**

Editor: Ken Kalturnyk

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

Fax: 477-6741

Email: mrc-cpcml@mts.net

Internet: www.modern-communism.ca

Produced by volunteer labour