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By Sara Flounders
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70th anniversary of 1953 coup in Iran – Stop U.S. global aggression!

This talk was given by video by Sara Flounders, contributing editor of Workers World newspaper and coordinator of the International Action Center, to a conference held Aug. 15 in Tehran, Iran, on the 70th anniversary of the CIA-sponsored coup that overthrew Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh and installed the hated Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The 1979 Iranian Revolution put an end to the shah's reign of terror.

Other speakers at the conference included Foad Izadi, Ph.D. Associate Professor and the Head of the American Studies Department, University of Tehran; Hamid Shahrabi, research director of House of Latin America and Cofounder and coordinator of Solidarity Iran; Vijay Prashad, U.S.-based Indian historian, author, journalist and political commentator; and Ambassadors of the ALBA countries (Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua).



Sara Flounders

Dear friends in HOLA (House of Latin America in Tehran) and Faculty of World Studies, University of Tehran — thank you for organizing today’s event. It is an honor to participate.

This meeting happens at a crucial moment. This week Iran faces dangerous new threats from U.S. imperialism that require a response from the whole world. The Pentagon has deployed 3,000 Marines and sailors to the seas near Iran. The amphibious assault ship USS Bataan, the dock-landing warship USS Carter Hall and a Marine Expeditionary Unit have converged on Iran.

These ships carry dozens of fixed-wing and rotary aircraft, plus amphibious landing craft and tactical vehicles.

Three weeks ago, the U.S. sent the guided missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner, along with F-35 and F-16 fighter jets, to the region. As a further provocation, the U.S. is planning to put armed personnel on commercial ships traveling through the Strait of Hormuz.

The Pentagon war planners are risking the lives of sailors and Marines in an attempt to launch a new war, a military adventure. As in past wars, they are willing to use their own soldiers to terrorize and destroy the world.

Their stated role, announced by the U.S. Central Command, is to defend U.S. interests. What are U.S. interests? U.S. interests are the control of profits and markets. U.S. imperialism is an oppressor of poor and working people in the U.S. and on an international level.

How do United States military and oil corporations defend U.S. interests? By inflaming regional instability, by undermining national sovereignty.

As usual, the U.S. military and civilian spokespeople cloak their military maneuvers with lies, claiming their target is an enemy engaged in aggression. This is always a Big Lie, just like the Big Lies regarding Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Yugoslavia, Vietnam and Korea.

70 years since coup

Today we mark the 70th anniversary of the CIA/M-16 bloody coup in Iran against the democratically elected government of Mossadegh. The CIA operatives have long bragged of their criminal role, writing books applauding their crimes, openly acknowledging that it was to regain control of the oil industry and keep revenue from being used in the interests of the Iranian people.

CIA operative Kermit Roosevelt described in detail the payoffs to gangs and to disruptors who operated with impunity. Terror tactics were used to spread confusion, divide people

and dissolve Mossadegh's political power base within the National Front of Iran. Hyperinflation and shortages were consciously used to undercut support.

In 1953 Iran was essentially defenseless against a U.S.-instigated coup; 70 years ago people had far less experience with imperialist subterfuge.

All of this was to bring in a corrupt, compliant and reactionary regime, an absolute monarch, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who operated through terror tactics for 26 years. It was a brutal regime that protected Washington's and London's corporate oil interests in the Persian Gulf.

This was at a time when U.S. imperialist power was at its height. In 1953, Washington's power seemed uncontested. The war in Korea left tens of thousands of U.S. troops in control in South Korea, in a war that killed 4 million Korean people. The 1954 U.S. coup in Guatemala pulled down the hope for land distribution and workers' rights. U.S. imperialism was consolidating the building of NATO and welcoming into the alliance the fascist forces who had remained untouched in West Germany.

Revolution changed balance of power

The 1979 Iranian Revolution challenged U.S. power and its ability to control the region. It changed not only the direction of Iran, but it also fundamentally changed the direction of the entire region. It was a revolution where U.S. imperialism couldn't use the tactics of the past.

The past 44 years of non-stop threats, sabotage, raids, drone attacks, harsh sanctions, assassinations and wars in the region since the 1979 Iranian Revolution have been a U.S. effort to defeat the challenge of Iran controlling its own resources. The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria are a failed effort to regain a secure foothold in this region.

The constant efforts to set countries in the region against Iran and the imperialist efforts to inflame religious and national differences, while selling weapons worth hundreds of billions of dollars, created debtor nations out of oil-rich countries.

Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, this U.S. intervention has not ended for even one minute. U.S. imperialism has seized Iranian ships and bank accounts. The outrageous assassination in 2020 of the great liberation organizer, commander of the Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani, who was on a peace mission to Iraq, was part of this continuing conspiracy against Iran.

U.S. intervention has never ended.

It is essential for U.S. leftists and antiwar forces to be clear that Iran has the right to defend its national interests. The U.S. is the central power of world imperialism. The

imperialist ruling class has decades of experience in utilizing its propaganda machines, military machine, nuclear threats, political alliances and diplomatic leverage.

The U.S. violated every agreement, including the internationally signed Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action with United Nations Security Council members, Germany and the European Union. The Trump administration broke the JCPOA treaty and reimposed sanctions. President Joe Biden's group has continued the sanctions. These economic sanctions hurt trade and are intended to disrupt the Iranian economy and make the Iranian people suffer.

The real oppressors

The truth is clear: U.S. imperialism is an oppressor country that imposes class exploitation on the workers of the world and plunders the natural resources of nations unable to compete with guns, finances or production.

These days, when U.S. capitalism is declining, Washington uses the Pentagon and its more than 800 military bases worldwide to maintain its domination, or as the Pentagon calls it, "to defend U.S. interests."

This year Washington, which has been waging a proxy NATO war in Ukraine against Russia, is sailing warships in the seas near Taiwan and Korea to target China and North Korea and is poised to intervene in the Sahel region in Africa.

There is enormous frustration by the corporate war planners. Where can they prevail? Where can they launch a war and use it as a weapon to intimidate other countries? Where can they make a big show of their devastating power?

Iran has not threatened working people in the U.S. Iran has only asserted its own national sovereignty.

In recent years, the U.S. Navy has several times seized Iranian-controlled tankers and shipments of oil en route to other countries, citing its own illegal and unilateral sanctions on Iran's oil exports.

Iran says it views U.S. military vessels lurking in the waters of the Persian Gulf as a threat to its security and a source of tension and instability in the region. Instead of seeking to prevent conflict and get rid of the sanctions, Biden and his war planners have greeted the legitimate Iranian resistance to U.S. imperialist domination by escalating the war danger.

U.S. troops out now!

Sending sailors and Marines to this hot region puts these troops in danger, risking their lives to create a pretext for an attack on Iran. This is a provocation invented by the Pentagon propaganda machine. This is a tactic the war planners and the compliant

corporate media have used again and again. It is a tactic that has been used in the destruction of Iraq and Libya and goes back to the launching of the U.S. war against Vietnam and the notorious, fraudulent claim of an attack in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964.

All past U.S. imperialist efforts to defeat Iran's assertion of its sovereignty have failed. Iran has refused to bow down to US domination.

New alliances are forming, new diplomacy. The U.S. and its junior partner in crime, apartheid Israel, are now increasingly isolated in the region. They need war and want war; it is their only weapon. But it won't change the course of history.

Iran is aiding other sanctioned countries to survive U.S. sanctions, far distant Venezuela and Cuba, and closer Syria.

We join the people of the world in demanding:

Pull the U.S. sailors and Marines out of the seas near Iran!

End the economic sanctions against Iran!

Stop the imperialist war before it starts!

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