



End Pakistan army offensive in Swat valley

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The Pakistani military operation in Swat must end, and the US must stop intervening in South Asia

The government-led offensive at the behest of the U.S. imperialists into the Swat Region of Pakistan has left untold misery on the civilians caught between both government and insurgent gunfire. The workers and peasants of Pakistan must not continue paying with their lives just because the U.S. imperialists require a general blood bath to marginalize those unwilling to prostrate themselves before their imperial 'master' and, by extension, shore up its crumbling occupation in Afghanistan. The joke in this particular case, however, is entirely on the U.S. imperialists who erroneously believe that by promoting an offensive in the Swat Region, they eliminate all threats to their rule. But, in reality, these actions only makes those forces who oppose the armed presence of the Pakistani military stronger.

The current rise in strength of the Islamist insurgents coalescing in the North-West Frontier Region of Pakistan is made possible by the role the United States has historically played in Central-Asian political and economic affairs. It is beyond doubt, that if the interventions and occupations ended tomorrow, so would the 'threat' from insignificant localized tribal traditionalists. It is ridiculous to claim that Islamic fundamentalists are really trying to overthrow the 'values' of the United States. Moreover, if Americans genuinely want to see democratic rights (including women's rights) flourish in Afghanistan and Pakistan, then foreign invasions and occupations, bloody wars which slaughter tens of thousands of innocent civilians, which turn the reactionary Islamists into defenders of their communities and their countries, must all come immediately to an end.

The idea that this is all about defeating 'extremism' and 'preserving' democracy in Pakistan is a brazenly self-serving prevarication. After all, the United States had no qualms whatsoever regarding the direct arming of the ruthless military dictatorship led by Musharraf for almost a decade. This is all about maintaining power for those who have everything to lose if Pakistan were to break free from its semi-colonial position in the global capitalist economy (i.e., Wall St., the International Monetary Fund [IMF], the World Bank [WB], and the World Trade Organization [WTO].)

The arming of the workers and peasants to not only drive out the Pakistani military, but to provide protection from hostile Islamist forces seeking to wipe out the progressive gains won through working-class struggle (i.e., independent trade unions, freedom of the presses, and women's rights) is crucial in the coming weeks and months ahead. Both the forces of the government and the Islamists, although they share disparate goals for how Pakistani society should be organized, believe that the working class and the poor peasants must be smashed in any event. This would be a disaster for the progressive struggle in Pakistan and, therefore, cannot be overlooked nor allowed to eventually manifest.

The national-based and imperial capitalists in Pakistan fear the rise of the Islamists; they view it simply as a direct threat to their way of life. The overall weakness of the puppet governments of the U.S imperialists to reconcile the internal contradictions plaguing Pakistan, can force the local bourgeoisie to support a potential military coup 'even at the expense of their 'formal' democracy. But the workers, poor peasants, and urban poor have nothing to gain from this. A new military dictatorship would surely crack down on the independent mobilizations of the working class just as quickly as an Islamist regime would. That is why the Pakistani military cannot be relied upon as a safeguard for democracy in the country. Only a workers and poor peasants government 'organized on the basis of soviets and protected by a revolutionary militia of working people' can make democracy a reality in Pakistan. That is why we call for the victory of the resistance movement in the Swat region against the Pakistani military offensive.

Workers? Power (US) also condemns the U.S.-sponsored imperialist aggression in the Swat Region. We call for the defeat and immediate withdrawal of all U.S. armed forces from the country ? including aircraft carriers harbored in the Indian Ocean. Not one more penny must go to the repressive state apparatus that holds the workers and peasants of Pakistan in perpetual bondage to the multi-nationals who headquarter in the United States or the tools of imperialist plunder, i.e., the WB, the WTO, and the IMF, who parasitically siphon the lifeblood out of the Pakistani people . The workers and peasants of Pakistan must be afforded the right to decide who they want to represent them in government without any interference from the United States.

Statement by Workers Power US, sympathising section of the League for the Fifth International

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