

U.S.-Sponsored Genocides: From Guatemala to Congo

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Guatemala has put its U.S.-backed genocidal maniac on trial, but Washington continues to protect its agents of mass murder in the Democratic Republic of Congo. "There is no auditorium big enough to hold the all the living Americans who should justly be charged with genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity."

The man who unleashed a genocide against the Maya Indians of Guatemala, former dictator and general Efraín Ríos Montt, went on trial for his crimes against humanity in Guatemala City, this week. By all rights, the 86 year-old Montt should be joined in the dock by scores of still-living United States officials, including former President George [Bush the First](#).

"The genocide would have been impossible without the United States."

Back in 1954, the [CIA overthrew](#) the reformist government of President Jacobo Arbenz, whose land reform measures had angered the United Fruit Company. The U.S. termination with extreme prejudice of Guatemalan democracy ultimately led to a 36-year rebellion and civil war, with the Americans backing a succession of dictators. General Montt was the most monstrous. In the 1980s, his regime [declared total war](#) on the Mayan people of the country's highlands. Whole villages were massacred and entire regions laid waste as the military attempted to drain the human sea in which the guerilla movement swam. Army documents show clearly that the native Maya were targeted for extermination because of their ethnicity; that all Maya – a majority of Guatemala's population – were considered enemies of the state. Ríos Montt is the first Latin American former head of state to be charged with genocide in his own country.

However, this crime is not Ríos Montt's, alone. The genocide would have been impossible without the United States, which had run the show in Guatemala since 1954 and had armed the general to the teeth. The U.S. corporate media like to call President Ronald Reagan the "Great Communicator" but, in Guatemala, he was the Great Exterminator, encouraging and financing General Ríos Montt's orgy of mass murder. Reagan [described](#) the racist butcher as "a man of great personal integrity and commitment" who was "getting a bum rap." All told, a quarter million or more Guatemalans died in the 40 years since the CIA robbed them of their democracy and independence.

"The Maya were targeted for extermination because of their ethnicity."

In 1999, when the civil war was over, President Bill Clinton [apologized](#) for the harm done to Guatemala by the United States. But by then, Clinton had already set in motion a far larger genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo – a [U.S.-sponsored holocaust](#) that has so far

claimed 6 million lives. In a just world, Slick Willie would join an auditorium full of Obama, Bush and Clinton administration operatives who, over the space of 16 years, made eastern Congo the charnel house of the planet. Susan Rice would have a place of prominence in this vast assemblage of criminals, as among [the most culpable](#) for the worst bloodbath since World War Two.

In fact, there is no auditorium big enough to hold all the living Americans who should justly be charged with genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. There are too many – great crowds of them from each administration, especially in the last ten years, since the invasion of Iraq. Imperialism in its last stages maintains an ever-lengthening Kill List.

Guatemala is coming to grips with its past, in a trial that will probably last a few months. The United States has an infinity of crimes to answer for.

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